

**Black  
Resistance  
in the Ending  
of Quaker  
Slaveholding  
in Virginia  
and Maryland,  
1750-1800**



**Presentation to  
Charlottesville Friends Meeting**

**Based in New Research  
by Jim Fussell  
16 January 2022**

***(Alternate phrase:  
'Enslavement by Quakers'?)***

## **Four Questions I Will Try to Answer Today**

- 1. Why Did Quakers End Quaker Enslavement in Maryland and Virginia?**
- 2. Why by the Year 1800 were Quakers absent from Anne Arundel County, Maryland - a place which had once been the center of Maryland Quaker Life from 1672 to 1785?**
- 3. How Crucial was the Role of 'Black Resistance' in precipitating the process of ending Quaker Slaveholding?**
- 4. What Details Can We Know About the 30-Year Internal Struggle Among Quakers to End Quaker Slaveholding?**

# IN 1812 Visiting Quaker Minister Joseph Hoag Witnessed Physical Desolation at Former Quaker Sites at West River in Anne Arundel County, Maryland

140 years after George Fox established Maryland Yearly Meeting, three decades after the Yearly Meeting annual sessions relocated to Baltimore in 1785, Joseph Hoag visited West River.

*Joseph Hoag (1762-1846): "From this place we went to attend an appointed meeting at West River, where Friends once held their Yearly Meeting for Maryland.*

*We found it a desolate spot, the meeting-house being almost down with decay—the grave-yard lying open, with briars and bushes growing - hogs and cattle feeding on the graves, many of which were greatly disordered by them.*

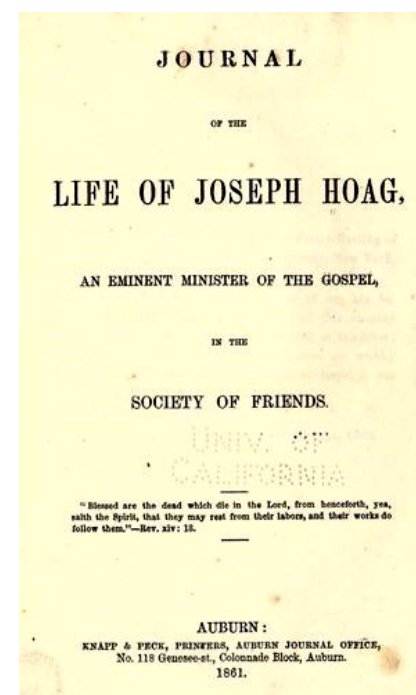
*My feelings were mournful, and I could but exclaim in my heart, "How doth the earth mourn with a dreary face, and refuse to smile upon the remains of those who marred her beauty by oppression!" (paraphrasing Jeremiah 12:4)*



JOSEPH HOAG.

189

witnessed the power of Gospel authority so to rise into dominion over all opposition for many days. It was the Lord's doings, to whom the glory belongs. From this place we went to attend an appointed meeting at West River, where Friends once held their Yearly Meeting for Maryland. We found it a desolate spot, the meeting-house being almost down with decay—the grave-yard lying open, with briars and bushes growing,—hogs and cattle feeding on the graves, many of which were greatly disordered by them. My feelings were mournful, and I could but exclaim in my heart, "How doth the earth mourn with a dreary face, and refuse to smile upon the remains of those who marred her beauty by oppression!"



The 'inward desolation' John Woolman experienced on visits to the Chesapeake Region in 1757, 55 years later in 1812 had become the outward desolation at Quaker sites in in Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

Phillips P. Moulton, ed., *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman*, 1971, p. 64.

After his death in 1846. Hoag became famous for his 1803 prophecy predicting divisive conflict and civil war.

## When Did Quakers Cease Being Slaveholders?

**Slaveholding became a disownable office over a period of 12 years:**

**-New England Yearly Meeting in 1772**

**-Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1774**

(including Pipe Creek, Goose Creek and Hopewell Meetings in PYM's Western Quarter in Maryland and Virginia)

**-New York Yearly Meeting in 1776**

(Purchase, NY 1767)

**-Maryland (*West River*) Yearly Meeting in 1778**

(including Deer Creek, Gunpowder, Sandy Spring and Eastern Shore Meetings such as Third Haven)

**-North Carolina Yearly Meeting in 1783**

**-Virginia Yearly Meeting in 1784.**

(including Richmond and Tidewater area Meetings)

**Chesapeake Region Quaker Meetings (*after 1785 - Baltimore Yearly Meeting*) in the 1750s were in three different Yearly Meetings. Within each of these Yearly Meetings the end of Quaker Slaveholding was a process lasting approximately three decades.**



# John Woolman of New Jersey: His 6 Journeys to Maryland and 2 Journeys to Virginia and North Carolina from 1746 to 1768.

**1746:** With Isaac Andrews. March 12 to June 16 to Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina (3 months, 1500 miles). Monocacy, Fairfax, Hopewell, Shenandoah with John Cheagles *"In our journeying to and fro, we found some honest-hearted Friends who appeared to be concerned for the cause of Truth among a backsliding people."*

**1748:** Aug 7 with *"my ancient friend John Sykes"* (age 66) to Delaware and Eastern Shore of Maryland (6 weeks, 340 miles). To **Western Shore Quarterly Meeting**. *"Though our Society in these parts appeared to me to be in a decline condition, yet I believe the Lord hath a people amongst them, who labour to serve him uprightly, but have many difficulties to encounter."*

**1757:** Early May-: Maryland 2 , Virginia 12 meetings , North Carolina. (2 Months 1150 miles) to annual seasons of Virginia Yearly Meeting. He visited **William Cox at Deer Creek**, Cedar Creek 12th, Camp Creek 14th, and Swamp, Wainoak Burleigh, and Black Water Meetings. **Virginia Yearly Meeting** was held at Western Branch. to May 30th.

On finding the language of the query on importing negroes has been watered-down, he stood to speak, saying the Negroes are 'captives of war or taken by stealth'. No one objected to what he said, nevertheless the diminished query language remained in place.

He continued to North Carolina and back to to Tidewater Virginia meetings with James Copeland to Curles, Black Creek, Caroline with William Stance to Goose Creek and Fairfax in Northern Virginia, and into Maryland to Pipe Creek, and Menallen with John Everett.

**1766:** May 5 - with John Sleeper 'to travel on foot in the form of a servant amongst them' to Delaware and Eastern Shore of Maryland to the Nicholite Sect, Cecil, Sassafras, and **Third Haven** *"I had a very lively feeling of the state of the oppressed"* (p. 146-147).

**1767:** Apr 26. *"Lonely walk"* alone on foot to Western Maryland. Quarterly meeting at Gunpowder, Pipe Creek, Red Lands and Western Quarterly in Pennsylvania. He was *"united to a tender-hearted people in these parts."*

**1768:** May 5. He went alone on foot to Maryland (5 weeks) to annual session of **West River Yearly Meeting** *"Much inward waiting."*

John Woolman was very important in ending Quaker slaveholding,  
Yet perhaps not as uniquely significant as later Friends have claimed.  
Other actors were also crucial.

## **Factors in Ending Quaker Slaveholding:**

- 1) Forerunners 1688-1742 (Daniel Pastorius, Ralph Sandiford, Benjamin Lay and others)**
- 2) The broader Quaker internal reform movement against moral decline which began among Friends in Ireland, England and North America the mid-1750s**
- 3) The Moral Crisis created by French and Indian War (Seven Years War), including persecution of war resisters and an interruption in Atlantic trade**
- 4) The decline of Quaker Enslavers among the leadership, especially men like Pennsylvanians Anthony Morris, Jr, Israel Pemberton and John Kinsey, Jr. as well as Robert Jordan, Jr. from Nansemond, Virginia who moved to Philadelphia in 1731**
- 5) The Writings of John Woolman & Anthony Benezet from 1754 to 1771. Benezet among the overseers that approved Woolman's groundbreaking 1754 booklet.**
- 6) Traveling Ministers From Northern Colonies, Britain & Ireland (Besides Woolman, others included Mary Peisley, Daniel Stanton, David Ferris, Sarah Richards Harrison)**
- 7) Strong Annual Condemnatory Epistles after 1757 from London and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings**
- 8) Local Quaker anti-slavery activists in Maryland and Virginia Meetings (Edward Stabler, Sarah Lynch Terrell, William Cox, Benjamin Parvin, Barnaby Nixon and others)**
- 9) The Crisis and Struggle Precipitated by Black Resistance in Quaker Enslaver Households. I will offer specific examples and show how they fit into a larger pattern of Slave Resistance**

# With Hindsight We Can Chart Nine Steps Maryland and Virginia Quakers Took To End Quaker Slaveholding and Involvement with Slavery

	<b>Step</b>	<b>Year Began</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Significance</b>	<b>Disownments</b>
1	<b>Disciplining ‘Gentry Leisure Activities’</b> (horse racing, gambling, use of strong drink, as wells ‘neglecting to attend’ meeting for worship)	1756		The rising reform first focused on the symptoms of what Woolman called ‘inward desolation.’ It weakened the position of Quaker Enslavers. Marietta, p. 120.	John Lee, Jr., MD Moses Haines, NJ, 1759
2	<b>Making Slave Trading (importing) a Disownable Act</b>	1761 LYM 1759/1761 MD	MD Quaker Slave Trader Samuel Galloway, a [former] Quaker in West River Maryland appears to have had influence to delay Maryland YM’s denunciation of slave-trading for two years. London-based VA slave trader John Hanbury died in 1758.	Trans-Atlantic cooperation.  By the mid-1760s many Virginians were boycotting all British imports including the slave trade viewing it as an imperial intrusion on colony	Joshua Albertson, 1777 dealing. Uneasy that slaveholding had " crept in , and got deep Root amongst us , “ 1767 MD
3	<b>Requiring Friends to Teach Enslaved People To Read</b>	about 1760		The new requirement of ‘Negro education’ kept the well being of enslaved on the agenda of monthly meetings. It was just as significant to changing Quaker teachers as is was to Black learners.	
4	<b>Making Buying and Selling of Enslaved People a Disownable Act (committees appointed)</b>	1762	VA YM Query: “Are Friends Clear of importing and buying negroes or other slaves; and do they use well those they are possessed of?”	West River Friends even bought & sold Enslaved people during Yearly Meeting. A VA law of 1723 (MD 1753?) profited individual enslavers from manumitted. Reuniting spouses	Daniel Bartlett diso 1767, Third Haven, MD  Hopewell W. Askew, 1782
5	<b>Disallowing Enslavers From Holding Leadership Positions in Meeting, such as Elder &amp; Clerk</b>	1770 MD			
6	<b>Making Holding of People in Slavery a Disownable Act (Books of Manumissions Kept by Committees)</b>	1774 PYM, 1778 MYM 1785 VYM	Robert Waters	1st Manumissions: Hopewell Wm Joliffe 1773, Gunpowder, West River	
7	<b>Making Employment as an Overseer a Disownable Act</b>	Before 1789		Some Alexandria, VA Quakers support “Negro Moses” in Jan 1791 in the killing in self defense of overseer Hezekiah Willams employed by Charles Alexander, Sr.	James Harris 1789, John Harris 1793 VA Robert S. Terrell 1835
8	<b>Making Hiring or Leasing Enslaved Labor a Disownable Act</b>	1790s			Christopher Lynch 1805 VA; William Amos, Jr. 1809 MD
9	<b>Disciplining a Friend Who Revealed a Hiding Place of a Freedom Seeker</b>	1809 Little Falls Mtg		When in 1809 an Elder Thomas Wilson at Little Falls Meeting in Harford, Co., Maryland was told he had revealed the hiding place of a freedom seeker leading to recapture , he became angry.	After a nearly two year discipline process, Wilson acknowledged fault and was not disowned.

## Three Accelerators of the Process of Ending Quaker Enslavement: Black Resistance, Wars, and Legislation

**- Warfare accelerated the Quaker Reform Process generally, by the moral crisis they created for Quakers, as well as removing enslavers from positions of influence through disownments for militia service, loyalty oaths or other war related violations of discipline.**

**-Legislation and Lobbying to en manumission laws prohibiting manumissions by individuals succeeded in Virginia in 1782 and in Maryland in 1796. Laws to tax, restrict or end slave imports had less significance, in part due to vetoes. In Virginia the 1782 manumission law facilitated a large number of manumissions by Quakers and others.**

**-Black Resistance The Violence Associated With High Risk Slave Resistance appears to have contributed to created a crisis of conscience among Quakers. This Violence was of two kinds: 1) Actions by Enslaved, including property destruction, arson, poisoning or insurrection; and 2) Violence of repression upon the bodies of the Enslaved, including disciplinary and judicial corporal punishment and capital punishment.**

**-Litigation Some Friends, such as Robert Pleasants, also pursued litigation in courts with hopes to accelerate the emancipation process by establishing legal principles, but these efforts were contained by enslavers.**

**Friends, during 2022 I want to lift up these five names  
from Baltimore Yearly Meeting's history:**

***James, Grace, Jane, Jack and Nace.***

**Between 1751 and 1763 these five enslaved persons of African decent  
engaged in acts of resistance in Quaker Enslaver Households in  
Maryland and Virginia.**

**The more risky acts of resistance left behind evidence-  
*Escape* and *Arson* left contemporary written records,  
*Verbal Confrontation* left oral accounts.**

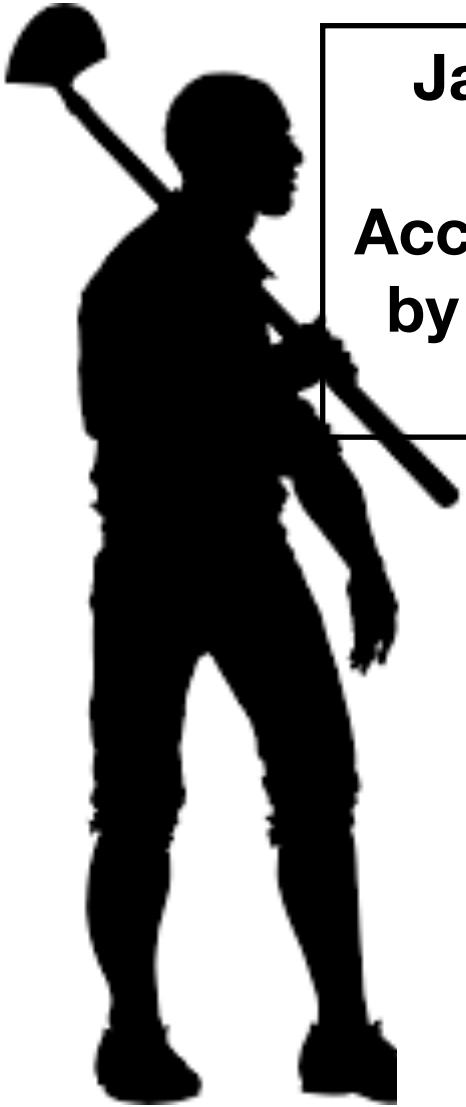
**I believe these actions, along with many others not recorded ,  
powerfully impacted Friends to gravely reconsider their status as  
enslavers.**

**As much -if not more- than the traveling ministry of John Woolman to  
Maryland and Virginia between 1746 and 1768, these actions made it  
clear to Quakers that the institution of slavery could not be  
maintained except through violent repression.**

**Say their names "James, Grace, Jane, Jack and Nace."**

**Today we will uncover their concealed stories from the dozen years  
immediately before Friends took actions to end Quaker Slaveholding**





**James, 14, was  
enslaved in  
Accomack, Virginia  
by Quaker Daniel  
Mifflin, 37.**



**Nace, was  
enslaved near  
Darlington,  
Maryland by  
recently  
disowned  
Quaker James  
Lee Junior, 62.**

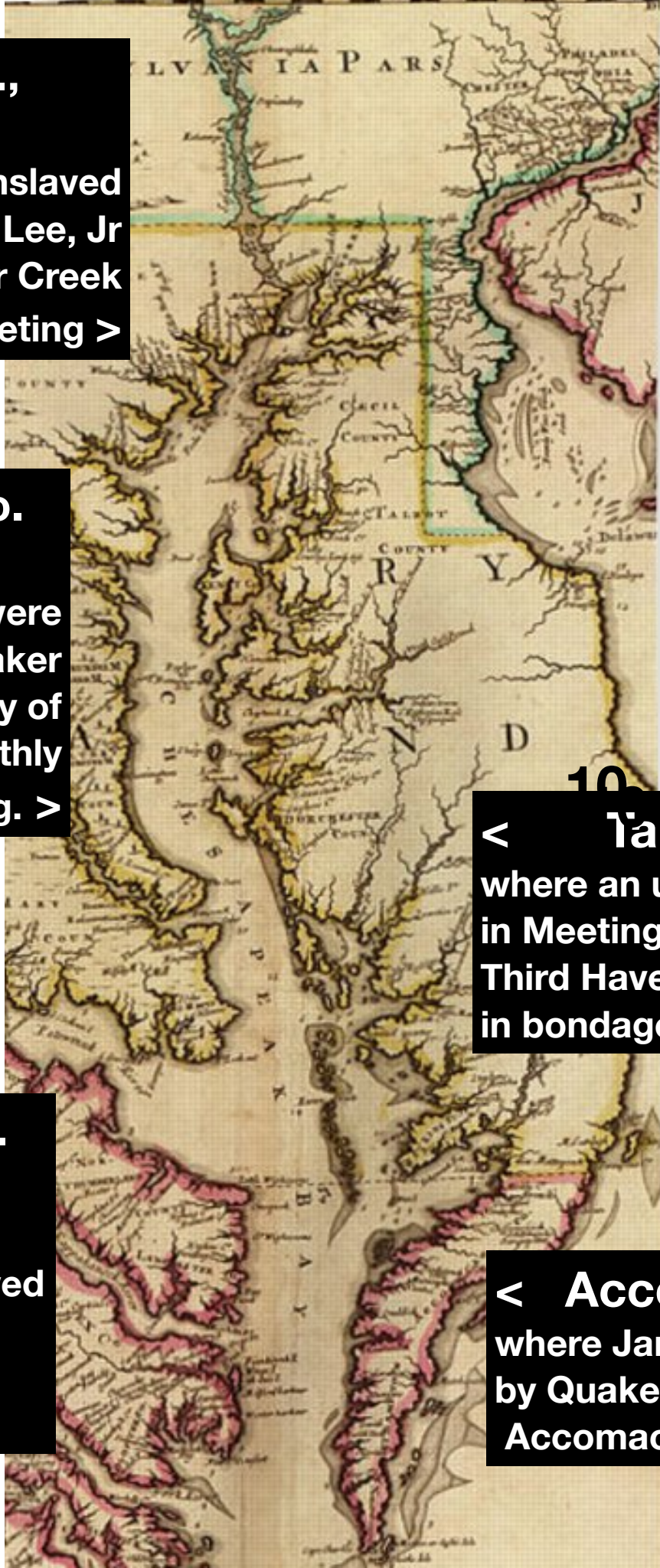


**Jack, was enslaved  
in Goochland Co.,  
Virginia by Quaker  
John Pleasants, 55.**

**Grace & Jane,  
were enslaved in  
Anne Arundel County,  
Maryland by newly married  
Quaker Joseph Galloway,  
52.**







**Baltimore Co., Maryland**  
where Nace was enslaved by exQuaker James Lee, Jr formerly of Dear Creek Preparative Meeting >

**Along the Chesapeake Bay**  
In the 1750s and early 1760s commerce, visitation and news traveled by water up and down the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers.  
Every Spring Quakers gathered for Yearly Meeting in West River on the Western Shore and in the Fall at Third Haven on the Eastern Shore.

**Anne Arundel Co. Maryland**  
where Grace & Jane were enslaved by Quaker Joseph Galloway of West River Monthly Meeting. >

< **Talbot Co., Maryland**  
where an unnamed 'Black Quakeress' spoke in Meeting, calling upon Quaker enslavers in Third Haven Meeting to free those they held in bondage.

< **Goochland Co. Virginia**  
on the James River where Jack was enslaved by Quaker John Pleasants of Henrico Monthly Meeting.

< **Accomack Co., Virginia**  
where James was enslaved by Quaker Daniel Mifflin of Accomack Monthly Meeting.

**Friends Need to consider Black Agency  
in Pursuing and Achieving Freedom from Quaker Enslavement:  
A Moral Struggle and Physical Struggle - By Words, Blows or Both.**

**“This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle.**

**Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.**

**Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both.”**

*~Frederick Douglass, August 3, 1857, “West India Emancipation”  
speech at Canandaigua, New York.*

The ideas expressed in 1857 by Frederick Douglass’ ARE JUST AS APPLICABLE to the circumstances of Black people enslaved by Quakers in the 1750s one hundred years earlier.



In the summer of 1759 James, 14, verbally confronted his Quaker master's eldest son Warner Mifflin, also age 14, in the tobacco fields of Daniel Mifflin's plantation:

*Is this the way it's always going to be?  
I work in these fields while you go learn and study??  
And by and by, my children must work here too,  
so your children can go study !?!*



Warner Mifflin later recalled being embarrassed and angry at hearing these confrontational words. Still, he never forgot what James had said. Eventually Mifflin took action.



**On September 1, 1750, "between the Hours of nine and ten in the night," not long after the tobacco harvest, Grace, Jane and apparently others defiantly set fire to Quaker Joseph Galloway's tobacco curing barn. The County Court of Anne Arundel, Maryland later said the two women had acted with "malice aforethought."**

*Maryland State Archives; Robert L. Hall, "Slave Resistance in Baltimore City and County, 1747-1790." Maryland Historical Magazine 84 (1989): 305-18.*





Negroe Grace and Negroe Jane the Slaves of a certain Joseph Gallo



On March 12, 1751 Grace and Jane were sentenced to be "Hanged by the Neck until they be Dead."

On April 17, 1751 issue of the *Maryland Gazette*:  
"Last Friday the two young Negro Wenches were executed here pursuant to their Sentence for burning a Tobacco House some Time ago."

Last Friday the two young Negro Wenches were executed here; pursuant to their Sentence for burning a Tobacco House some Time ago.



they have already said  
Therefore it is Considered by the Justices here the 12<sup>th</sup> day of March Anno Domini  
1751 That the said Negroe Grace and Negroe Jane be taken from the Bar of this Court  
by the Sheriff of Ann Arundel County to the Prison from whence they come and  
from thence to the Gallows in the said County the common place of Execution of  
Malefactors and there be Hanged by the Neck until they be Dead and thereupon  
they are Committed to the Custody of the Sheriff of the County afo<sup>re</sup> said to remain until  
J. who being present took Charge of them accordingly  
The Value the said two Negroes to fifty pounds Current Money each  
Test Jm. Bowie Clk

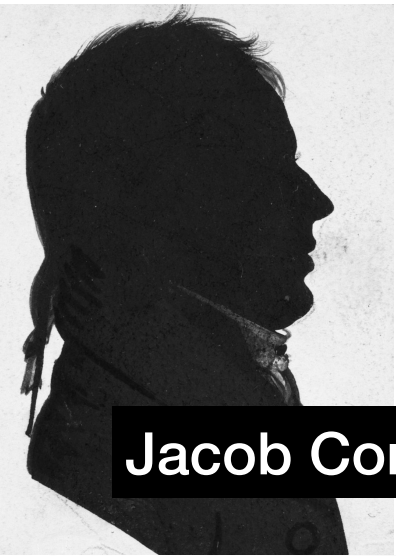




**In early August 1763, Nace and a small group of persons enslaved by exQuaker James Lee, Jr. escaped in Baltimore County. Lee formed a search party and soon recaptured them. In the process, Lee shot Nace to death, and wounded two others.**







Jacob Comley, 24

Deer-Creek preparative meeting informs us that James Lee Jun<sup>r</sup> hath been charged with Abetting or laying a wager on a race, evil language & profane Swearing - Some part whereof he owns James Rigbie and William Cox, are appointed to Treat with him as they may see Occasion & report their Sense of the affair to next mo<sup>o</sup> meeting



William Parrish, Jr., 19

Seven years previously, in June 1756 nearby Deer Creek Preparative Meeting, had disowned Enslaver James Lee, Jr. after six months careful 'laboring' by James Rigby and William Cox for "laying a wager on a race, evil language and profane swearing." Horse racing and Betting are examples of acts which could be called 'landed gentry leisure activities' in which enslavers frequently engaged.

After killing Nace, in September 1763, a Baltimore County grand jury indicted Lee for manslaughter in the death of the freedom seeker.

**Three Young Men Quickly Disowned By Quakers**

Also in September 1763, Friends learned that three young adult Quakers of their Meeting William Parrish, Jr., Jacob Comley, and Thomas Hooker, had armed themselves and joined James Lee Jr's search party which resulted in the shooting death of Nace.

Their case was brought before Gunpowder Monthly Meeting in October. It soon became clear that the young men had helped to apprehend those persons wounded by Lee, for which he had paid them a reward.

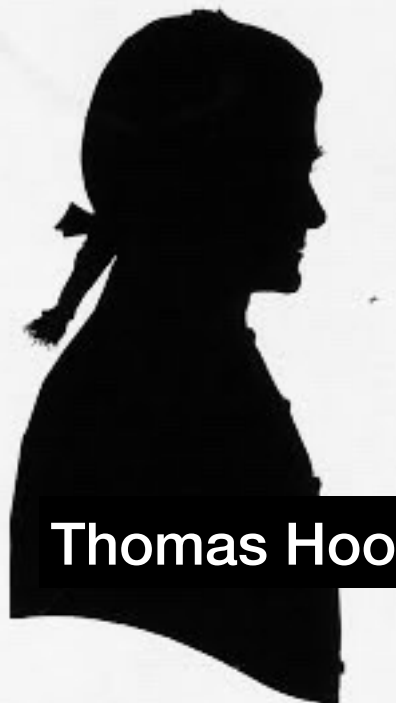
In November 1763 after only one month of laboring with the young men, "to clear the truth" all three young men were disowned.

In March 1764, Governor Horatio Sharpe pardoned James Lee, Jr. before his case came to trial. Ten years later in April 1773, Lee was again indicted for the death of another man he held in slavery.

(Andrew T. Fede, *Homicide Justified*, 2017, p. 83)



Two or more surviving unnamed freedom seekers were apprehended by these disowned Quakers



Thomas Hooker, 29







## Spoken Ministry as an 'Act of Resistance':

**“At Third Haven Friends Meeting there exists a tradition that an eighteenth century Black Quakeress belonging to Third Haven called upon her fellow Quakers to free their slaves, but that the slaveholders paid no attention to her message.”**

*“And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and **proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. That fiftieth year shall be a Jubilee to you.**”* Leviticus 25:10-11

**This account was an oral tradition among white Quakers, who, though usually diligent keepers of written records, failed to either record the date or the name of the ‘Black Quakeress’ who spoke in Third Haven Meeting.**

**The 1684 Meetinghouse where she spoke still remains, the oldest Quaker Meetinghouse in North America.**



February 10, 1752.

**R**AN away from the Subscriber, living in *Goochland County*, a likely *Virginia-born* Negroe Man, named *Jack*, about 6 Feet high, has a down cast sly Look when spoken to, talks very sensible, and is much addicted to Lying; had on when he went away a very long dy'd Cotton Waistcoat and Breeches, an Oznabrig Shirt, Plaid Stockings, and *Virginia-made* Shoes. Whoever will apprehend and convey him to me, or to *Mr. John Pleasants*, in *Henrico County*, shall have a Pistole Reward, paid by  
*Thomas Pleasants.*

2||

**Frederick Douglass:** "I prayed for 20 years but received no answer until I prayed with my feet."

**February 10, 1752.**

RAN away from the Subscriber, living in *Goochland County*, a likely **Virginia-born Negroe Man, named Jack, about 6 Feet high**, has a down cast sly Look when spoken to, talks very sensible, and is much addicted to Lying; had on when he went away a very long dy'd Cotton Waistcoat and Breeches, an Oznabrig 37 Shirt, Plaid Stockings, and *Virginia-made* Shoes.

Whoever will apprehend and convey him to me, or to *Mr. John Pleasants*, in *Henrico County*, shall have a Pistole Reward, paid by *Thomas Pleasants*.

*Virginia Gazette*, **February 20, 1752**, p. 4; Lathan A. Windley, comp. *Runaway Slave Advertisements, vol. 1 Virginia and North Carolina*, 1983, p. 25-6. (A 'Pistole' is a Spanish gold coin.)

## Here are a Spectrum of Resistance Actions Taken by Enslaved Laborers *(including James, Jane, Grace, Jack & Nace)*

*All these actions are ways of claiming human agency, influence and a modicum of control within the profoundly life-constricting circumstances of lifetime chattel slavery.*

<b>Identity</b> 'self determination'	<b>Autonomy</b> 'everyday resistance'	<b>Confrontation</b> 'insubordination'	<b>Subversion</b> 'open defiance'	<b>Insurrection</b> 'premeditated rebellion'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Retaining African names, culture, religion practices (in private)</li> <li>-Taking food</li> <li>-Maintaining family ties</li> <li>-Sharing information</li> <li>-using and sharing symbols, learning to read and to write</li> <li>-Administering herbal medicine</li> <li>-Unsupervised meetings 'hush harbor' at night,</li> <li>-Reinterpreting Biblical stories ('Negro Spirituals' and preaching)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Work slowdown ('malingering'),</li> <li>-Carelessness 'Shoddy', 'Clumsy' work</li> <li>-'Losing things', 'accidents', 'playing dumb'</li> <li>-Feigning illness,</li> <li>-Travel offsite to see family or a partner without permission</li> <li>-Terminating a pregnancy to deny property to the slaveowner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>-Confronting a white person (James)</b></li> <li>-Short term absence ('Outlying'),</li> <li>-Theft of objects</li> <li>-Breaking tools</li> <li>-Deception: giving false information, forging or sharing a pass or freedom papers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Self Defense,</li> <li><b>-Escape (Nace, Jack)</b></li> <li>-Aiding Escape</li> <li>-Property destruction,</li> <li><b>-Arson (Jane &amp; Grace)</b></li> <li>-Keeping &amp; hiding weapons</li> <li>-Aiding enemy during wartime</li> <li>-Self-mutilation, infanticide, suicide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Organized Insurrection</li> <li>-Mass escape</li> <li>-Poisoning</li> <li>-First Degree Murder</li> </ul> <p>1709 Plot Surry Co. VA "Scipio Edwards, et al" 1762-63 "Tacky's Rebellion" Jamaica 1800 Richmond, VA "Gabriel" 1803 York, PA Multiple Arsons by women 1817 St. Mary's Co, MD "Easter time" 1831 Southampton VA "Nat Turner" 1845 Charles Co, MD "Mark Caesar" mass escape 1857 Dorchester, MD armed mass escape</p>
Lowest Risk	Low Risk	Risky	High Risk	Highest Risk
Frequent	Often	Occasional	Seldom	Rare

**Enslaved Laborers had to "build a life for themselves in the narrow margins between total submission and open defiance" writes Alex Bontemps, (*Punished Self*, 2001, p. 133); DuBois 1903. Double consciousness necessary to survive in under conditions of life under conditions without personal autonomy ).**

**Enslavers were fearful to the point of paranoia about slave rebellion and being poisoned. High risk property destruction such as tool breaking and arson can be compared in manufacturing to "Saboteurs" in France, and to "Luddites" of 1811, in England as well as the agricultural 'Swing Riots' in England in 1830. In all these events heavily exploited laborers destroyed a master's tools and machinery which facilitated their oppression.**



**Quaker Minister David Ferris (1707-1779) a Connecticut-born convinced Friend of Wilmington, Delaware compared Quaker Enslavers to Lepers (Num 5:2-4) and Extortionists (1 Cor 6:10)**

**1766: “To bear up a testimony against the iniquitous practice of enslaving our fellow men... it would be better for the body, if leperous persons were removed from the camp.**

**And I verily believe, that will be the case in awhile, that no member of our society will be a slave keeper.”**

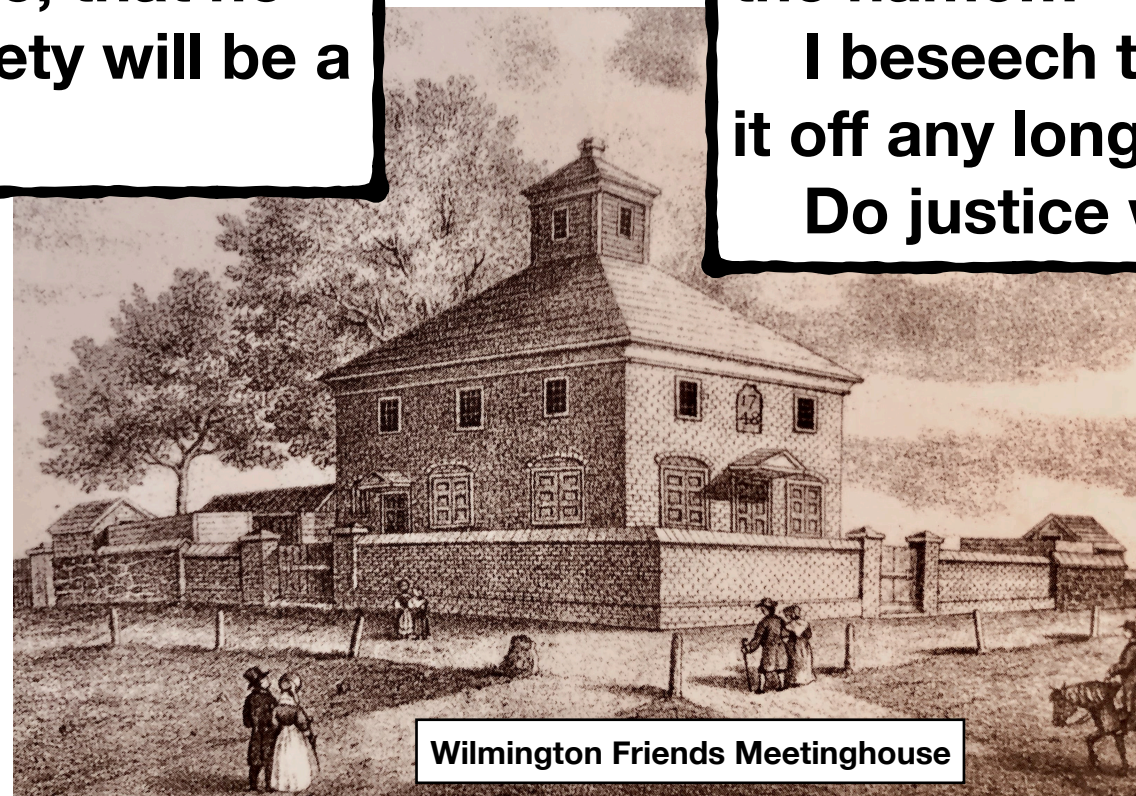
**To James Rigby  
of Deer Creek  
Meeting in  
Maryland, 7th of  
4th mo. 1766**

**1774: “Slave-keepers are *extortionists*, to all intents and purposes; and what will be the end of the extortioner? ...If the usage generally extended to the negroes be not “*extortion*,” I know not where to look for anything that deserves the name...**

**I beseech thee not to dally, or put it off any longer.**

**Do justice without delay.**

**To Robert Pleasants  
of Curles Meeting in  
Virginia, 20th of 9th  
mo. 1774**



Wilmington Friends Meetinghouse

Ferris, originally from a Puritan church in Connecticut, became a convinced Friend at age 24. For two and half decades Ferris resisted the call to public ministry until 1758, when he was recorded. His reference to slave-keeping as ‘leprosy’ may well have been influenced by Benjamin Lay’s 1738 *“All slave-keepers that keep the innocent in bondage, apostates...”*, p. 120, 151.

Quotes from Martha Grundy’s 2001 book *Resistance and Obedience to God: Memoirs of David Ferris, 1707-1779*, p. 75, 79.

## Increasing Free Black Populations in Virginia, Maryland and Delaware

*(Percentage of the whole population)*

State	1790	1800	1810	1860
Virginia	12,866 (1.7%)	20,493 (2.5%)	30,570 (3.1%)	58,042
Maryland	8,043 (2.5%)	19,587 (5.7%)	33,927 (8.9%)	83,942
Delaware	3,899 (6.6%)	8,268 (12.9%)	13,136 (18.1%)	19,829

**Quakers were joined in mass manumissions by Methodists and Baptists, as well as Anglicans embracing philosophical anti-slavery ideas.**

**For example preacher Freeborn Garrettson of Maryland manumitted enslaved people he had inherited and influenced many Methodists to do the same. Virginian Robert Carter III manumitted over 500 enslaved people and later worshipped with them as an equal in Yeocomico Baptist Church until he was forced to flee to Baltimore and the church was burned to the ground. Anglican Richard Randolph, a former student of George Wythe, manumitted 90 enslaved people in 1796 and deeded them 350 acres of land which became the community of Israel Hill in Prince Edward County, Virginia. Two decades later his brother John Randolph freed 383 enslaved people, providing them with land in Ohio.**

**Quakers were at the center of what became a thirty-year movement from 1775 to 1805 which emancipated over 50,000 enslaved people in the Chesapeake region.**

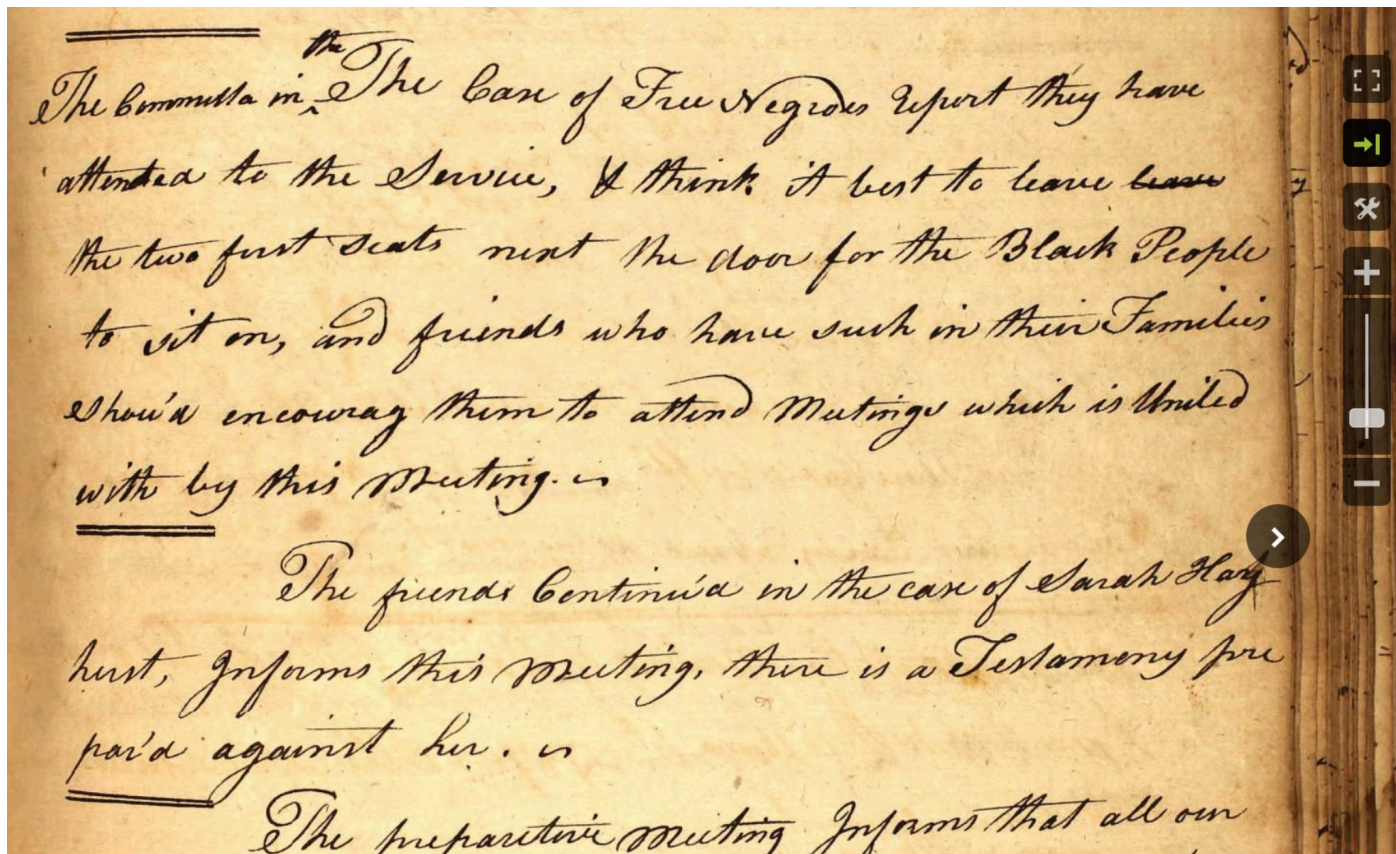
**Of these various groups, only Quakers sustained their anti-slavery over time and through a decision making and disciplinary processes obtained unified against against slaveholding by all their members.**



# The 1787 Decision for Segregated Seating at Deer Creek Meeting 23 is an example of how Friends could embrace anti-slavery while retaining inequality.

Among the worshipers at Deer Creek Meeting were Free Black Marylanders, likely persons who had been manumitted in prior decades by Quakers in Darlington, Maryland. In October 1787, after 21 months of discernment, Deer Creek Friends minuted: 'The Committee in the Case of Free Negroes report that attended to the Service, and think it best to leave the two front seats next to the door for the Black People to sit on, and Friends who have such in their Families should encourage them to attend Meetings - which it United with by this Meeting.'

One free Black child, Cupid Paca (1777-1847) of that time became a shoemaker, stonemason and Darlington's first Black landowner. He donated acreage on which was later built the nearby Hoseanna AME Church and School.



## Free Negroes U.S., Quaker Meeting Records, 1681-1935

Detail	Related	Source
Name	Free Negroes	
Residence Date	4 Oct 1787	
Residence Date on Image	04Tenth1787	
Residence Place	Harford, Maryland	
Event Type	Miscellaneous	
Monthly Meeting	Deer Creek Meeting	
Type (Orthodox or Hicksite)	Pre-Separation	
Yearly Meeting	Baltimore Yearly Meeting	
Meeting State	Maryland	
Meeting County	Harford	
<a href="#">Add Additional Information</a>		





E 115  
GABRIEL'S REBELLION

On 24 Aug. 1800, slave Ben Woolfolk met with other slaves at nearby Littlepage's Bridge to recruit individuals for an insurrection planned for 30 Aug. The insurgents led by Gabriel, a slave owned by Thomas Henry Prosser of Henrico County, intended to march into Richmond, capture Governor James Monroe, and force him and other leaders to support political, social, and economic equality. Intense rains delayed the scheme. Mosby Sheppard of Henrico County notified Monroe of the conspiracy after his slaves, Tom and Pharoah, made him aware of the plot. Monroe called out the militia, who captured many of the alleged conspirators. Trials were held in a number of jurisdictions, including Caroline County, resulting in the execution of Gabriel and at least 25 supporters.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES, 2002

In 1800, Ben Woolfolk, one of the participants Gabriel's Rebellion Plot in Richmond, Virginia, testified during his trial on October 6, 1800:

***"None were to be spared of the Whites, except Quakers, Methodists and French people."***

***He reported they had "a piece of Silk for a flag on which they would have written 'Death or Liberty.'"***

(Commonwealth v. Gabriel &at. Testimony Oct 6th 1800)

SA 66  
EXECUTION OF  
GABRIEL

Near here is the early site of the Richmond gallows and "Burial Ground for Negroes." On 10 Oct. 1800, Gabriel, an enslaved blacksmith from Brookfield plantation in Henrico County, was executed there for attempting to lead a mass uprising against slavery on 30 Aug. 1800. A fierce rainstorm delayed the insurrection, which then was betrayed by two slaves. Gabriel escaped and eluded capture until 23 Sept., when he was arrested in Norfolk. He was returned to Richmond on 27 Sept. and incarcerated in the Virginia State Penitentiary. On 6 Oct. he stood trial and was condemned. At least 25 of his supporters were also put to death there or in other jurisdictions.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES, 2004

Another of unnamed participant in Gabriel's Plot said during his trial in the fall of 1800:

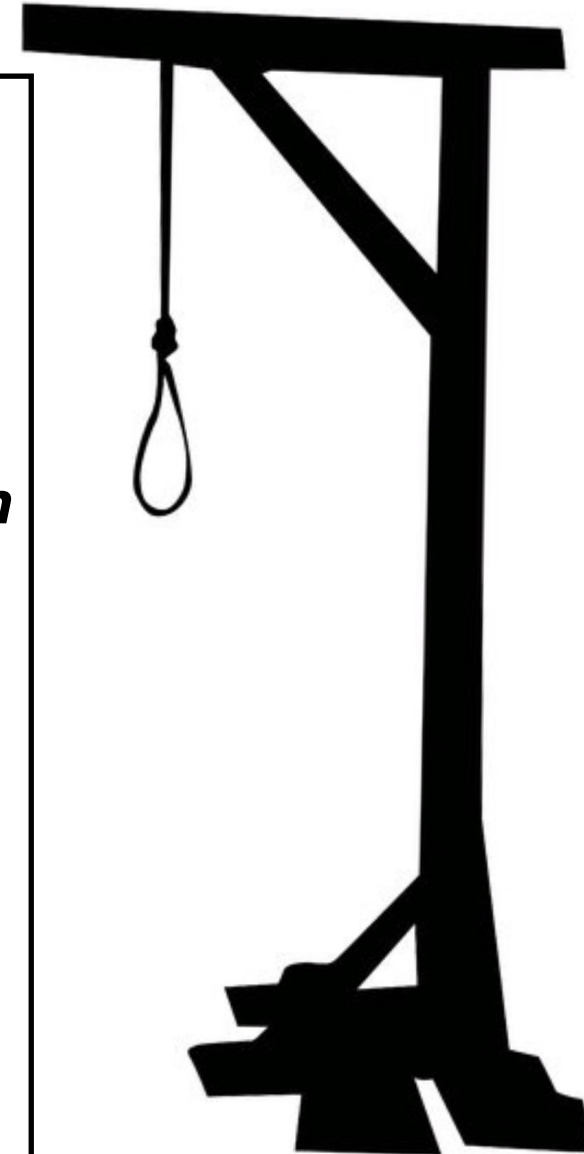
***"I have nothing more to offer than what General Washington would have had to offer, had he been taken by the British and put to trial by them.***

***I have adventured my life in endeavoring to obtain the liberty of my country men, and am a willing sacrifice in their cause: and***

***I beg you, as a favour, that I may immediately be led to execution.***

***I know that you have predetermined to shed my blood, why then all the mockery of a trial?"***

(Quoted from the Journal of Quaker Robert Sutcliff (1760-1811) of Sheffield, England.)



# What Happened Later in the Places of Black Resistance

Resister	Year	Enslaver	Meeting	Outcomes
Grace & Jane, d. 1752	1751	Joseph Galloway 1699-1752	<b>West River Meeting</b> already in decline began disowning enslavers in 1777, within a decade the meeting was laid down.	Galloway died in 1752 with 19. Daughter Ann married Joseph son of Israel Pemberton, Jr.. John C, Pemberton 1814-1881 CSA
Jack, free ten days (or longer?)	1759	John Pleasants 1698-1771	<b>Curles Meeting</b>	Robert Peasants 1723-1801
Unknown Name "Black Quakeress"	?	?	<b>Third Haven Meeting,</b> embraced antislavery in 1767	The Berry Brothers became strong advocates of anti-slavery traveling to other meetings.
James b. 1745, survived to be manumitted in 1774	1759	Daniel Mifflin 1722-1795	<b>Accomack Meeting</b>	Werner Mifflin 1745-1798, after 15 years, freed including James. Restitution in form of back wages for work since age 21
Nace, d. 1763	1763	James Lee, Jr. 1701-1778	<b>Deer Creek Meeting</b> Enslavers obstructed anti-slavery from 1766 to 1771, but embraced it by 1777.	.

**The descendants of Enslaver Joseph Galloway ceased to be Quakers, with one descendent James C. Pemberton becoming a Confederate General.**

**Robert Pleasants and Werner Mifflin, two sons of Quaker Enslavers confronted by Black Resistance, became significant anti-slavery leaders both among Quakers and in wider Society in the 1780s and 1790s.**

**Third Haven Meeting in 1767 became an early center of anti-slavery action within Maryland Yearly Meeting, while West River Meeting delayed until 1777. In Deer Creek Meeting, relatives and friends of James Lee, Jr. obstructed action form 1766 to 1771.**

## Sources for more details:

Haverford College Quaker Archives “Manumitted: The People Enslaved by Quakers launched in the summer of 2021 with the intention to aid genealogists, community members, and scholars in learning about the history of slavery and Quakerism in the Mid-Atlantic.

“Blackwater — In 1807 the Blackwater Monthly Meeting was laid down and membership joined to the Western Branch Monthly Meeting.” See <https://manumissions.haverford.edu/>

Alex Bontemps, 'The Punished Self: Surviving Slavery in the Colonial South' Cornell University Press, 2008

Stephanie M.H. Camp, Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South, 2005

Michael J. Crawford. The Pace of Manumission among Quakers in Revolutionary-Era North Carolina, Quaker History, Vol. 102, No. 1 (Spring 2013), pp. 1-16

Aline Helg, Slave No More : Self-Liberation Before Abolitionism in the Americas, 2019

Walter C. Rucker, The river flows on: Black resistance, culture and identity formation in Early America, 2009.

Alan Taylor, The Internal Enemy, The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia, 1772-1832. Norton, 2013. P. 38 “Them the

Eva Sheppard Wolf, Race and Liberty in the New Nation: Emancipation in Virginia from the Revolution to Nat Turner's Rebellion, LSU Press, 2006.