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Black Participation in Five Early 19th Century

Lower East Side Churches

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Introduction

Originally known, from 1824 to 1949, as All Saint's parish, the Episcopalian congregation of present day St. Augustine's has, since 1828, worshiped continuously in the same location at 290 Henry Street. That fact has probably contributed to the endurance of a strong oral tradition, which includes the story of the "slave gallery." In the area bordered by the Bowery in the West, Houston Street in the North, Division and Grand Streets in the South and the East River, it is the only parish from the 1820s that has survived. Congregations from other churches established in the area before 1828 have either disbanded or moved several times to different locations in northern Manhattan. The goal in examining four other churches, each representing a separate denomination and formed between 1795 and 1820, find out how similar

In contrast to St. Augustine's, the former Rutgers Presbyterian Church at 141 Henry Street, an 1841 building that replaced a 1798 structure at the same site, is now a Roman Catholic Church. In the 1860s, the congregations at Rutgers and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church at the corner of Broome and Christie moved to neighborhoods further north, where they continue to exist. Since 1866, two successive Presbyterian congregations have used the house of worship built at 61 Henry Street, an 1819 building formerly known as Market Street Dutch Reformed Church. The Reformed congregation that worshiped at 61 Henry Street has disappeared altogether; the building formerly used by St. Stephens no longer exists.

When All Saint's parish was organized in 1824, Methodists worshiped in Churches located on Forsyth, Allen and Willett Streets. As late as 1900, the Forsyth, Allen and Willett Street Churches continued to conduct services on the Lower East Side, but, by the end of 1905, all three had ceased to exist. Unlike the Methodist houses of worship at Forsyth and Allen Street, the building formerly known a Willett Street Church has survived. Unfortunately, the congregation of Willett Street Methodist Church no longer exists. Few primary or secondary sources discuss the early history of Willett Street Methodist Church and only in a limited fashion.

I. *Rutgers Presbyterian Church*

In 1828, the vestry of All Saint's parish erected their church at 290 Henry Street five blocks south of Rutgers Street Presbyterian Church, whose congregation worshiped in a building already thirty years old. The Presbyterian Church located at Henry and Rutgers Streets existed a year before New York State first initiated its program of gradual manumission, which, by July 4th, 1827, led to the legal abolition of slavery in New York State. Two successive buildings, both located at the address 141 Henry Street, from 1798 to 1862, served as Rutgers Presbyterian Church. The first building stood from 1798 to 1841, when a new edifice opened on the same spot. In 1862, the congregation of Rutgers Presbyterian Church sold the building at 141 Henry Street and joined the northward migration of many of their neighborhood's former residents. Rutgers Presbyterian retained its original name and is now located at 73rd and Broadway. A current member, Vera Mowry Roberts, has indicated in a 1998 book and a telephone conversation that neither church documents nor lore of Rutgers allude to slavery or segregated pews at the old Henry Street location.

A Presbyterian congregation formed the future Rutgers Church in 1796 in a then sparsely populated neighborhood located in the area later known as the Lower East Side. At that time, residents of Manhattan regarded the area that from Division Street to the East River and from Catherine Street to Grand Street as the northeastern section of New York City. Vera Mowry Roberts traced the roots of Rutgers Church to the First Presbyterian Church located on Wall Street and at the Brick Church on Beekman and Ann (now Nassau) Streets. In 1719, Presbyterians selected as Wall Street as the location of their first church in New York City, and in 1768 members of the First Presbyterian built the Brick Church. In 1756, the "Scotch" (or Second) Presbyterian Church was formed, but, until the 1800s, it was not connected to the Wall Street, Brick or Rutgers churches. Prior to 1809, when they finally separated, the Wall Street, Brick and Rutgers churches the same trustees, elders, deacons, ministers and parish records.

African Americans and the First Presbyterian Church

In the 1790s, the parish register of Christ Episcopal Church, formed in 1793, contained notations "black" or "free blacks" next to the names of some individuals in its baptismal and marriage register. African Americans cited in the Christ Church register without the designation free were probably slaves. From 1809 to 1826, the priests of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church inserted the notations colored, black or the abbreviation "bk" next the names of African Americans recorded in their baptismal register. Unfortunately, although Rutgers Presbyterian Church retains control of its parish records, it is transferring them to the national archive of the Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and could not be consulted. In a telephone conversation, Vera Roberts mentioned that her research the Rutgers Presbyterian Church register revealed only few direct references to blacks. Dr. Roberts acknowledged that she occasionally found notations next to the name of a person that identified him or her as black.

Though their congregations worshipped in three separate buildings, until 1809, Wall Street, Brick and Rutgers buildings were considered one collegiate church, the First Presbyterian. The New York Historical Society has a record of the baptisms performed, from 1804 to 1809, by the First

Presbyterian Church. The baptisms performed by the First Presbyterian, until 1809, also included a record of persons baptized by Brick and Rutgers churches, since all three, prior to their separation, shared the same parish register. Nothing in the 1804 to 1809 baptismal register of the First Presbyterian Church identified the race or status of the individuals recorded on its pages. No such inscriptions appeared next to the names of parents, sponsors or baptized individuals in the register of the First Presbyterian Church, which either failed to make note of African Americans or did not record them on its pages.

Slave Owners in Rutgers Street Church

Vera Roberts' book mentioned that the original building the first congregation of Rutgers, from 1798 to 1841, contained a gallery, but she acknowledged no link between the balcony, slavery or racially segregated seating. The federal census record of 1790 and 1800 revealed that Henry Rutgers, a leading member of the Presbyterian Church that bore his name, owned slaves. The 1790 census recorded that one slave lived in the household of Henry Rutgers, and that by 1800 the number of slaves in his home had expanded to five. Also, New York State manumission papers contained the names of at least two members of Rutgers Presbyterian Church, Henry Rutgers and Appolos Wetmore. On June 12, 1817, Rutgers signed his name on the manumission papers that freed Thomas Boston, a male slave owned by him.

Roberts wrote that, until 1852, the Sunday School of Rutgers Presbyterian Church maintained a "Coloured Department." Dr. Roberts asserted, however, that the parish records, for the most part, made no explicit mention of segregation at Rutgers, nor revealed the state of race relations within the Church during the early nineteenth century. Practically, the only information on slavery and the role of race in a New York City Presbyterian Church prior to 1830. Only the federal census and surviving manumission papers, so far, have linked any parishioners of Rutgers Presbyterian Church with the institution of slavery.

Neither Vera Mowry Roberts nor Robert Russell Booth broached the issue of Presbyterian slave owners, but, at least, one 1906 source acknowledged a link between slavery and an early New York City Presbyterian Church. In 1906, a book written by a Presbyterian minister, David Wylie, *Our Jubilee: The 150th Anniversary of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, New York, 1756-1906*, conceded that the Scotch Presbyterian Church provided seats in the "gallery for persons of color." At the time of the book's publication, Wylie served as the pastor of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, and he identified his parish's former location on Cedar Street, between Broadway and Nassau, as the site of the segregated gallery seats. The congregation of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, from 1756 to 1768, worshiped in a wooden Chapel on Cedar Street, but, in 1768, they built another Church at the same site, which served them until 1836.

Wylie never referred to the balcony of the Scotch Church as a "slave gallery," nor did he directly identify the status of the blacks supposedly restricted to those seats. According to Wylie, a man offered the job of pastor in 1800, Rev. Alexander MacLeod, expressed doubts about accepting the post at Scotch Presbyterian Church. Wylie wrote that MacLeod's opposed slavery and objected to active members of the Scotch Church congregation owning slaves. In order to attain the services of MacLeod, the members of the Scotch Presbyterian Church agreed to a rule that "no slaveholder should be retained in the communion." The new bylaw that bared the

future participation of slaveholders applied only to the Scotch Church. Wylie claimed that his parish was the first the Presbyterian Church pass such a resolution.

Rutgers Presbyterian Church Elders and Deacons

Elders 1809-1819

Beekman, John Rockwell, Benjamin Torbert, Samuel
Bendict, Eli Rutgers, Henry Van Gelder, jr. Abram
Brasher, Ephraim Smith, Daniel Webb, Benjamin
Cowerperthaite, John R. Smith, Epenetus Wetmore, Appolos
Fenn, Gaius Sturges, Strong
McMaster, James Thurston, Benjamin

Deacons 1809-1823

Covert, John McCullum, Archibald Tuthill, William
Cooper, Thomas Park, John Wheeler, Solomon
Frost, Ezra Platt, Isaac Willets, Samuel
Hubbard, Richard L. Smith, Ephanetus

New York City Directories

1809 Name Occupation Address

Brasher, Ephraim excise- officer 350 Pearl, h.

Orchard

Frost, Ezra marshal 74 Division

McMaster, James grocer Rutgers

Park, John merchant 89 Pearl

Rutgers, col. Henry Jefferson c. Cherry

Thurston, Benjamin grocer first c. Bayard

Torbert, Samuel M. D. 5 Division

Wetmore, Appolos 61 Water n. Corlear's Hook

1810 Beekman, John rigger 8 Cross

Platt, Isaac 1 Division

Sturges, Strong inspector of flour 44 Front, h. 45 Oliver

Van Gelder jun., Abram collector 10th Ward 95 Bowery
1811 Hubbard, Richard S. cooper 67 Rutgers
Tuthill, William grocer 18 Charlotte

1814 Rockwell, Benjamin physician 58 Catherine

1819 Benedict, Ely grocer New-slip Oak

Webb, Benjamin teacher 10 Bayard

II. *St. Stephens Episcopal Church*

In 1805, an Episcopalian congregation formed St. Stephen's parish constructed a church at the corner of Broome and Chrystie, twenty three years before and several blocks west of the house of worship built, in 1828, by the parishioners of All Saint's Episcopal (now St. Augustine's) Church. The names of original members of All Saint's Church, including one of the two founding wardens, James P. Allaire, appear in the parish records of St. Stephen's Church. Joshua Newton wrote *A history of St. Stephen's parish, 1805 to 1905* and mentioned that some early members of All Saint's Church had formerly been affiliated with St. Stephen's Church. In contrast to All Saint's parish, formed originally in 1824, St. Stephen's Church was founded twenty-two years before the legal end of slavery in New York State in 1827. Newton noted that, before slavery ended in New York, the priests of Stephen's Church inserted the words "black" or "colored" next to the names of some persons recorded in the parish register.

St. Stephen's Church survived at corner of Broome and Chystie Street from 1805 to 1866, when the congregation decided to abandon its building and move further north. Apparently, the parishioners of St. Stephen's were unable find another congregation to replace them in their former house of worship, for the 1805 building was demolished in 1866. Today, Christ and Stephen's Episcopal Church is located at 122 West 69 Street, between Broadway and Columbus Avenue. The name that now precedes St. Stephen's refers to Christ Episcopal Church, a parish organized in 1793, which, in 1795, built a house of worship on Ann (Nassau) Street. The current church 69th and Broadway retains in the wall of its entrance the original cornerstones of St. Stephen's and Christ Churches, with the years 1805 and 1795 inscribed on them. In the 1970s, Christ Church, located on 71st Street, merged with St. Stephen's to form one parish.

Actually, five Episcopalian parishes have merged to form the current Christ and Stephen's church, including St. Cyprian's Chapel, a black mission formerly located at 175 West 63rd Street. St. Cyprian's, from 1905-1958, served the African American population in a section of Manhattan formerly known as "San Juan Hill." Christ and St. Stephen's church recently dedicated a room to the memory of St. Cyprian's. Rev. L. Kathleen Liles serves as the rector of Christ and St. Stephen's Church. George Johnson, the sexton, attended services at St Augustine's Episcopal Church in the 1950s and 1960s. Rev. Paul Olsson, the assistant rector, has willingly shared his extensive knowledge of both St. Stephen's and Christ Churches and the records of the two

formerly separate parishes. Father Olsson revealed that the priests of St. Stephen's, a parish organized in 1805, and Christ Churches, founded in 1793, inserted notations that identified the African Americans recorded in their registers.

St. Stephen's Baptismal Register

The following list of baptisms performed by St. Stephen's Church (1809-1828) display the notations priests wrote next to the names of African Americans they baptized or their parents. Father Olsson suspects that the "'B k'" or "'B ks'" notation written next to some names in the baptismal register might be an abbreviation of the word Black.

Baptisms Parents Children Birth Date

Oct. 12, 1809 Saunders Alexander Leonard Aug 24, 1809

And Two Black Children

Dec. 4, 1809 Unknown Sarah Anderson Coloured unknown

Woman

Jan. 27, 1813 Unknown Jane Clark (Coloured Woman) Mar. 5, 1784

June 14, 1813 John Joseph & Alexander (Black) April 19, 1813

Sybell

Jan. 23, 1814 Jane Everson a Coloured Woman and her children Ellen April 27, 1808

Yaff Oct. 2, 1813

July 10, 1814 Charles Silleck & Fanny Euretter (Black) Feb. 18, 1814

Dianne

Oct. 9, 1814 Prudence Davis A Coloured Woman

Baptisms Parents Children Birth Date

Feb. 26, 1815 Thos. W. and Francis Jan. 19, 1815

Ann Commarar

July 23, 1815 Peter and Francis April, 1815

Fanny "'B ks'"

Sept 17, 1815 James and Maria Oct 26, 1814

Cath Brown "'B k'"

Oct. 24, 1815 Eliza Etton a girl of Colour living with Mr. Carr 1810

Feb. 14, 1816 Primus Sharp an adult man of Colour unknown

May 19, 1816 Ebenezer & Phebe Henry Johnson unknown

Duffe Child of Colour

Jna. Johnson, Thos. Peterson & Eliz. Peterson Sponsors

June 2, 1816 Chas. & Jane Mary Ann April 24, 1816

Sutton Coloured Child

[The register recorded two baptisms for January 12, 1817, apparently performed in the same household on behalf of man named James Smith. Father Olsson recalled that Episcopal priests usually performed baptisms, marriages and funerals in homes rather than inside churches. The first baptized, Amanda, was a relative James Smith and the second name Mary Augusta, the child of a servant.]

Baptisms Parents Children Birth Date

Jan. 12, 1817 Amanda Smith adult daughter-in law of James Smith

Jan. 12, 1817 James Smith Mary Augusta unknown

A Black child of Mr. Smith's Sev

June 18, 1818 Peter & Fanny Charles A. Oct. 9, 1817

Stevens (Color)

Oct. 18, 1818 Remes A Color Child unknown

April 12, 1819 John unknown

Charlotte} Color

Jane

June 25, 1820 Noah & Eliza Anna Mary Eliza Jan. 4, 1820

[The names recorded for June 16, 1822, starting with James and Cath Brown, apparently portrays a priest from St. Stephen's Church performing baptisms for a group of African Americans. The name Cath Brown appears first as the mother of William Henry and later, at the end, as one of the people baptized that day. Notice that the priest wrote the abbreviation "B ks" after her name on list of parents, but that he used the word "Color" to designate her as an African American. As for the others in the group, the priest drew a line from the top to the bottom

names of the people baptized that day, indicating that all of them were black]

Baptisms Parents Children Birth Date

June 16, 1822 James & Cath William Henry Feb. 11, 1822

Brown ““B Ks””

Maria Lovett Maria April 22, 1820

Rich & Harriet Jan. 4. 1820

Platt

Thos. & Lousia Nov. 13, 1819

Lovett

““Same Same”” Thos. Rob Sept. 2, 1821

Cath Brown (Color) mother of above child unknown

Baptisms Parents Children Birth Date

July 28, 1822 James & Margaret Jane Eliza July 26, 1821

Miller ““B k””

Sept. 5, 1822 Alfred a Colored Man unknown

Oct. 6, 1822 Margaret Miller (A Colored Woman)

Sept. 10, 1823 James & Ann Peter July 27, 1823

Law

Nov. 27, 1824 James & Cath Susan Harriet Feb. 2, 1824

Brown

Feb. 15, 1825 James & Ann James Nov. 17, 1824

Law (Color)

Jan, 19, 1826 Mary Sheperd (Color) unknown

[The baptismal register of St. Stephen’s parish contains the name of James P. Allaire, one of the two original wardens of All Saint’s Episcopal Church. The priest from St. Stephen’s recorded in a January 11, 1811 entry that he baptized, Charles Brown, Frances Wilmot, Throckmorton Alexander and James and acknowledged James and Frances Allaire as the parents of the four children. Charles Brown Allaire was born in 1805, and baptismal register listed his youngest sibling’s year of birth as 1810. The name George Lovett, a founder and original vestryman of All

Saint's parish, also appears in the St. Stephen's baptismal register.]

Communicants

The following list contains the names of communicants collected by Rev. Daniel Feltus, the parish priest of St. Stephen's Church from 1809 until his death in 1828. Feltus wrote the names at the top a page with the heading "'People of Color,'" on a list kept separate from the pages with the white communicants.

People of Color

James Sutton Nester Dink Susan Williams

Jane Everson Hagar Hall Rachel Harrison

Rosan Seaman James Hall Hannah King

Phebe Smith Hugo Hall Flora Peterson

Mary Harris Elizabeth Hazzard Timothy Smith

Sarah Deen Ann Jackson Mary (illegible)

Diana Hamilton Susan Carry Primus Sharp

Julia Richard George Henry Prudence Davis

Rebecca Mathews Thomas Patterson

Elizabeth Hemen Elen Dink

Slave owning members of St. Stephen's Parish

Two men who served as vestrymen of St. Stephen's Church, Daniel Mersereau and James Gillander, owned slaves. A 1799 law required that, after July 4th of that year, slaveholders register the children born to their female slaves with the City Clerk. In an effort to reduce its slave population, the New York State Assembly declared that the children of female slaves would no longer inherit the status of their mothers. Instead, if they desired to do so, slaveholders could retain the children of their female slaves as indentured servants until the age of 28 for males and 25 for females. The New York Historical Society has 240 of the original birth certificates in its possession, and the names Daniel Mersereau and James Gillander appear on two of the documents.

In 1811, James Gillander acknowledged on a certificate the birth of Dick, a boy born to his female slave Nance. Apparently written in Gillander's own hand, the document revealed that Dick was born the previous year on April 2, 1810. Gillander, unlike many other slaveholders, neglected to indicate whether or not he intended to retain Dick as an indentured servant. Both the birth certificate and the New York City directory identified Gillander's occupation as shipmaster.

Neither the directory nor the birth certificate of his female slave revealed the occupation of Daniel Mersereau; perhaps he was a landowner. In a birth certificate dated February 7, 1814, Mersereau never indicated whether or not he intended retain the services of William, the son of an unnamed female slave.

The 1820 federal census for New York County recorded that two free blacks, a male and a female, resided in James Gillander's household. Unfortunately, before 1850, the federal census only published the names of heads of households. Both the male and the female in Gillander's household, recorded under the heading "'Free Colored Persons,'" were between the ages of 14 and 26. Dick, the child of Gillander's slave Nance, was born in 1810, and he would have reached the age of 10 by the time of the 1820 federal census. The free black male recorded for the Gillander household would have been born before 1810. Nance's approximate age is unknown and federal censuses prior to 1820 only recorded the age distribution of whites and the numbers of slaves who lived in a single household.

Another slaveholder, Marinus Willett, who owned an estate that stretched from Broome to Delancey and from Lewis Street to the East River, also attended Sunday services at St. Stephen's Church. In the 1780s, Willett purchased a portion of the auctioned off estate of James Delancey, a supporter of British rule whose land New York State confiscated after the American Revolution. Until his death in 1830, Willett resided at Cedar Grove, a mansion located at Corlear's Hook on a former portion of the Delancey estate. Willett also served as Mayor of New York City in the period 1807 to 1808. Both the 1790 and 1800 federal censuses recorded that a single slave lived in household of Marinus Willett.

In an 1874 sermon, Rev. Dunnell acknowledged Marinus Willett as one of four individuals who signed the articles of incorporation, in 1820, for Calvary Church, an Episcopalian parish that preceded All Saint's in the Corlear's Hook near the East River. James P. Allaire, John Rooke and Henry Eckford joined Marinus Willett in signing the articles on behalf of Calvary Church. Although Willett lived in a mansion at Corlear's Hook, where in 1824 James P. Allaire and John Rooke helped to form All Saint's Episcopal Church, he remained a member of St. Stephen's Church.

The 1810 federal census for New York County recorded that Henry Eckford, another individual affiliated with St. Stephen's Church, also owned a slave. The vestry minutes of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church recorded that, in 1820, Eckford served as one its delegates to the Diocesan Convention. Several books, including *South Street, 1930* by Richard McKay and *History of New York, 1884* by Benson L. Lossing, identified Eckford as an important and influential ship builder in New York City during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. McKay's book and several primary sources mentioned an 1826 financial scandal and subsequent trial involving Eckford and several others, including William P. Rathbone, a founding vestryman of All Saint's parish.

The NYHS retains a collection of the New York Manumission Society papers, which includes deeds signed and filed by New York City slaveholders manumitting one or more of their slaves. On November 8, 1817, a document notarized by the mayor and clerk of New York City

acknowledged the lawful freeing of Nan, a slave owned by Henry Eckford. The manumission deed filed by Henry Eckford provided no further information on Nan other than her name. According to the 1810 federal census, a single enslaved African American lived in the Eckford household, almost certainly Nan, the female identified on the 1817 birth certificate. Nothing on the birth certificate indicated that Eckford intended to relinquish his ownership of Nan or her son. The work that enslaved African Americans performed for Henry Eckford is unknown, though quite possibly they were domestic servants.

By 1830, the federal census recorded that three ““free colored persons”” lived in Eckford’s household, two males and one female. The elder male was between 34 and 56 and the younger male anywhere from 10 to 24 years old. The female was anywhere from 24 to 36 years old. Like the earlier federal censuses, the 1830 edition only recorded the names of the heads of households. In 1817, the black female who lived in Eckford’s household in 1830 would have been anywhere from 11 to 21 years old. The 10 to 24 age ranges in the 1830 federal census for the younger male could indicate that he was born after 1816, the year of birth given by Eckford on the birth certificate, or that, on November 8, 1817, he was anywhere from 11 to one day old. Nan, her spouse and their child, perhaps the boy cited on the 1817 birth certificate, might have been the same African Americans who lived in Eckford’s 1830 household.

Wardens, Vestrymen and Diocese Convention

Delegates of St. Stephen’s in New York City

Directories, 1805 to 1825

1805 name occupation address

Clarke, Benjamin measurer of Grain 11 Thomas

Emmons, Isaac grocer Mott, corner of

Bayard

Fowler, Abraham shoemaker 126 Bowery

Gibbons, Thomas butcher Stanton, corner of

First

Mott, Jacob C. morocco-leather manufact 39 Frankfort

Mott, Jordan watchmaker 247 Pearl

Schuyler, Cornelius butcher Bowery

1806 Beck, George butcher Spring, near Mott

1807 Gillander, James shipmaster 257 Bowery

Pell, John butcher 69 Bowery

Poillon, John chocolate maker 116 Bowery

Poillon jun, John cabinetmaker 271 Pearl

Willett, col. Marinus not listed Corlear's Hook

1816 Dobbin, James grocer 39 South, h. 3

Division

Hawes, George butcher 49 Bayard st,

Bear Market

Warner, George sailmaker 325 Bowery

1820-21 Marsh, David butcher 46 Fly market h. 274

Bowery

Mersereau, Daniel not listed 105 Bowery

1824-25 Aims, Jacob butcher 37 Wash. Market

h. 207 Mulberry

Chadwick, Joseph rigger 126 Allen n. Delancey

Fink, Arnus (Ernest) butcher 1 Spring mark. h. 23

Spring

III. Market Street Dutch Reformed Church

Frederick Bruckbaer's book, *The Kirk on Rutgers Farm, 1919*, chronicled history of a church on Market and Henry Streets that from 1819 to 1866 served as the home of a Reformed Dutch congregation. In 1919, two churches on the Lower East Side, the former Market Street Church building at 61 Henry Street, and All Saint's Episcopal Church at 290 Henry Street, use the appellation "slave gallery" to describe the former use of a portion of their buildings. Like Rutgers Church and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, the congregation of Market Street Church sold its house of worship in the 1860s, as the population of the surrounding neighborhood changed. In contrast to Rutgers and St. Stephen's, the congregation of Market Street disbanded a few years after selling their church and ceased to exist.

Until 1818, Henry Rutgers served as president of the board of trustees of Rutgers Presbyterian Church. Although affiliated with Rutgers Presbyterian Church for twenty years, Henry Rutgers rejoined the Reformed Church and worshiped at Market Street until the day of death. Philip Milledolar, the first pastor of an independent Rutgers Church, and more than twenty of congregation also transferred their allegiance to the Reformed Church. In 1817, Milledolar helped to organize the Reformed congregation that two years later dedicated a Church built at the corner of Henry and Market Streets. Milledolar also served on the original the board of trustees of Market Street Church.

The New York Historical Society (NYHS) has the consistory minutes and other parish records of the Market Street Dutch Reformed Church. The consistory minutes of the Market Street Church cover the years 1819 to 1843 and are four hundred and seventy three pages long. The minutes of Market Street Church described the consistory as ““ Male members in full communion.”” The consistory elected members to church offices, selected the minister and directed the sale and renting of pews, as well as other church business.

According to the minutes, most of the early meetings of the consistory took place at the home of Henry Rutgers, a founder and former member of Rutgers Presbyterian Church. Rutgers donated the land needed for the building of Market Street Church, and, in 1819, the consistory elected him president of the board of trustees and also to serve as one three original elders. The discussions in the consistory minutes of Market Street Church rarely mentioned the gallery, except for a few entries include brief references to pew rents. Only one entry, dated October 8th, 1821, referred directly to people who sat in the gallery, but it only mentioned the ““Sunday Scholars”” and the need to procure benches for them. The discussions recorded in the consistory minutes never linked the gallery with black parishioners of Market Street Reformed Dutch Church.

Blacks, Slavery and Market Street Church

The more than four hundred pages of the consistory minutes contained only a few references to blacks and made no mention of slavery or slaves. A November 9, 1824 entry recorded a motion by the consistory for it to consider a request by African Americans to use its meeting room ““once a fortnight for lectures.”” A man named Mark Jordan made the request on behalf of the African Americans who wished to use the consistory room. Mark Jordan led the Colored Reformed Church. The consistory appointed a committee to review the request, but, in 1825, the minutes reported that the matter was ““discharged from further consideration.””

In *The History of New York City Churches, 1846*, author Jonathan Greenleaf mentioned Mark Jordan and the 1826 formation of the Colored Reformed Church. The congregation of the Colored Reformed Church met in a schoolroom located on Duane Street, near Hudson Street. On February 1, 1826, the consistory minutes of Market Street Church reported that the consistory of Colored Reformed Church asked permission to use the building at 61 Henry Street for their congregation to meet and ““Mark Jordan to preach in.”” The consistory minutes of Market Street Church made no further mention of Mark Jordan and his black Reformed congregation. According to Greenleaf, they made plans to build a church at Wooster and Canal Streets and

actually laid down a foundation for the building, but “the thing did not succeed” and within two years the Colored Reformed Church dissolved itself.

1821 Consistory Meeting Participants

Anderson, John Hansen, Cornelius Randal, William S.

Atwood, John Luff, John C. Redfield, John

Bunkerhoff, Elbert Luff, Martin Rutgers, Henry

Conger, John S. Mills, George Ruypers, James

Crosby, William Montgomery, James Thompson, William R.

Darling, James Murrow, Thomas Troop, John

Dubois, James Mychoff, Teunis Vermule, Richard

Furman, Job. Neefus, Peter Waldron, Teunis

Elders Deacons

Atwood, John Bunkerhoff, Elbert

Bunkerhoff, Jacob Dubois, James

Crosby, William Murrow, Thomas

Redfield, John Neefus, Peter

Rutgers, Henry Waldron, Teunis

IV. Willett Street Church, 1817-1905

In 1826, a Methodist congregation erected a church on Willett Street and worshiped there until 1905, when their parish dissolved itself. Though roughly the same age as St. Augustine’s

Episcopal Church, no sermons or other literary sources that retells the history of Willett Street Church or its congregation has surfaced. Also, unlike either St. Stephen's Episcopal Church or Rutgers Presbyterian Church, no books dedicated to the history of Willett Street Church apparently exist. A Jewish congregation took over the former Willett Street Church and transformed the building into Bialystoker Synagogue, with the remaining members of the Methodist congregation dispersing to other churches in New York City.

Organized in 1817, the future Willett Street Church congregation originally held their meetings in a Broome Street schoolroom, but they shortly afterwards ““removed to a building called “The Mission House,” standing on Broome Street, between Cannon and Lewis streets.”” In 1816, Presbyterians constructed the ““Mission House”” in order to facilitate the religious activities of active members and draw new converts into their Church. By 1818, after the original occupants created the Seventh Presbyterian Church and built a house of worship at Grand and Lewis Streets, they abandoned the ““Mission House”” to the Methodist group who later erected a Church on Willett Street. After the construction of Willett Street Church, a Baptist congregation, later known as the Cannon Baptist Street Church, replaced the Methodists who formerly worshiped in the ““Mission House.””

To the north of Houston Street and New York City, Methodists, in 1806, organized meetings in the then separate community of Greenwich Village, erecting a Church five years later. Prior to 1817, Methodists had established two New York City Churches south of Houston Street, north of Catherine Street and east of the Bowery, as the population of New York City gradually moved up the East Side of Manhattan. In 1789, Methodists founded their second Church in New York City at Forsyth Street, near Division Street. By 1810, Allen Street Church appeared, making it the fifth Methodist Church in New York City. In 1902, after ninety-two years of existence, Allen Street Church dissolved itself. Two years later, in 1904, Forsyth Methodist Street Church ceased to exist, and, of course, the following year the members of Willett Street sold their house of worship and disbanded their congregation.

By 1817, when the future Willett Street Church was formed, nine other Methodist Churches already existed in New York City. Three of the nine Methodist Churches in New York served African American congregations. In 1796, a group blacks led by Peter Williams, former sexton of John Street Church, home of the oldest Methodist congregation in the United States, organized the first independent black Methodist meetings in New York City. Bishop Francis Asbury, leader of the Methodist Church in New York State, permitted and supported the decision of black Methodists to hold separate meetings and, a short later, create the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The congregation of the AME Zion Church initially worshiped in a house located on Cross Street, between Mulberry and Orange (Baxter) Streets. In 1800, the AME Zion congregation built a Church at the corner of Leonard and Elm (Lafayette) Streets, and still worshiped there in 1826, when Willett Street Church opened. The AME Zion Church was located nineteen blocks west and seven blocks south of Willett Street.

Race, Slavery and New York City Methodism

Initially a movement inside the Anglican Church, Methodist meetings in New York City spawned Wesley Chapel, widely recognized as the first Methodist house of worship established in America. Both whites and blacks attended religious services at Wesley Chapel, which later evolved into John Street Methodist Church. In his book, *Lost chapters recovered from the early History Methodism, 1858*, Joseph Wakeley described the status of blacks in Wesley Chapel, American Methodism and New York City.

There were many colored people in New-York in the early days of Methodism, and many slaves. Slavery in the state of New York at that time was established by law. From the first there were a number of colored people belonging to Wesley Chapel. They used to sit in the gallery.

In 1784, one year after the United States attained its independence from Great Britain, Wesley Chapel transformed itself into John Street Church. That same year, at a meeting in Baltimore, Maryland, American Methodists held their first General Conference. The individuals who attended the 1784 General Conference established the American Methodist Episcopal Church as an independent denomination. The General Conference, created as a legislative body for American Methodism, passed resolutions that sought to curtail the number of slaveholding members in the Methodist Church. Nathan Bangs, a nineteenth century Methodist clergyman and author, wrote in his four volume work, *The History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1841*, that the 1784 General Conference created rules for its membership that favored the gradual manumission of slaves. He also noted that it authorized the expulsion of slaveholding members who failed to comply with the resolution.

The 1784 General Conference also decided to exclude the future acceptance of slaveholders into the Methodist Church. Carter G. Woodson, however, noted in his book, *The History of Negro Church, 1921*, that in 1785 the General Conference suspended the antislavery resolutions that it passed the previous year and postponed implementation of the 1784 rules until an undetermined date. According to Woodson, petitions from dissenting Methodists prompted the General Conference to moderate its position on slavery, though it continued to express a desire to uproot the institution of human bondage from the Methodist Church. In 1796, the General Conference finally agreed to implement the previous antislavery resolutions, ironically the year that back Methodists in New York City held the first meetings that later led to the formation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Philip Hardt, author of *The Soul of Methodism: The Class Meeting in Early New York City Methodism, 2000*, suggests that segregated class meetings in New York City contributed to the departure of blacks from predominately white John Street Church and led to the founding of the AME Zion Church. Hardt describes the class meeting as an important component of Methodism that existed before its emergence as an independent Church. According Hardt, after the establishment of the American Methodist Church, Methodists continued to use weekly class meetings of about twelve people to create a more intimate environment for members and to

instruct and evaluate new applicants. Methodist congregations divided themselves into an optional number of classes, usually led by laypersons. Class leaders held their own meetings to decide on whether or not to accept an applicant into their Church, after he or she served a probationary period of at least six months.

Hardt points out that the 1784 General Conference that passed the antislavery resolutions also decided to reserve the position of class leader to whites. Hardt's examined New York City class lists from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the records from 1785 to 1796 revealed that Methodists customarily divided classes according to race and gender. The 1784 rules reserved for white laypersons the leadership of all black class meetings. Despite the attempts by Methodists to address and reflect on a potential conflict between their religious faith and slaveholding, New York City Methodists continued to segregate blacks from their predominately white membership.

In his 1818 sermon celebrating the opening of new John Street Church, Nathan Bangs directed a portion of his speech to blacks sitting in the gallery of the rebuilt Methodist house of worship. Bangs' 1818 sermon revealed that both the attendance of blacks and segregation survived in John Street Church, despite the existence of three all black Methodist Churches in New York City. In 1801, five years after African Americans formed the AEM Zion Church, they organized Zion Methodist Church and, in 1813, added Asbury Methodist Church. In 1826, Asbury Church was located at 54 Elizabeth Street, fourteen blocks west of the newly constructed Willett Street Church. The members of Zion Church resided in a building on Mott Street, fifteen blocks west of Willett Street.

Willett Street Church Baptismal Register 1838-1841

The 1838-39 New York City Directory inserted the word "coloured" between the names and occupations of African Americans listed on its pages. All the names below are male parents recorded from 1838 to 1841 in the Willet Street Church baptismal register. Few women appear, at that time, in the New York City Directories. The word "coloured" never appeared after any names in the Directories that corresponded with those found in the Willet Street baptismal register.

New York City Directory

1838-39 Name Occupation Address

Allen, Abraham carter 16 Lewis

Abraham, Isaac shoemaker 45 Goerck

Anderson, Jacob S. shipcarver 462 Water. 92

Chrystie

Atwood, Caleb grocer 175 Henry

Ballou, Benjamin W. shipcarpenter 61 Montgomery

Bedell, Joseph carter 236 Delancey

Carson, Joseph sawyer 71 Goerck

Chichester, John c. gauger 191 Front h.

42 Columbia

Coffman, John P. papermaker 170 Cherry

Edwards, John B. bookkeeper 6 Willet

Flockner, William shoemaker 262 Delancey

Hands, George F. brassfounder 61 Montgomery

Humphrey, William smith 194 Franklin

1838-39 Name Occupation Address

Insley, David D. broker 71 Wall h. 90 Essex

Kellogg, rev. Nathaniel 5 Willet

Lewis, William H. brassfinisher 295 Pearl

McDonald, Thomas smith 339 Washington

12 Caroline

Mills, John S. lumber 270 Cherry h. 167

Monroe

Newton, William carpenter 269 Division

Petit, Samuel smith 267 Delancey

Peyronnet, Lucien bootmaker 156 Pearl h. 359

Monroe

Philips, James builder 81 Forsyth

V. **The Vestry Minutes of All Saint's Church**

An examination of the All Saint's Episcopal Church Vestry Minutes, covering the years 1824 to 1845, revealed nothing as to origin of the "“slave gallery”" story. The words slave or slavery never appeared in the All Saint's vestry minutes. References to African Americans, in fact, almost never appear in the Vestry minutes of All Saint's. When discussions centered on the galleries,

entries in the minutes largely emphasized concerns about the design, construction, expansion, maintenance and pew rents of the balcony. The minutes also revealed that of the original group selected in 1824 to serve as wardens and vestrymen of All Saint's, by 1828, only one, Samuel P. Brown, retained an official leadership role in the church.

From 1824 to 1828, many discussions stressed the need to purchase land and acquire funds for the erection of two separate houses of worship. The parishioners of All Saint's erected a temporary wooden chapel for their use and worshiped there until June 1828, when they replaced it with a new stone edifice. The minutes often included recommendations for the interior design of the new stone church at 290 Henry Street. An August 23, 1827 entry declared that

On motion Resolved. That the building committee be authorized to contract for the erection of a Church ninety feet in length and sixty four ft in width and twenty eight feet in height with a tower nineteen feet square, and an end Gallery and other appendages according to their discretion.

At first, the Vestry agreed to the building only a rear gallery, but, on December 13, 1827, the building committee requested an additional \$1,304 for the construction of side galleries. The minutes neglected to explain why the building committee later recommended the inclusion of side galleries. In 1824, the vestry agreed in a resolution "that the Pews Shall forever be free in All Saint's when erected," but, later entries in the minutes disclosed that All Saint's had discarded the idea of free pews, including seats in the gallery. The 1824 entry apparently referred to the temporary wooden chapel erected later that year, but when and why the vestry decided to reverse itself on the issue of free pews was not inserted into the minutes.

Entries in the 1830s mentioned that Sunday School students sat in the South gallery of All Saint's Church. In a June 16, 1828 entry, the vestry agreed to let the "female department of the Sunday School" use the "rear pews in the gallery until rented." The resolution also recommended that "the male department occupy the vacant spaces on each side of the organ." The first volume of the vestry minutes (1824-1845) made no other reference to individuals who occupied the rear gallery. The minutes emphasized that the vestry intended to rent the pews in the rear gallery.

The "rear pews" evidently refer to the space in the gallery now known as the "slave gallery." The June 16 entry suggests that the female students from the Sunday School, at one time, occupied the rear pews in the gallery. Only a January 6, 1834 entry in the minutes contained a reference to African Americans, but only indirectly. The 1834 passage reported that the vestry decided that the Singing School of All Saint's should use "the room occupied by the Colored Sunday School." The insertion of the word "Colored" in describing a room used by a portion of the Sunday School was the only indication in the minutes that All Saint's provided separate spaces for blacks and whites.

The Episcopalian periodical *The Christian Journal and Literary Register*, which existed from 1817 to 1830, published annual reports of the Sunday Schools of Episcopal churches in New York City. In 1817, Bishop John Henry Hobart supported the formation of New York Episcopal Sunday School Society. The *Christian Journal*, a periodical also supported by Bishop Hobart, in

1819, published detailed accounts of the activities and progress of the Sunday Schools in the New York Episcopal Sunday School Society. The reports supplied by Episcopal churches in the Society included information on the racial and gender composition of the scholars, as well the number of individuals who participated in each Sunday School program.

The article in the *Christian Journal* reported the celebration of the second anniversary of the New York Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Society, in 1819, which took place in St. Paul's Chapel. John Pintard, a prominent Episcopalian, banker and founder of the New York Historical Society, mentioned his attendance at St. Paul's Chapel that day in a letter to his daughter. Pintard noted that the 700 scholars, apparently from various churches, included among their number "'a large number of Color'" in the galleries of St. Paul's Chapel. The *Christian Register* reported that "'139 white girls, and 37 coloured women'" attended Sunday School classes at St. Paul Chapel on a regular basis. By placing black and white scholars in separate categories and classes, St. Paul's revealed that a policy of racial segregation existed within the confines of its Chapel.

St. Paul's divided its 13 female classes into 11 white and 2 black classes. Other Episcopal churches provided similar information on the racial composition and organization of their Sunday School classes. Trinity Church, for example, reported that 47 scholars, 23 black and 24 white, attended its Sunday School. The article in the *Christian Journal* also commented on the curriculum taught in each Sunday School and also on the attendance, capabilities and progress of both black and white scholars. Unfortunately, by 1826, when All Saint's Church first appeared in the annual Sunday School articles published in the *Christian Journal*, the periodical provided less detailed information than in earlier years.

The May 1826 article merely mentioned that 65 males and 25 females regularly attended Sunday School classes in a room built in 1825 behind the temporary wooden chapel, located at Grand and Pitt Streets, parishioners of All Saint's used. All Saint's parish started its Sunday School in October 1824, the same month it opened the chapel at Grand and Pitt for religious services. The article praised the scholars of All Saint's for the attention they gave to religious services and their studies, but the 1826 review of Episcopal Church Sunday Schools contained no information on the distribution of blacks and whites in the various Sunday School programs.

The 1834 entry in All Saint's Church vestry minutes strongly suggests that black Sunday School classes met separately from their white counterparts. Joshua N. Perkins' book, *History of St. Stephen's parish in the City of New York, 1805-1905, 1906*, mentioned that St. Thomas' Episcopal Church constructed a gallery above the pulpit "'in full view of the congregation'" for their black Sunday School scholars. In 1826, the parishioners of St. Thomas erected a church at Broadway and Houston, two years before All Saint's moved into its new stone edifice on Henry Street. Perkins also described the balcony of St. John's Chapel simply as a "'Sunday School gallery.'" If All Saint's provided a separate room for their black Sunday School participants to meet, than where did they and other African Americans sit during Sunday services in inside the church?

Dunnell and the Slave Gallery Story

The oral history of All Saint's (now St. Augustine's) Church reserves the original occupation of the enclosed space above side galleries to slaves, yet the vestry minutes only made a single reference to the female members of the Sunday School as occupying that area. Most of the literature that either refers to the "slave gallery" or retells the entire story of its former use dates from the time of Rev. Kenneth Guthrie's leadership of All Saint's. Until recently, all known written sources indicated that the "slave gallery" story originated in 1915, when the Bishop William Greer appointed Guthrie to serve as vicar of All Saint's Church.

A March 20, 1911 article revealed that the appellation "slave gallery" existed before the arrival of Kenneth Guthrie. The article, contained in a single column, reported the retirement of William N. Dunnell, who served as rector of All Saint's from 1871 to 1911. The column came from one of a collection of 1911 articles contained in the New York City Episcopal Church Archives that announced the imminent retirement of William Dunnell. A single sentence near the bottom of a column in a March 20, 1911 article stated that behind the "the big organ pipes in the balcony" of All Saint's Church "there used to be a slave gallery."

This is the earliest known written source that mentions the "slave gallery," and, since Dunnell served as rector from 1871 to 1911, it probably indicates that the phrase existed in the nineteenth century. The article that mentioned the "slave gallery" came from an as yet unidentified newspaper. The allusion to the "slave gallery" in the coverage of Dunnell's retirement suggests that certain members of All Saint's considered it an important chapter in the history of their Church, and that they were already circulating the story of its original function.

Kenneth Guthrie apparently inherited and helped popularize the story of the "slave gallery" and other anecdotes that retold the oral history of All Saint's Church. A *New York Times* article, also dated March 20, 1911, traced Dunnell's connection to All Saint's parish to time of his birth, February 3, 1825. The *Times* reported that Dunnell was born in the parish and christened in All Saint's Church. The article also identified Elbridge Gerry Dunnell, a prominent physician, who lived on Broome Street, as the father of the future rector. New York City directories in the 1820s listed a physician named Eldridge G. Dunnell as living at Broome and Lewis Streets. As early as 1817, the New York City directory listed an Eldridge G. Dunnell at Broome Street.

If Eldridge G. Dunnell was the father of the rector, then one or more members of Rev. Dunnell's family resided at Corlear's Hook, at least, seven years before the formation of All Saint's parish. At the time of Dunnell's birth, in 1825, slavery still existed in New York State, and the parishioners of All Saint's worshiped in the wooden Chapel at Grand and Pitt Streets. In June 1828, when All Saint's parish removed itself to that address, Dunnell was three years old, and slavery had ended in New York State eleven months earlier. William Dunnell and his family lived a short distance from the church at 290 Henry Street.

Dunnell perhaps knew some of the original parishioners of All Saint's parish, a group that possibly included his father and other family members. If Dunnell attended Sunday services at All Saint's in the 1820s or 1830s, then he probably retained memories of the people who sat in the

galleries and elsewhere in the Church. July 4th, 1827 clearly marks the day that New York State residents lost the legal right to own slaves. Dunnell, a two year old child in 1827, must have known that slavery officially ended in New York State near the time the new All Saint's Church opened, yet he still evidently endorsed the phrase "slave gallery" as a designation for a portion of the balcony of that church.

The March 20, 1911 *New York Times* article that announced Dunnell's retirement from his post at All Saint's Church also made a reference to the community of Williamsburg. According to the *Times* article, when Dunnell took over the leadership of All Saint's in 1817, many parishioners traveled by rowboat from the Brooklyn community of Williamsburg to Sunday services in Manhattan. In 1855, Williamsburg, formerly an independent village, merged with the City of Brooklyn. The *Times* article recalled that in 1871 bridges connecting Brooklyn with Manhattan did not as yet exist, and that the only other means of travelling across the East River were ferries, which transported passengers on an irregular basis. The *New York Times* account may confirm a long held belief at St. Augustine's Church that some parishioners of All Saint's, at least in the 1870s, lived in Williamsburg and traveled by rowboat across the East River to attend Sunday services.

Individuals elected as wardens and vestrymen, 1824-1829

Surprisingly, of the ten individuals listed as original wardens and vestrymen All Saint's in 1824, only Samuel P. Brown retained an official leadership position in the parish by June 1828. With the exception of Samuel P. Brown, the names of no other founding vestrymen or wardens appeared in the vestry minutes after 1828. For nearly a decade, Brown served as vestryman, warden and on various committees on behalf of All Saint's Church. After the annual election of the wardens and vestrymen on April 11, 1833, Brown's name ceased to appear in the vestry minutes of All Saint's parish.

Most of the other original vestrymen and wardens disappeared from the minutes for unknown reasons. For two of the founding vestrymen, George Lovett and William P. Rathbone, it is not difficult, however, to speculate on why they suddenly disappeared from the minutes and probably the parish entirely. After the annual election of the wardens and vestry in April 1827, Lovett and Rathbone forever relinquished their official responsibilities as vestrymen of All Saint's parish. Two separate scandals forced both men to leave their former positions within the parish. One scandal involved the misappropriation of funds raised for the erection of new church. The second scandal revolved around the trials of prominent New Yorkers for bank and insurance fraud.

The vestry of All Saint's elected George Lovett, a dock builder, to serve as treasurer, as they proceeded to raise funds and approve designs for a permanent house of worship. In 1827, the Vestry replaced George Lovett as treasurer and failed to reelect him to the vestry of All Saint's parish. On August 6, 1827, the vestry decided to file a lawsuit against their former treasurer, for they believed that Lovett had made off with funds that rightfully belonged to the parish. The vestry momentarily decided to delay "prosecuting for the funds now due them—from said George Lovett," and they enlisted a vestryman, James Burges, to negotiate for the recovery of the money. Burges evidently persuaded Lovett to return the funds, for the vestry minutes made

no further mention of the incident.

After the annual election in April 1827, William P. Rathbone's name also disappeared from the list of All Saint's vestrymen. Unlike the incident with George Lovett, which the vestry handled quietly, an 1826 grand jury indictment led to a public trial of Rathbone and eight other individuals. A complicated series of financial transactions involving several banks and an insurance company led to Rathbone's trial and indictment. New York City directories listed Rathbone's occupation as merchant; the trial revealed that he also owned shares and sat on the board of directors of, at least, two of the banks connected to the scandal. His codefendants included several prominent New Yorkers, Henry Eckford, a major shipbuilder, Jacob Barker, a financier and shipbuilder, and Matthew L Davis, a friend and future biographer of Aaron Burr.

The first trial ended in a hung jury and the state decided to retry the defendants. Rathbone, however, managed to avoid the second trial by cooperating with the Manhattan district attorney. In the second trial, Jacob Barker defended himself, and, in speeches to the jury, he described Eckford as a partner and patron of William P. Rathbone. Barker proceeded to frequently denounce Rathbone before the jury. A record of his testimony at the second trial is contained in several books that Barker used in his attempt to vindicate himself.

On one occasion, Barker, speaking to the jury, pointed directly at Rathbone and called him a rogue. Barker often verbally assailed Rathbone's character. He accused Rathbone of betraying his friend and patron, Eckford, and Barker also called him a "consummate villain" and "monster." At the time of his trial, Rathbone also served as the Alderman of the 11th Ward. An Alderman and an Assistant Alderman from each of the eleven wards served as the one of the twenty-two members of the Common Council, a body that, until 1834, annually selected the mayor of New York City.

William P. Rathbone

William P. Rathbone's reputation apparently never recovered, for, in 1827, his name ceased to appear in New York City directories as well as the vestry minutes of All Saint's parish. An 1830 Bergen County, New Jersey federal census schedule recorded a William P. Rathbone as living in Franklin Township. In the household of this William P. Rathbone lived two free black males, one 10 and under and the other between the ages of 34 and 56 years old. According to the 1820 federal census for New York County, a black female between the ages 13 and 27, lived in the Rathbone household. If the William P. Rathbone of Franklin Township, New Jersey was also the former vestryman of All Saint's, then what happened to the female slave in the 1820 federal census for New York County? Two free black males appear in the 1830 household of this William P. Rathbone. Where did they come from, did Rathbone ever own the two males and how did their status differ fundamentally from slaves of that era in New Jersey?

The 1840 federal census for New Jersey recorded that one free black male between the age of 10 and 24 lived in Rathbone's household. The older black male from the 1830 census disappeared from the Rathbone household by 1840. The younger black male in the 1830 census and the sole free black male cited in 1840 could be the same person. No William P. Rathbone appeared in the

1850 federal census record for Bergen County, New Jersey, but a person with that name surfaced in the population tabulation for Wirt County, Virginia.

This William P. Rathbone resided in or near a town named Parkersburg, and the census recorded that a 50 year-old male slave lived in his household. No one with the surname Rathbone appeared in the 1820, 1830 and 1840 census records for Wirt County. William P. Rathbone apparently died during the period between the 1850 and 1860 federal censuses. The 1860 federal census index for Wirt County, West Virginia, listed the names of four Rathbones, J. Castello, John V., Samuel and Van Allen.

A December 9, 1846 obituary in the *New York Evening Post* acknowledged the passing of a woman named Martha M. Rathbone of Parkersburg, Virginia (now West Virginia). The obituary referred to her husband, William P. Rathbone, as a former resident of New York City, but it gave no further details about these two individuals. In 2000, a woman named Paula Faulkner posted an e-mail on a message board at the Ancestry.Com. She wanted to locate individuals descended from William Palmer Rathbone of New York, his wife Martha Ming Valleau and their son, Samuel Brown Rathbone. Paula Faulkner is a descendant of Samuel Brown Rathbone, who was born in 1823. Martha Ming Valleau was born in 1793. The December 1846 obituary of Martha M. Rathbone stated that she died at 53, so 1793 would be the year of her birth. Paula Faulkner could be a descendant of a founding member of All Saint's Church.

Christian Bergh and Thomas Underhill

All Saint's Vestry Elections 1824-1829

May 27, 1824 Election

Vestry Wardens

Appleby, William Nichols, Sellick Allaire, James P.

Brown, Samuel P. Palmer, James D. Dominck, George

Irwin, George Rathbone, William P.

Lovett, George Rooke, John

April 5, 1825 Election

Vestry Wardens

Appleby, William Palmer, James D. Allaire, James P.

Brown, Samuel P. Perry, Joseph S. Dominick, George
Lovett, George Rathbone, William P.
Nichols, Sellick Welling, Charles

March 28, 1826 Election

Vestry Wardens

Appleby, William Palmer, James D. Allaire, James P.
Brown, Samuel P. Perry, Joseph S. Dominick, George
Lovett, George Rathbone, William P.
Nichols, Selick Welling, Charles

April 16, 1827 Election

Vestry Wardens

Brown, Samuel P. Perry, Joseph S. Dominick, George

Graham, William Scott, George Rooke, John
Hammond, Judah Underhill, Thomas
Lawrence, Charles C. Wiggins, Richard

On June 24, 1826, for reasons not explained in the vestry minutes, an election chose John Van Steenbourgh to succeed John Rooke with as a warden, before the expiration of the latter's one year term. Also, James Burges replaced Judah Hammond as a one of the eight vestrymen of All Saint's Church.

April 7, 1828 Election

Vestry Wardens

Brown, Samuel P. Sabbaton, Paul VanSteenbourgh, John
Burges, James Stuart, Frederic A. Dougherty, John
Charter, George Tanner, Benjamin
Perry, Joseph S. Wiggins, Richard

April 20, 1829 Election

Vestry Wardens

*Brown, Samuel P. Perry, Joseph S. Burges, James
Charter, George Sabbaton, Paul Dougherty, John
Hewlett, George Wiggins, Richard
Lownds, Oliver M. Wood, Elijah*

*Wardens and Vestrymen of All Saint's
Church in New York City*

Directories 1827-1829

1827-28 name occupation address

Burges, James marshal 117 Suffolk

Charter, George 71 Pearl h. 112

Orchard

Hammond, Judah attorney 2 Dey & 4 Frankfort

h. 176 Division

Lawrence, Charles potter 595 Water

Perry, Joseph M. D. 369 Grand

Sabbaton, Paul A. founder Cannon h. Columbia

Scott, George shoemaker 351 Grand

Stuart, Frederic A. com. mer 88 Wall h. 16 Attorney

Tanner, Benjamin hatter Scammel n. Lombardy

Underhill, Thomas broker 56 Wall h. 106 Essex

Vanstenburgh, John shipwright 199 Madison

Wiggins, Richard teacher h. 246 Division

1828-29 Hewlett, George grocer Delancey c. Ridge

Lowndes, Oliver M. sheriff 194 Harman

Wood, Elijah grocer 513 Grand