

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY WALKING TOUR

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AT ANC: SEGREGATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS



ENGAGE



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AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AT ANC:
SEGREGATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Length: ~5 miles Starting Point: Section 36 (0.2 miles from Welcome Center) Exertion Level: High

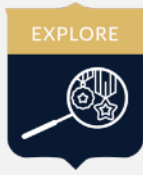
There are three types of stops on this walking tour:



HONOR stops mark the gravesites of specific individuals.



REMEMBER stops commemorate events, ideas or groups of people.

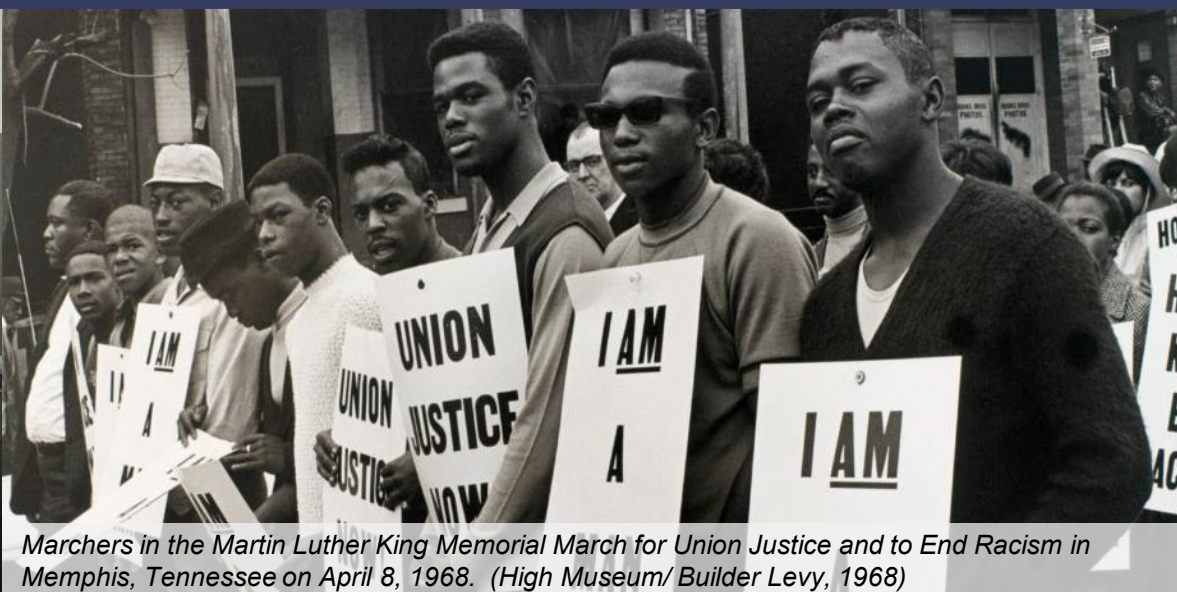


EXPLORE stops invite you to discover what this history means to you.

1	Medgar Evers	Section 36, Grave 1431	
2	Section 27	Section 27	
3	Spottswood “Spot” Poles	Section 42, Grave 2324	
4	Thurgood Marshall	Section 5, Grave 40-3	
5	James Reese Europe	Section 2, Grave 3576	
6	Alexander Thomas Augusta	Section 1, Grave 124-C	
7	O.S.B. Wall	Section 1, Grave 124-B	
8	James Parks	Section 15E, Grave 2	
9	Lemuel Penn	Section 3, Grave 1377-LH	
10	Lee Archer	Section 6, Site 9215 RH	
11	Matthew Henson	Section 8, Grave S-15-1	
12	Freedman’s Village	Sections 4, 8, 20, 34	
13	Ruth A. Lucas	Section 64, Grave 6031	
14	Hazel Johnson-Brown	Section 60, Grave 9836	
15	Celebrated Units	Walking back to Welcome Center	



A segregated waiting room in Florida. (High Museum/ Marion Palfi, 1945-1949)



Marchers in the Martin Luther King Memorial March for Union Justice and to End Racism in Memphis, Tennessee on April 8, 1968. (High Museum/ Builder Levy, 1968)

This walking tour celebrates the achievements of African American men and women in the U.S. military who made historic contributions to American society despite systemic racism and discrimination. In order to appreciate the contributions of these exceptional people, it is important to understand the historical background of inequality and segregation during the times in which they lived and worked.

SEGREGATION IN THE UNITED STATES

The American Civil War (1861-1865) began as a war to preserve the Union of the United States of America. By its end, enslaved African Americans were freed and the practice of slavery in this nation was abolished. Following the Civil War, there was promise of racial equality. The United States ratified three constitutional amendments—the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments—that guaranteed African Americans’ legal status as United States citizens, and Congress passed civil rights legislation intended to provide them with educational and economic opportunities. However, state and local governments, largely but not entirely in the South, passed laws that restricted these newly granted freedoms. These laws included the racial segregation of public facilities (so-called “Jim Crow” laws), as well as poll taxes and literacy requirements that limited African Americans’ ability to vote.

In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court made racial segregation legal, ruling in Plessy v. Ferguson that the principle of “separate but equal” did not violate the 14th Amendment. After this ruling, America embraced segregation. Blacks and whites were kept separate in schools, restaurants, public transportation and even bathrooms; however, they were not equal.

Almost 60 years later, on May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court unanimously reversed the Plessy ruling, deciding in Brown v. Board of Education that separate schools were not equal and therefore the segregation of public schools was unlawful. This was a major victory for African Americans and civil rights activists, however, desegregation was neither immediate nor easy. Some white Americans opposed and even violently protested the integration of schools, restaurants and other public facilities.

After Brown v. Board, which only applied to public schools, it took African American activists and their allies another 10 years to secure passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which barred racial discrimination in the workplace and public spaces. Additional civil rights legislation included the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which gave the federal government oversight in state and local elections to protect African Americans’ right to vote, and the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which provided equal housing opportunities regardless of race, creed, or national origin and made it a federal crime to injure or intimidate anyone because of their race, color, religion, or national origin.



U.S.C.T. soldiers in Dutch Gap, Virginia in 1864. (LOC)



Soldiers from the 369th Infantry Regiment en route home from war in 1919. (NARA)



Members of the 6888th Battalion in a 1944 parade honoring Joan d’Arc. (NARA)



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



Soldiers of the 24th Infantry marching in 1898. (LOC)



Well-wishers at the 369th Infantry Regiment homecoming in 1919. (NARA)



Tuskegee Airmen in Ramitelli, Italy in 1945. (LOC/Toni Frissell)

SEGREGATION IN THE U.S. MILITARY

The history of segregation within the U.S. military is similar to that of segregation in U.S. society at large: a slow march toward progress with many steps backward along the way. Approximately 5,000 African Americans served alongside whites in Continental Army regiments during the Revolutionary War, and some served with American forces during the War of 1812. After 1815, state and federal laws and regulations gradually restricted or prohibited African Americans serving in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or state militias.

In July 1862, in the midst of the Civil War, Congress authorized the recruitment of Black soldiers, and after the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863 the Army established the Bureau of Colored Troops to supervise the units of the United States Colored Troops (USCT). Through World War II (1941-1945), most African Americans who wished to serve in the U.S. armed forces were assigned to segregated, all-Black units, often overseen by white officers. Although these segregated units served with valor and distinction, they received less support than white units and regularly had to deal with discrimination, unequal benefits and assignment to difficult duties such as building fortifications and occupying southern states during the years after the war.

On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981, mandating equality of treatment and opportunity in the U.S. military, to include burial at national cemeteries such as Arlington, regardless of race. Over the next few years, each of the military service branches (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard) implemented the executive order in different ways until the U.S. military was fully racially integrated by late 1954.

SEGREGATION AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

Following the segregation practices of the U.S. military, for many decades Arlington National Cemetery required African American servicemembers to be interred in segregated sections. Prior to World War II, African American service members were buried in Section 27 (from the Civil War through 1899), Section 23 (from 1900 through the 1920s), Section 19 (repatriations from World War I (1917-1918), and Section 25 (from the late 1920s until 1948). Through 1948, African American veterans who did not die during WWI were buried in Sections 23 and 25. It is important to consider how this practice of segregation affected not only the location of gravesites, but also the experience of African American mourners who may have experienced racism when attending funerals or visiting graves in segregated sections.

Desegregation for new burials began immediately following President Truman's Executive Order in 1948, and Arlington National Cemetery has been fully integrated ever since.

SERGEANT MEDGAR EVERS



WALKING TOUR STOP 1 Section 36, Grave 1431

BIRTH: July 2, 1925, Decatur, MS

DEATH: June 12, 1963, Jackson, MS

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Medgar Wiley Evers was one of four children born to James and Jesse Evers. Growing up in Decatur, Mississippi, Evers attended a racially segregated school and witnessed violent attacks against African Americans throughout his childhood. After serving in World War II, Evers enrolled at Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, where he met and married Myrlie Beasley. Together they had three children.

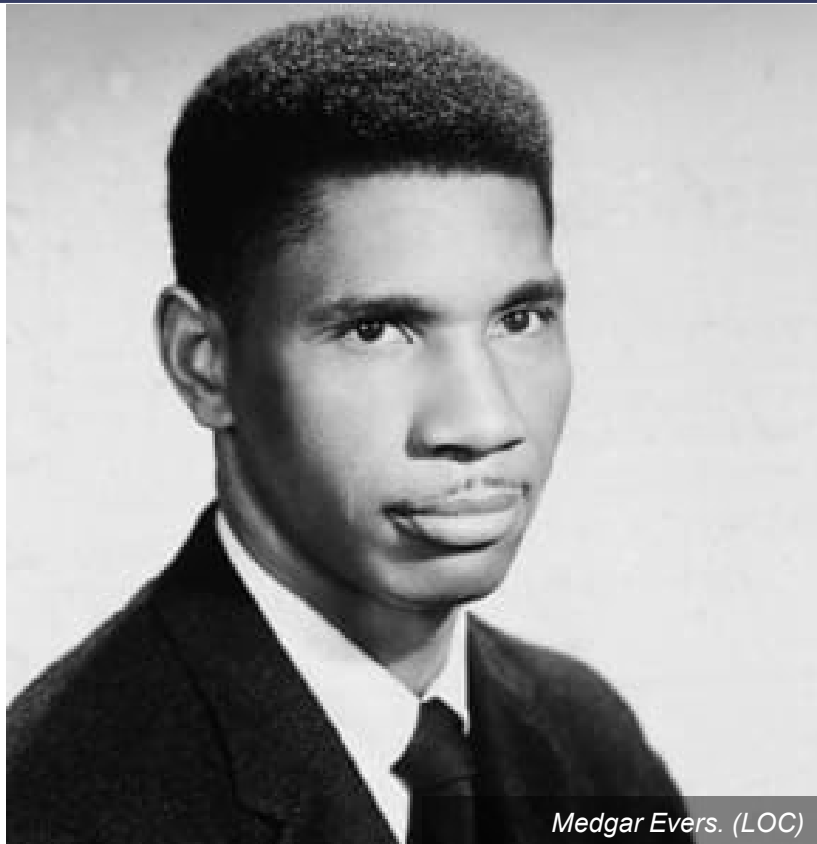
CAREER: In 1942, Evers volunteered for the U.S. Army to fight in World War II and was assigned to the 325th Port Company, a segregated unit that participated in the post-D-Day invasion into Normandy, France. He was honorably discharged as a sergeant in 1946. The military's racial segregation angered Evers and he returned home from the war committed to fight for change and racial equality.

Evers' first action was registering to vote with his brother Charles and several other African American veterans in the summer of 1946. While they successfully registered to vote, on election day a group of angry whites prevented them from casting their ballots and drove them away from the polling place at gunpoint. This experience only confirmed for Evers that the status quo had to change.

In February 1954, Evers applied for and was denied admission to the University of Mississippi Law School. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) decided to focus on Evers' case in an attempt to desegregate the law school. In May 1954, the Supreme Court determined school segregation to be unconstitutional in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. The lawsuit, led by NAACP attorney and future Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall (see Stop 4), was unsuccessful, but the NAACP recognized Evers as an emerging civil rights leader and recruited him to become its first state field secretary in Mississippi. In this position, Evers recruited members, organized voter registration drives and boycotts of white-owned companies that practiced discrimination, and investigated crimes against African Americans, most famously the 1955 lynching and murder of Emmett Till.

Evers' civil rights activism made him and his family the target of white supremacists. After narrowly escaping two attempts on his life in May and June 1963, Evers was assassinated in his driveway on June 12, 1963. Despite an abundance of evidence, it took three trials and 31 years to finally convict Evers' killer. National outrage over Evers' murder increased support for the legislation that would become the Civil Rights Act of 1964 — one of the most important federal guarantees of civil rights.

LEGACY: Medgar Evers' work doubled the number of NAACP members in Mississippi who fought for African American civil rights and justice. He laid important groundwork for the fight for freedom and voting rights in the 1960s and 1970s.



Medgar Evers. (LOC)



NAACP leaders Roy Wilkins and Medgar Evers being arrested for attempting to picket outside the Woolworth's store in Jackson, Mississippi in 1963. (Civil Rights Movement Archive)

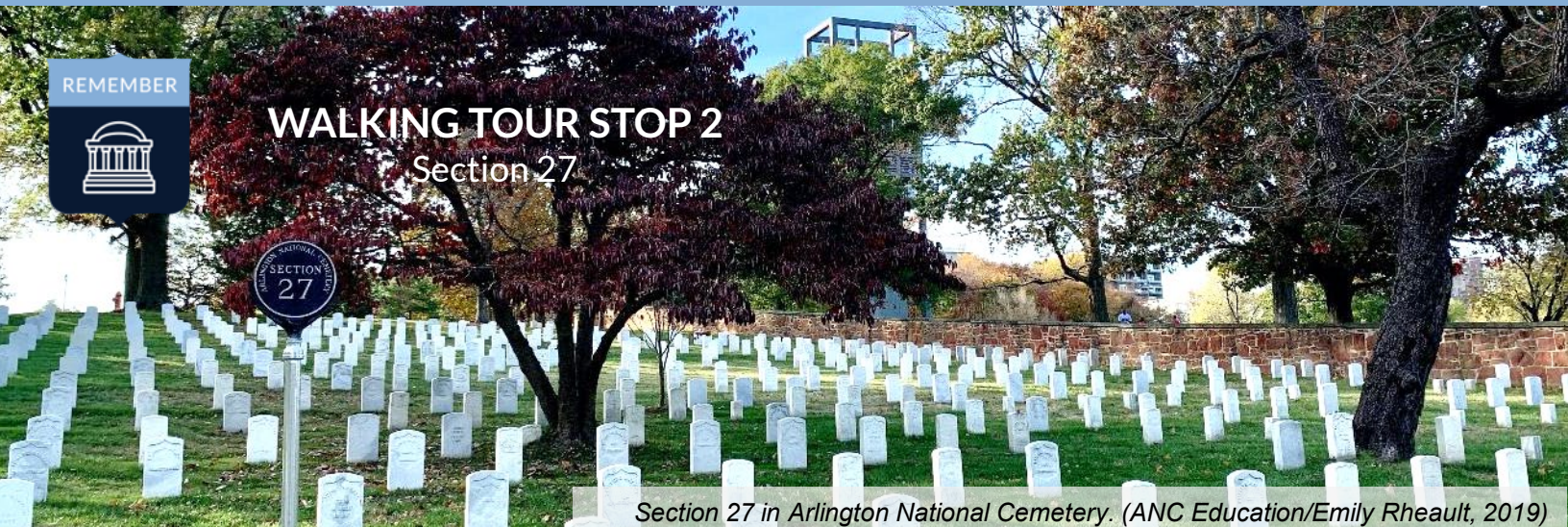


CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

Exiting the WIMSA Memorial onto Schley Dr., make an immediate right onto Custis Walk. Evers's grave is located in the last row of the headstones facing away from the sidewalk on your immediate right.



SECTION 27



Section 27 in Arlington National Cemetery. (ANC Education/Emily Rheault, 2019)

Arlington National Cemetery, like other national cemeteries across the United States, was segregated until President Truman ordered the desegregation of the military in 1948. Until that time, enlisted African American soldiers were only permitted to be buried in Sections 23 and 27 (African American officers could be buried alongside white officers in officer sections). Section 27 is an especially unique area as it contains the earliest military burials in the cemetery, a mix of white and African American soldiers, and thousands of African American civilians. To understand the significance of this section we need to look back to the beginnings of Arlington National Cemetery.

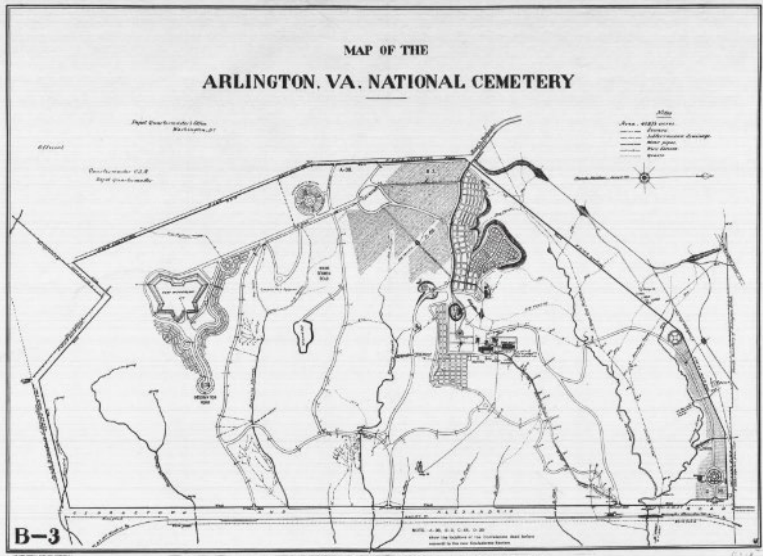
In 1862, Congress began establishing national cemeteries to accommodate the thousands of Union soldiers who were dying on battlefields and in military hospitals far from home. Arlington House, the previous home of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and his family, had been occupied by the U.S. Army since 1861, and in June 1864 the estate was designated as Arlington National Cemetery. The first burials were on the northern edge of the property, hidden from the view of Arlington House, in the area now known as Section 27. Early burials included white Union soldiers, government employees and government dependents; in July 1864, African American soldiers of the United States Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.) and civilians began to be buried there as well.

In any war, “contraband” is the term for confiscated enemy property. During the Civil War, the United States also used the term “contraband” to refer to escaped slaves who fled across U.S. Army lines seeking freedom. This term dehumanized freedpeople, however, as it was the same language used for any other confiscated Confederate property, including livestock, machinery and buildings

In August 1864, Union Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs ordered that Union soldiers and officers should be buried closer to Arlington House, partly to ensure that it would remain permanently inhospitable to the Lee family. At that point, the military stopped burying white Union soldiers in Section 27. Burials of African American soldiers and civilians continued, however, and the section came to be known as the “Contraband Cemetery” (at the time, enslaved people who escaped the Confederacy were referred to as “contraband of war.”)

In the years surrounding the Civil War, the U.S. government assisted freedpeople in many ways, including providing burial assistance as needed. Freedpeople who lived in and around Washington, D.C. and were too poor to afford a proper burial could be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. From 1864 to 1867, more than 3,000 African American civilians were buried in Section 27, significantly outnumbering the number of soldiers (both white and Black) buried in the section. It is often assumed that the African American civilians buried in Section 27 were residents of the nearby Freedman’s Village (which is Stop 13 on this tour and was located on present-day Sections 4, 8, 20 and 34). However, Freedman’s Village residents were buried in other local cemeteries.

As you walk through Section 27, you can find the graves of freedpeople by looking for headstones marked “citizen” or “civilian” and the graves of African American soldiers by looking for headstones marked “U.S.C.T.”



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR
Continue walking down Custis Walk toward the Ord and Weitzel Gate. When you reach the gate turn left and Section 27 will be on your right.

Map of Arlington National Cemetery from 1901. Section 27 is the shaded portion on the right and the “cemetery proper” is the shaded portion at the top. (LOC)

SERGEANT SPOTTSWOOD "SPOT" POLES



WALKING TOUR STOP 3

Section 42, Grave 2324

BIRTH: December 9, 1887, Winchester, VA

DEATH: September 12, 1962, Harrisburg, PA

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Spottswood Poles was born to Matilda and French Poles in Winchester, Virginia, on December 27, 1887. As a young child, Poles moved with his family to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where he learned to play baseball.

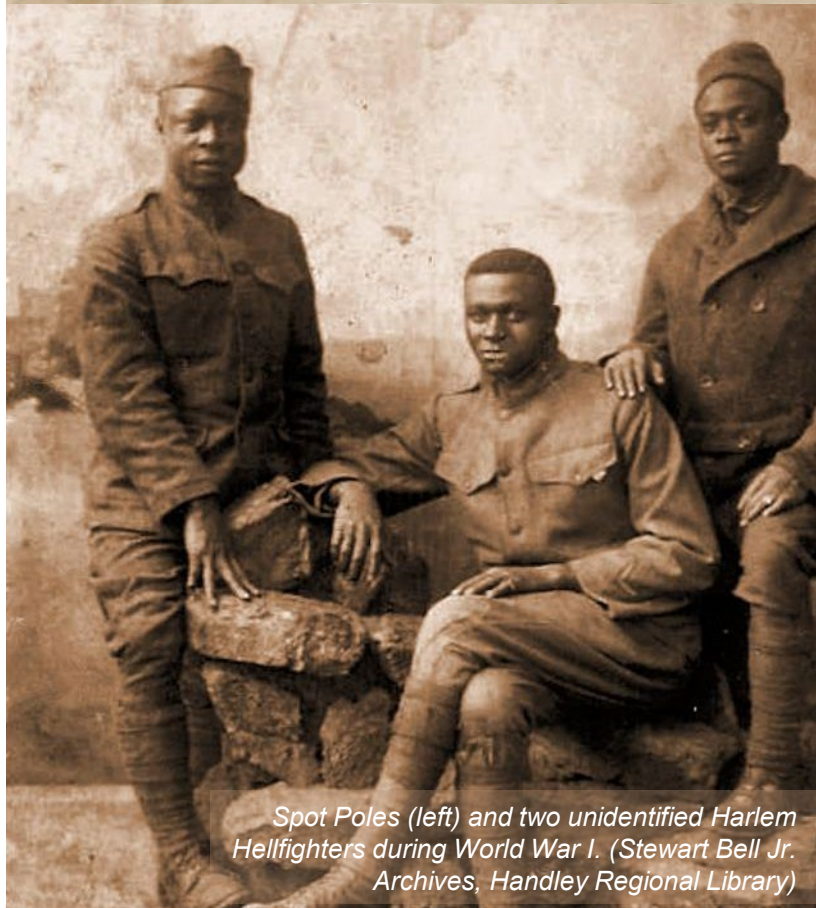
CAREER: In 1906, Poles started playing baseball for the Harrisburg Colored Giants. Three years later, he entered professional baseball as a centerfielder with the renowned Philadelphia Giants, part of the Negro League—professional baseball teams made up of African Americans and Latin Americans, who were excluded from major league baseball. Poles quickly became known for his speed and his high batting averages. While statistics for the Negro League were rarely recorded, the statistics that do exist credit Poles with hitting a lifetime average of over .400. From 1911 to 1917, Poles played for various teams in the Negro League and played four winter seasons in Cuba.

In 1917, Poles left baseball to serve in World War I. He enlisted in the 369th Infantry, famously known as the Harlem Hellfighters, and served in France, earning five battle stars and a Purple Heart. After the war, Poles resumed his baseball career, but soon grew tired of the constant travel and retired from baseball in 1923. Poles spent the remainder of his career as the owner of a taxi cab company and working with his wife, Bertha, at Olmstead Air Force Base in Pennsylvania.

LEGACY: Spottswood "Spot" Poles, often referred to as "The Black Ty Cobb," was one of the greatest African American baseball players and athletes of all time, and possibly one of the greatest baseball players of all time. However, because baseball was segregated, Poles never played in the Major League.



Spot Poles. (Stewart Bell Jr. Archives, Handley Regional Library)



Spot Poles (left) and two unidentified Harlem Hellfighters during World War I. (Stewart Bell Jr. Archives, Handley Regional Library)



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

Continue walking down Ord and Weitzel Dr. After you pass Section 49, make a left into the grass and cross into Section 42 (the headstones will be in horizontal rows facing you). Poles' headstone is nine rows back, about halfway down the row.

SUPREME COURT JUSTICE THURGOOD MARSHALL



WALKING TOUR STOP 4

Section 5, Grave 40-3

BIRTH: July 2, 1908, *Baltimore, MD*

DEATH: January 24, 1993, *Baltimore, MD*

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Born on July 2, 1908 in Baltimore, Maryland to Norma and William Marshall, Thurgood Marshall was the grandson of a slave. From an early age, Marshall's father instilled in him an appreciation for the U.S. Constitution and the rule of law, taking him and his brother to watch legal proceedings and arguments in court. Growing up, Marshall attended segregated schools, although his family's income allowed him to attend a first-rate private high school. After completing high school in 1925, Marshall attended the historically Black Lincoln University in Chester County, Pennsylvania. Marshall married Vivian Burey shortly before he graduated from college. After Vivian's death in 1955, he married Cecilia Suyat, with whom he had two sons.

CAREER: In 1930, Marshall applied to the University of Maryland Law School, but was denied admission because of his skin color. He attended Howard University Law School in Washington, D.C. instead, graduating in 1933. In Marshall's first major court case—and his first of many cases litigating civil rights for African Americans—he successfully sued the University of Maryland Law School to admit an African American student. Marshall began working with the Baltimore division of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1934, and in 1936, he became the NAACP's assistant chief legal counsel, focusing on cases that would eradicate Jim Crow segregation. After Marshall successfully challenged many state-sponsored discrimination practices, including school segregation in the landmark 1954 *Brown v Board of Education* decision, President John F. Kennedy appointed him to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in 1961. As a circuit court judge, Marshall wrote more than 150 decisions supporting civil rights for immigrants and minorities. In 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson nominated him to the Supreme Court. Marshall was the first African American justice to sit on the Supreme Court, and his dedication to civil rights and ending racial discrimination earned him the nickname "Mr. Civil Rights." Marshall served as an associate justice on the Supreme Court until his retirement in 1991.

LEGACY: Thurgood Marshall was a leader in the 20th century civil rights movement. Throughout his legal career, Marshall fought to overthrow racial discrimination and to guarantee civil rights for all Americans, regardless of skin color or background.



U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. (LOC, 1976)



NAACP leaders in 1956 holding a poster against racism in Mississippi, from left: Henry L. Moon, Roy Wilkins, Herbert Hill and Thurgood Marshall. (Al. Ravenna/LOC)



U.S. Supreme Court in 1976, Marshall far right. (LOC)

CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR



Walk through Section 42 to L'Enfant Dr. Facing Section 43, turn right and continue to Mitchell Dr. Turn left. Turn right on Lincoln Dr. and at the end of the road make a left onto Sherman Dr. Take the next right onto Sheridan and continue straight. Stop in front of the Weeks memorial before Kennedy's grave; Marshall's grave is behind two graves to the left of the Weeks memorial.

LIEUTENANT JAMES REESE EUROPE



WALKING TOUR STOP 5 Section 2, Grave 3576

BIRTH: February 22, 1881, *Mobile, AL*

DEATH: May 10, 1919, *Boston, MA*

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: James Reese Europe was born in Mobile, Alabama to Henry and Lorraine Europe. When Europe was ten, his family moved to Washington, DC, where he began his musical career, studying the violin with the assistant director of the Marine Corps Band. In 1904, Europe moved to New York City to pursue a career in music.

CAREER: Europe started as a pianist in New York and soon joined the Black theater music scene. In 1910, he founded the Clef Club, an all-Black orchestra and chorus that also served as a union and fraternal organization for Black musicians. The Clef Club gained acclaim and respectability after its orchestra performed at Carnegie Hall in 1912. The orchestra, which included instruments not typically used by orchestras (such as banjos and mandolins), played music exclusively by Black composers. After leaving the Clef Club in 1913, Europe founded the Tempo Club, another all-Black musical group that played at the dances captivating New York City social life. With the popular dancing duo Vernon and Irene Castle, Europe invented the turkey-trot and the fox-trot.

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, Europe was commissioned as a lieutenant in the all-Black 369th U.S. Infantry, popularly known as the Harlem Hellfighters. Europe was ordered to form a military band of the best musicians he could muster. Europe's band, known as the Hellfighters Band, performed to great acclaim for troops and citizens across continental Europe. Europe credited the band's success to the fact that the musicians played only their own original music, which was influenced by African American musical traditions.

When Europe and his band returned to the United States in 1919, he was received as a hero and the band embarked on a national tour. Tragically, however, before the second show on the tour, the band's drummer lashed out in anger over a disagreement and accidentally killed Europe. The city of New York honored him with its first official public funeral for an African American.

LEGACY: Europe elevated African American music as an art form and brought it into mainstream American society. His music, inspired by African American tradition and musical innovation, was a blend of ragtime and early jazz and influenced the evolution of jazz in the 1920s and 1930s.



Lt. Europe and the Hellfighters Band return home from war. (NARA, 1919)



The Hellfighters Band, led by Lt. Europe, playing jazz for a wounded American soldier outside a Paris hospital in 1918. (LOC)

Europe's Music

These links are just a sample of recordings of Europe's music. More can be found on the Library of Congress website.

- <https://www.loc.gov/item/jukebox-134538/>
- <https://www.loc.gov/item/ih.100010756/>
- <https://www.loc.gov/item/ih.100010704/>

CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR



From Sheridan Dr., turn left onto Weeks and then right onto Roosevelt. At McClellan Dr. turn right. About halfway down the road, Europe's headstone is three rows back on your right.

BREVET LIEUTENANT COLONEL ALEXANDER THOMAS AUGUSTA



WALKING TOUR STOP 6

Section 1, Grave 124-C

BIRTH: March 8, 1825, Norfolk, VA

DEATH: December 21, 1890, Washington, D.C.

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Born a free man in Norfolk, Virginia in 1825, Alexander T. Augusta was determined to pursue a medical career. Although Virginia law forbid African Americans from learning to read, Augusta secretly learned to read and write from local pastor Daniel Payne while working as a barber. The University of Pennsylvania's medical school denied him admission for lacking the necessary qualifications, although Augusta believed that he was denied because of racial prejudice. Concerned that American medical schools would continue to deny him admission, Augusta moved to Toronto, Canada in the 1850s and enrolled at Trinity Medical College. He graduated with a medical degree six years later and established his own medical practice in Canada. He married Mary Burgoin in 1847.

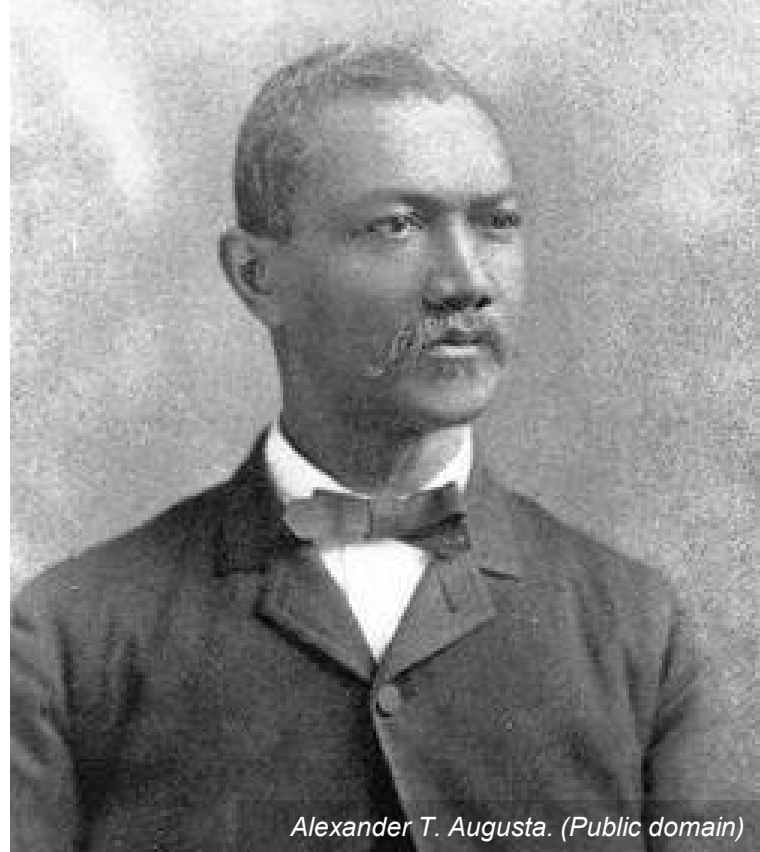
CAREER: In 1863, Augusta wrote to President Abraham Lincoln asking to serve as a doctor for the United States Colored Troops (USCT). He was commissioned as a major – the first African American to be commissioned as a medical officer in the U.S. Army. Augusta was assigned as the regimental surgeon for the 7th Infantry of the USCT, however, white surgeons who refused to serve under his command wrote to President Lincoln to demand his termination. The Army decided to transfer him out of the regiment and appointed him as the surgeon-in-charge at the Contraband Hospital in Washington, D.C., making him the first African American hospital administrator in U.S. history. (At the time, enslaved people who escaped the Confederacy were referred to as “contraband of war”; the Contraband Hospital was for former slaves and free Blacks.)

In February 1864, while Augusta was wearing his uniform, a streetcar conductor ordered him to disembark because he refused to stand in the uncovered portion of the car. Augusta later petitioned government officials to address streetcar segregation. In March 1865, Augusta was promoted to brevet lieutenant colonel (similar to a warrant officer position today), making him the highest ranking African American officer of the Civil War.

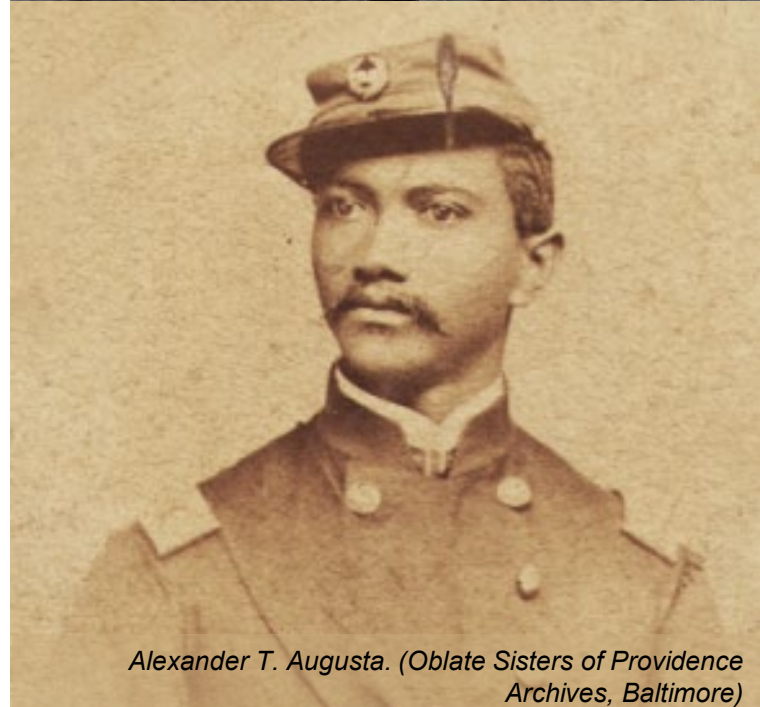
After the war, Augusta continued to practice medicine. He joined the medical faculty at Howard University, becoming the first African American to teach medicine at a U.S. university. Howard also awarded Augusta two honorary degrees, including the first honorary degree awarded to an African American by an American university.

For many years, Augusta attempted unsuccessfully to join the all-white Medical Society of the District of Columbia. In 1870, he and other Black medical professionals founded the National Medical Society, which was open to physicians of all races, and in 1884, Augusta helped found the Medico-Chirurgical Society, the first Black medical organization in the United States.

LEGACY: Throughout his life, Augusta protested and fought racial discrimination. Despite encountering prejudice at every step of his career, Augusta worked both within and outside of white institutions to push back against racist practices. He helped establish African Americans in the medical profession and encouraged young African Americans to pursue careers within the medical field.



Alexander T. Augusta. (Public domain)



Alexander T. Augusta. (Oblate Sisters of Providence Archives, Baltimore)



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

Walk up Crook Walk to Sheridan Dr. and turn left. After passing the James Tanner Amphitheater, follow the walking path adjacent to Meigs Dr. to the end of the path. August's grave is in the 4th row, 8th from the wall.

CAPTAIN O.S.B. WALL



WALKING TOUR STOP 7

Section 1, Grave 124-B

BIRTH: August 12, 1825, *Richmond County, NC*

DEATH: April 26, 1891, *Washington, D.C.*

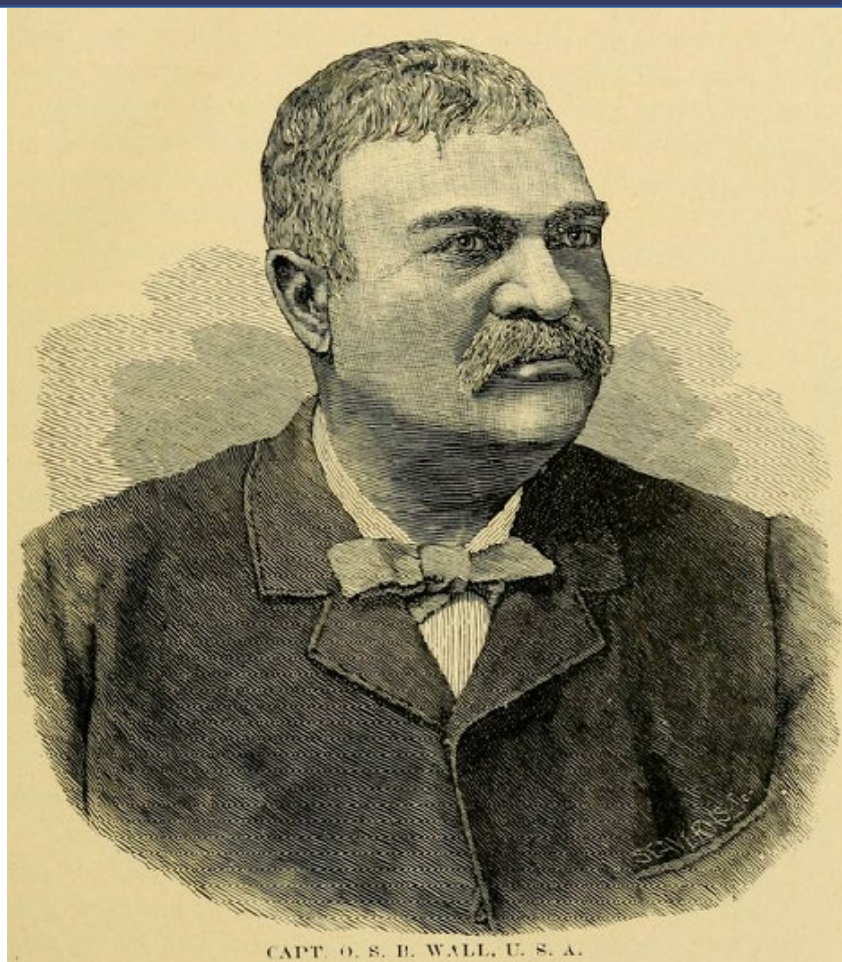
EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Orindatus Simon Bolivar Wall, known as O.S.B. Wall, was born into slavery. His mother, Priscilla, was enslaved by his father Stephen Wall, who was known to be involved with at least two other enslaved women. In 1838, Stephen Wall freed four of his six enslaved children and sent them to Ohio to be raised and educated by Quaker abolitionists. In 1854, Wall married Amanda Thomas, a free woman born in Virginia.

CAREER: Wall trained as a cobbler and moved to Oberlin, Ohio in the early 1850s where he became active in the abolitionist movement. In 1858, he was part of a group that rescued John Price, a runaway slave who had been captured by slave catchers, and smuggled Price to Canada. Although Wall and his co-conspirators were indicted under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, they were soon released from custody and heralded for their heroic actions.

When Congress passed legislation permitting African Americans to serve in the United States military in 1862, Wall and his brother-in-law John Mercer Langston helped recruit Black regiments across the Union. In March 1865, Wall was commissioned as a captain in the Army.

After the Civil War, Wall and his family moved to Washington, D.C. where Wall worked as a police magistrate and his wife Amanda taught freedpeople and marched for women's voting rights. Wall soon became involved in politics and in 1872 was elected to the Washington, D.C. Territorial House of Delegates, representing a white-majority district for two terms. While in D.C., Wall recruited the first students for Howard University and graduated in the second class of Howard University's law school. He and his family also helped integrate the First Congregational Church in downtown Washington, D.C.

LEGACY: Born into slavery, Wall was one of the few Black officers who served in the Union Army during the Civil War. He was integral to recruiting African American soldiers to fight for the Union. Wall's work in politics and to integrate white and Black spaces following the Civil War left a lasting legacy in the communities in which he lived.



Top: Engraving of O.S.B. Wall contained in Joseph T. Wilson's 1888 book *The Black Phalanx: A History of the Negro Soldiers of America*. Bottom: The group who rescued escaped slave John Price. Wall is second from the left. (LOC/1859)



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

Facing Augusta's headstone, Wall's headstone is directly to your right.



JAMES PARKS



WALKING TOUR STOP 8

Section 15E, Grave 2

BIRTH: 1843, Arlington, VA

DEATH: August 21, 1929, Arlington, VA

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: James Parks was born into slavery in 1843 at Arlington Estate, the home of the Custis-Lee family, to Lawrence Parks and Patsy Clark. Parks was 18 when the Civil War broke out in April 1861. By May of that year, the Lees had moved to Richmond, leaving behind their slaves and overseer at Arlington. The will of George Washington Parke Custis, Parks' former owner, officially freed him from slavery in 1862. During Parks' lifetime, he married twice and was the father of 22 children, five of whom served in World War I.

CAREER: After the U.S. Army took over the Arlington House and its grounds, Parks began working for the Army to help construct Forts McPherson and Whipple (today Fort Myer). In 1864, when two hundred acres of the Arlington estate were set aside to form Arlington National Cemetery, Parks began working as a grave digger and groundskeeper. He continued this work until June 1925, when he was in his 80s.

Parks spent his entire life living and working on the land that had been the Arlington estate – he grew up in the Arlington House slave quarters, then lived at the Arlington Freedman's Village (Walking Tour Stop 12) until 1888, and then moved into a cabin near the cemetery's south entrance.

LEGACY: In 1925, Congress approved the restoration of Arlington House to the way it had appeared when the Lees lived there. As restoration on the exterior began in 1928, Parks became a crucial source of information on the house and property. Although he was in his 80s, Parks's memory was, by all accounts, sharp and detailed. His recollections, recorded by journalists and military officials, have provided some of the most important firsthand accounts of the history of Arlington House and Arlington National Cemetery. His testimony also offered valuable insights into the Custis-Lee family, slavery at Arlington and life in Freedman's Village.

James Parks died on August 21, 1929, at age 86. Prior to his death, the Secretary of War authorized for him to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery even though he was a civilian. On August 23, 1929, Parks' long service to Arlington, in both slavery and freedom, was honored with a full military honors funeral. The American Legion erected his headstone; the inscription represents Parks as a "faithful" servant. Parks is the only person buried at the cemetery who was born on the property.



James Parks. (National Park Service)



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

Walk down Garfield Ave. At the bend in the road, continue straight into Section 15G. Parks' headstone is in the 13th headstone in the row closest to the wall when you enter Section 15G.

HONOR AND REMEMBER: THE LEGACY OF ARLINGTON'S ENSLAVED PEOPLE



When George Washington Parke Custis moved to Arlington in 1802, he brought with him a number of enslaved people. These people built Arlington House, served the Custis family and farmed the land of the

estate. Upon his death in 1857, George Washington Parke Custis bequeathed the Arlington estate – which consisted of the manor, 1,100 acres of land and 196 enslaved men and women – to his daughter, Mary Anna Randolph Custis Lee (the wife Robert E. Lee). When the Lees abandoned Arlington House at the outbreak of the Civil War, many of the enslaved people were left behind, and they took on roles supporting the Union Army.

James Parks' parents and grandparents, along with other Arlington Estate slaves, were buried in a slave cemetery on the estate's property.

At the turn of the century, the Department of Agriculture uprooted this cemetery to use the land as an experimental farm. It is not known what happened to the bodies interred in the slave cemetery. Today, the Pentagon sits on this land.

Consider who we choose to remember and honor—and who we do not. The enslaved men and women who forcibly labored on the land that is now Arlington National Cemetery were uprooted from their place of rest and lost to history.

Individuals who had been enslaved at Arlington and whose names are still known, such as James Parks and Selina Gray (pictured, right), are often remembered and valued because of their association with and contributions to their white enslavers.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

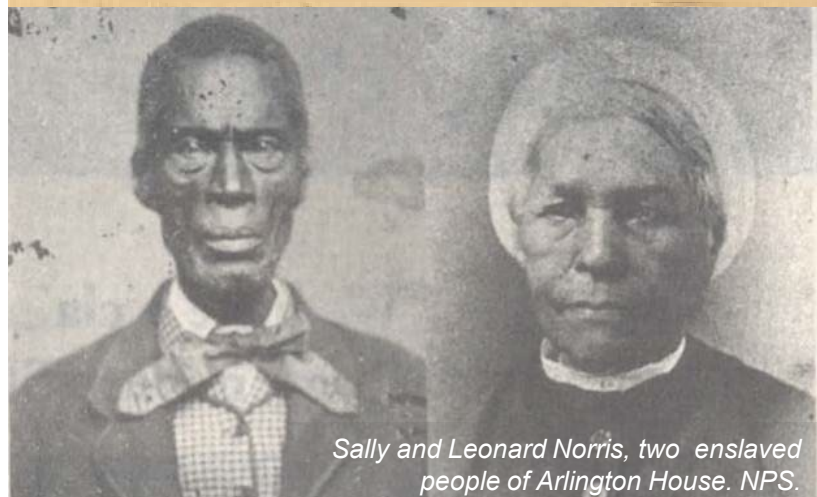
- While individual voices are often lost to history, how can we preserve the memory and experiences of groups of people?
- How does honoring and remembering the stories of only certain people reinforce historical and cultural narratives about who mattered in the past and who matters now? How can honoring and remembering the lives of other individuals challenge those narratives?
- Are there people in your community whose lives and contributions have been erased or forgotten? How can those people be honored even if little tangible evidence of their lives and experiences remains?



Arlington House enslaved housekeeper Selina Gray and two of her daughters. NPS.



An unknown Arlington House enslaved man sitting in the doorway of the north servants' quarter. NPS.



Sally and Leonard Norris, two enslaved people of Arlington House. NPS.



Social Media
Connection #1

LIEUTENANT COLONEL LEMUEL PENN



WALKING TOUR STOP 9 Section 3, Grave 1377-LH

BIRTH: September 19, 1915, *Washington, D.C.*

DEATH: July 11, 1964, *Madison County, GA*

EARLY AND PERSONAL LIFE: Little information is known about Penn's early life. He and his wife Georgia were the parents of two daughters and one son.

CAREER: Penn attended the historically Black Howard University, where he joined the Army Reserve. During World War II, Penn served in New Guinea and the Philippines, attaining the rank of lieutenant colonel and earning a Bronze Star. At the time of Penn's death, he was the assistant superintendent of Washington, D.C. public schools.

LEGACY: On July 11, 1964, Lemuel Penn was shot and killed by Ku Klux Klan members. Penn and two other African American World War II veterans were driving home from their annual Army Reserve training at Fort Benning, Georgia when local members of the Ku Klux Klan noticed them. The Klan members followed the men to the nearby Broad River Bridge, where they began firing at their vehicle, killing Penn.

Lemuel Penn's murder was not unique. Many people are not aware of the extent to which Black veterans were targeted for racial violence because they posed a threat to white supremacy. According to research done by the Equal Justice Initiative, between 1877 and 1950, "no one was more at risk of experiencing violence and targeted racial terror than black veterans." ¹

The Georgia Historical Society has placed a marker at the site of the shooting, which notes: "When a local jury failed to convict the suspects of murder, the federal government successfully prosecuted the men for violations under the new Civil Rights Act of 1964, passed just nine days before Penn's murder. The case was instrumental in the creation of a Justice Department task force whose work culminated in the Civil Rights Act of 1968."²



Lemuel Penn in uniform. (Zinn Education Project)



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

From Garfield Dr., turn right onto McPherson Dr. Continue straight until reaching Porter Dr. Turn left onto Porter. Poles' headstone is 8 rows back and 8 headstones in.



Social Media
Connection #2

¹"Targeting Black Veterans: Lynching in America" Report by Equal Justice Initiative.

²"Lt. Col. Lemuel Penn and the Civil Rights Act" Historical Marker, Georgia Historical Society.



LIEUTENANT COLONEL LEE ARCHER



WALKING TOUR STOP 10 Section 6, Site 9215 RH

BIRTH: September 6, 1919, Yonkers, NY

DEATH: January 27, 2010, Manhattan, NY

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Lee “Buddy” Andrew Archer Jr. was raised by his parents, Lee Archer Sr. and May Piper Archer, in Harlem, New York and attended college at New York University (NYU). In 1941, Archer left NYU to enlist in the Army.

CAREER: Though Archer dreamed of becoming a pilot when he joined the Army, he was initially rejected from pilot training since the Army did not permit African Americans to serve as pilots. In December 1942 — one year after he joined the Army — Archer was accepted to a new, experimental training program for African Americans at Tuskegee Army Airfield, near historically Black Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Archer graduated from this program first in his class and was assigned to the 302nd Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group — part of the “Tuskegee Airmen,” all-Black aviation units that served honorably during World War II.

While in the Tuskegee Airmen, Archer and his colleague Wendell Pruitt earned the nickname “The Gruesome Twosome” for their deadly attacks on Nazi planes. On July 18, 1944, he successfully shot down one enemy aircraft during an air battle in northeastern Italy. On October 12, 1944 while bombarding enemy supplies traveling by rail between Budapest, Hungary and Bratislava, Slovakia, Archer successfully shot down three enemy aircraft in a span of 10 minutes. Archer was awarded in the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1945 in recognition of his actions.

Archer transitioned into the United States Air Force after it was created in 1947, remaining an active duty officer until his retirement as a lieutenant colonel, in 1970. While serving, he also completed his education, earning his bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Los Angeles and a master’s degree in government from NYU.

LEGACY: Lee Archer was a Tuskegee Airman and one of the first African American aviators in the U.S. military. Like all Tuskegee Airmen, he demonstrated that race is not a factor in effective military flying.



Lt. Col. Lee Archer. (U.S. Air Force)



Lt. Col. Lee Archer speaking at Luke Air Force Base in 2006. (U.S. Air Force)



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

Archer's headstone is four rows back from the intersection of Porter and Roosevelt.

In His Own Words

In this 2004 interview for the Veterans History Project, Archer described joining the Tuskegee Airmen and his military experiences during World War II.

<https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.44004/>

★ TO SERVE OR NOT TO SERVE ★



African Americans (and other minority groups) have historically had conflicting views toward participation in the military. Some viewed military participation as a way to secure full citizenship and to prove their loyalty and patriotism, while others have not supported fighting for a country that discriminated against them and did not protect their civil rights. Read the below quotes by African Americans who served in the military and are buried at Arlington National Cemetery and consider the questions that follow.

“The strength of the United States of America lies in its unity. It lies in free men blessed and ordained with the rights of freedom working to provide, build, enjoy, and grow. Those who would subvert us – or any free people – try to disrupt this unity by breaking the small parts from the whole – driving in the wedges of fear and discontent. I am a Negro and, therefore, I am subject to their constant harangue. They say: ‘You, James, are a member of a minority – you are a black man.’ They say: ‘You should be disgusted with this American society – this so-called democracy.’ They say: ‘You can only progress so far in any field that you choose before somebody puts his foot on your neck for no other reason than you are black.’ They say: ‘You are a second-class citizen.’

“My heritage of freedom provides my reply. To them I say: ‘I am a citizen of the United States of America. I am not a second-class citizen and no man here is unless he thinks like one, reasons like one or performs like one. This is my country and I believe in her, and I believe in her flag, and I’ll defend her, and I’ll fight for her and serve her. If she has any ills, I’ll stand by her and hold her hand until in God’s given time, through her wisdom and her consideration for the welfare of the entire nation, things are made right again.’”

— GENERAL DANIEL “CHAPPIE” JAMES



James with his F-4C Phantom during the Vietnam War. (Smithsonian Institution)

From a 1967 letter that won the Freedoms Foundation George Washington Honor Medal.



Lee Archer
(U.S. Air Force)

“I went down to join the Army Air Corp and took the test. Did very well on it and everything else. And then waited to be called. I didn’t get called... and after I had hassled them a bit about not being called when white friends were called, I was informed by the military, by a young officer in New York City, that I would never be called for the Army Air Corp because there were no colored units. There was never going to be one.”

— LIEUTENANT COLONEL LEE ARCHER

From a 2004 interview for the Veterans History Project (16:46-17:38)

“[I was] saving America for democracy, but not allowed to participate in the goddamn thing.”

— VICE ADMIRAL SAMUEL LEE GRAVELY JR.

From an interview published in Ebony, September 1977.



Samuel Lee Gravely Jr. in 1972 (Naval History and Heritage Command)

- How would you feel fighting for a country that did not grant you full citizenship and equal civil rights?
- How would you or do you protest forms of discrimination and inequality—boycotting, working within the institution, forming a separate institution?
- Daniel “Chappie” James and the other service members discussed here had distinguished careers in the military, but not every African American who joined the U.S. armed forces attained such prominence. What might be the perspective of those who were drafted into the military? What might be the perspective of those who wanted to serve their country, but were unable to succeed under the system of racism and discrimination that pervaded?



Social Media
Connection #3



MATTHEW HENSON



WALKING TOUR STOP 11

Section 8, Grave S-15-1

BIRTH: August 8, 1866, Charles County, MD

DEATH: March 9, 1955, New York, NY

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Matthew Alexander Henson was born in 1866 in Charles County, Maryland to sharecropper parents who were free people of color before the Civil War. Orphaned as a child, at age 12 Henson ran away from his widowed step-mother and became a cabin boy on a sailing ship. As a cabin boy, Henson learned to read, write and navigate.

CAREER: In 1887, while working as a salesclerk in Washington, D.C., Henson met Robert Peary, a U.S. Navy engineer and explorer, who hired him as a personal valet for his expedition to Nicaragua the following year. Peary, impressed with Henson after that expedition, hired him as a navigator and craftsman for seven subsequent expeditions to the Arctic between 1891 and 1909.

On their seventh expedition to the Arctic in 1909, Henson, Peary and four Inuit assistants successfully reached the North Pole. Based on Henson's accounts of that trek, he – not Peary – was the first person to reach the geographic North Pole. In 1989, the National Geographic Society reexamined Peary and Henson's records and determined that due to limitations of the navigational instruments at the time, the team may not have actually reached the Pole.

LEGACY: Despite being partners in their trek to the Pole, Peary received almost all of the acclaim for the expedition. Congress refused three times to grant Henson a pension, and the prestigious Explorer's Club excluded him for many years (although he eventually became the first African American life member). Unlike Peary, Henson was not considered for burial at Arlington National Cemetery at the time of his death, and he was instead buried at Woodlawn Cemetery in New York City. In 1987, 32 years after Henson's death, President Ronald Reagan granted permission for him to be re-interred at Arlington National Cemetery, in recognition of his integral role in reaching the North Pole. That same year, the National Geographic Society posthumously awarded Henson the Hubbard Medal, its highest honor.



Matthew Alexander Henson wearing a fur coat. (LOC)



(L-R) Donald Baxter MacMillan, George Borup, and Thomas Gushue and Matthew Henson on the sledge that went to the North Pole. (LOC)



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

Walk to the end of Porter Dr. At the USS Serpens Monument, turn right down Pershing Dr. At the fork, bear right and continue until you read the U.S. Coast Guard Memorial. Henson's headstone will be on your left.



FREEDMAN'S VILLAGE



REMEMBER



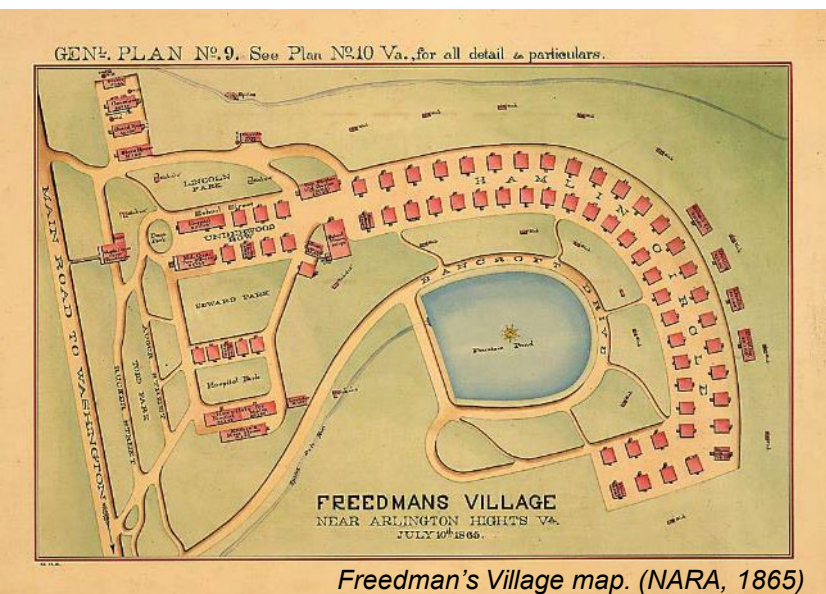
WALKING TOUR STOP 12

Sections 4, 8, 20, 34



Freedman's Barracks in Alexandria, Virginia. (LOC)

Following the Emancipation Proclamation and the prohibition of slavery in the District of Columbia in 1862, many enslaved African Americans from the Confederacy fled to Washington, D.C. seeking freedom. Newly freed African Americans from Confederate states often settled in Army freedman's camps throughout the city. These men, women and children were refugees, having fled the only home and communities they knew in search of a new and better life. The camps were established not only to help integrate newly freed African Americans into society, but also to prevent African Americans from creating permanent, integrated communities in racially segregated Washington, D.C. However, as more people arrived, the camps quickly became overcrowded and conditions deteriorated.



Freedman's Village map. (NARA, 1865)

In May 1863, the military chose Arlington Estate, the former home of Confederate General Robert E. Lee, as the site for a new camp called Freedman's Village, which was intended to serve as a model community for freedpeople. The village was designed as a place where newly freed slaves could temporarily live while they learned trade skills and earned some money before moving on to permanent homes. However, many residents took pride in the life and community they built at Freedman's Village and stayed for many years. The community included 50 one-and-a-half story residences, a hospital, churches, schoolhouses, a laundry and a home for the elderly. Originally built to house 600 residents, the population fluctuated between 1,000 and 3,000 over the years.

Able adult villagers who were not employed elsewhere were put to work on government farms and construction projects for \$10 per week, half of which was taken for a general fund to maintain the village. Although the village operated many farms, produce from those farms was sold to consumers in Washington, D.C., and residents sometimes subsisted on military rations. Rent became a contentious issue in the village. Some residents viewed rent (typically between \$1 and \$3 per month) as an unnecessary burden as they worked to gain self-sufficiency, and therefore refused to pay it; however, most villagers did pay their monthly rent.

As early as 1868, the government attempted to close Freedman's Village. However, the village survived until 1887. By then, land in Arlington had become desirable for development, and support for aiding African American integration into society waned. Residents began moving away, and in 1900 Congress authorized payment for the homes owned by villagers and officially closed the village. Today, no trace of the village remains.

While the buildings of Freedman's Village were torn down, the community that residents built did not collapse. Residents used what they had learned during their time there to form other Black communities in the Arlington area. Organizations that began in the village and continue in Arlington today include the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows and Mt. Olive and Mt. Zion Baptist churches.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

While in Section 8 take a moment to reflect on the Freedman's Village and the thousands of formerly enslaved men and women who lived in this community.

COLONEL RUTH A. LUCAS



WALKING TOUR STOP 13 Section 64, Grave 6031

BIRTH: November 28, 1920, *Stamford, CT*

DEATH: March 23, 2013, *Washington, D.C.*

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Ruth Alice Lucas was born on November 28, 1920 in Stamford, Connecticut to Walter and Amanda Lucas. She was interested in education from an early age and graduated in 1942 from what is now Tuskegee University, with a degree in education and a minor in sociology.

CAREER: During World War II, Lucas enlisted in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) shortly after her graduation and was one of the few Black women to attend what is now the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia. When the United States Air Force formed in 1947, Lucas transferred from the Army to the Air Force, where she stayed for the remainder of her military career.

While stationed in Tokyo, Japan as chief of the Air Force Awards Division from 1951 to 1954, Lucas, a teacher at heart, spent much of her free time teaching English to Japanese students. After her return to the United States, Lucas decided to pursue a graduate degree in educational psychology. Following her graduation from Columbia University in 1957, she was transferred to Washington, D.C. to develop programs to increase the education levels, particularly literacy levels, of service personnel. In 1968, she became the first African American woman promoted to colonel in the U.S. Air Force. She also received the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, awarded for outstanding non-combat service.

Speaking to *Ebony* magazine in 1969 about her initiative to increase education levels, Lucas said, "Right now if I have any aim, it's just to reach these men, to interest them in education and to motivate them to continue on."¹ After her retirement from the military, Lucas continued promoting education as director of urban services at the Washington Technical Institute. In this position, she designed outreach programs to encourage high school students to pursue higher education. Lucas retired in 1994 as assistant to the dean of the University of the District of Columbia's College of Physical Science, Engineering, and Technology.

LEGACY: Lucas dedicated her military career and her life to education. The programs she implemented helped open opportunities for service members who had received little education and raised education levels in the military.



Ruth A. Lucas at her colonel promotion ceremony. U.S. Air Force.



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

At the intersection of Bradley and Eisenhower, look over Section 60 where Lucas is buried. Section 60, like other sections in this area, is an active burial site, so please be mindful of funeral services and family or friends who are grieving loved ones nearby.

¹ "Air Force's Education Expert," *Ebony Magazine*, Nov. 1969, 88-89.

GENERAL HAZEL JOHNSON-BROWN



WALKING TOUR STOP 14 Section 60, Grave 9836

BIRTH: October 10, 1927, West Chester, PA

DEATH: August 5, 2011, Wilmington, DE

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE: Hazel Johnson-Brown and her six siblings grew up on their parents' farm in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Her parents instilled in her a passion for education, which inspired her to pursue a career in nursing. During her youth, Johnson cared for her younger siblings, and by the age of twelve she was also working as a maid in another family's home.

CAREER: Johnson-Brown initially applied to the Chester School of Nursing but was denied admission because of her race. She instead enrolled at the Harlem Hospital School of Nursing, graduating in 1950. She worked in the emergency ward at Harlem Hospital for three years before joining the medical cardiovascular ward at the Philadelphia Veterans Administration. After only three months there, she was promoted to head nurse. During this period, she decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in nursing at Villanova University.

Johnson-Brown joined the Army Nurse Corps in 1955 and was deployed to Walter Reed Army Medical Center to work on the female medical-surgical ward. In 1966, as the United States escalated its involvement in the Vietnam War, the Army Nurse Corps assigned Johnson to evaluate a transportable hospital intended for use in Vietnam. The following year, after overcoming a lung infection, she assumed control of central material services at Valley Forge General Hospital. In 1976, Johnson-Brown served as director and assistant dean of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Nursing while working towards a Ph.D. at Catholic University. In 1979, the Army promoted Johnson-Brown to the position of chief of the Army Nurse Corps, with the accompanying rank of brigadier general—the first African American woman in U.S. military history to attain a general officer rank. Johnson-Brown retired from the Army in 1983.

LEGACY: Throughout her career, Johnson promoted the importance of academic scholarships for Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) students. She also worked to implement the first standards of practice within the Army Nurse Corps, and she laid the foundation for the expansion of the nursing profession within the military.



Hazel Johnson-Brown. (U.S. Army)



Hazel Johnson-Brown's promotion to colonel ceremony. (U.S. Army)



CIVIL RIGHTS AND SEGREGATION WALKING TOUR

At the intersection of Bradley and Marshall look over Section 64 where Johnson-Brown is buried. Section 64, like other sections in this area, is an active burial site, so please be mindful of funeral services and family or friends who are grieving loved ones nearby.

In Her Own Words

In this video series for the Visionary Project, Johnson-Brown described her childhood as well as experiences in the Army.

<http://www.visionaryproject.org/johnsonbrownhazel/#2>

CELEBRATED SEGREGATED UNITS



WALKING TOUR STOP 15 *Walking back toward the Welcome Center*

On July 26, 1948, President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9981, ending racial segregation in the United States military. The order stated “that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin.”

Prior to this order, and for a few years afterward, each branch of the armed forces segregated its units by race. Often, African American units were assigned to non-combat jobs, as the military considered Black men and women less capable than white men and women. The exemplary service of the five segregated units featured below forced U.S. military leadership to recognize that African Americans were capable of making outstanding contributions in the military. These units paved the way for a diverse and integrated United States armed forces.



Company E, 4th U.S. Colored Infantry. (LOC)

USCT (Sections 23 and 27)

During the Civil War, the U.S. Army recruited African Americans to serve in all-Black regiments, collectively called the United States Colored Troops (USCT). These regiments suffered heavy casualties, and members captured as prisoners of war often suffered serious abuse by their Confederate captors. The USCT regiments were disbanded when the Civil War ended in 1865.



African American soldiers after the Spanish-American War. (LOC, ca. 1899)

ENGAGE

Social Media
Connection #4

Buffalo Soldiers

The “Buffalo Soldier” Army regiments were established by Congress in 1866 to serve on the United States’ western frontier. Sources disagree on the origin of the nickname “Buffalo Soldiers,” but it was likely the name Native American warriors gave to the Black soldiers they fought or encountered in the West. During the Spanish-American War, the Buffalo Soldiers distinguished themselves in the Battle of San Juan Hill, fighting alongside Teddy Roosevelt and his famous “Rough Riders.” The Buffalo Soldiers continued to serve in the military until the Army disbanded the last of the original four units in 1951.

CELEBRATED SEGREGATED UNITS



Men of the 369th Infantry Regiment. (NARA)

Harlem Hellfighters

The 369th Infantry Regiment, nicknamed the Harlem Hellfighters, had one of the most distinguished records of any unit in the history of the United States Army. It saw extensive combat in both World War I and World War II. In World War I, the 369th Regimental Army Band (which recruited up to a third of their members from Puerto Rico) also helped introduce European audiences to jazz music.



The first graduates of the Advanced Flying School at Tuskegee. (LOC)

Tuskegee Airmen

Prior to World War II, the United States military perpetuated the belief that African Americans lacked the necessary skills to serve as military aviators. However, intense scrutiny from prominent African American newspapers and civil rights leaders resulted in the formation of a “Negro pursuit squadron.” In June 1941, the U.S. Army Air Corps officially designated Tuskegee Institute, a historically Black college in Alabama, as the site for training African American military aviators. Between 1941 and 1946, 966 African American men completed their military aviator training at Tuskegee. The Tuskegee Airmen completed more than 1,800 missions, which included 351 bomber escort missions and 112 aerial victories.



Maj. Charity E. Adams inspects the Six Triple Eight. NARA.

6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion

During World War II, the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, popularly known as the “Six Triple Eight,” was an African American unit of the Women’s Army Corps (WAC). The 6888th was charged with sorting the two- to three-year backlog of undelivered mail for U.S. service members in England and France. The WAC was initially restricted to white women, but in November 1944, African American women were permitted to join. The 6888th was the only non-medical African American women’s unit to serve overseas during World War II and was disbanded after the war.



SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTIONS



We love hearing about your visit! Share your pictures, questions, and favorite parts of the tour on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Tag Arlington National Cemetery using @ArlingtonNatI and hashtags #ANCEducation and #BlackHistoryANC.

#1: REMEMBERING ARLINGTON'S ENSLAVED PEOPLE

Are there people in your community whose lives and contributions have been erased or forgotten? How can you remember them and help others learn about their stories? Share your ideas with @ArlingtonNatI using the hashtags #ANCEducation and #BlackHistoryANC.

#3: TO SERVE OR NOT TO SERVE

Many African Americans served in the military while discriminatory laws denied them equal civil rights. African Americans even served when slavery was legal. They volunteered to serve when the opportunity was denied them based on their race. They signed up when service was segregated and opportunities were limited because of their skin color. Would you support fighting for a country that did not grant you full citizenship and equal civil rights? Share your answer and your reasoning with @ArlingtonNatI using the hashtags #ANCEducation and #BlackHistoryANC.

#2: LEMUEL PENN

Before his murder, Lemuel Penn was an ordinary American raising a family and working to earn a living. After his death, attention about him was focused on the circumstances of his murder and the implications for life in the United States at the time. In a way, he became more of a symbol than a person. However, his family lost an individual husband and father. How can we respect the mourning of those who lose loved ones? How can we remember the individuality of people who serve in large organizations or movements? Share your thoughts with @ArlingtonNatI using the hashtags #ANCEducation and #BlackHistoryANC.

#4: CELEBRATED SEGREGATED UNITS

Did your understanding of ANC's connections to the experiences of African Americans and the Civil Rights movement change after visiting these sites? How so? Share your thoughts with us by tagging Arlington National Cemetery using @ArlingtonNatI and the hashtags #ANCEducation and #BlackHistoryANC.

SEGREGATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS WALKING TOUR

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Page 3: Dutch Gap, Virginia. Picket station of Colored troops near Dutch Gap canal. Photograph. November 1864. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018670817/>

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