Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries: A Reflection of Greene County, Ohio’s African American Community and Their Contributions to the World

Thesis

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Abstract

Massies Creek and Cherry Grove cemeteries represent over two centuries of heritage and pride in a community that flourished from the early nineteenth century to the present. Massies Creek and Cherry Grove cemeteries are essential to understanding the history of Greene County’s African American community. Massies Creek and Cherry Grove cemeteries are the final resting place of numerous bishops, church leaders, university presidents, educators, successful businessmen, politicians, and other figures that have made an impact locally, regionally, and nationally. Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries: A Reflection of Greene County’s African American Community and Their Contributions to the World uncovers the vital importance of Massie’s Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries as reflections of the community that they served by reviewing the history of the county, especially its African American community. The thesis also unveils facts about the prominent African Americans buried in the two cemeteries and how they were pivotal to Americans, particularly African Americans, in Ohio and throughout the nation. The thesis explicates what makes these cemeteries, and the communities around them, an anomaly. In addition, Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries: A Reflection of Greene County’s African American Community and Their Contributions to the World examines how and why these phenomenal leaders made these two cemeteries their final resting places.
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Thesis

Introduction

Martin Delany, distinguished African American abolitionist, scholar, author, and diplomat was born in West Virginia to former slaves who instilled pride and the value of education in him. His intellect gained him admission into Harvard University Medical School becoming the first African American, along with two others, to gain this privilege. Unfortunately, their presence caused such an uproar that Delany was forced to withdraw in the first few weeks.

Delany became a newspaper publisher and an author whose works included *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States, Politically Considered*. Delany also published *Mystery*, a weekly newspaper supporting the abolitionist movement, from 1843-47, during which time Delany began working with Frederick Douglass. After the *Mystery* closed, Delany became co-editor of Frederick Douglass's newspaper, *North Star*. After his joint venture with Douglass, he apprenticed under several physicians in the Pittsburgh area and then opened his own practice, specializing in dentistry and leech therapy.\(^1\) Notably, Delany was also a military official and became the first black field officer in the United States Army.

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\(^1\) John M. Hyson. *Leech Therapy: A History*. (Journal of the History of Dentistry, Vol. 53, No. 1, March 2005). Referencing leech therapy, Hyson stated, “The leech was used in medicine as a means of ‘local depletion’ (bloodletting).” In 1839, Chabin Harris, dental authority, recommended the application of leeches to the gum for drainage of a swelling tooth.
During a portion of the Reconstruction period, Delany lived in South Carolina and ran for Lieutenant Governor. On January 24, 1885, Martin Delany, distinguished African American abolitionist, scholar, author, and diplomat died as a result of tuberculosis.² Martin Delany is buried in Massie’s Creek Cemetery in Cedarville Township, Greene County, Ohio.

Many people have not heard of Greene County, Ohio, and even fewer know of its history. The elevated concentration of influential African Americans who have been acquainted with Greene County, Ohio cannot be understated. The individuals and institutions in the Greene County have impacted the nation and even the world. The intellectual capital that was brought to and developed in this area has affected university curricula and religious doctrines throughout the nation and beyond. Several African Americans have decided to retire here and hundreds decided to make Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries their final resting place. In fact, Richard R. Wright, Jr., college president, scholar, and author, produced a groundbreaking social study of the African American communities in Greene County, especially Xenia, in 1902 and the United States Bureau of Labor published and used it as a reference.³

Why did so many African Americans move to Greene County? Some individuals followed their families here. Several members of Hallie Q. Brown’s family are buried

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² Martin Delany obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. January 24, 1885
³ Richard R. Wright, Jr. *The Negroes of Xenia, Ohio: A Social Study.* (Bulletin of the U.S. Bureau of Labor, 1902) 1006 Wright states that among the reasons that he chose Xenia/Greene County for his research was because of the diversity of African Americans in the area (some being recent arrivals and others among the oldest families in the area) and because of the proportionally large population of African Americans in this northern community.
here, including her parents. Colonel Charles Young, highest-ranking black officer in the United States Army until his death in 1922. He was a faculty member at Wilberforce University for several years and moved his family to Wilberforce. His two children are buried in Massies Creek Cemetery. Young’s children, Charles Noel and Marie Aurelia, grew up in Wilberforce and went to Wilberforce University after their father moved to Wilberforce a second time to teach military science at Wilberforce University.

Others moved to Wilberforce because of the ample availability of employment. Lower levels of migration of European immigrants to Southwestern Ohio increased the opportunity for African Americans to find jobs. James Campbell, author of *Songs of Zion: the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa*, noted that many blacks worked in Xenia’s distillery, cordage factory, and tobacco-sorting plant.⁴ The growing black population allowed for businesses and professionals catering to their community to flourish including barbershops, restaurants, small businesses, law offices, and a hospital. African American physician Horace R. Hawkins established one of the first hospitals for African Americans in Ohio in 1913. The hospital was in service through 1935 and located on E. Main St. in the town of Xenia.⁵ African American communities in Greene County had built churches, fraternal organizations, public school systems, businesses, farms, and institutions that rivaled other African American communities. On the other hand, some sought the education

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and employment that was provided at Wilberforce University or the accessible public education provided to youth of color in Xenia.

There were black representatives on the local board of education, blacks on the city council, and at least one state legislator, Bishop Benjamin W. Arnett, was elected to represent Greene County for a term. African Americans have also made a large impact from the smaller areas in Greene County including in Cedarville and Yellow Springs. Greene County was not perfect as African Americans faced racism and hostility in Greene County like they would virtually anywhere else in America at that time, but the county’s African American community continued to build and grow from the nineteenth century to the present day.

In *Up from the Grave: A Sociohistorical Reconstruction of an African American Community from Cemetery Data in the Rural Midwest*, Gary Foster and Craig Eckert compiled and researched cemetery and burial record data to reconstruct the sociohistorical background of an African American community in the rural Midwest. Foster and Eckert described gravestones and burial records as repositories of demographic data representing communities across time, which provide a broader picture of the communities in which they are located then the often anecdotal diaries.

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6 Campbell, *Songs of Zion: the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa*. 261
7 Wright, Jr., *The Negroes of Xenia, Ohio: A Social Study*. 1006-1044. Wright’s social study documents the progress of Greene County’s African American community in 1902, at the center of the community’s two hundred year history
ledgers, and family records. The study researched Coles County, Illinois from 1825 (five years before its formation) to 1985. The researchers studied 55,914 cases, of which 338 were identified as African Americans. 324 of the 338 African Americans were buried in the Dodge Grove Cemetery in Mattoon, the largest town in Coles County. Eckert and Foster found that the average age of African Americans in the area was younger than white population because they did not live as long in adulthood (unless they reached the age of 86, then African Americans proportionally lived longer than their white counterparts), the black community experienced a seasonal mortality (being more susceptible to diseases in the summer and winter), and that death resulting from violence was proportionally greater in the African American community.

“Minorities are often not reflected in official documents, and cemeteries are a way of retrieving minority history.” I agree with this statement and it is one of the reasons why I selected Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries for my thesis. The article does an exemplary job at solely utilizing cemetery and burial records to reconstruct Coles’ County African American community. However, I did not solely rely on statistical data from the cemeteries to build a story about the history of Greene County’s African American community because there was/is critical information outside of the burial records that provide a fuller story. For this thesis, I utilized

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9 Ibid. 486
newspaper clippings, older journals and books, proceedings, etc. Foster and Eckert did not include information about community activities or individuals. Patricia Roberts Harris, a former United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and the first African American woman to serve as a United States Ambassador, was born in Mattoon, Illinois in 1924.\textsuperscript{10} Her father was a railroad dining car porter, one of the main employers in the town. Her mother’s family was descended from enslaved African Americans from Virginia who bought their freedom and moved to the Illinois nearly fifty years before the Civil War and some may be buried in the researched cemeteries.\textsuperscript{11} None of Harris’s, or any other individual/communal, information was included in Eckert and Foster’s study. In fact, after reading this article, readers would still have several questions about the lives and activities of African Americans in Coles County.

Marilyn Yalom, author of \textit{The American Resting Place: 400 Years of History Through Our Cemeteries and Burial Grounds}, stated, “Cemeteries are outgrowths of the communities that create them, and they often become focal points for family, religious, ethnic, regional, or national celebrations that simultaneously honor the dead and enhance a sense of group identity among the living.”\textsuperscript{12,13} Yalom’s premise about cemeteries being outgrowths of the communities that create them aptly applies to both Massie’s Creek and Cherry Grove cemeteries. Massies Creek and Cherry Grove

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid. 105
\textsuperscript{12} Marilyn Yalom. \textit{The American Resting Place}. Houghton (New York: Mifflin Company, 2008) 28
cemeteries represent over two centuries of heritage and pride in a community that flourished from the early nineteenth century to the present. Massies Creek and Cherry Grove cemeteries are essential to understanding the history of Greene County’s African American community.

In chapter 1 I will explore the development of Greene County’s African American community from its formation until the end of the Civil War. The African American population in the county was small in the first few decades of the county’s existence, but it steadily grew. In 1820, there were only 53 people of color in the county, but their numbers tripled in 1830, nearly doubled in 1840 and 1850, and more than doubled by 1860. Strong anti-slavery sentiment, supported by local religious institutions, made Greene County an attractive area for both free and enslaved African Americans. I will discuss both the impact of anti-slavery movement in the area and the impact of religious institutions on the area. It was also during this time that the African Americans in the county began being buried in Massies Creek Cemetery, 1853, and formed Cherry Grove Cemetery, 1864. I end this chapter at the end of the Civil War because of its unparalleled importance to the area and the nation. Greene County had more men enlisted, proportionally, in the military during the Civil War than any other county in Ohio. I argue that Greene County’s fervor for the Union during the Civil War was due to its prior religious and abolitionist history.

In chapter 2 I will examine how and why the Greene County’s African American community expanded after the Civil War. The largest increase of Greene County’s
African American population in its entire history occurred between 1860 and 1870. Most of these men, women, and children came to the area seeking employment, better living conditions, and an exceptional education. A few African American residents came to the area to settle down after accumulating wealth and prestige from other areas. All of the new and old residents had the opportunity to network and fellowship together at the numerous churches, social affairs and through organizations. I pay close attention to organizations in this chapter because they were a vital part of this community as they also were on the national level. Fraternal and community organizations provided agency, networking opportunities, camaraderie and a social outlet for African Americans. Some valued these organizations so much that they have the organization’s insignias inscribed on their tombstones.\textsuperscript{14} I conclude this chapter by discussing the pivotal role Wilberforce University has played in both the local and national African American community.

In chapter 3 I will investigate the history Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries and highlight the accomplishments of several prominent African Americans who are buried in them. Massie’s Creek and Cherry Grove cemeteries, located in Greene County, Ohio are the final resting place for hundreds of people. These two cemeteries are identical to thousands of other cemeteries; both are not large cemeteries and the tombstones vary from well kept to those that are in deplorable condition

\textsuperscript{14} Dr. Joseph Carroll, author of \textit{Slave Insurrections in the United States, 1800-1865}, is buried in Massises Creek Cemetery and his fraternity’s letters are on his tombstone. Major Martin Delany’s grave notes his involvement in Prince Hall Masonry.
primarily due to their age and weather. However, these two cemeteries are infused with a unique and rich history whose reach stretches across the globe. Massies Creek and Cherry Grove cemeteries are the final resting place of numerous bishops, church leaders, university presidents, educators, successful businessmen, politicians, and other figures that have made an impact locally, regionally, and nationally. The large number of prominent African Americans who migrated to the area and settled here is not an accident. Two centuries of Greene County’s religious, activist, institutional and educational history helps explain its rich past and the cemeteries reflect the culture and success of the community that established it.

In this thesis I will uncover the vital importance of Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries as reflections of the community that they served by reviewing the history of the county, especially its African American community. I will also unveil facts about the prominent African Americans buried in the two cemeteries and how they were pivotal to Americans, particularly African Americans, in Ohio and throughout the nation. I will explain what makes these cemeteries, and the communities around them, an anomaly. In addition, I will examine how and why these phenomenal leaders made these two cemeteries their final resting places.
Chapter 1: The Birth of Greene County’s African American Community

Greene County, Ohio was established on March 24, 1803; only 23 days after Ohio became the 17th state admitted to the Union. The county was named after Nathaniel Greene, an American Revolutionary Major General who had won many battles against British forces, especially in the South. Greene proposed raising regiments composed of enslaved blacks in his Southern campaigns, but the South Carolina and Georgia legislatures turned down this request.\(^{15}\) His cousin, Colonel Christopher Greene, commanded the all black First Rhode Island Regiment for the duration of the American Revolutionary War.\(^{16}\) This is fascinating because Greene County, Ohio, one of the most racially progressive counties in the nation for African Americans, is named after an American military hero who fought for the rights of blacks in the army during the American Revolution.

Records prove that there were African Americans in Greene County by the end of the eighteenth century. The office of the Greene County clerk of courts has a book entitled *Records of the Certificates of the Freedom of Negroes* in which freed men and women in Greene County entered their names and other pertinent information in the book to confirm their status as free people of color and as protection against rogue slave

\(^{15}\) Pete Maslowski. National Policy Toward the Use of Black Troops in the Revolution. (South Carolina Historical Magazine 73:1-17, 1972)

catchers and cynics. Although this record-keeping practice is usually associated with the South, it was also a part of the history of the northern states, particularly in the border areas. The Black Law of 1804 mandated that free blacks and mulattoes living in Ohio provide proof of their freedom, which was usually accomplished by filing a certificate of manumission with the county clerk and paying a twelve and a half cents for the registration fee. The Black Law of 1804 also penalized anyone who harbored or assisted fugitives. This law was instituted in Ohio only months after it became a state and it was the first free state to develop a black code after the American Revolution.

The Barkson brothers were the earliest recorded names of people of color in the county on the registry. Robin Barkson was born on Sept. 17, 1796 and Richard Barkson was born in October 1798. Both names were listed immediately after they were born. A white man, James Towler, who was the first postmaster of Xenia, entered the Barksons. David Patterson, another freed men, was also one of the earliest names that appeared in this record book when he signed it on September 22, 1806. By signing the document, he agreed to assemble when called upon “in such cases made and

17 Harvey Elam. Record of Freed Negroes Found Here; Tells Early Story of Abolitionist Movement: Harvey Elam in Possession of Old County Record. (Xenia Gazette February 3, 1986)
19 Ibid. 59
20 Elam. Record of Freed Negroes Found Here; Tells Early Story of Abolitionist Movement: Harvey Elam in Possession of Old County Record. Xenia Gazette February 3, 1986
provided.”21 Patterson is of particular interest because the record book includes the story of how he gained his freedom.

“State of North Carolina, Guilford County: At a county court session held on the third Monday in November A.D., 1800, on the petition of John Tumbelson and his slave David Patterson, a black man, praying the court to exonerate the said David Patterson from his present state of slavery, for meritorious services which were set forth in the said John Tumbelson’s petition and which petition was signed by a number of the respectable inhabitants of said county, it was unanimously agreed by the court that the prayer of said petition be granted.”22

Like Patterson, several African Americans came to Greene County from southern states, particularly the states that shared a border with Ohio like Kentucky and Virginia.23 For example, Godfrey Brown was born enslaved in Brunswick County, Virginia in 1768. Brown’s skill as a shoe cobbler allowed him to make enough money not only to buy his own freedom, but that of his wife and twelve children in 1820. He also used $2350 that he had earned to purchase an estimated 1500 acres of land in Greene, Shelby, and Van Wert counties. Five hundred and fifty acres of the land was in Greene County, where he established a settlement (Brown settlement), a church (Middle Run Baptist Church, which is still in operation in Xenia), and a cemetery.24

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21 The article did not discuss what those particular duties were, but it may allude to militia service and help with community affairs.
22 Elam. Record of Freed Negroes Found Here; Tells Early Story of Abolitionist Movement: Harvey Elam in Possession of Old County Record. Xenia Gazette February 3, 1986
23 Virginia bordered Ohio until 1863. West Virginia was the western extension of Virginia until 1863 when it separated to join the Union and become its own state.
Some African Americans established roots in the area after arriving via the Underground Railroad, which had several stops in Greene County, Ohio. Crossing the Ohio River was not a guarantee to eternal freedom. Bounty hunters and small fortune seekers on both sides of the river could kidnap enslaved men and women. Due to black codes and fugitive slave laws, white citizens had much less of an incentive to help slaves and much more of one to seize them, especially since laws strictly forbade anyone harboring or assisting in harboring fugitives with a host of fines, but rewarded those who assisted in the capture of blacks. Consequently, many enslaved men and women who ran away decided to continue further north beyond Cincinnati and other Ohio cities and counties that bordered slave states to places in Greene County and beyond.

Greene County had stations on the Underground Railroad since the early nineteenth century. There were at least 30 Underground Railroad operators in Greene County including two doctors, all of whom supported several stations in the county.25 One of the two doctors, Dr. Joseph Templeton, was particularly vocal about his hatred slavery and his wife may have been the first person to establish a school for colored students in the county.26 Both white and black citizens participated in the Underground Railroad by hiding enslaved men and women in their homes and helping them go to their next

26 George F. Robinson. *History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions.* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1902) 125. Mrs. Templeton formed a school for colored students in Xenia between 1826 and 1843.
station. Greene County also had an Anti-Slavery Society, which included over two-dozen local community residents. Greene County’s Anti-Slavery Society was one of 120 anti-slavery societies in Ohio by 1836. These societies came together to form the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society in Zanesville at a meeting held in April 1835. Among Greene County’s members were David Mitchell who came to Greene County from Kentucky where he owned one thousand acres of land. Mitchell left Kentucky, like other early settlers, because of his hatred of slavery. David Laughead, another abolitionist pioneer, arrived to Greene County from Kentucky to get away from slavery. The society fought for the abolition of slavery and advocated laws that would eliminate slavery. The Greene County abolitionist movement may have been uniquely strong because so many residents purposefully moved to the area to escape from the horrors of slavery.

Religious denominations and institutions in Greene County also advocated the abolition of slavery and were active in the anti-slavery movement. Greene County hosted over a dozen different denominations, many of which had strong anti-slavery

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27 The Davis House on Market Street is still used for occasional tours to see the cellars where fugitives hid.
28 Greene County Society Account Book. 1837
30 Broadstone. History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions. 329
31 Ibid.
sentiments. In particular, the Greene County area attracted a large number of religious emigrants from the Presbyterian sects. The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church was the church to which many of the early residents belonged and a few of the Presbyterian residents were born in Ireland. This sect of Presbyterians is important to this study because of their anti-slavery views and involvement in the Underground Railroad. All communicant members “believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the basis for their faith and activity, loving and caring for one another and for other people, and Spreading the Gospel to all parts of the world, according to the first of several vows required for such membership. This sect of Presbyterians was actively involved in social reform movements during the 19th century, including the abolition of slavery. In 1830, the Western Synod of the Presbyterian Church, which governed the Greene County congregations, decided that slave-ownership was incompatible with Christian doctrines. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of America outpaced them by thirty years when they outlawed their members from having slaves. Among the first judicial acts of the Reformed Presbytery was the deliverance of this body, in 1800, on the subject of human slavery. They had held this system to be a sin, and previous to 1798, the ministers in South Carolina had warned

33 Massies Cemetery records reveal that a few of the early Presbyterians in the area were born in Ireland. For example, Robert Jackson was born in Londonberrv, Ireland, fought in the American Revolutionary War and is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.  
35 Ibid.
members against it. The matter was brought before them by Rev. Alexander McLeod refusing to accept a call to Coldenham, New York, because there were some members who owned slaves. The Presbytery enacted, without a dissenting voice, that “no slaveholder should be allowed the communion of the Church.”

Members had to free their human property if they had not already done so. It appears that the Greene County Presbyterians took an early stance against slavery as the first Presbyterian congregation did not bring any slaves with them when they had moved to Greene County from Kentucky and other Southern states. Rev. Hugh McMillan, a Reformed Presbyterian Mininister and educator, left South Carolina in 1829 he was disillusioned by the slavery conditions in that state. A few others followed him from South Carolina to Massies Creek in Greene County. Correspondingly, at least four charter members of the United Presbyterian Church at Jamestown and two charters members of the United Presbyterian Church at Cedarville were listed as members of the Greene County Anti-Slavery Society in 1837. Abolition was a major factor in the decline of the denomination's South Carolina and Tennessee congregations: most members there, finding it hard to be abolitionists in slave-owning states, moved to southern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois; by the beginning of the Civil War, the remnants of

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36 Ibid.
37 Broadstone. History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions. 487

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many Presbyterian factions in the South formed the Southern Presbyterian Church.\textsuperscript{39}
The only congregations remaining in slave-holding territory were in Baltimore, Maryland, and in Roney's Point, Virginia (now West Virginia), near Wheeling.\textsuperscript{40}

Like the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Greene County, African American churches in the county were influential in their communities and they played a significant role in the abolitionist movement. Middle Run Baptist Church is the oldest African American church in the county, formed in 1822 in Godfrey Brown’s settlement about 8 miles away from its present location in Xenia.\textsuperscript{41} First Baptist Church, now known as Zion Baptist Church, was organized on Sunday, April 16, 1839, essentially through the efforts of Rev. Wallace Shelton.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church was one of the strongest churches in Greene County and examining the history and mission of the church will help explain its influence on the area. The African Methodist Episcopal Church grew out of the Free African Society. The Free African Society was founded in April of 1787 and its goal was to create a non-denominational religious organization that served the spiritual, economic and social needs of Philadelphia’s African-American community. Philadelphia has one of the oldest and largest African American communities and has

\textsuperscript{40} Glasgow. \textit{History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America}. 400 & 414
\textsuperscript{41} Broadstone. \textit{History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions}. 17
been the subject of many books and studies. The rapidly expanding city of “brotherly love” of the late eighteenth century was not always very brotherly to the nearly 2000 African Americans in the city at the time. African Americans detested being limited to second-class citizenship, but circumventing the institutional racism of the time was nearly impossible. However, some African Americans challenged the system by forming their own support groups and institutions, especially churches.

Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, and several other African Americans belonged to St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia in the late eighteenth century. The church was segregated limiting blacks to the balcony and limiting their leadership in the church. Richard Allen and Absalom Jones led a group of African Americans out of the church after being pulled from their knees while praying during the service because the seats previously designated for blacks were needed for white members. Thereafter, Allen and Jones formed the Free African Society, a mutual aid society to help support African Americans; especially the sick, jobless, orphaned and widowed. They also sought to improve the morals of its members by regulating marriages.

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42 The University of Pennsylvania created a special bibliography that concentrates on materials relating to the African American experience in Philadelphia that can be found in their Van Pelt Library and other institutions, which include Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720-1840 by Gary Nash and The Elite of Our People: Joseph Willson's sketches of Black upper-class life in antebellum Philadelphia, http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/guides/afrc/afrcphil.html
condemning drunkenness, and adultery. Allen and a few others resolved to remain Methodist and they led this group to form the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1793. Allen successfully sued in the Pennsylvania courts in 1807 and 1815 for the right of his congregation to exist as an independent institution. Black Methodists in other Middle Atlantic States experienced similar discrimination and supported the idea of having religious autonomy. Representatives from these churches came to Philadelphia in 1816 and met with Richard Allen to officially form the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME).

The AME Church was the first African American denomination organized and incorporated in the United States. Some have claimed it to be the first major religious denomination in the western world that developed because of sociological rather than theological differences. The AME motto, “God our Father, Christ our Redeemer, Man our Brother”, reflects the charge of activism basic beliefs of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church rapidly spread in the Northeast and Midwest states, but was limited in the South because of its lack of oversight by white officials, its charge for the uplift of African Americans and its strong stance against

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45 Campbell. *Songs of Zion: the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa.*

46 The four African-American congregations that formed the AME church were from Philadelphia, Salem, New Jersey; Delaware, and Maryland.
slavery. AME founder Richard Allen was a former slave in Delaware and he led the attack against slavery. His church operated a station on the Underground Railroad. It was from these roots that the AME church established itself in Greene County and its distinguished service in abolition, education and community advancement.

The first AME church in Greene County was St. John AME Church. It started out as a prayer group in West Xenia in 1832 and a year later they were sanctioned as an official AME church through the Ohio Annual Conference, Western District of the African Methodist Episcopal on September 14, 1833. The congregation had grown to 52 members by 1842 and they were often led by circuit riders, itinerant clergy who were assigned to travel around geographic locations to either organize or minister to congregations. Within the next fifty years, AME congregations were established at Wilberforce (Holy Trinity - 1863), Yellow Springs (Central Chapel – 1866) and Cedarville (St. Paul – 1878).

Another denomination with great influence in Greene County was the Christian Connection, also known as the Christian Church. The Christian Connection was a Christian movement that began in several places during the late 18th and early 19th

47 Campbell. *Songs of Zion: the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa.*
50 Ibid. An opposing faction from the St. John AME Church in Xenia formed their own congregation, First AME, in 1915 and they were autonomous until 1974. The 1974 tornado hit both churches hard so they subsequently decided to unite. They are now known as the United AME Church.
centuries. They had seceded from three different religious denominations, Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, due to differences with the other denominations hierarchy and their commitment to use the Bible as the only “rule of faith and practice.” The Christian Connection held influence in northern and southern states including Kentucky, Virginia, and Southern Ohio.

From the denomination's inception its leaders spoke out against slavery. James O'Kelly, a pioneer religious leader in this denomination, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, wrote a pamphlet opposing ownership of human beings. Barton W Stone renounced slavery and influenced relatives to liberate their slaves. David Purviance did not own or employ slave help, because he believed “human rights forbade men to make chattels of their fellows.” William Kinkade was steadfast in securing state constitution in Illinois forever banning slavery. All four of these religious leaders, all natives of the South, are important because they had influence and preached to congregations primarily in Border States, including in Greene County, Ohio, and they were vocal of their disapproval of slavery.

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52 Ibid. 15-20, 362
53 Ibid. 277, 362
54 Ibid. 56, 362
55 Ibid. 62, 362
56 Ibid. 362. The denomination as a whole did not officially take a stance on the issue until Northern delegations forced the issue on the floor at a General Convention in Cincinnati. The denomination split by Northern and Southern factions over what to do about slavery and they were not reunited until after the Civil War.
The Christian Church founded Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, in 1852. The college had high academic standards and good moral character was a requirement for graduation. Antioch's first president was Horace Mann, a nationally known expert on education in the nineteenth century. Horace Mann was a staunch abolitionist and he was an active proponent of anti-slavery laws when he served in Congress representing Massachusetts. Although the Christian Church was instrumental in the college's start, Antioch soon became known for providing a nonsectarian education.

The original founders gave no consideration to the question of whether Antioch should admit students of color, neither forbidding nor explicitly allowing it. Antioch College was also coeducational from the beginning. The Christian Church planning committee which established Antioch College also decided that the college “shall afford equal privileges to students of both sexes.” The equal opportunity clause was extended to the faculty when Rebecca Pennell, Mann’s niece, was hired as one of the original

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60 Straker. *Brief Sketch of Antioch (1853-1921)* 5
faculty members and became the first female college professors in the United States to have the same rank and pay as her male colleagues.62

Some female and African American students who attended the college in its early years were sometimes frustrated by the social restrictions that they faced. The associated preparatory school admitted two African American girls during the mid-1850s, an action one trustee responded to by resigning and removing his own children from the school. His opinion was apparently the minority one, though, as the African American students were not withdrawn.63 The preparatory schools were established to prepare younger students for a college/university education. The age range of the schools varied from high school age, 14-18, to elementary students. Admission into college prep schools were/are very selective. Intriguingly, both Antioch College and Wilberforce University had a school that prepared young men and women for college, which accepted African Americans since the 1850s until they were disbanded.64

Horace Mann, well-known for his anti-slavery beliefs, encouraged this sentiment at the college. Mann believed that the students should work hard to contribute to the moral fabric of society, once stating, “Be ashamed to die until you have won some

62 Ibid. 77
63 Straker. Brief Sketch of Antioch (1853-1921) 12
victory for humanity.” Antioch College has adopted this statement as its motto. The fervor to fight for humanity was a strong incentive for Greene County Presbyterians, AME congregants, and other Greene county citizens to fight for the Union.

Alternatively, some white citizens in Ohio did not support the anti-slavery movement. A significant number of whites believed that the freedom of enslaved men and women would lead to a mass exodus of African Americans to the north and also lead to competition for jobs. Ohioans against the anti-slavery movement were vocal and violent. Fears and a massive increase in the African American population led to a large race riot in nearby Cincinnati in 1829. 1200 blacks fled the city, although many fought back and stayed. Cincinnati’s African American population did not fully recover from the attack until after the Civil War. In September 1846, an unruly mob murdered Thomas Woodson, Jr. of Berlin Crossroads, Ohio, for harboring fugitives. The probability of a person becoming a victim of mob rule, like Thomas Woodson, and other violence from the anti-slavery opponents was a noteworthy factor that both black and white abolitionists had to consider.

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65 Stephen B. Herr. *Connected Thoughts: A Reinterpretation of the Reorganization of Antioch College in the 1920s.* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America. 1997) 36; Coretta Scott King is one of the Antioch’s most prominent alumni.


However, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 enraged countless white citizens who had hitherto sat on the sidelines. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 declared that all “runaways” must be returned back to their masters and all citizens were obliged to not harbor them or they would face legal consequences and possibly imprisonment. In May of 1857, anti-slavery sentiment reached its high-water mark in Greene County when Sheriff Daniel Lewis and a posse of 16 men arrested four federal marshals and freed their prisoners, Champaign County residents arrested for violating the Fugitive Slave act.  

The 1850s were times of bitter battles, ideologically and physically, particularly on the issue of slavery. Pro-Slavery forces in Kansas demolished Lawrence, Kansas, a town established by anti-slavery settlers. John Brown, raised in Hudson, Ohio, led counter guerilla campaigns in Kansas against the pro-slavery forces, increasing the casualties. In neighboring Montgomery County, Clement Valandingham, Representative for the Third District of Ohio in the United States House of Representatives, was a chief supporter of the Southern states right to slavery because he believed it was their legal right through his interpretation of the United States Constitution. He was also the national leader of the Copperhead Movement that primarily consisted of Northern Anti-War Democrats who called for an immediate end

68 Mary Bullard-Johnson & Ben Johnson. *Xenia area an early haven for blacks.* (Xenia Gazette January 15, 1986)  
69 Ross Drake. “The Law That Ripped America In Two”  
70 Clement Valandingham is currently buried in Woodland Cemetery in Dayton
to the Civil War and as well as an immediate peace treaty with the Confederate government.\textsuperscript{71} The issue of slavery divided families, communities, and even churches. Abraham Lincoln was elected in 1860 and tried to balance the sentiments without the country erupting into war. Lincoln once wrote, “my paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and it is not either to save or destroy slavery, If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that.”\textsuperscript{72} However, the seceding states of the Confederacy forced President Lincoln to act.

In 1861, the first battles were fought between the Union and the Confederacy after decades of strife over the “peculiar institution.” Ohio immediately raised 23 volunteer infantry regiments. It is important to note that Ohio enlisted the third highest number of troops to the United States Army during the Civil War and that Greene County would send more men, per capita, than any other county in the state and possibly the nation.\textsuperscript{73} Sixty percent of Ohio men ages 18 to 45 enlisted and 13.5 percent of the total Greene County population fought in the Civil War.\textsuperscript{74} This statistic is paramount to

\textsuperscript{71} Benjamin P. Thomas, \textit{Abraham Lincoln: A Biography} (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1952) 377
\textsuperscript{73} Although New York and Pennsylvania supplied the Union with more troops, both states were numerically bigger than Ohio, possibly making the state that sent the largest proportion of troops into battle.
\textsuperscript{74} Broadstone. \textit{History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions}. 650-652
understanding the sentiment of the county and their support of the Union and abolitionism. White men and black men in the area picked up arms for the Union cause by the thousands. Some abolitionists, like Rev. Granville Moody, practiced what they preached. Moody served as a colonel of the 74th Ohio Volunteers, Army of the Tennessee.  

Presbyterian denominations took a strong stance against the Confederacy because of their antislavery views. The Reformed and Northern Associate Reformed Presbyterians, active in Greene County, fervently supported the North in the Civil War and they enlisted to fight against the “slaveholders' rebellion.” “Covenanters regarded the government justifiable in the war so far as it was waged to maintain the integrity of the country and to overthrow the iniquitous system of human slavery. Taking this position the members of the Church generously supported the cause of the Union with their prayers and their lives. There was not a rebel within the pale of this Church. They believed that the Southern Confederacy was a conspiracy against God and humanity, and that her members were doing God’s service when they enlisted to break it up.” The AME Church also believed that the Civil War was of elevated importance because

75 Bullard-Johnson & Johnson. *Xenia area an early haven for blacks.* Xenia Gazette January 15, 1986
76 The Southern Presbyterian Church was the exception as it sided with the Confederacy.
77 Several of the Civil War Veterans listed in Massies Creek Cemetery records were also Presbyterians.
it would allow them to spread the gospel to four million men, women, and children held in bondage and establish new congregations.\textsuperscript{79}

African Americans in Ohio were eager to enlist, but were not allowed to enlist because most white political leaders in the early phases of the Civil War considered the Civil War “the white man’s war.”\textsuperscript{80} Consequently, John Mercer Langston, African American politician, educator and abolitionist, recruited nearly 900 African Americans to serve in the Massachusetts 54\textsuperscript{th} Volunteers.\textsuperscript{81} The 127\textsuperscript{th} Ohio Volunteer Infantry, later the 5\textsuperscript{th} Colored United States Infantry Regiment, was the unit that most African Americans in Ohio served in during the duration of the Civil War. Two of the initial companies in the 5\textsuperscript{th} Colored United States Infantry Regiment were from Wilberforce University.\textsuperscript{82} 150 men from Wilberforce banded together to form a unit, but were initially rejected.\textsuperscript{83} The men from Wilberforce were incorporated into the 5\textsuperscript{th} Colored United States Infantry after its formation. At the conclusion of the war, Ohio had produced over 310,000 men to fight for the Union and only 8750 of Ohio’s soldiers were drafted.\textsuperscript{84} 5,092 of Ohio’s Civil War soldiers were African American. This was a

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{79} Campbell. \textit{Songs of Zion}. 53-54  \\
\textsuperscript{80} Gerber \textit{Black Ohio and the Color Line}. 33  \\
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid. p. 34  \\
\textsuperscript{82} Jeane H. Candido. \textit{Historical Society ignores war sacrifices, opts for sensational.} Newspaper  \\
\textsuperscript{83} Gerber. \textit{Black Ohio and the Color Line}.  \\
\end{flushleft}
huge contribution considering that the total Ohio African American population was 36,673 in 1860.\textsuperscript{85}

\textsuperscript{85} Gerber, \textit{Black Ohio and the Color Line}, 26
Chapter 2: N.E.W. Ground: Networking, Expansion, & Wilberforce

The growth of the Wilberforce/Xenia communities after the Civil War and the hospitable climate it afforded to African Americans attracted hundreds of African Americans to the area. The decade from 1860 to 1870 saw the largest increase of Greene County’s African American population in its entire history. In 1870, there were 3,839 people of color in Greene County, nearly tripling the size of the Greene County’s African American population. The African American community in Greene County’s growth mirrored the increasing African American population in Ohio, which expanded from 36,673 to 63,213 from 1860 to 1870. The African American population in Greene County and throughout Ohio continued to expand through the twentieth century.

The African American newcomers came from all backgrounds and stations. Hundreds came to the area in search of employment, especially from Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee. They may have came after hearing news about the area from relatives and friends who had previously moved to Greene County as a lot of the earliest African American settlers came from Kentucky and Virginia. By 1902 in Xenia, 474 African Americans were employed in domestic occupations, 179 in industrial occupations, 106 in commercial occupations and 35 in professional

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occupations. \(^{88}\) 288 women in the survey were listed as housewives. \(^{89}\) In 1904, sociologist E.S. Todd stated that Southern blacks were very familiar with the area and exclaimed, “All Negroes in Virginia, the Carolinas and Kentucky know of Xenia and Springfield…They regard these places as a Mecca.”\(^{90}\)

However, a few had the means to choose Greene County as a location to retire. Martin R. Delany is a prime representative of this group. After spending decades as a diplomat, soldier, confidant, and author, etc. Delany decided to settle down in his final years and chose Wilberforce as his final destination. His reason for moving to Wilberforce included having his children grow up in an upwardly mobile community that valued education. Dr. Joshua Jones, President of Wilberforce University, also remained in Wilberforce after he retired from his duties at Wilberforce because he had his strongest ties in this area, including his home and his family. The fact that Delany, Jones, and other African Americans had the means to retire during this time period is phenomenal. Most Americans, at that time, worked until they died. As late as 1890, only about one-quarter of all aged white workers considered themselves permanently non-employed. \(^{91}\) They were termed permanently non-employed because the concept of retirement was not fully developed at this time. This number would be considerably less for African Americans who usually did not have the means to think about retirement. In

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\(^{88}\) Wright, Jr. *The Negroses of Xenia, Ohio: A Social Study*. 1024. These occupations included 88 cordage factory laborers, 35 teamsters/drivers, 17 porters, and 17 seamstresses.

\(^{89}\) Ibid.

\(^{90}\) Ibid. 278

\(^{91}\) Carol Haber. *Mandatory Retirement in Nineteenth Century America: The Conception Basis for a New Work Cycle*. (Journal of Social History Vol. 12 No. 1 Autumn, 1978) 77
1890, only about 32.1% of the entire United States population reached the age of seventy.\(^{92}\) The percentage of African Americans surviving to the age of seventy at the end of the nineteenth century was certainly considerably less.

Both the well-to-do and the labor force were very active in the employment. African American men and women had ample opportunity to become involved in a myriad of activities. Those who had more time and finances, e.g. Martin Delany and Reverdy Ransom, were involved in more organizations and activities. Book clubs, debating groups and intellectual societies were prevalent in the area. Dr. Scarborough was very active in scholarly groups and was an advocate of all groups that boosted an individual’s intellectual capacity.\(^{93}\) There were also at least 16 churches in Greene County by 1918 including several AME churches, Baptist churches, and a sect of “Holy Rollers.”\(^{94}\) Most of the churches had concordant committees and societies that members could join. In fact, some of these groups were very active in the community. Greene County churches were busy with numerous activities including Sunday schools, fish fries, and concerts and they were often listed in *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. The Y.P.C.E. (Young People’s Christian Endeavor) Society of the St. John’s A.M.E. Church hosted a musical and literary program and posted the details of the successful event in the Xenia

\(^{92}\) Haber. *Mandatory Retirement in Nineteenth Century America: The Conception Basis for a New Work Cycle*. 90

\(^{93}\) Broadstone. *History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions*. Vol. II 956 A few African Americans attended the Catholic Church in Xenia.

\(^{94}\) Ibid. Vol. I 543

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Daily Gazette.\textsuperscript{95}

*The Xenia Daily Gazette* was the most significant paper in the county. It included sections that catered to the black community known variously as *Our Colored Citizens* and *East End News* since the 1860s. The topics included everything from church events to when someone was leaving out of town. The Xenia Daily Gazette also included a couple of stories about a young professor, W.E.B. Du Bois, who lectured at a Xenia church, but it was not well attended.\textsuperscript{96} However, Dr. Du Bois had better luck on the campus of Wilberforce University where he met his wife, Nina Gomer, who was a student. It appears that there was a weekly African American newspaper established for the Xenia/Wilberforce area, *Ohio Standard and Observer*, formed in 1897, but it only lasted until 1907.\textsuperscript{97} There was also a monthly African American newspaper called the *Sodalian*, 1906-1922, that chronicled the Wilberforce community. The African American newspapers and the African American sections in *The Xenia Daily Gazette* imply that the African American community in Greene County had a high literacy rate. This is significant because 44.5\% of African Americans could not read at the turn of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{98}

There was also a myriad of societies and fraternal organizations among African

\textsuperscript{95} The Xenia Daily Gazette April 25, 1896
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid. May 1, 1896
Americans. These organizations were vital to African American communities because they provided social, financial, and educational relief. Several of these organizations only followed the church in influence.\textsuperscript{99} Lodges allowed schools to meet in their buildings and most of the fraternities sponsored scholarships. Wilberforce Lodge #21, a lodge consisting of Prince Hall (African American) Masons, valued education. They paid money to the statewide organization for scholarships and they laid the cornerstone of Carnegie Library at Wilberforce University in a public ceremony.\textsuperscript{100} Socially, fraternal organizations were both an outlet for men and women and they often signified status in the community.\textsuperscript{101} For example, from its beginning, black Masonry in America has been a middle-class organization. The Prince Hall Masons, like their white brethren, set high standards for membership. One of the earliest Worshipful Masters, President, of Wilberforce Lodge #21 was John R. Blackburn. He was an 1863 graduate of Dartmouth College in New Hampshire and was a principal in Wilberforce before he became a mathematics Professor at Alcorn State University in Mississippi.\textsuperscript{102} There were also two attorneys in the lodge by the end of the 1860s: John Jones and Campbell

\textsuperscript{99} Loretta J. Williams. \textit{Black Freemasonry and Middle-Class Realities}. (Columbia, U of Missouri Press, 1980)
\textsuperscript{100} Charles H. Wesley. \textit{The History of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Ohio, 1849-1971; An Epoch in American Fraternalism}
\textsuperscript{101} Churches also signified status. Membership in Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational. Catholic, and many AME churches often indicated an elite status on the African American community. Holy Rollers, Pentecostals, and some Baptist churches were/are often associated with the lower class.
\textsuperscript{102} Rebecca Goodman & Barrett J. Brunsman. \textit{This Day in Ohio History}. (Cincinnati: Emmis Books, 2005)
Maxwell.\textsuperscript{103}

Investigatory Committees screened potential members before acceptance. The questions these committees asked ventured deep into the personal lives of the applicants. “Questions about the marital status and sex life, mental capabilities, morality, and sobriety were common.”\textsuperscript{104} These committees also asked pre-existing members if they would be ashamed to bring the potential applicants into their homes or into public. William Muraskin, professor and author of \textit{Middle-class Blacks in a White Society}, suggested, “This intense battery of questions was intended to disqualify lower-class blacks from the Order, whose public and private behavior did not always meet the standards of the middle-class Masons. In addition to the Investigatory Committee, the fees necessary to become a Mason guaranteed the middle-class status of members. Masons often expressed the opinion that ‘cheap Masonry’ was harmful to the Order, and that ‘to lower the fee is to lower the quality of the members.’”\textsuperscript{105} The number of members in the organization further evidenced the limits on membership. In 1902, the African American Masons in Wilberforce/Xenia had a membership of 48, which is exceedingly small in comparison to the 1197 African American men residing in Greene County in 1910.\textsuperscript{106} The values of the fraternal organizations and similar societies

\textsuperscript{103} Charles H. Wesley. \textit{History of Sigma Pi Phi, first of the Negro-American Greek-letter fraternities.} (Washington: Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1954)
\textsuperscript{104} William A. Muraskin, \textit{Middle-class Blacks in a White Society}, (Berkeley and Los Angeles.: U of California Press, 1975) 22-3
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid. 22-3
\textsuperscript{106} Wright, Jr. \textit{The Negroes of Xenia, Ohio: A Social Study} and Broadstone, \textit{History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions.} 121
attracted men like Richard Allen, founder of the AME Church, and Absalom Jones, the first African American Episcopal Priest in America.\textsuperscript{107} Most of the other African American male and female fraternal organizations had similar criteria for membership. These qualifications were elevated, at least academically and financially, for members of the alumni Greek letter fraternities because college degrees and community involvement were the standard.\textsuperscript{108}

Sigma Pi Phi, i.e. the Boule, is the oldest and arguably the most prominent African American Greek letter fraternity, established in 1904 for African American professionals in every field. Bert Andrew Rose, a medical doctor in Dayton, sent a letter to the organization in 1923 inquiring about the potential establishment for a chapter in the Dayton/Springfield/Wilberforce area. He wrote, “We have in Dayton and vicinity a number of congenial and progressive professional men who stand for much in their communities. We have local organizations through which we nurture fellowship and service, but there comes a time when such minds ‘feel out’ for kindred minds across local boundaries.”\textsuperscript{109} The chapter, Sigma Boule, was established for Wilberforce, Xenia, Springfield, and Dayton on April 19, 1924. Wilberforce faculty member George F.

\textsuperscript{107} Absalom Jones was the first Grand Master of the African American Masons in Pennsylvania and Richard Allen was its first Grand Treasurer.
\textsuperscript{108} The undergraduate fraternity situation is slightly different because one can gain admission while pursuing a college degree. However, the prices are still expensive and acceptance continues to be limited and only bolstered by academic achievement and community involvement.
\textsuperscript{109} Wesley, Charles H. \textit{History of Sigma Pi Phi, first of the Negro-American Greek-letter fraternities}. (Washington, Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1954) 173
David was a national officer in Sigma Pi Phi for 26 years.\textsuperscript{110} Several prominent Greene County citizens were also affiliated with the Prince Hall Masons, the oldest black fraternal organization in the United States and in Xenia. Most were attached to Wilberforce Lodge #21 and included local and national dignitaries among their members, e.g. Dr. George T. Simpson, Bishop James Shorter, Dr. Frederick McGinnis, Dr. Thomas H. Jackson, Atty. Campbell Maxwell, Bishop Reverdy Ransom, and Dr. George Valentine.\textsuperscript{111} The Town & Country Club is one of the oldest clubs for black women in the area and they were known for hosting big gala affairs. Women also had a plethora of other organizations to join including the Links, the Order of the Eastern Star, bridge clubs, and intellectual societies. Two Wilberforce University officials were also national presidents of their fraternities. George F. David was the Grand Polemarch of Kappa Alpha Psi and Charles Harris Wesley was the National President of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. Wilberforce University, and later Central State University, had a wide assortment of activities on their campuses for everyone to participate in.

\textbf{Wilberforce & Central State University}

The most well known African American establishments in Greene County are Wilberforce University and Central State University located in Wilberforce. On September 21, 1844, the Ohio Conference of the AME Church appointed a committee for the higher education of African Americans and they purchased 172 acres of land in

\textsuperscript{110} Wesley, \textit{History of Sigma Pi Phi, first of the Negro-American Greek-letter fraternities.}

\textsuperscript{111} Broadstone, \textit{History of Greene County, Ohio: Its People, Industries and Institutions.} Volume I. This information was also indicated in their obituaries.
Columbus, opening a seminary. On September 18, 1853, the Methodist Episcopal Church also appointed a committee for the establishment of a “literary institution of high order” for the education of African Americans. In 1856, the AME Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church combined efforts and established a university near Xenia. Tawawa Springs was acquired for $40,000 by AME and Methodist Episcopal officials and is now known as Wilberforce, Ohio. There is currently a historical marker that chronicles this history and the inscription addresses the relationship. Side A states:

In the early 1800s, William and Eleanor Kendall owned this land, known for its natural springs, beauty, and farmland. In 1850, Elias Drake, lawyer and former speaker in the Ohio General Assembly, purchased the property and named it Tawawa or Xenia Springs. He developed a health resort hotel surrounded by summer cottages, all of which were completed the following year. “Tawawa” is believed to be Shawnee for “clear or gold water,” alluding to the clear, mineral-rich springs. From its beginnings, the resort did not fare well as it was popular among southern planters who, much to the consternation of nearby antislavery sentiment, brought slave entourages whenever they came. In October 1855, negotiations for its sale opened with the Cincinnati Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which purchased Tawawa Springs, including 54 acres and the hotel and cottages, for $13,000 to establish a university for African Americans.

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112 James J. Burns. *Educational history of Ohio: a history of its progress since the formation of the state.* (Columbus, OH: Historical Publishing Company, 1905) 350
Several southern planters went to the spa in Tawawa Springs, Ohio. The planters sometimes brought slave entourages and/or free African-American mistresses and their mixed-race children with them. Some emancipated women and their mixed children stayed in the area, especially after Wilberforce was formed so their children could be educated. Some university literature stated that the majority of the initial 207 students were the “natural children” of Southern and Southwestern planters.

Originally deemed Ohio African University, Wilberforce resulted from the works of an AME committee entitled the “Elevation of Colored People”. Bishop Daniel Payne was the guiding force to the development of Wilberforce University and was one of the original 24 trustees. The university was the first black private college in the United States. Wilberforce University and the surrounding community are named after a highly esteemed British abolitionist, William Wilberforce. Wilberforce was a British politician, a philanthropist, evangelical Christian and a leader of the movement to abolish the slave trade from the late eighteenth through the early nineteenth century. He led the campaign

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114 Gerber. Black Ohio and the Color Line. 19
116 Campbell. Songs of Zion: the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa.
against the British slave trade for over twenty years and oversaw the passage of the Slave Trade Act 1807 in Great Britain.\textsuperscript{117}

In 1863, Wilberforce closed because most of their students went back to the South during the Civil War and their donations/support from Southern planters were diminished.\textsuperscript{118} In the same year, the African Methodist Episcopal Church acquired full ownership of the university and Wilberforce operated as a private university for the next twenty-four years. The first three decades were filled with hardship from finding funds and putting together a suitable curriculum. However, they managed to build a strong infrastructure with the help of strong leaders like Daniel Payne and Benjamin Arnett. In 1870, Congress allotted $25,000 to Wilberforce University to help finance the institution.\textsuperscript{119}

In 1887, the Ohio General Assembly enacted legislation that created a Combined Normal and Industrial Department at Wilberforce University. This occurred after intense lobbying from Wilberforce University representatives, especially from Bishop Joshua Jones, Rep. Jeremiah A. Brown, and Bishop Benjamin Arnett. Arnett was

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\textsuperscript{117} Stephen Tomkins. \textit{William Wilberforce: A Biography}. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2007) 201 The Slave Trade Act ended the slave trade in the British Empire, but not slavery itself. In 1823, Wilberforce aided in organizing and became a vice president of the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions, also known as the Anti-Slavery Society.
\textsuperscript{118} Frederick A. McGinnis. \textit{A History and an Interpretation of Wilberforce University}. (Cincinnati: Brown Publishing Company, 1941) 37. McGinnis explained, “No longer could the Southern planters and slave-holders support their children in an institution of this kind, for they were all drawn into the service of the rebel cause. Soon the income of the institution was greatly reduced; and the situation was so discouraging that the trustees met and decided to pay the teachers as best they could and suspend operation.
\textsuperscript{119} James J. Burns. \textit{Educational history of Ohio: a history of its progress since the formation of the state}. (Columbus, OH: Historical Publishing Company, 1905) 350
\end{flushright}
representing Greene County in the state legislature at the time he asked for funds.\textsuperscript{120}

The objectives of this new state-sponsored department were to provide teacher training and vocational education and to stabilize these programs by assuring a financial base similar to that of other state-supported institution. The statute establishing the Combined Normal and Industrial Department declared that the institution was “open to all applicants of good and moral character,” thereby indicating no limitations as to race, color, sex, or creed.

By 1900, Wilberforce University had over 400 students, a $28,000 endowment, and grounds and buildings worth over $155,000. The Combined Normal and Industrial Department also expanded rapidly. Although this department operated as part of Wilberforce University in most respects, a separate board of trustees was appointed to govern the state-financed operations. In 1941, the department expanded from a two- to a four-year program, and in 1947, it legally split from Wilberforce, becoming the College of Education and Industrial Arts at Wilberforce. The name was changed in 1951 to Central State College, and in 1965, the institution achieved university status.\textsuperscript{121}

Students came from all over the United States and even other countries to attend Wilberforce and Central State Universities for its superior education and inviting climate. Wilberforce University had several students from South Africa in the late

\textsuperscript{120} Gerber. \textit{Black Ohio and the Color Line}. 331

\textsuperscript{121} http://www.centralstate.edu/prospects/about/history.php
nineteenth and early twentieth century. Most of them want back to South Africa and became leaders in their communities. Charlotte Manye Maxeke attended Wilberforce University and received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1901, making her the first African woman from South Africa to obtain a Bachelor of Science Degree. She became a leader in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the first African woman to be made a probation officer. Maxeke is called the 'Mother of Ethiopia' because of the part that she played in the amalgamation of the Ethiopian Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Church in South Africa.\textsuperscript{122}

The most distinguished African American scholars vied for positions on the Wilberforce staff/faculty. W.E.B. DuBois taught at Wilberforce and Mary Church Terrell had one of her first jobs working at the same institution. The dynamic Steward duo, Susan McKinney Steward and her husband, Theophilus Gould Steward, were on the faculty together for over a decade. Dr. Susan Mckinney Steward, the third African American woman to earn a medical degree, was Wilberforce’s physician and Dr. Theophilus Gould Steward taught history, French, and logic.\textsuperscript{123} Several others have come through the doors of Wilberforce and Central State to get their start or to stay for the rest of their lives.

\textsuperscript{123} Sylvain Cazalet. "Biography of Susan Smith McKinney Steward (1848-1919)". \textit{History of the New York Medical College and Hospital for Women}. 2001 
Charles Young, West Point graduate, soldier, musician, and writer, was recruited to become the Professor of Military Science and Tactics at Wilberforce University in 1894, a position he held until 1897. He went on to admirably serve in the Spanish American War, World War I and on several assignments throughout the world. In 1917, Young returned to Wilberforce to establish a home.124 Another prominent scholar who decided to settle in Greene County was Milton SJ. Wright. Wright, an African-American academic born in Georgia. He received his B.A. from Wilberforce University in 1926, his M.A. from Columbia University and his Ph.D. in Economics from Germany’s University of Heidelberg in 1932. He met Adolf Hitler at a dinner party in Heidelberg in 1932. Hitler pointed out that blacks have no voting rights, and criticized them for being docile about their oppression. Hitler asked Wright, “‘Don't you think your people are destined perpetually to be slaves of one kind or another?’ and replied "Yes! Your people are a hopeless lot. I don't hate them... I pity the poor devils.”125 The conversation was reenacted in 1944 on the radio show New World A-Coming.126 He became a professor and head of the department of Economics and Political Science at Wilberforce in 1933 and in 1959 he was Dean of the College.127

124 Broadstone. History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions. 948-950
126 New World A-Coming, WMCA, New York, 12 Mar. 1944. 3-4.
127 Milton S.J. Wright obituary, Xenia, Ohio, The Xenia Daily Gazette. March 13, 1972
Chapter 3: Greene County’s Legacy: Massies Creek & Cherry Grove Cemeteries

African Americans buried in Cherry Grove and Massies Creek Cemetery had achieved a lot of impressive accomplishments. It was because of their efforts that Greene County became a hub of progressive thought for African Americans during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Greene County African Americans had superior education, dynamic political activity, successful businesses, a strong religious history, numerous social outlets, and other opportunities made available by the great strides they made in all fields and endeavors. Greene County African Americans had/have pride in their communities and cemeteries and the consistent growth from 36 people of color in the county in 1810 to 4,055 in 1900 and exploding to 12,650 by 1990 is a testament to Greene County’s African Americans’ population unswerving achievements and expansion.

One way of showing one’s esteem for a community is by being buried within the community. It has become customary for many Americans to request to be buried in particular cemeteries, even if it is thousands of miles away, because it is their final resting place. People want to be surrounded by their loved ones, in a familiar environment, or in an area that they have invested a lot into. Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries were/are the cemeteries where hundreds of African Americans, including dozens with regional and national connections, have decided to make their final resting place.
Massies Creek Cemetery, also known as Tarbox cemetery, was formed in the early eighteenth century. Dozens of Presbyterians moved to Greene County and the surrounding area from Kentucky, South Carolina and Tennessee in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. They established farms, a church and Massies Creek (Tarbox) Cemetery in 1814.\textsuperscript{128} The cemetery is located in Cedarville Township, just north of Wilberforce. It is approximately eight miles away from the heart of Xenia. Tarbox Cemetery was named after the Tarbox family who were prominent entrepreneurs and active in politics. They were well known in the local lumber industry in the late nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{129} In 1853, African Americans began being buried in this cemetery. There is no evidence that African Americans were segregated in this cemetery. Most Wilberforce and Central State faculty who are buried in Greene County are buried in Massies Creek Cemetery. Unlike Wilberforce, none of the presidents of Central State University are buried in Greene County, Ohio.

Cherry Grove Cemetery was established toward the end of the Civil War in 1864 so that persons of color might have a cemetery in their own neighborhood. The cemetery is about one and a half miles west of the city and is still used for approximately 50 interments a year.\textsuperscript{130} In 1869, local African Americans bought the

\textsuperscript{128} There is another Massies Creek Cemetery in Greene County (Old Stevenson Cemetery), which also has a rich history. The Daughters of the American Revolution were regularly listed in the Xenia Gazette in the 1930s for their annual beautification/dedication of that cemetery. However, I only refer to the Tarbox cemetery in my study because it is the cemetery, along with Cherry Grove, where most African Americans from Wilberforce and Xenia area are buried.

\textsuperscript{129} Broadstone, *History of Greene County, Ohio: Its People, Industries and Institutions*. Vol. 1 367

\textsuperscript{130} History of Cherry Grove Cemetery from the cemetery records
nearly seven acres of land for the current location of the cemetery. The cemetery is located only about a mile from downtown Xenia. The grounds of the cemetery were kept in great condition through the efforts of the community and a very active trustee board. Cherry Grove also served as a location for public ceremonies and dedications. Veterans organizations and community leaders were drawn to the cemetery because of the large number, proportionally, of African American veterans buried there and there is even a veteran from the War of 1812 buried there. Unfortunately, the cemetery has not recovered from the 1974 tornado that devastated the city. Several dozen of its trees were virtually wiped out, tombstones were damaged, and the cemetery fell into disarray. It also destroyed the cemetery’s entrance sign and its Babyland sign.

Babyland was a unique part of the cemetery that was reserved for infants and children. Unfortunately, there is not much information on Babyland in Cherry Grove Cemetery, but there are other Babyland sections in cemeteries in other parts of the nation. There are Babyland sections from Santa Clara, California to Cinnaminson, New Jersey. Lone Mountain Cemetery in Carson City, Nevada has two Babyland sites in one cemetery. In 1958, Mr. and Mrs. Milton V. Price sued Washelli-Evergreen Cemetery in Seattle for $5000 for refusing to allow their three-year old son to be buried in their Babyland section because it was restricted to white babies. Many of the Babyland

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132 *Seattle Negroes Sue Cemetery For Refusing Baby.* Johnson Publishing Company. May 1, 1958. 7
sites were formed in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and probably reflect the higher mortality rate of infants and youth during that time.

Pride was manifested in both cemeteries and the community in several ways including parades. An old photo in the Xenia Gazette illustrated a parade held by Xenia’s African American community on Decoration Day, now Memorial Day, in the mid 1920s and included the Xenia Black Band and African Americans soldiers from the area. They began their march in the East End, where the majority of Xenia’s African American population was located, to Cherry Grove Cemetery.\footnote{133} This is important because the pride manifested reflected the success of the community and its residents. However, these cemeteries have rarely been celebrated and commemorated over the past few decades, especially after the tornado of 1974 that destroyed much of Xenia. Like similar African American towns that once thrived, e.g. Boley, Oklahoma, a lot of its history has been forgotten or overlooked. The community and trustees have actively engaged in restoring the cemetery and the entrance sign was rededicated in 1992. Although the deceased in Cherry Grove are overwhelmingly black, it is not segregated.

In all probability, the location of the cemeteries was a major factor in the decision by Xenia and Wilberforce African Americans in which cemetery to buried in. Cherry Grove Cemetery is only a mile away from the East End neighborhood of Xenia.\footnote{134} Massies Creek Cemetery is approximately the same distance away from Wilberforce.

\footnote{133} Paul N. Buford. \textit{Xenia Daily Gazette} February 13, 1987
\footnote{134} The East End neighborhood has the heaviest concentration of African Americans in the city.
Therefore, African Americans living in the East End and other parts of Xenia were more likely to be buried in Cherry Grove because of proximity. The same would be true for African Americans who live in or near Wilberforce; they had a higher probability of being buried in Massies Creek Cemetery due to their location. However, class and connections to Wilberforce University may have also played a role in which cemetery African Americans in Greene County decided to be buried. Massies Creek Cemetery is the home of most of the Wilberforce University presidents and most of the faculty at Wilberforce and Central State University buried in Greene County, Ohio. Sociologist Richard Wright, Jr. also noted that most families in Wilberforce were property owners. Cherry Grove has several distinguished men and women buried in their cemetery, but they mostly have close ties to the Xenia community.

At least one group has attempted to maintain and celebrate the departed in Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries in the last decade. Central State University’s Black Oak Project, connected to their Drama department, held a wreath laying ceremony at Massies Creek cemetery in 2000. They were honoring Joseph C. Carroll, Ida B. Wells, and John Brown and read poems and resolutions in their memory. Also, Dr. Floyd Thomas, former director of the National Afro-American Museum and

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135 Benjamin Arnett is the only Wilberforce University President buried in Greene County, Ohio that is not buried in Massies Creek Cemetery. He is buried on the grounds of Central State University.
136 Wright, Jr. The Negroes of Xenia, Ohio: A Social Study. 1043
Cultural Center, facilitated the erection of the Martin Robinson Delany Monument as the ultimate testament to a remarkable man who deserved a better grave marker.

Prominent African Americans Buried in Massies Creek and Cherry Grove

The distinguished citizens who will be highlighted below were picked because of their regional and national importance through their occupations, affiliations, and achievements. The individuals are divided up into four categories: Education, Military, Political and Organization Leaders, and Religious Officials. These four areas reflect the wide range of occupations that the Greene County citizens excelled in on all levels. Brief synopses of the most prominent African Americans from the area are included in the categories discussing their lives, connections to Greene County, and in which cemetery they are buried. The categories will be prefaced with a brief statement about why these categories are important. The biography questions section was a template I used to include the most pertinent information in the synopses. Some of the distinguished African Americans included in the list could actually fit under more than one category. As a result, I placed individuals under the categories in which they made their biggest mark. There are many other local and regional African American luminaries buried in these cemeteries who I did not include. These men and women are not as well known, but they are worth studying at a later date.\footnote{Other professionals to look for in the cemeteries include, but are not limited to, Raymond H. Middleton (Physiologist for WPAFB – Cherry Grove), I.S. Lane (Biology professor at Central State - }
Biography Questions

- When and where were they born?
- What was their occupation?
- Who was their family and what did they do: Parents, Spouse, Children, other relatives/connections?
- What is their connection to Greene County?
- What organizations and/or extracurricular activities were they involved in?
- Did the person receive a well-known/significant award or honor, or were they nominated for one several times?
- Did the person make a widely recognized contribution that is part of the enduring historical record in his or her specific field?
- Why is the person regarded as an important figure or is widely cited by peers or successors?
- Is the person is known for originating a significant new concept, theory or technique?
- Has the person created, or played a major role in co-creating, a significant or well-known work, or collective body of work, that has been the subject of an independent book or feature-length film, or of multiple independent periodical articles or reviews?
- Did they retire in Greene County?
- Where are they buried?

Education

Higher education has always been encouraged in the African American community.

Even when laws forbade African Americans to learn how to read and write, the yearning for knowledge did not cease. Prince Hall, an African American Boston...
leader, asked the Massachusetts Congress for a school program for black children on October 17, 1787. When denied, Hall founded one of the first schools for African Americans in his home in Boston. Nearly forty years later, the first African American to receive a college degree was Alexander Lucius Twilight, 1823, Middlebury College. After an additional thirty-three years, Wilberforce University was established in 1856 becoming the second historically black college/university in the nation. It was also the first African American private institution of higher education owned by African Americans. The AME Church’s accomplishment of starting and owning a university that is still in existence today is undoubtedly one of the most important events in African American history. Wilberforce University was so significant that Michael Broadstone devoted several pages to the institution in his book, *History of Greene County, Ohio: Its People, Industries and Institutions*, nearly 100 years ago! Central State University and Payne Theological Seminary have also thrived in Greene County. Men and women from all over have flocked to these distinguished schools and alumni, like former Congressman Floyd Flake and Opera Singer Leotyne Price, have garnered national and international acclaim. Education was not only beneficial to students, but it was also a steady employer for scholars and African Americans throughout the vicinity. Hallie Q. Brown and other scholars were able to flourish and benefit society without worrying about employment.  

139 Unfortunately, Hallie Q. Brown is the only woman I include in this section because she was the only
Hallie Q. Brown

Hallie Quinn Brown was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on March 10, 1849. She was the daughter of Thomas Arthur Brown and Frances Jane Scroggins, both former slaves. Hallie Brown’s father, Thomas Brown purchased his own freedom. He was the son of a Scottish woman and black man. Thomas mother owned a plantation in Maryland and his father was the plantation's overseer. Hallie Brown’s mother, Frances, was freed by her grandfather, a white plantation owner and Revolutionary War officer. Both of Hallie’s parents were actively involved with the Underground Railroad. Hallie Brown was greatly influenced by her parents.

The Brown Family moved from Pittsburgh to Ontario, Canada in 1864 and then to Wilberforce, Ohio in 1870. Thomas Brown moved to Wilberforce for the purpose of obtaining a better education for his children. Both of Brown’s parents were well educated and this served them well when they moved to Wilberforce because they were able to find employment and help students. Hallie Brown attended Wilberforce University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1873. She later became a professor at Wilberforce in 1893 and spent the rest of her life there.

woman, I have found, to have a regional and national influence during the period before World War II that is buried in either cemetery. Mary Church Terrell and Dr. Susan McKinney Steward would have been included in this section because of their ties to Wilberforce, but neither one is buried in the state. I will continue to look into this discrepancy.

140 Broadstone. History of Greene County: Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions. 986
141 Thomas Brown’s obituary listed education as the primary reason for his family’s relocation to Wilberforce.
142 Broadstone. History of Greene County: Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions. 984
Brown wrote several books including *Homespun Heroines*, which tells the life story of 60 African American women.

In 1900, the A.M.E church elected Brown as their Secretary of Education where she became the first woman to serve as a “daughter of the church.” She became the 7th National President of the National Association of Colored Women from 1920 to 1924 and acted as its honorary President until her death in 1949. Brown was also an excellent elocutionist and gave lectures all over the country and the world. She was received by Queen Victoria in London in 1899.¹⁴³ She is buried Massies Creek Cemetery next to her parents and other family members.

**Dr. Joseph C. Carroll**

Dr. Joseph Cephas Carroll, born in 1886, was a clergyman and historian. He was the author of *Slave Insurrections in the United States, 1800-1865*. His book was one of the first sources that extensively examined major American slave insurrections and their effectiveness when it was published in 1938. He died in 1951. At the time of his death, he was employed by Wilberforce University, and was a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, whose symbol is displayed prominently on his tombstone in Massies Creek Cemetery.

**Dr. Thomas H. Jackson**

Dr. Thomas Jackson was born on March 13, 1844 in Philadelphia. He graduated from Wilberforce University and worked in education. He was the President of Shorter

¹⁴³ Ibid. 985
College in Little Rock, Arkansas from 1895 to 1904 and served as the Dean of their theological department from 1904 to 1912, but he moved backed to in 1912 Wilberforce where he became the chair introduction and practical theology at Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce University. Jackson published a few pamphlets including the Life and Labors of Bishop Payne. Jackson was an active member of the Masons and the Odd Fellows. He is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.  

**Dr. Gilbert H. Jones**

Dr. Gilbert Haven Jones was born in Calhoun County, South Carolina on Aug. 23, 1883. He is an alumnus of Wilberforce University. During his 50-year tenure at Wilberforce, he served in many capacities including president from 1924 to 1932. On June 10, 1910, Dr. Jones married Rachel Gladys Coverdale, a resident of the Germantown section of Philadelphia, and whose father was also an A.M.E. preacher. They had four children: Gladys Havena, Gilbert Haven Jr., Ruth I. and Donald C. Dr. Jones served on the National Advisory Board of the Public Health Service, the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, the Association of Teachers of Psychology, the Association for the Advancement of Psychological Research, Phi Gamma Mu of University Administrators, the Northeast Life Insurance Company, and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. Interestingly, he was at one time an itinerant elder, although he never was a fulltime pastor of a church. Mrs. Jones passed away while he was in his 70s. Some years later, he remarried and moved to Chicago, but still

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144 Broadstone. *History of Greene County: Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions.* 965-967
maintained his home in Wilberforce. Dr. Jones passed away June 24, 1966, and is interred near his father at Massies Creek Cemetery in Cedarville, Ohio.\textsuperscript{145}

\textbf{Frederick A. McGinnis}

Dr. Frederick A. McGinnis wrote the History of Wilberforce University, the Education of Negroes in Ohio, and several other professional articles. His book on Wilberforce University continues to be referenced by scholars. He was a professor and dean of the College of Education. McGinnis was 92 at the time of his death in 1975. He is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.\textsuperscript{146}

\textbf{Rev. Samuel T. Mitchell}

Rev. Samuel Mitchell was born in Toledo, Ohio on September 24, 1851 as one of ten children. He grew up in Wilberforce and received an undergraduate degree from Wilberforce University. He also received a Doctor of Laws degree from Kentucky State University. He was elected President of Wilberforce University in 1884 and it was through his leadership that the Combined Normal and Industrial Department, was inaugurated.\textsuperscript{147} His daughter, Lottie Pearl Mitchell, was the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Supreme Basileus of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and the 1\textsuperscript{st} executive secretary of the Cleveland Branch of the NAACP. Mitchell is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{145} Broadstone. \textit{History of Greene County: Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions}. 953-954
\item \textsuperscript{146} Frederick A. McGinnis obituary. (\textit{The Xenia Daily Gazette}. April 11, 1974)
\item \textsuperscript{147} Broadstone. \textit{History of Greene County: Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions}. 960-63
\end{itemize}
William S. Scarborough

William S. Scarborough was born in 1852 in Macon, Georgia. His father was a free black man, but his mother was enslaved. Scarborough learned how to read and write from neighboring whites and free blacks. He matriculated to Macon’s Lewis High School and then attended college at Atlanta University. In 1875, he completed his education at Oberlin College.  

Scarborough returned to Lewis High School. He specialized in teaching classical languages, an amazing accomplishment considering that this opportunity would not have been available to him or his students less than a decade before. The principal of the school was Sarah Bierce, a white missionary. Unfortunately, Lewis High School was burned to the ground by arsonists. He was forced to leave and found a job as the Principal of Payne Institute in Cokesburg, South Carolina, Thereafter, Scarborough returned to Oberlin to complete a master’s degree.

In 1877, Scarborough became a professor of Latin and Greek at Wilberforce University in Xenia, Ohio. He was only twenty-five years old. Scarborough wrote a textbook, *First Lessons in Greek*, to assists his students with learning the language. The book was published in 1881 and garnered wide acclaim, including at Ivy League schools. Also in 1881, he married Sarah Bierce. Scarborough wrote another book,

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Birds of Aristophanes, in 1886. Scarborough was also the author of many published papers on a wide range of subjects. Scarborough was respected around the world for his knowledge of Greek and Latin literature. In addition, Scarborough joined the Modern Language Association and the American Philological Association, two prestigious white organizations, by the conclusion of the 1880s.\textsuperscript{150}

In 1896, William Scarborough challenged Booker T. Washington and his promotion of industrial education. Scarborough believed that blacks would benefit more from a liberal arts education.\textsuperscript{151} Scarborough’s argument predates the challenges to Washington from Du Bois and other scholars. Scarborough was also active in the Republican Party in Ohio and the president of Ohio’s Afro-American League. Scarborough lobbied for legislation that banned the operation of Jim Crow railroad cars in the state and he lobbied against legislation that supported legal segregation in Ohio’s schools.\textsuperscript{152}

In 1908 Scarborough was named President of Wilberforce University. Scarborough was the President of Wilberforce University until 1920. “During his tenure as President he continued to write and publish in linguistics and to speak out on race relations. In 1921 Scarborough was appointed by President Warren G. Harding to a

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid.
post in the Department of Agriculture which he held until his death in 1926."

His wife, Sarah, was an intellectual and scholar in her own right, and they are both buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.

**George T. Simpson**

Professor George Thompson Simpson was born in Coal Hill, Ohio in 1860. His father, M.M. Simpson, was the head instructor of the shoemaking department at Wilberforce and trained George to become a shoemaker. However, George had a spectacular singing voice (as noted in several newspapers like the Baltimore American) and he entered the Conservatory of Music at Oberlin. Simpson began touring around the world as a soloist with the Fisk Jubilee Singers in 1889. He also made an independent concert tour around the United States at the conclusion of the tour with the Fisk Jubilee Singers. He served as the Dean of Voice Culture and Theory of Music Department at Wilberforce and he also wrote music. He passed away in 1942 and is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.

**Military**

The military has afforded African Americans the opportunity to show their patriotism and loyalty to the United States of America. It was also a solid source of employment for those who had the opportunity to be employed by the military on a permanent basis. African Americans have served in the armed forces for every major conflict in

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153 Ibid. 154 Broadstone, *History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions*. 958 155 Ibid. p. 958
America’s history. Greene County African American residents have served America’s armed forces since the War of 1812. Several have served with distinction and broke color barriers when they were elevated to their respective ranks.

There are several African Americans buried in Cherry Grove and Massies Creek cemeteries who have served in the military since at least the Civil War. There are at least 84 veterans from the 5th Regiment buried in Cherry Grove Cemetery. Some of the high number may be attributed to soldiers in the 5th regiment from Greene County who gave their lives in battle during the war and were interred in this cemetery. This was the case in other cemeteries also like the African American section of Elmwood Cemetery, which contains nearly 20 troops from the 102nd United States Colored Infantry who were killed during the Civil War. However, it is likely that most of the veterans had settled in the area after the war. Martin R. Delany, buried in Massies Creek cemetery, is the most prominent United States Colored Troops veteran buried in either cemetery. John Hanks Alexander, the second African-American graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, is buried in Cherry Grove cemetery.

\[\text{An African American veteran from the War of 1812 is buried in Cherry Grove Cemetery.}
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\[\text{Information obtained through cemetery records and Ohio Adjutant General’s Office through the Graves Registration File}
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John Hanks Alexander

John Alexander was born on January 6, 1864, to former slaves. He was one of seven children. Alexander was supported and protected by prominent white families throughout Helena and the rest of Phillips County, Arkansas. Alexander’s father thrived as a barber and dealer in toiletries. He even attained property and purchased his own freedom, as well as that of most of his family. James and Fannie Alexander, Alexander’s parents, wanted Alexander and his six siblings to have access to education. All seven of their children graduated from high school and three attended Oberlin College.

Alexander graduated first in his class from his high school in Helena at the head of his class and after graduation he briefly taught in Carrollton, Mississippi. In the fall of 1880, he enrolled in Oberlin College and at the end of his second year at Oberlin he successfully passed the examination for admission to West Point. Alexander received an appointment to the academy Ohio Congressman George W. Geddes.\(^{159}\)

Alexander was at West Point for four years and popular among his fellow cadets. As a result, he escaped some of the mistreatment experienced by previous black cadets. Alexander was a skilled boxer and a good student who excelled in languages and mathematics. By the time of his graduation in 1887, he ranked thirty-second in a class that had decreased in size from 122 to sixty-four members. His fellow cadets and

academy officials lauded him. John Hanks Alexander became the second African-American graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, following Henry O. Flipper.

Alexander began his military career as a second lieutenant after he arrived for duty at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, on September 30, 1887 to join the Ninth Cavalry, part of the Buffalo Soldiers. Alexander was the only black officer in a command position because the Ninth Cavalry was an all-black regiment under the authority of white officers. In 1888, he was transferred to Fort Washakie, Wyoming, in 1888, he had the hard tasks of “garrison duties, fighting fires, escorting prisoners from place to place, making a seventeen-day march across mountainous terrain to Fort Du Chesne in Utah, supervising the building of a post sawmill and telegraph line, and serving in court martial proceedings. On February 12, 1894, Alexander was detailed to Wilberforce University as professor of military science and tactics. On March 26, 1894, he was stricken suddenly and died immediately from a ruptured cerebral blood vessel. He was buried in Cherry Grove Cemetery with military honors.

The Department of War cited Alexander as “a man of ability, attainments, and energy.” They honored him by giving a military installation at Newport News, Virginia, the name of Camp Alexander in 1918.

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160 Reef. *African Americans in the Military: A to Z of African Americans.* 6-7
161 Ibid. 7
Martin Delany

Martin Delany was a pre-Civil War abolitionist, Black Nationalist, explorer of Africa, and veteran of the American Civil War. Delany’s grandparents were all from Africa, but had been captured and brought to America. Delany’s father was also a slave. However, his mother was free, and this meant that Delany was born free by law. From his childhood, his parents told him that his ancestors were African royalty. Delany’s family rushed north when his mother faced retribution for educating Martin and her other children.

Delany obtained letters from 17 doctors attesting to his skill, he applied to several medical schools but was denied solely because of the color of his skin. Delany was admitted to Harvard University’s medical school in 1849. He attended for only a few months, however, before his presence became so controversial that the Dean of the Medical School, Oliver Wendell Holmes, rescinded Delany's admission. Delany decided to continue his medical practice when he moved to Pittsburgh. In Pittsburgh, Delany became extremely involved in the Underground Railroad and abolitionist movement. Addressing a rally in 1850, Delany said, “My house is my castle. If any man approaches that house in search of a slave... if he crosses the

162 Frank A Rollin. Life and Public Services of Martin R. Delany: Sub-Assistant Commissioner, Bureau Relief of Refugees, Freedmen, and of Abandoned Lands, and the Late Major 104th U. S. Colored Troops
threshold of my door, and I do not lay him a lifeless corpse at my feet, I hope the grave may refuse my body a resting place, and righteous Heaven my spirit a home.”

Delany was a man of letters and distinguished his thoughts in his writing. Delany wrote a book in 1852 entitled, *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States, Politically Considered*. It was one of the first widely read books that advocated Black Nationalism. He also wrote a book called, *Blake, or The Huts of America*, which was written as a response to Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* because Delany was irritated by Stowe's depiction of black enslaved men and women as submissive victims.

In August 1854, Delany helped organize the National Emigration Convention of Colored People held in Cleveland. At the convention, Delany called for abolition, and for free blacks to resettle in the Caribbean, Central or South America, or East Africa. In fact, Delany went to Liberia and Africa's Niger Valley where he discussed resettlement plan of African Americans to Africa with various local African leaders. Delany also traveled to London and Canada where he spent several months lecturing to academic groups about his travels in Africa, speaking to human rights groups about his life in America and held a discussion with a fugitive slave community. The Civil War began not long after his travels. He joined the military and...

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164 Rollin, *Life and Public Services of Martin R. Delany: Sub-Assistant Commissioner, Bureau Relief of Refugees, Freedmen, and of Abandoned Lands, and the Late Major 104th U. S. Colored Troops*

165 Ibid.

166 Ibid.
was assigned to the 104th Colored unit. Martin Delany became the first African-American to become a field officer in the US Army, reaching the rank of Major.\textsuperscript{167} Delany worked for the Freedman’s Bureau after the Civil War and was an advocate for former slaves. Accordingly, he moved to South Carolina and ran for Lieutenant Governor in 1874. He lost narrowly on a ticket opposing the Republican Party. He endorsed the Democratic ticket at the following elections, and was appointed to a judgeship after they succeeded. Thereafter, Delany moved to Wilberforce to retire and so his kids grow up an area with access to a great education. He was also an active Mason and a Fellow of the Royal Society. Delany is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.\textsuperscript{168}

\textbf{Elected Political and Organization Officials}

African Americans were not included American politics for centuries. States have disenfranchised African Americans since the seventeenth century. Congress went a step further when their delegates at the Philadelphia Convention of 1787 formulated the Three-Fifths Compromise, a compromise between Southern and Northern states, in which three-fifths of the population of slaves would be counted for regarding both the distribution of taxes and the apportionment of the members of the United States House of Representatives. By law, most African Americans had become equivalent to a status beneath humanity. Only a severely limited number of African Americans

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{168} Martin Delany obituary, Xenia, Ohio, \textit{The Xenia Daily Gazette}. January 24, 1885
were eligible to vote before the advent of the Civil War and even fewer participated in politics.

The fervor to participate in politics among African Americans blossomed after the Civil War when more opportunities were afforded to them. The 14th Amendment was pivotal to African Americans because its clauses for citizenship, equal protection, and due process extended rights to them that were previously prohibited due to de jure and de facto laws and cases like the Dred Scott case that denied their citizenship. The 15th Amendment was equally important because it prohibited voting rights being denied on the basis of race. Numerous African American politicians represented Americans, primarily in the South, in local, state, and the national government. Greene County residents took an active part in politics. Martin Delany was an official in Liberia and ran for lieutenant governor in South Carolina.\(^{169}\) Jeremiah Brown served in the Ohio legislature representing Cuyahoga County. Benjamin Arnett represented Greene County in the Ohio Legislature in 1885. Although African Americans in elected offices declined significantly by the turn of the twentieth century, African Americans remained active in politics through political parties, debates, and local initiatives. Xenia elected one of the first African American mayors in the nation in 1969, James T. Henry, Sr. The current mayor of Xenia, Marsha Bayless, is also an African American.

Like political leaders, leaders of organizations have the responsibility to work in the
best interest of their constituents, manage the areas they were elected to represent, set
goals, and achieve beneficial accomplishments. Organizations, like political activity,
enabled African Americans to voice their concerns, take leadership positions, and
network. Organizations also allowed African Americans to have a social outlet
besides the church. The majority of the distinguished leaders included in this thesis
were members/leaders of at least one organization outside of their profession. The
Greene County leaders were able to be so active because their professions,
particularly the educators, administrative officials, and religious leaders, allowed them
to have the time and money to actively participate in leisure activities. The Prince
Hall Masons are the oldest organization, not related to the church, among African
Americans in both the country and the county. Wilberforce Lodge #21 was chartered
on June 21, 1859. Dozens of other African American organizations have come into
existence in the county since that time. Several of the citizens I highlight were
members of those organizations. Milton S.J. Wright was the National Education
Director for the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks of the World
(IBPOEW). Several other men and women served as national, regional, and state
officers. Charles H. Wesley, former president of Central State University wrote the
national history for the Elks, Scottish Rite Masons, Alpha Phi Alpha, and Sigma Pi
Phi. He also invited them to have their conventions at Central State and all at one time
or another accepted the offer. This was another way in which a national spotlight was
placed on Greene County. After integration, African Americans joined/desegregated several white organizations like the Lions Club, the American Legion, and Kiwanis.

**Jeremiah A. Brown**

Jeremiah A. Brown was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on Nov. 14, 1841 to Thomas and Frances Brown. He attended Avery College in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, and lived in Canada, Wilberforce, and St. Louis before settling in Cleveland in 1870 or 1871. He became the first African American to receive a political appointment in Cuyahoga County when he began serving as bailiff for Judge Daniel R. Tilden. In 1877, he was appointed deputy sheriff. Later, he was clerk for the Board of Equalization and Assessment and in 1881 became a letter carrier, a position regarded as elite at the time. Four years later, he resigned his postal position because it kept him from politics. In 1885, Cuyahoga County residents elected Brown as State Representative and in 1887, they re-elected him.

Brown took an active role in promoting fairness for Ohio citizens. He sponsored legislation that prevented life insurance companies from discriminating against African Americans by charging them higher rates than whites. He helped secure funds for Wilberforce College (where he was a trustee) and helped repeal Ohio's Black

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170 Wesley, *The History of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Ohio, 1849-1971; An Epoch in American Fraternalism*. Washington. Associated Publishers for the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. 96

171 William J. Simmons, *Men of Mark, Eminent, Progressive and Rising*. (Cleveland: GEO. M. REWELL & CO. 1887)

172 Jeremiah A. Brown obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. April 4, 1913
Laws. In 1890, he supported the organization of the militant civil rights group, the Afro-American League. He was also a Grand Master of the Masons. Brown is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.

**Walter G. Sellers**

Walter G. Sellers was the 1st black National President of the Kiwanis. As president of Kiwanis International, he chaired the organization's board of trustees, served as chief spokesman and visited Kiwanis clubs and service projects in many nations. Sellers was a member of the Kiwanis for over 40 years and was the past president of the Kiwanis Club of Xenia, OH. He has served as governor of the Ohio Kiwanis District. He was first elected to the Kiwanis International Board in 1990 for a one-year term. In 1991 he was elected to a full three-year term. He later served as vice president, treasurer and president-elect.

Sellers served as an administrator at Central State University for 38 years and at the time of his retirement was director of alumni affairs and public relations. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree by Central State University in Ohio in 1988. The university has named its alumni building the Walter G. Sellers Alumni Center. He is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.

**Religious Officials**

The church was arguably the most influential element of African American society. The church served in various roles to fit the needs of their communities. African

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American churches experienced rapid growth after the eighteenth century. The first African American church in Greene County was Godfrey Brown’s Baptist church followed by the AME church. By 1918 there were at least seventeen African American congregations in the county. The churches sponsored lectures, provided aid/charity, held socials, and allowed for ordinary and extraordinary citizens to have a part in civic/social affairs and leadership. The leaders of the church were also leaders in the community. AME and Baptist officials were also community organization leaders, educators, and politicians in Greene County. Lawrence Little, author of *Disciples of Liberty: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the Age of Imperialism, 1884-1916*, wrote, “As members of the black elite, leaders within the AME ministry and laity along with many of their close associates expressed many of the values of middle-class America and maintained vested interest in American society.” This was especially true for Greene County. Bishops Benjamin Arnett and Benjamin Franklin Lee were Republican leaders and Arnett served a term in the Ohio legislature. Bishop Lee, Rev. Mitchell, Bishop Jones, and Bishop Stokes presided over Wilberforce University for a combined tenure of 52 years. Dr. Woodson and Bishop Stokes were both deans of Payne Theological Seminary, one of the oldest African American seminaries. Under Stokes leadership, the seminary was admitted to

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the Association of Theological Schools in 1956. Also, several of religious leaders were involved in the fraternal organizations. Bishop Stokes was a 33rd degree Mason, the highest honorary rank one can attain in Masonry. Bishop Arnett was the Grand Master, State President, of the Odd Fellows. Several pastors of Xenia’s AME church’s became Bishops in the AME church: William Paul Quinn, (Pastor - St. John AME, 1836-1837) Bishop 1844-1873; James Alexander Shorter, (Pastor - St. John AME, 1859-1860) Bishop 1868-1887; Cornelius Thaddeus Shaffer, (Pastor - St. John AME, 1874-1877), Bishop 1900-1919; James Haskell Mayo, (Pastor - First AME, 1946-1947) Bishop 1980-1996; Harrison J. Bryant, (Pastor - 1932-1936), Bishop 1964-1976. Greene County’s religious leaders were movers and shakers in their congregations and in their communities.

**Bishop Joshua Jones**

Joshua Henry Jones, Sr., was born on June 15, 1856 in the Pine Plains area of Lexington County, South Carolina. His mother, Sylvia, was a slave and his father was the white master. Joshua joined Shady Grove A.M.E. Church at the age of 10 and rapidly rose through the ranks from Sunday school teacher to being ordained at 19. In 1875, he married Elizabeth P. Martin. The Jones family moved to Orangeburg, SC

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175 Omolewu. *President Rembert Stokes of Wilberforce: 1956 to 1976.* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2009) 35
176 Annie Whitaker. *Springfield/Xenia District History of Churches.* (Columbus, OH: Whittaker Press, 2009) 41 The book did not specify whether Bryant was the pastor at St. John AME or First AME.
and Jones enrolled at Claflin University.\textsuperscript{177} Jones became an itinerant preacher in the 1880s and preached in the northeastern states, e.g. Rhode Island.

He was transferred to the Ohio Conference and assigned to St. Paul’s AME Church located on Long Street in Columbus where he pastored for eight years. In 1892, he became the first African American elected to the Columbus Board of Education. He was on the board for eight years and assisted in the city hiring its first African American teachers. In 1893, he became Secretary of the Industrial Department at Wilberforce. Through networking, Jones helped Wilberforce University acquire financial aid from the state legislature. Rev. Jones was appointed Presiding Elder in 1894. Jones continued his duties as the pastor of St. Paul’s AME Church and an active member of the university’s school board after he was appointed as Presiding Elder.\textsuperscript{178}

In 1899, he was assigned to Zanesville A.M.E. Church.

Bishop Jones was elected president of Wilberforce University in 1900.\textsuperscript{179} Jones was the president of Wilberforce for eight years. As President of Wilberforce, he was characterized as being “dynamic, aggressive, masterful and scholarly with a commanding appearance.” In 1912, Jones was elected as the 38\textsuperscript{th} Bishop of the AME Church. By this time, Bishop Jones had amassed a considerable fortune and the mere

\textsuperscript{177} Joshua H. Jones obituary, Xenia, Ohio, \textit{The Xenia Evening Gazette}. Nov. 25, 1932
\textsuperscript{178} Joshua H. Jones obituary, Xenia, Ohio, \textit{The Xenia Evening Gazette}. Nov. 25, 1932
\textsuperscript{179} Joshua H. Jones obituary, Xenia, Ohio, \textit{The Xenia Evening Gazette}. Nov. 25, 1932
mention of his name had become synonymous with greatness. Jones is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.\textsuperscript{180}

**Bishop Benjamin Franklin Lee**

Bishop Lee, clergyman, was born in Gouldtown, New Jersey, September 18, 1841. He was educated at Wilberforce University, Ohio. He entered the ministry in 1869, was appointed to the chair of pastoral theology, homiletics, and ecclesiastical history in Wilberforce University in 1873, and elected its president in 1876. He was chosen to represent his church at the Ecumenical conference in London in 1881, and at the Methodist centennial in Baltimore in 1884. He was given the degree of D. D. by Wilberforce University, Ohio, in 1883, and elected editor of the “Christian Recorder” in 1884.\textsuperscript{181} He has written “Wesley the Worker” (New York, 1880), and “The Causes of the Success of Methodism.” He was Bishop of the AME Church from 1896-1900. Bishop Lee is buried in Cherry Grove Cemetery.

**Bishop Reverdy C. Ransom**

Reverdy C. Ransom, AME Bishop, was born on January 4, 1861. Ransom is an alumnus of Wilberforce where he received a B.A. degree in 1886. He soon after became a pastor in the AME church at congregations in the North and Midwest. Ransom attended the second annual meeting of the Niagara Movement in 1906 and W.E.B. Du Bois considers the speech he delivered, “The Spirit of John Brown,” as the

\textsuperscript{180} Joshua H. Jones obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Evening Gazette*. Nov. 25, 1932

\textsuperscript{181} Wright, *Centennial Encyclopedia of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*. 148-149
driving force behind the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which was organized in 1909. Ransom became the editor of the AME review in 1912 and was elevated to Bishop of the AME church in 1923. He was 63 at the time of his ordination and was an active bishop for the remaining 35 years of his life.\footnote{182}

Ransom was an advocate for Civil Rights and fought inequality. Bishop Reverdy challenged anyone with the idea that the black race was inferior to the white race.\footnote{183} He also believed that capitalism and individualism caused many of the problems in the world. He believed that socialism teamed with Christianity would be the best remedy for America and the rest of the world.\footnote{184} Ransom died in 1959 and is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.

**Bishop James A. Shorter**

Bishop Shorter was born Feb. 4, 1817 in Washington D.C. He was a founder of Wilberforce University and a Bishop in the AME Church.\footnote{185} He was ordained deacon in 1848 and elder in 1850. At the time of the opening of Wilberforce University he moved his wife and six kids to Xenia from DC to Greene County to give the children the benefits offered by this institution.

\footnotetext[183]{Ibid.}
\footnotetext[184]{Ibid.}
\footnotetext[185]{James A. Shorter obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette.* July 1, 1887}
The several circuits where Shorter preached throughout his life reflect the itinerant lifestyle of AME pastors: Gettysburg and Lewiston circuit, Seningtonville circuit, Lancaster circuit, Bethel, Baltimore; Israel Church, Washington, D. C.; Ebenezer, Baltimore; Xenia, Ohio; Zanesville Station, Allen Chapel, Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1866, he was agent for Wilberforce University and collected about $3000 for educational purposes. In 1867, he was a pastor at Wylie A. M. E. Church, Pittsburgh, PA. In 1868 he was elected bishop at the general conference in Washington, D. C. He organized many conferences: Tennessee annual conference, Louisiana conference, Texas and Arkansas conferences. He died July 1, 1887, and is buried at Xenia, Ohio. He traveled all over the world on behalf of the AME church including England, France, and Switzerland. He is buried in Cherry Grove Cemetery.\footnote{Wright, Jr. Centennial Encyclopedia of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Philadelphia. 201}

**Bishop Rembert Stokes**

Bishop Rembert Stokes, President of Wilberforce University from 1956-1976, was born on June 16, 1917. Stokes was elected to the Bishopric of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1976. He held AME Church pastorates in Jamestown, RI, Cambridge, MA and Canton, OH. Also served as the Dean of the Payne Theological Seminary. Stokes was also a member of the Board of Directors of the United Negro
College Fund and a wide variety of other cultural and civic organizations. The Stokes Learning Resource Center at Wilberforce University is named in his honor.  

While president of Wilberforce University, the school regained North Central Association accreditation (lost at the time of the separation, in 1947, of the Normal and Industrial Department, funded by the State of Ohio), strengthened the Board of Trustees, and developed plan to build a new campus. He initiated the Cooperative Education Program in 1964, and enrollment nearly tripled. He served on the Board of Directors for the United Negro College Fund and many other organizations. Stokes is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.

**Rev. Horace Talbert**

Reverend Horace Talbert was born into slavery in Lexington, Kentucky on Sep 21, 1853. He was freed before the end of the Civil War and had an instant interest in education. When he worked at the tobacco warehouses or on the river, he went to night school. Talbert was encouraged to continue his education and he matriculated to Berea College, Wilberforce University, and Boston University. After graduation, he was initially an itinerant preacher with the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He was also involved with publications and schools affiliated with the church. In 1892, Talbert returned to Wilberforce where he served in the capacities of professor and

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189 Broadstone. *History of Greene County, Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions.* 981
190 Ibid. 980-981
administrator. Talbert helped recruit an exceptional faculty as an administrator at Wilberforce University. He also supported the erection of campus facilities. It was through Talbert’s efforts that Andrew Carnegie donated the money to build the university's library. Rev. Talbert published *The Sons of Allen: Together with a Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Wilberforce University, Wilberforce, Ohio* in 1906. The book discussed the history of the AME Church and Wilberforce University. He is buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.

**George F. Woodson**

George F. Woodson was born on May 20, 1861 in Pittsburgh, PA where he attended public schools. He attended Wilberforce University and later earned an honorary degree from Wilberforce. He also earned a degree from Drew University. He received Doctor of Divinity Degree from both Payne Theological Seminary and Morris Brown University. He earned his license to preach in 1887. Woodson was a pastor in Ohio, New Jersey, and Bermuda. He taught at Payne Theological Seminary and served as the dean of the seminary from 1902 until 1937, the longest dean/president in the history of the seminary. ¹⁹¹ Woodson, his son George, Jr., and daughter Grace, also former faculty members of Wilberforce University, are buried in Massies Creek Cemetery.

Conclusion

Edwin S. Dethlefsen, anthropologist, exclaimed, “A cemetery should reflect the local, historical flow of attitudes about community. It is, after all, a community of the dead, created, maintained, and preserved by the community of the living”¹⁹²

Cemeteries are keys to figuring out the structure and heart of a community. The precepts and values that communities have are manifested in its laws, buildings, and cemeteries. It is important to know that so many African Americans decided to live and be buried in Greene County out of the numerous other metropolitan areas and college towns to move to. Where one is buried by choice signifies a strong attachment the individual had to the area.

The early history of Greene County portrays the establishment of an African American community that is almost as old as the county itself. Roots were being established as African Americans trickled in the county, particularly from Virginia, Kentucky, and other parts of Southern Ohio following a path of opportunity. There was also a strong anti-slavery sentiment in the area, which encouraged more African Americans to move to the area. The Underground Railroad had several stations in the county. The Presbyterians, Christian Connection, AME Church, and other denominations were often abolitionists and their religious doctrines encouraged them to fight against the peculiar institution. Greene County African Americans were also

active participants in the Underground Railroad and the building of Greene County. Unfortunately, the area was not free of racism or slavery sympathizers. Greene County residents of color still had to sign a county records book verifying their status as free men and women for the county records and for their own protection as slave catchers and Southern sympathizers had a significant presence in southern Ohio. They also had to face the fears of being attacked, unemployment, and disenfranchisement.

Greene County African Americans were not docile and when the opportunity came to improve their condition and all African Americans condition, they took it. Wilberforce University was developed in 1854 due to the foresight of men and women like Daniel Payne who wanted better education for African Americans at a time when it was illegal for most African Americans to have any literacy. Local African Americans supported Wilberforce University and took advantage of their strategic location by attending Wilberforce or sending their kids there. Another opportunity for improvement came with the Civil War. By serving in the Union Army, African Americans proved that they were courageous and they were willing to die for freedom and to be fully accepted as American citizens. African American Ohioans, especially from Greene County, joined in large numbers and served with distinction. Martin R. Delany became the first field officer in the United States Army during the Civil War.

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After the Civil War African Americans in Greene County continued to make great strides in all of their endeavors and it continued to grow. Greene County boasted African American lawyers, doctors, educators, religious leaders, business men and women, organization leaders at all levels and high ranking military personnel. In addition, Wilberforce University continued to thrive under determined religious leaders, administrators, educators and a supportive community. African Americans were represented on the Xenia School Board and even in the Ohio legislature. These achievements attracted thousands of African Americans to the area. Many decided to stay and make Greene County their home. Most of these phenomenal men and women are deceased, but they remain in Greene County at Massies Creek Cemetery and Cherry Grove Cemetery.

Cemeteries are shrines that memorialize the service of departed citizens, many of whom risked their lives for the betterment of others. It is the job of the community members to keep up the cemeteries. A few decades ago, it was not uncommon for communities to hold Memorial Day services at cemeteries to honor the dead. In 1932, a large crowd was assembled in the East End of Xenia to honor the colored veterans and other dignitaries buried in Cherry Grove Cemetery. The parade was replete with bands, veterans groups (including from the Civil War), gold star mothers (mothers who lost sons and/or daughters during military service), an R.O.T.C. battalion,
community organizations and a squad of automobiles. James A. Booker, Wilberforce University professor and World War I veteran, was the guest speaker. Beautification cemetery projects often preceded or followed these celebrations, usually annually.

The earliest African American parades can be traced to the Pinkster celebration and Negro Election Day Parades of the mid-eighteenth century. These days allowed for fellowship and entertainment. The parades often took place in public thoroughfares and sometimes were purposely navigated in white communities. Shane White, author of *It was a Proud Day*, wrote, “The parades were attempts to foster unity among an increasing disparate black population; they proclaimed to a skeptical and often hostile white audience that blacks were no longer slaves and as Americans citizens they, too, had a right to the streets.” African American Parades were examples of the esteem that African Americans had for themselves, their deceased, their cemeteries, and their communities. Greene County residents had a lot to be proud of and they displayed it.

There are an abundant amount of stories about prominent African American families and individuals who are from Greene County, moved to Greene County and

194 Xenia Gazette May 13, 1932
195 Leslie Alexander. *African or American?: Black Identity and Political Activism in New York City, 1784-1861*. (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2008) 22 Dr. Alexander stressed that parading for the Black community was more than a flash procession. On the contrary, it had developed into a common form of political and cultural expression.
197 Ibid.
lived out the rest of their lives here, or lived in Greene County for an extended period of time. Consequently, Massies Creek and Cherry Grove Cemeteries have become the final resting place of dozens of prominent African Americans and hundreds of others who benefited from living in Greene County. For these reasons, Massies Creek and Cherry Grove cemeteries are essential to understanding the history of Greene County’s African American community.
AAAS M.A. Thesis Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

Newspapers
 The Xenia Daily Gazette
 Retrieved most obituaries from the Xenia Gazette. The Xenia Gazette was very helpful in finding first hand information on local residents and their affairs. I used several articles from this newspaper spanning from the 19th to the 20th century.
 Elam, Harvey. Record of Freed Negroes Found Here; Tells Early Story of Abolitionist Movement: Harvey Elam in Possession of Old County Record. The Xenia Daily Gazette February 3, 1986

Our Colored Citizens. The Xenia Daily Gazette. April 25, 1896

Our Colored Citizens. The Xenia Daily Gazette. May 1, 1896

The Xenia Daily Gazette May 13, 1932


Obituaries

I have looked through hundreds of obituaries to find primary source information on the subjects. The Greene County Room in the Xenia Library contains an impressive collection of obituaries from the area beginning with the early nineteenth century to the present. Unfortunately, the earliest records do not include many of the African Americans. However, the majority of the African Americans I highlight had obituaries in the Xenia Gazette and some even made the front-page news like Bishop Reverdy Ransom. I have consulted obituaries for Jeremiah A. Brown, Martin Delany,
Joshua Jones, Benjamin Franklin Lee, Frederick A. McGinnis, Walter G. Sellers, James A. Shorter, George Simpson and Milton S.J. Wright all of which were collected from the Greene County Public Library.

Jeremiah A. Brown obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. April 4, 1913

Thomas A. Brown obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. December 31, 1884

Martin Delany obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. January 24, 1885

Joshua H. Jones obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Evening Gazette*. Nov. 25, 1932

Benjamin Franklin Lee obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. 1926

Frederick A. McGinnis obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. April 11, 1974


James A. Shorter obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. July 1, 1887

George Simpson obituary, Xenia, Ohio, *The Xenia Daily Gazette*. July 14, 1942


**Secondary Sources:**

Books
Alexander, Leslie. *African or American?: Black Identity and Political Activism in New York City, 1784-1861*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2008. 288 ps. *African or American?: Black Identity and Political Activism in New York City, 1784-1861* was an inspiration to my thesis. Although the time periods mostly differ, it portrayed the same agency, uplift, and development of a community that I attempt to encapsulate in my thesis. I also referenced information about African American parades and Pinkster Day from this book.
Broadstone, Michael A. *History of Greene County: Ohio; Its People, Industries and Institutions.* Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen Subjects 1918 Volume I (682 ps.) & Volume II (996 ps.)

Michael Broadstone provides a detailed county history from the beginning of white settlement in the area until 1918. This book includes information on biographies, local landmarks, religion, education, demographics, and other activities. The information on African Americans in this book is surprisingly tolerable considering that time period. It provides some information on the demographics of African Americans in 1910, a few detailed biographies on prominent African Americans in the area, and Wilberforce University. Unfortunately, I noticed that all of the African American biographies were placed in the last 50 pages of the book.

Campbell, James T. *Songs of Zion: the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa.* Oxford University Press US, 1995. 418 pages

*Songs of Zion* examines this remarkable historical convergence from both sides of the Atlantic. James Campbell charts the origins and evolution of black American independent churches, arguing that the very act of becoming Christian forced African Americans to reflect on their relationship to their ancestral continent. He then turns to South Africa, exploring the AME Church’s entrance and evolution in a series of specific South African contexts. Throughout the book, Campbell focuses on the comparisons that Africans and African Americans themselves drew between their situations. Their transatlantic encounter, he argues, enabled both groups to understand and act upon their worlds in new ways. His book supports my research because he provides ample space in his book on Wilberforce University and the Xenia community. He listed some of the prominent men and women who have lived and worked in the area including Mary Church Terrell.


Davies incorporated a brief section about the history of the AME Church and I cited the section where she discusses the “walk out” of Absalom Jones, Richard Allen and the others from the racist Methodist Church before they formed their own.

Gerber analyzes black urban and rural populations in Ohio through in-migration, black urban community life, magnified social welfare concerns, and the virulent racism/hostility towards blacks before 1915. He also examined the development of new black leadership during this era that addressed the concerns of the black communities. Included in this book are references to black leaders who either worked and/or lived in Greene County.

Giffin explores the unique experience of African Americans in Ohio during a fifteen-year period, which might seem limited, but it is actually a very detailed book that covers a significant amount of history. Giffin incorporated all parts of Ohio in his research and he paid close attention to the both the similarities and differences in each region. His book incorporates brief sections about leaders from Greene County.

Presbyterians were among the earliest settlers to Greene County and greatly influenced the area. Glasgow offered great insight into the beliefs of the Reformed Presbyterians and their early history. The sections that discussed the church’s view on slavery and their actions against it were very helpful as a sizeable portion of my paper is devoted to Greene County Presbyterian pioneers.

Dr. Goggins produced a history of Central State University, principally using primary sources. Central State traced its roots back to the development of Wilberforce University. Dr. Goggins took the time to not only look at the history of the curriculum and social advancement of Central State, he also took the time to identify important financial statistics and the development of the buildings on the campus, which bring pride to the students, alumni, faculty, and community residents. The chapters in this book assisted my research by giving accounts on the activities of the African American educational leaders in the area as well as highlighting the importance of Central State and Wilberforce University.

*The New African American Urban History* was a great resource because it does not limit itself to the usual stories of African American history, often portraying African
Americans as relatively docile except for the Civil War and Civil Rights movement. It examined the hope, accomplishments, and agency that African Americans had during that period. Pinkster celebrations and Jim Crow opposition by the working class are stories that are not often told. I used the Pinkster celebration discussion in my thesis as a comparison to the festive parades that were held in Xenia.

*The Sage of Tawawa* is a well-documented book about Rev. Reverdy Ransom, his life, and his family. Author Gomez-Jefferson’s position as a daughter of an AME Bishop, Joseph Gomez, likely gave her critical insight into developing this book.


I checked Heinritze list to find all African American newspapers for Greene County. It was a great resource and I learned a few things about the numerous African American newspapers that have been produced in Ohio.


Holloway creates a “portrait of death and dying in twentieth-century African-America.” Holloway's book feels haphazard, and at times, indecisive among historical accounts of the development of African-American funeral home businesses, to a brief look at violence in black communities, to the various “rituals of death” that have taken place over the last few decades. Although much of this information does not seem to directly relate to my thesis, it was used as a comparison study for my thesis.


Wright gave an account of the efforts of African-Americans to preserve their heritage through funeral rites and possession of their burial grounds. Wright provided data on cemeteries in the United States and Canada and included stories about their formation, who is buried in the cemeteries, and some of the current struggles on maintaining ownership. Some of the cemeteries Hughes highlights had information that incorporated the importance and burial locations of African American soldiers, particularly during the Civil War. Hughes work and my study on African American Civil War veterans was beneficial in enabling me to compare other statistical, historical, and geographical information.


An updated history on Greene County with a few references to African Americans in the area. Kilner highlights various buildings and facts from the smallest hamlets to the largest cities in Greene County. He does not provide a lot of information on African Americans, but there is information to be gleaned from this source including the segment about Dr. Hawkins’ hospital.


Little addresses both the local and global involvement and perspectives of the AME church. Little places emphasis on the AME church’s concern for not just internally motivated issues, but also international matters including British imperialism during the Boer War, persecution of Russian Jews, the Boxer Rebellion, and mistreatment of citizens in Africa. Their international awareness reflected a belief that prejudice at home was also a reflection of imperialism abroad. *Disciples of Liberty* portrays the AME bishops, reverends, and lay leaders as more than just religious figureheads, but leaders whose influence and interest reached past their flock.


McIlwain describes contemporary funeral practices after making observations of the differences and similarities of African American and European American funerals. McIlwain explores the origins of the funeral ceremonies imported from Africa and Europe. He also examines how some of the funeral traditions in America have taken elements from more than one origin.


Morrill developed a fascinating book about a denomination I knew nothing about. They disagreed with most of the Christian denominations about doctrine and decided to form their own denomination. Their establishment of Antioch College is one of their biggest legacies.


Omolewu writes about President Rembert Stokes of Wilberforce, 1956 to 1976 and provides an excellent, rich and very interesting history of the presidency of the 14th President of Wilberforce University. It provides a good study on presidential leadership effectiveness in a higher education setting. Students were trained to fulfill their potential in all areas of life, intellectually, morally, culturally, socially, politically and vocationally.

Parker’s book is about the career and untimely death of an American WWII naval hero, Doris Miller, an African American. In the book, she also devotes over a page to an interesting meeting in pre-war Germany between Dr. Milton S.J. Wright, Head of the Department of Economics and Political Science at Wilberforce, and Adolph Hitler. Wright was a university student at the time of the meeting. He interviewed Hitler and wrote a column on Hitler’s egotism and staunch racism.


Rollin, Frank A. *Life and Public Services of Martin R. Delany: Sub-Assistant Commissioner, Bureau Relief of Refugees, Freedmen, and of Abandoned Lands, and the Late Major 104th U. S. Colored Troops*. Boston: New York, Lee & Shepard Press, 1868. Rewritten in 1969. 367 ps. Rollin documents the tireless efforts of Major Martin Delany. Rollin primarily documents Delany’s activities during the Civil War. These include correspondence, command details, and commission. It also includes insight on some of the Delany’s international, political, and educational experience. The book utilizes primary sources, but Rollin does not give much regard to Delany’s life after the Civil War because the book was originally published in 1868. He was occasionally crude and opinionated in his writing.
This extensive book on a lesser known figure, but pivotal figure, in African American history traces Scarborough’s path out of slavery from Macon, Georgia to a distinguished career in academia. He would eventually become the President of Wilberforce University. Ronnick’s use of primary sources, including census records and church registries, enhanced the quality of the book.

Simmons series of biographies on African American men is one of the first of its kind. It documents the lives and accomplishments of African American men particularly in the fields of religion, education, and business. Unfortunately, it does not document the lives and accomplishments of African American women. I used this book as reference for a few of my biographies including Bishop Jones.


Straker’s sketch had enough information for me to provide good and accurate information about Antioch College and its development.


I only cited Abraham Lincoln’s quote from the book.

Wesley’s account on the oldest fraternal organization among African Americans includes information on several prominent men from Greene County, Ohio, especially Jeremiah A. Brown. Jeremiah Brown was a Past Grand Master of Ohio and brother to Hallie Q. Brown. Wesley combed through hundreds of primary sources to produce this well-documented history. It is still used by the Ohio Grand Lodge 40 years later, a testament to the quality and resourcefulness of the book.

Wesley’s account on the oldest Greek Letter fraternity for African Americans includes several prominent men from Greene County, Ohio, especially George David. Sigma Pi Phi was founded in 1904 and the Wilberforce/Xenia/Dayton chapter area has one of the oldest chapters. This organization connected the black elite locally and nationally.


Williams, Loretta J. Black Freemasonry and Middle-Class Realities. Columbia, U of Missouri Press, 1980
A large segment of my discussion on the ideologies and middle class values of Freemasonry and other fraternal organizations comes from this book.

Although Philadelphia’s Blacks Elite is a great book, it’s only used in my thesis to supply information about the early Philadelphia community in which the AME church was developed. Winch’s discussion about the elite and organizations is relatable to the second section of my thesis where I discuss both items.

Wright, Jr. Richard R. *The Negroes of Xenia, Ohio: A Social Study*. Bulletin of the U.S. Bureau of Labor, 1902. 38 ps. Provides invaluable statistics on activities of African Americans in this area this time including religious, fraternal, civic, and educational activities. Wright wrote this for the Bureau of Labor and it may have been used as an example/model to compare to other African American communities.

Yalom, Marilyn. *The American Resting Place: 400 Years of History Through Our Cemeteries and Burial Grounds*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008. 352 ps To rescue the dead from oblivion, examine America's ethnic diversity and highlight shifts in

**Journals/Magazines**


Gatewood Jr., Willard B. “John Hanks Alexander of Arkansas: Second Black Graduate of West Point.” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 41, Summer 1982. 103-128


Photo

Appendix A: Population of Greene County from 1810 to 1990
Table 1: Population of Greene County from 1810 to 1990\textsuperscript{198}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>White Population</th>
<th>Non-Caucasian Population</th>
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<td>5,834</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>1820</td>
<td>10,582</td>
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<td>14,801</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>136,731</td>
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<td>12,650</td>
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</table>

\textsuperscript{198} United States Census Bureau. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Press, 1810-1990). Julie Overton, et al. \textit{Greene County, Ohio Facts & Firsts}. (Greene County Public Library: 1994) 3 The right side is marked as non-Caucasian instead of African American because the Census did not make a distinction between ethnicities/races; however, the non-Caucasian column is undoubtedly overwhelmingly African American.