



BISHOP RICHARD ALLEN

Thursday, February 9, 2023





Bishop Richard Allen

Born: February 14, 1760 in Philadelphia

Sold to Sturgis in Dover, Delaware ~ 1768.

Converted to Methodism at the age of 17.

Purchased his freedom for 2,000 Continental dollars in 1783.

Returned to Philadelphia, PA joined St. George's Methodist Church.

“ At the age of 17, Richard was converted in classic Methodist style: “I cried to the Lord both day and night. . . . All of a sudden my dungeon shook, my chains flew off, and, glory to God, I cried.”

Richard Allen



In the year 1784 I left East Jersey, and laboured in Pennsylvania. I walked until my feet became so sore and blistered the first day, that I scarcely could bear them to the ground. I found the people very humane and kind in Pennsylvania. I having but little money, I stopped at Cæsar Water's, at Radnor township, twelve miles from Philadelphia. I found him and his wife very kind and affectionate to me. In the evening they asked me if I would come and take tea with them; but after sitting awhile, my feet became so sore and painful that I could scarcely be able to put them to the floor. I told them that I would accept of their kind invitation, but my feet pained me so that I could not come to the table. They brought the table to me. Never was I more kindly received by strangers that I had never before seen, than by them. She bathed my feet with warm water and bran; the next morning my feet were better and free from pain. They asked me if I would preach for them. I preached for them the next evening. We had a glorious meeting.

They invited me to stay till Sabbath day, and preach for them.

I agreed to do so, and preached on Sabbath day to a large congregation of different persuasions, and my dear Lord was with me, and I believe there were many souls cut to the heart, and were added to the ministry. They insisted on me to stay longer with them.

I stayed and laboured in Radnor several weeks. Many souls were awakened, and cried aloud to the Lord to have mercy upon them. I was frequently called upon by many inquiring what they should do to be saved. I appointed them to prayer and supplication at the throne of grace, and to make use of all manner of prayer, and pointed them to the invitation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has said, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Glory be to God! and now I know he was a God at hand and left not afar off.

*I preached my farewell sermon, and left these dear people.
It was a time of visitation from above.*

Many were the slain of the Lord. Seldom did I ever experience such a time of mourning and lamentation among a people. There were but few coloured people in the neighbourhood--the most of my congregation was white. Some said, this man must be a man of God; I never heard such preaching before. We spent a greater part of the night in singing and prayer with the mourners.

I expected I should have had to walk, as I had done before; but Mr. Davis had a creature that he made a present to me; but I intended to pay him for his horse if ever I got able. My dear Lord was kind and gracious to me. Some years after I got into business, and thought myself able to pay for the horse. The horse was too light and small for me to travel on far. I traded it away with George Huftman for a blind horse, but larger. I found my friend Huftman very kind and affectionate to me, and his family also. I preached several times at Huftman's meeting house to a large and numerous congregation.

227 BROOK STREET

HOME CAESAR AND PHEBE WATERS



The space that is now this park was once the home of Ceasar and Phebe Waters, a free Black couple who were some of the first Black landowners in Radnor Township. Though he lived in this space as a free man, Ceasar Waters was enslaved by a wealthy white politician and lawyer named Charles Humphreys for the majority of his adult life, mainly in nearby Haverford Township. We know very little about Phebe Waters' life though it is likely that she was also enslaved in the Philadelphia Area.



Charles Humphreys owned over 100 acres of land in Radnor, Haverford, and Lower Merion Townships, and with his sisters Elizabeth and Rebecca enslaved 9 Black people. These enslaved people were Nanny, a Black woman, Nancy, a Black woman, Dolly, a biracial woman, Thomas Craill, a Black man, Judy Miller, a biracial woman, Ceasar Waters, a Black man, Alice, a biracial girl, Tommey, a biracial boy, and Fanny, a biracial girl. These enslaved people had difficult and traumatic lives but resisted enslavement in many different ways. They tried to survive in harsh conditions by taking care of themselves and each other.

Charles Humphreys enslaved Ceasar Waters from the mid-1700s until 1786 when he died. In his will Humphreys freed Ceasar Waters, Thomas Craill, Nanny, and Judy Miller. He gave them some money, objects, and land to Ceasar, Thomas, and Judy that is now the space of this park. He also wrote that his estate executors were to build Thomas and Judy a log house with a stone chimney. Though he coupled Thomas and Judy together in his will, Thomas and Judy had relationships with other people – Thomas with a woman named Effie and Judy with a man named James. It is likely that Ceasar and Phebe Waters also lived in a type of log house. The Waters couple also eventually had a daughter named Charlotte.

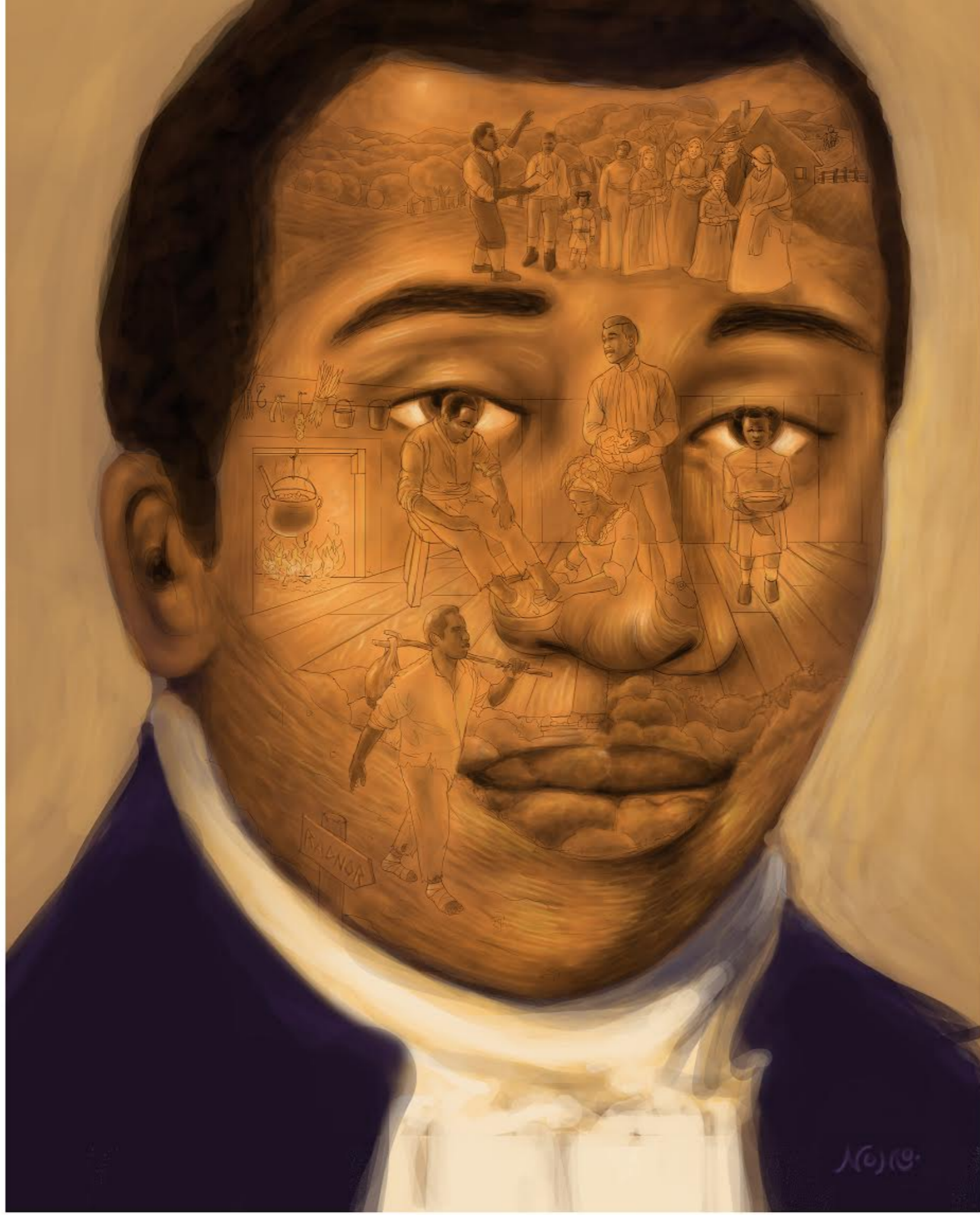
In 1784, Bishop Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, visited the Waters couple and stayed with them when he preached in Radnor Township. The Waters couple took care of Allen, gave him tea, and welcomed him into their home. Allen wrote about his visit to the Waters and their help in his autobiography as taking place in 1784, two years before Ceasar was legally freed by Charles Humphreys.

Based off of Allen's writing, it is possible that Ceasar and Phebe were living in this space even though Ceasar was still enslaved when Allen visited.

It is clear from the historical record that Ceasar and Phebe Waters lived in this space with their daughter Charlotte until at least 1829, when Ceasar died.

Today, we can honor the lives of the enslaved and free Black people who called this space home.

We remember Richard Allen, Ceasar, Phebe, and Charlotte Waters, Thomas and Effie Craill, Judy and James Miller, Nanny, Nancy, Dolly, Alice, Fanny, and Tommey.



1619



NOVEMBER, 1787

FREE AFRICAN SOCIETY

BIRTH OF BETHEL CHURCH

“MOTHER BETHEL”

HEAVEN'S GATE





RICHARD ALLEN
1760 - 1831
FOUNDER AND FIRST BISHOP
OF THE
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

APOSTLE OF FREEDOM PROCLAIMING
A LIBERATING AND RECONCILING GOSPEL

DEDICATED JULY 3, 2016

**In 1793
Allen and Jones responded to
Benjamin Rush's
call to mobilize
the black community to serve
during Philadelphia's yellow fever
epidemic.**

Dedication of the Bishop Richard Allen Park, 2009













JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE THE 263RD BIRTHDAY OF

Bishop Richard Allen

FOUNDER, AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Join members of the AME Community and Friends as we celebrate the life and legacy of Bishop Richard Allen, and commemorate his historic walk to Radnor in 1784.

TUESDAY **FEBRUARY 14, 2023**
3:00 PM WREATH LAYING CEREMONY



227 BROOK ST.
BRYN MAWR, PA 19010



For more information, please call
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GOD OUR FATHER
CHRIST OUR REDEEMER
MAN OUR BROTHER

LET'S TALK!

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