

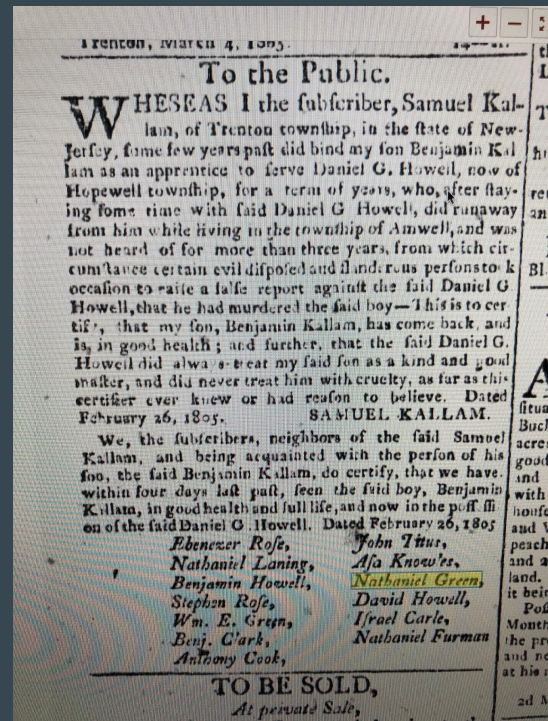
# “Time of a Black boy”: Slavery in New Jersey and the William Green Plantation

...

Kristin Bridges

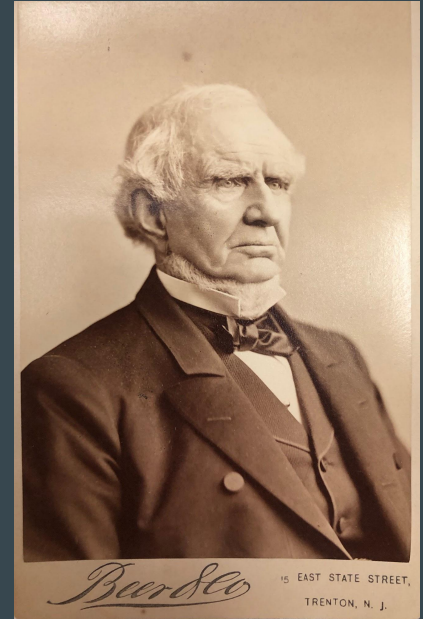
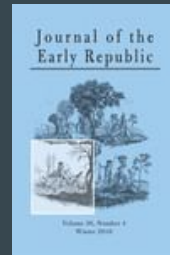
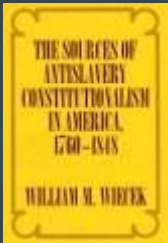
# Primary Sources

- Wills: Many of the Green Family's wills are housed at the New Jersey State Archives
- Newspaper Articles
- Hunterdon County Manumission Records
- Hunterdon County Slave Birth Records



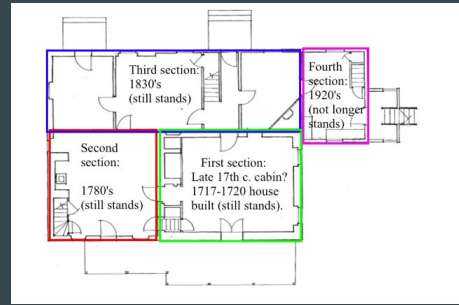
# Historiography

- *The Sources of Anti-Slavery Constitutionalism in America, 1760-1848* by William M. Wiecek
- “The Persistence of Slavery and Involuntary Servitude in a Free State (1685-1866)” by Simon F. Moss
- “The Whole North is Not Abolitionized: Slavery’s Slow Death in New Jersey, 1830-1860” by James J. Gigantino II

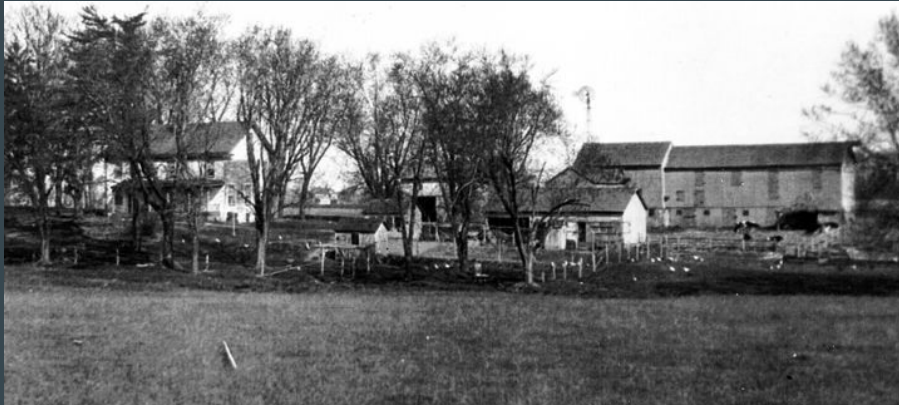


(Above: Photo of John Cleve Green)

# Background: The William Green House



- Initially built in the 1720s there were several additions over the years
- William Green I built the initial portion of the house and left it to his son William II who passed it down his family line.
- The house was occupied by several families until the 1960s and has been abandoned since



# Background: Slavery in New Jersey

- 1786 set the stage for the gradual abolition of slavery because it prohibited the importation of slavery within the state
- 1804, 1807, and 1830 saw three acts passed in an attempt to end gradually abolish slavery
- The last slave was officially freed with the passing of the 13th Amendment
- The 1804 Gradual Abolition Act freed female slaves after the age of 21 and men at the age of 25. Children born after the act were considered “free” but served as indentured servants. Any child born before 1804 were considered “indentured for life”
- After this act was passed, extensive records were kept on slaves born into families and manumissions in order to keep track of how many slaves were in New Jersey

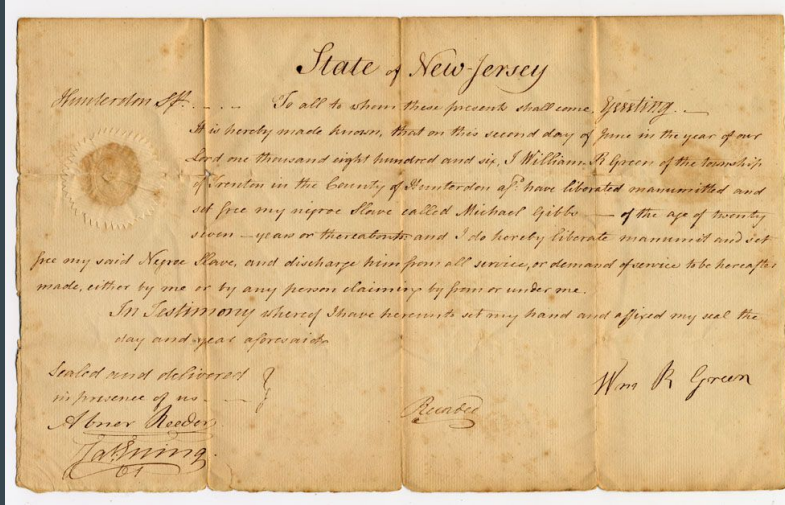
# Green Family Prominence in the Community

- March 11, 1805: *The Trenton Federalist* publishes an advertisement with the Green's as witnesses to the health of a man's son
- December 13, 1802: William Green publishes an announcement in the *The Trenton Federalist* as the executor of Christopher Howell's Will
- John Cleve Green, a Princeton Graduate, was a wealthy merchant who donated significant funds to Princeton University and The Lawrenceville Academy
- Many Greens served in public positions in their communities. Such as the William Green I who served as a judge and his descendent, Nathaniel Green, who served as the Commissioner of Appeal for the Township of Trenton in 1808.



# A Slave Owning Family

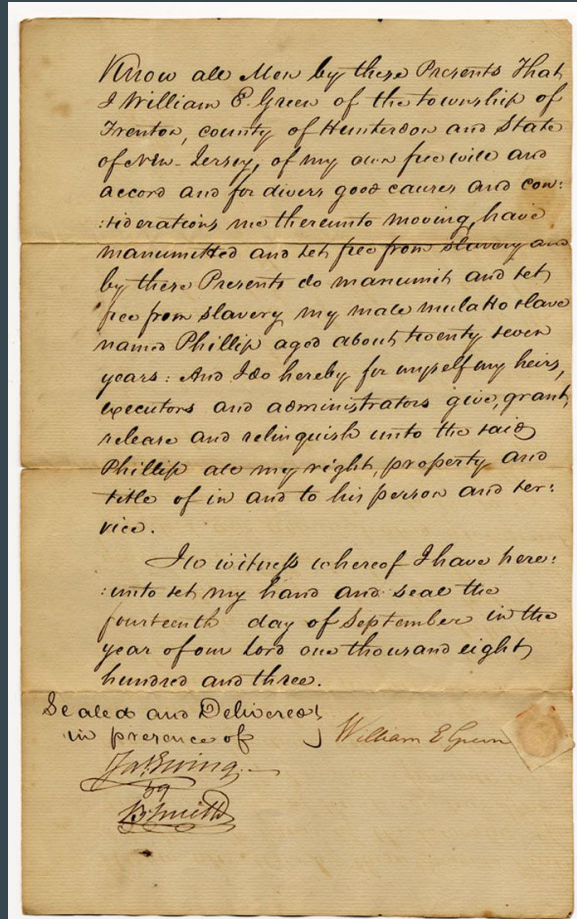
William R. Green: Michael Gibbs (aged 27),  
Trenton Twp., 2 June 1806.



(Above: New Jersey State archives, Hunterdon  
County Slave Manumissions))

(Right: New Jersey State archives, Hunterdon County Slave  
Manumissions)

William E. Green: Phillip (aged about 27), a  
mulatto slave, Trenton Twp., 14 September  
1803



# A Slave Owning Family

New Jersey State Archives, Birth  
Certificates of Children of  
Slaves, 1804-1835

Charles, born to Betty who  
was owned by Nathaniel  
Green

To the Clerk of the County of Hunterdon  
I do hereby certify that my Negro woman Betty was  
delivered of a male child on the 27<sup>th</sup> Decr. 1805 for name  
Charles - Witness my hand the 3<sup>rd</sup> Feby 1820  
for Nathl Green  
John Howells

George, born to Dinah  
who was owned by  
William E. Green

George son of Dinah the property of the subscriber  
was born on the twenty first day of November  
Eighteen hundred and four Town of Trenton  
County of Hunterdon & State of New Jersey -  
as Witness my hand this 9<sup>th</sup> day of March 1805  
To Mr. Ralph Hunt,  
(Clerk of Hunterdon)  
William E. Green

Dick, born to Dina who was  
owned by William E. Green

To the Clerk of the Superior Court of Common  
Pleas for the County of Hunterdon I William E. Green  
of Trenton township in the County of Hunterdon  
and State of New Jersey formerly do hereby testify  
that on the tenth day of January last Dina a  
black woman a Slave to me was delivered of  
a male child called that the said Child is named  
Dick and is Aged Seven months on this day  
in witness whereof I have hereunto set my  
hand and the day of August in the year of our  
Lord Eighteen hundred and seven  
William E. Green

Ruth, born to Jenet who was  
owned by Richard M. Green

Livoniaville Nov 23, 1810  
This certifies that on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October -  
1810 my female Slave Jenet had a  
female child which is named Ruth -  
Ruth and M. Green  
To the Clerk of the  
County of Hunterdon



# Evidence of Slavery at the House

A True and perfect Inventory of all and singular Goods, Chattels, Rights, Credits of Phebe Green late of the Township of Eving in the County of Hunterdon deceased by us whose names are hereunto subscribed, this twenty first day of March in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and thirty seven 1837

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Purse & Apperrel              | \$71.00 |
| Horned Cattle                 | 24.00   |
| Plate & other household goods | 139.50  |
| The time of a Black Boy       | 150.00  |
| Debts                         | 3522.43 |
|                               | 3909.93 |

1 Chest over looked

\$3910.50

John Green  
John Loring

Hunterdon, P. Lemuel M. Green, & John Louis, surviving Executors of Phebe Green, dec. being duly sworn according to law, do solemnly depose that the above instrument contains a true & perfect inventory of all singular the

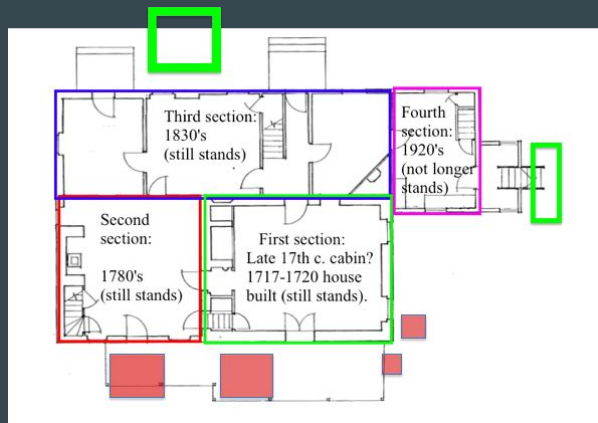
(Left: Last Will and Testament of Phebe Green)

(Right: Last Will and Testament Will of William Green III)

hands of goods and chattels of the property of the  
debts of the said Phebe Green, dated the eighth day  
of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand  
eight hundred and thirty seven: I hereby, vicariously  
him, appointing and distributing it to him in  
and of the estate of the testator Phebe Green.  
That part of the personal Estate late of the  
testator amounting to about one third, which  
I have taken into my own possession as my own  
property consisting of sundry goods and chattels,  
I do hereby, I appoint and distribute to be  
equally divided share and share alike to each  
of my above mentioned daughters Rebekah Lydia  
and Maria. Lastly, in case my son Samuel  
should die before me, I do hereby order and appoint  
that my daughter in Law Mary Green do receive  
the full possession of the rights and privileges  
above devised married and distributed to my said  
son Samuel in respect to his right in the house as  
married together with her proper right of dower  
in and to his Estate, during or as long as she shall  
be and remain his widow. The time of my said  
daughter Maria's said indentured service, I leave to  
my daughter Rebekah Willing. — I do appoint my said  
daughter Rebekah Willing as executrix of this my last will  
and testament of distribution. Witness whereof  
I have hereunto set my hand and seal the fifth  
day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand  
eight hundred and thirty seven.  
Signed, sealed, pronounced and published in presence of  
the testator as above her last Will  
in our presence then the presence of said John  
Green subscribed our names as lawfully sworn  
Executors  
John Green  
John L. Green

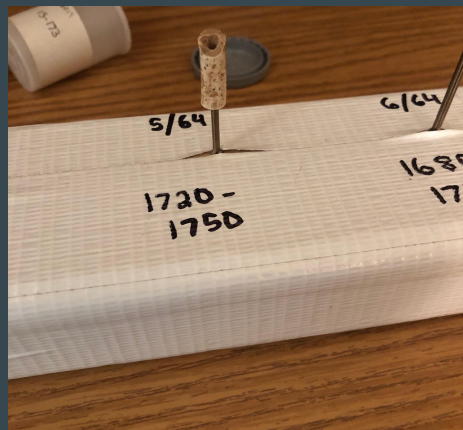
# Archaeological Excavations at the House

- Excavations done in 1989-95, 2015, and 2019
- The assemblage includes nails, ceramics, brick, glass, shell, pipe stem fragments, and some bone
- Digs have occurred on the south and east side of the house
- Future places of interest include locating the privy, smokehouse, barn, and cellar.

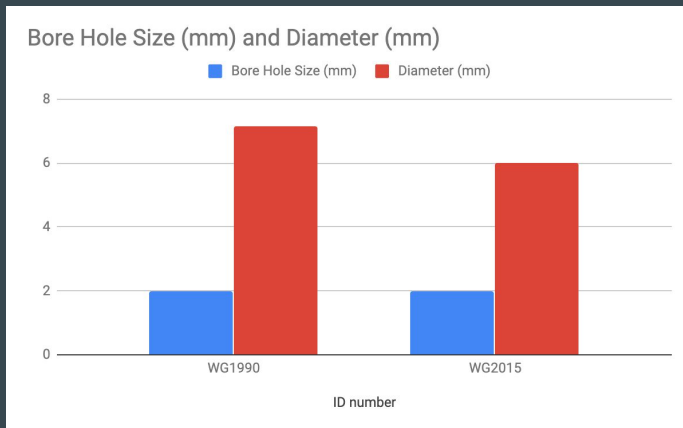


# Pipe Stem Measurements

- Using Harrington's method, the pipe stems found during excavations can be dated
- The two pipe stems found at the William Green House have bore holes that are  $\frac{5}{64}$ ths of an inch, and therefore are from the range of the 1720s to the 1750s
- Therefore, the assemblage contains artifacts that date back to the earliest occupation of the farm



| Pipe Stem Measurements |                     |               |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| ID number              | Bore Hole Size (mm) | Diameter (mm) |
| WG1990                 | 1.9812              | 7.14          |
| WG2015                 | 1.9812              | 5.99          |



# Archaeological evidence of slavery at the House?

- No archaeological evidence yet found during excavations at the house.
- However, this does not mean that slavery did not exist at the house
- In the North, slaves rarely lived in separate slave cabins which means that it is much more difficult to find artifacts that can distinctly be identified as belonging to slaves in the household.
- Slaves sometimes slept in barns, and therefore items belonging to slaves have been found in them, but the barn that stood near the William Green House has not been found.
- “Archeological investigations conducted at the Thompson site suggest that through the first decade of the nineteenth century, the white and enslaved occupants of the small, eight-room house lived in close contact, likely sharing objects and space with each other” (The Archaeology of Northern Slavery and Freedom)

**Conclusion:**

**Slaves were at the William Green House**



# Works Cited

- D'Autrechy, Phyllis B. "Slavery in Hunterdon County" *Some Old Records of Hunterdon County, 1701-1838*.  
Trenton: Trenton Printing Company, 1979.
- Delle, James A. *The Archaeology of Northern Slavery and Freedom*. Gainesville: The University of Florida Press,  
2019.
- Green, Robert Reeder. *The Land Along the Shabakunks : Adventures into Ewing's Past from Old Cross Keys to the  
William Green Farm (Ewingville to Trenton State College Campus)* s.l: Green, 1979.
- Green, William "Notice" *Trenton Federalist*. November 1, 1802.
- Gigantino II, James J. *The Ragged Road to Freedom: Slavery and Freedom in New Jersey, 1775-1865*, Philadelphia:  
University of Philadelphia, 2015.
- Gigantino, James J. "'The Whole North Is Not Abolitionized': Slavery's Slow Death in New Jersey, 1830–1860."  
*Journal of the Early Republic* 34, no. 3 (2014): 411-37. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24486906>.
- Harrington, J.C. "Dating Stem Fragments of Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Clay Tobacco Pipes". *Quarterly  
Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Virginia* 9(1):10–14. 1954.

# Works Cited Continued

Kallam, Samuel. "To the Public" *Trenton Federalist*. March 11, 1805.

Laning, John. *Pension Letter of Phebe Green*. National Archives Film 27 Reel 1123. 1832.

<http://williamgreenhouse.org/documents/default.html>

Leader, George, and Hammer, Jason. "The first excavations of the William Green colonial House, Ewing, New Jersey and its role as a Revolutionary War billet". *Archaeological Society of New Jersey Bulletin*. No. 71-73: 2016-2018. pp 187-196. 2019.

Moss, Simeon F. "The Persistence of Slavery and Involuntary Servitude in a Free State (1685-1866)." *The Journal of Negro History* 35, no. 3 (1950): 289-314. doi:10.2307/2715701.

Preservation New Jersey. "William Green House." *Preservation New Jersey*. 2015.

<https://www.preservationnj.org/listings/william-green-house/>

Schmidt, Hubert. *Slavery and Attitudes on Slavery on Hunterdon County New Jersey*, Flemington: Hunterdon County Historical Society, 1941.

"Township Officers Elected at the Town Meeting for the Township of Trenton on the 11th Instant" *Trenton Federalist*, April 18, 1808.

Wiecek, William M. "Antislavery during and after the American Revolution." In *The Sources of Anti-Slavery Constitutionalism in America, 1760-1848*, 40-61. Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1977.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt207g6m0.7>.

# Thank You!

