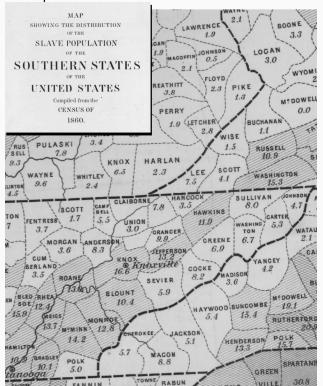
### **Enslavement**

Chattel slavery was a system in which allowed people to be bought, sold, owned & worked forever. This system lasted 246 years in the English-speaking Americas.

There are popular misconceptions that enslavement of Africans was largely absent from East Tennesse, Southwestern Virgina & Eastern Kentucky. Though there were robust anti-slavery organizations in the mountains & valleys, the economy relied heavily on the free labor of Africans & their descendants.

From the earliest colonial explorations of the region, those enslaved men, women & children were present in the area.





On January 1st, 1863 President Abraham
Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.
That Federal document ended chattel
enslavement in the midst of the US Civil War.
Declaring "that all persons held as slaves"
within the rebellious states "are, and
henceforward shall be free."

#### Did you know?

The Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to the enslaved people in the state of Tennessee, because Tennessee was no longer part of the Confederate States of America. By 1863, the state had returned as part of the United States of America and was occupied by the US Army.

Despite that, the then miltary Governor of Tennessee, Andrew Johnson, manumitted (or released from slavery) the people he held in bondage. That date was August 8th, 1863.



## The 8th of August

Celebration at Greeneville. The Colored people of Greneville had a celebration at that place yesterday. A procession was formed in the following order: 1st. Officer of the day, Sam Johnson, late a plave of President Johnson. 2d. Greeneville Brass Band, in four horse wagon, horses suitably bedecked with flags, &c. 3d. Citizens in wagons, buggies, carriages, on horseback and on foot Afterwards the colored Sabbath School of the city, schildren also formed in procession, carrying the American flag in front. They all morched out from town some distance when they were addressed by ex. President Johnson, Col. Bob Crawford and others. President Johnson went out about 11 o'clock in a two horse buggy, in company with several other gentleman. The procession commenced moving at 3 o'clock down Irish street to Maine, and on to Tusculum College near which the speaking and picnic exercises were held.

Knoxville Chronicle, August 9th, 1871

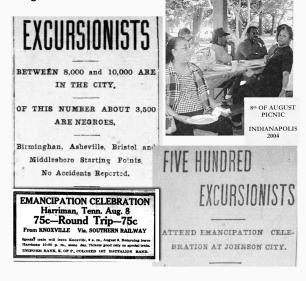
The earliest documentation of the 8th of August being celebrated as Emancipation Day in our region comes from a newspaper artcle some eight years after the Emancipation Proclamation & six years from the fall of the Confederacy. This first known event was held in Greeneville, Tennessee, the home of Andrew Johnson & the newly freed people; Samuel, Dolly & William.



Dolly Johnson, circa 1861, holding Andrew Johnson Stover, grandson of Andrew Johnson. Dolly had at least three children of her own: Liz, Florence & William Andrew

## Spread of the Celebration

As the decades passed after Emancipation, the celebration of August 8th as Freedom Day spread out from Greeneville & East Tennessee to six states and over 50 communities at its height.



Though Samuel Johnson is credited with the establishment of the the 8th of August as the date to be observed as Emanciption Day, the migration of Black families out of the agricultural valleys, into the coal fields & the factories of the North facilitated the spread in ways no one person could.



8th of August celebration in Detroit, Michigan, 1947

## **Organizations & Communities currently** commemorating the 8th of August

Appalachian African American Cultural Center Pennington Gap, Virginia

Beck Cultural Exchange Center Knoxville. Tennessee

George Clem Multicultural Alliance Greeneville, Tennessee

JC Emancipation Saturday Johnson City, Tennessee

Morristown Task Force on Diversity Morristown, Tennessee

The Tennessee Picnic Association Newport, Tennessee

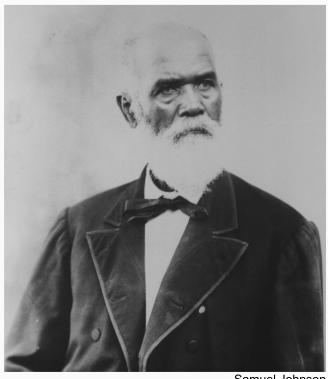
Clarksville, Tennessee Paducah, Kentucky Hopkinsville, Kentucky

#### For more information & additional resources:

Black in Appalachia www. BlackInAppalachia.org/8th-of-august

Andrew Johnson National Historic Site National Park Service www.nps.gov/anjo

# 8TH OF AUGUST **CELEBRATION OF EMANCIPATION**



Samuel Johnson

August 8 has been designated as the date for emancipation day exercises. This custom originated because negroes owned by Andrew Johnson, at Greeneville, were set free on August 8, and Sam Johnson, one of the former slaves of Andrew Johnson, worked for a long time and was successful in having Aug. 8 set aside for Emancipation Day observed in this section.