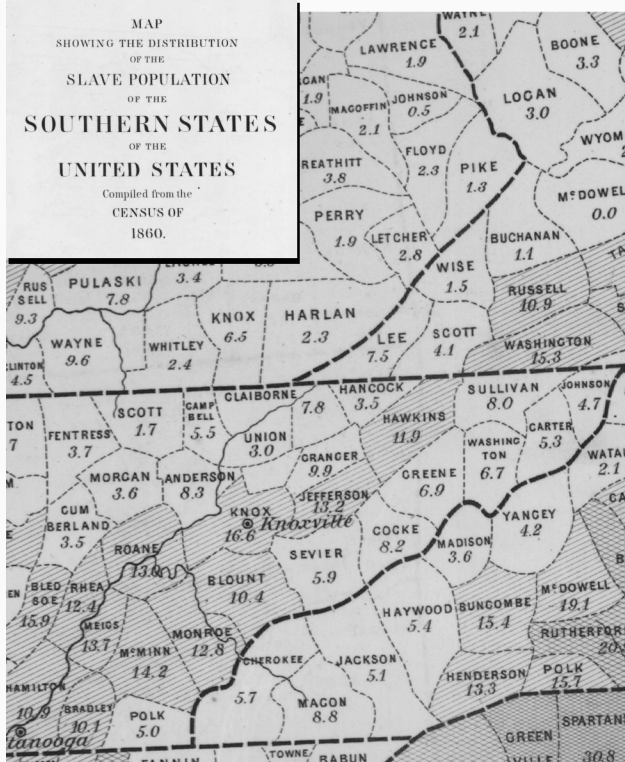


# Enslavement

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 Tennessee, Southwestern Virginia & 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.



# 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.

**EXCURSIONISTS**  
BETWEEN 8,000 and 10,000 ARE  
IN THE CITY,  
OF THIS NUMBER ABOUT 3,500  
ARE NEGROES.  
Birmingham, Asheville, Bristol and  
Middlesboro Starting Points.  
No Accidents Reported.



**EMANCIPATION CELEBRATION**  
Harriman, Tenn. Aug. 8  
**75c—Round Trip—75c**  
From KNOXVILLE Via SOUTHERN RAILWAY  
Special train will leave Knoxville, 8 a. m., August 8. Returning leave  
Harriman 10:00 p. m., same day. Tickets good only on special train.  
UNIFORM BARK, K. OF P., COLORED 1ST BATTALION BAND.

**FIVE HUNDRED**  
**EXCURSIONISTS**  
ATTEND EMANCIPATION CELEBRATION AT JOHNSON CITY.

Though Samuel Johnson is credited with the establishment of the the 8th of August as the date to be observed as Emancipation 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

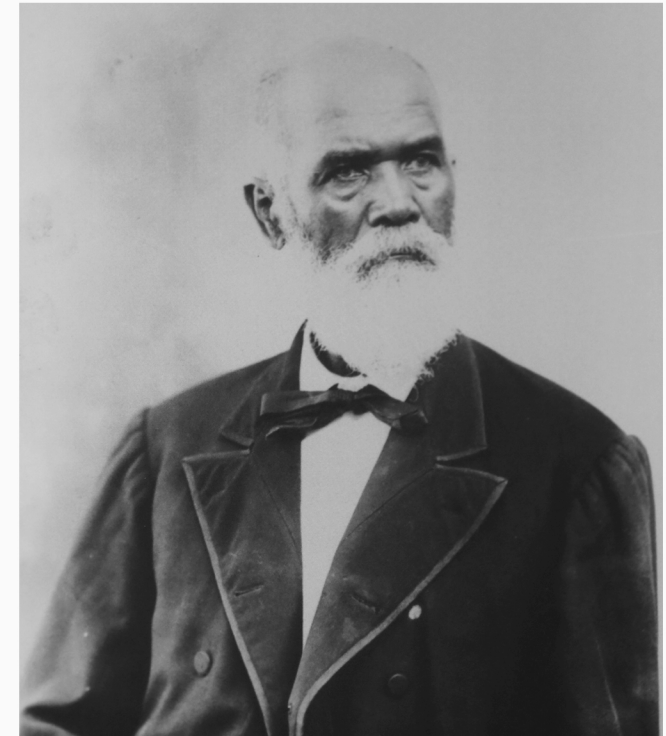
[www. BlackInAppalachia.org/8th-of-august](http://www.BlackInAppalachia.org/8th-of-august)

Andrew Johnson National Historic Site

National Park Service

[www.nps.gov/anjo](http://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.