HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 65

Recognizing the African American members elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and members elected to the Virginia General Assembly during Reconstruction.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 9, 2012
Agreed to by the Senate, March 10, 2012

WHEREAS, with the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, and with the surrender of General Robert E. Lee on April 9, 1865, marking the end of the American Civil War, tens of thousands of enslaved African men, women, and children were set free from the degradation of human slavery; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the abolition of slavery, the end of the American Civil War resulted in life-altering changes and challenges in former slave states, including extending the right to vote to African American men; and

WHEREAS, after the American Civil War, during the era of Reconstruction between 1865 and 1877, as a condition of readmission into the Union, former slave states were required by Congress to create reconstructed governments, hold state conventions, and establish new constitutions; in Virginia, African American men were given the right to vote for and to be elected delegates to the convention, and 25 African American men were elected to the 1867-1868 Virginia Constitutional Convention, which created the Virginia Constitution of 1869; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Constitution of 1869, the fifth of Virginia's seven state constitutions, was also known as the Underwood Constitution, named for Judge John C. Underwood, a federal judge and native New Yorker who served as the Convention's president; and

WHEREAS, according to Virginia Memory, a historical database of the Library of Virginia, "105,832 freedmen registered to vote in Virginia, and 93,145 voted in the election that began on October 22, 1867"; and

WHEREAS, the Underwood Constitution was ratified by popular vote on July 6, 1869; provided for universal suffrage, with the exception of women; established Virginia's first statewide system of public schools; and organized the division of counties into magisterial districts, and these new provisions of state government remained in effect until 1902; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Memory states that, during Reconstruction, "across the South about two thousand African Americans served in local and state government offices, including state legislatures and as members of Congress. About 100 African American men served in the General Assembly of Virginia between 1869 and 1890, and hundreds more in city and county government offices or as postal workers and in other federal jobs"; and

WHEREAS, across the South, legislation known as "Black Codes" was enacted to circumvent and thwart the newfound freedoms of former slaves; the reaction of Congress to these laws was the enactment of the Reconstruction Amendments to the United States Constitution, specifically the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment, which protects the rights of citizenship of freed men and women, and the Fifteenth Amendment, which prohibits states from denying citizens the right to vote due to race, color, or previous condition of servitude; and

WHEREAS, after emancipation, these constitutional amendments laid the foundation by which many former enslaved Africans and their descendants were afforded equal rights as citizens under the United States Constitution, including the right to vote and run for elected public office; and

WHEREAS, although nearly a century would pass before the descendants of slaves would inherit and embrace the reality of the rights embodied in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, the Reconstruction Amendments helped to transform the United States, according to President Abraham Lincoln, from a country that was "half slave and half free" to one in which the constitutionally guaranteed "blessings of liberty" would be extended to all the nation's citizens; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the resurgence of virulent racial discrimination that followed the Compromise of 1877, which officially brought an end to federal Reconstruction, Southern state governments enacted a system of laws known as "Jim Crow" laws, which established a rigidly segregated and legally sanctioned social system that subjugated and disenfranchised African Americans, again relegating them to second-class citizenship from 1877 until the mid-1960s; and

WHEREAS, during the Jim Crow era, very few African Americans dared to brave the political and social realities of the time to run for public office; from 1890 to 1968, African Americans were not represented in the Virginia General Assembly, the oldest continuous legislative body in the Western Hemisphere; in 1967, William Ferguson Reid, a Richmond doctor and community leader, became the first African American in the 20th Century elected to the Virginia House of Delegates; and

WHEREAS, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission ("MLK Commission") began the Virginia African American Legislators Project in 2004; with the generous assistance of former Secretary of Administration Viola Baskerville, who led the Project, and the Library of Virginia; the extensive research by the library and the Commission's legislative staff; and drawing upon *A Register of the General Assembly of Virginia, 1776-1918* and the groundbreaking research of Dr. Eric Foner (*Freedom's Lawmakers: A Directory of Black Officeholders During Reconstruction* (1996)) and of Dr. Luther Porter Jackson (*Negro Office-Holders in Virginia 1865-1895* (1945)), the Project has established the roll call of African American men who were elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and to the Virginia House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia during Reconstruction from 1869 to 1890, as follows:

Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868

William H. Andrews, born around 1839 in Virginia, was a teacher and represented Isle of Wight and Surry Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and Surry in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. During his tenure as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, he sought legislation to prevent the sale of liquor to minors.

James D. Barrett was born free in Louisa County in 1833 and later moved to Fluvanna County. A shoemaker and minister, Mr. Barrett represented Fluvanna in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He labored for the welfare of African Americans. Mr. Barrett died in 1903 and is buried on the grounds of Thessalonica Baptist Church in Fluvanna, which he organized in 1868.

Thomas Bayne, also known as Samuel Nixon, a dentist and minister, was born a slave in North Carolina in 1824. In 1865, he was elected to the New Bedford City Council, becoming one of only a handful of African Americans to hold office in the United States prior to Reconstruction. He was a member of the delegation of Virginia African Americans who met with President Andrew Johnson in February 1866 to press demands for civil and political rights; was one of the few African Americans to testify before the Joint Congressional Committee on Reconstruction; was elected as a vice president of the Republican state convention in 1867; and was elected from Norfolk to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, where he emerged as the most important African American leader and served on the Committee on the Executive Department of Government and the Committee on Rules and Regulations. He proposed legislation on school integration and equal citizenship and advanced the overhaul of the state's tax system. After Reconstruction, Thomas Bayne disappeared from public life. He died in 1889.

James William D. Bland, a carpenter, a cooper, and U.S. Tax Assessor, was born free in Farmville in 1844. He represented Prince Edward County and Appomattox in the Virginia Constitutional Convention and in the Virginia Senate from 1869 to 1870, where he served on the Senate Committee for Courts of Justice. At the Virginia Constitutional Convention, Mr. Bland proposed a resolution requesting military authorities to direct railroad companies to allow convention delegates to occupy first-class accommodations, which many railroads had refused to do. He also introduced a measure guaranteeing the right of "every person to enter any college, seminary, or other public institution upon equal terms with any other, regardless of race, color, or previous condition." He was considered to be the voice of compromise and impartiality in an age of turmoil and partisanship. James Bland was one of 60 persons killed in 1870 when the second floor of the State Capitol collapsed.

William Breedlove, a blacksmith, was born free in Essex County around 1820. He represented Middlesex and Essex Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention, where he served on the Committee on Taxation and Finance. He was the leading spokesperson of his day in Essex County and served on the Tappahannock Town Council and was a postmaster there from 1870 to 1871. William Breedlove died sometime before 1880.

John Brown, a mail carrier, was born a slave in Southampton County in 1826. In 1867, John Brown, then illiterate, dictated a letter to a local Freedmen's Bureau agent, hoping to reestablish contact with his wife and two daughters in Mississippi, who had been sold before the Civil War. In addition to serving in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, he served in the Virginia House of Delegates and was a member of the House Committee on the Judiciary. He voted regularly with the Radicals to reform and democratize the Constitution of Virginia to protect the rights of freed people. He died sometime after June 19, 1900.

David Canada, a stonemason, represented Halifax County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868.

James B. Carter was born a slave of likely mixed race ancestry in the town of Manchester (South Richmond) around 1816. A bootmaker and shoemaker, James Carter represented Chesterfield and Powhatan Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He introduced a resolution at the convention directing the General Assembly to pass a law requiring students to attend school at least three months each year. Mr. Carter did not seek office after the convention. His funeral was held at African Baptist Church (First Baptist Church) in Richmond in 1870.

Joseph Cox, native son, was born in 1833. Mr. Cox was a blacksmith who also worked as a bartender, tobacco factory worker, and day laborer, and he operated a small store. In 1867, he was president of the Union Aid Society, one of Richmond's largest African American organizations, and was a delegate to the state Republican convention. Mr. Cox represented Richmond in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He was vice president of the Richmond meeting of the Colored National Labor Union in 1870, and two years later he helped lead the successful campaign to elect African Americans to the city council. He died in Richmond in 1880 and is buried in the Mount Olivet Cemetery; some three thousand blacks marched in his funeral.

Willis A. Hodges was born to a well-to-do free Virginia family in 1815. Mr. Hodges was a minister and farmer who was actively involved in the abolitionist and black suffrage movements in New York. He was a cofounder of the *Ram's Horn* in 1847, a short-lived African American newspaper. Elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, Mr. Hodges became a spokesman for the interests of poor African Americans, urging that public hunting and fishing areas should be set aside since "many poor people depend on hunting and fishing." He died in the North in 1890 while on a fund-raising trip for a home for elderly African Americans in Norfolk.

Joseph R. Holmes, a native of Virginia, was a shoemaker and farmer who represented Charlotte and Halifax Counties at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He ran for a seat in the Senate of Virginia, but was killed in 1892.

Peter K. Jones, a native of Petersburg, was born in 1838. He worked as a shoemaker and carpenter. Mr. Jones was a delegate to the 1865 Virginia Black Convention and represented Greensville and Sussex Counties at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He served in the House of Delegates, representing Greensville County from 1869 to 1877.

Samuel F. Kelso, a native of Virginia, was born in 1827 and worked as a teacher. Samuel Kelso represented Campbell County at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868.

Lewis Lindsey, a musician and laborer, was born in Caroline County in 1833. After the war, he worked in the Tredegar ironworks, was a janitor at the Richmond custom house, and led a brass band. Mr. Lindsey was employed as a speaker by the Republican Congressional Committee in 1867 and was a delegate in that year to the Republican state convention from Richmond. Lewis Lindsey represented the City of Richmond at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868.

Peter G. Morgan, born a slave in Nottoway County of African, Indian, and white ancestry in 1817, was a storekeeper and shoemaker. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and in the House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. He served on the city council from 1872 to 1874 and was a member of the Petersburg school board. Mr. Morgan died in Lawrenceville in 1909.

William P. Mosely, a native of Virginia, was born in 1819 and worked as a house servant and operated a freight boat as a slave. He obtained his freedom before the Civil War and became well educated. Mr. Mosely was a delegate to the Virginia Black Convention of 1865, represented Goochland County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and served in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871. He ran for Congress as a Republican in 1880 but was defeated by the Readjuster candidate.

Francis "Frank" Moss was a farmer and minister who was born free in 1825 in Buckingham County. Mr. Moss served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871, and also served in the Virginia House of Delegates.

Edward Nelson, a native of Virginia, represented Charlotte County at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868.

Daniel M. Norton was born a slave in Virginia in 1840 and escaped to the North with his brother Robert around 1850. He learned medicine in Troy, New York, and was licensed as a physician. He returned to Virginia in 1864 and became one of Hampton's most important political leaders. He was elected in December 1865 to represent African Americans on a Freedmen's Bureau Court. Early in 1866, he was sent as a delegate of Hampton area African Americans to testify before the Joint Congressional Committee on Reconstruction. Daniel Norton represented James City and York Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and served in the Senate of Virginia from 1871 to 1873 and from 1877 to 1887. Mr. Norton built an effective political machine in Hampton, and for 40 years he was a justice of the peace in York County; he was appointed collector of customs in Newport News in 1862 and served on the board of visitors of Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute. He ran unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for Congress in 1869.

John Robinson, born in 1822, was a lawyer and graduate of Hampton Institute. He represented Cumberland County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1873. He also worked as a mail carrier and operated a saloon and general store during the 1870s.

James T.S. Taylor was born in 1840 in Clarke County and purchased his freedom before the Civil

War. He was educated as a youth, served as a commissary clerk for the Union Army during the Civil War, and was nominated to represent Albemarle County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. Mr. Taylor ran unsuccessfully for the Virginia House of Delegates in 1869.

George Teamoh, born a slave in Portsmouth in 1818, was a carpenter. An accomplished public speaker, he was a delegate to the Virginia Black Convention of 1865 and a Union League organizer. He served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, but generally remained silent. He wrote that "agricultural degrees and brickyard diplomas" were poor preparation for the complex proceedings. However, he did support the disenfranchisement of former Confederates. Mr. Teamoh served in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871, and, as a member of the Senate, he supported the formation of a biracial labor union at the Gosport Navy Yard. Later, he was denied re-nomination to the Senate of Virginia in 1871, due to party factionalism, and ran unsuccessfully for the Virginia House of Delegates. He was an advocate of African American self-help, was a founder of Portsmouth's first African American school, and was active in African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) church affairs in the city.

Burwell Toler, a native of Virginia, represented Hanover and Henrico Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. A Baptist minister, he organized two churches in Hanover County and preached at many others.

John Watson was born in Mecklenburg County and served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and in the House of Delegates in 1869. Mr. Watson was active in promoting schools and churches in the county. He died while in office.

Virginia House of Delegates

William H. Andrews, born around 1839 in Virginia, was a teacher and represented Isle of Wight and Surry Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and Surry in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. During his tenure as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, he supported legislation to prevent the sale of liquor to minors.

William Horace Ash, born in slavery in 1859 in Loudoun County to William H. and Martha A. Ash, preferred to call himself Horace Ash of Leesburg. He was educated as a teacher at Hampton Institute, now called Hampton University, and graduated in 1882, after which he relocated to Nottoway County, where he taught at a school for African American girls. He served as a county delegate to the Republican state party convention in 1884; three years later, he was nominated for the Virginia House of Delegates for the district comprising Amelia and Nottoway Counties. He served in the House of Delegates from 1887 to 1888 and was a member of the standing Committees on Propositions and Grievances and on Printing. He studied law and identified himself as a lawyer, but he is not known to have practiced law; he remained concerned with education. He also taught agriculture at Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute, later named Virginia State University. Mr. Ash died in 1908.

Briton Baskerville, Jr., born a slave in Mecklenburg County in 1863, was the eldest of five sons of Britton and Sallie Baskerville. He was educated at Boydton Institute and Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C., and taught school in the Flat Creek District of Mecklenburg County. He served as the Sunday School superintendent at Bloom Hill Baptist Church. Mr. Baskerville represented Mecklenburg County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1887 to 1888, where he served on the House Committees on Privileges and Elections and the Chesapeake and its Tributaries. He never married and died early of tuberculosis in 1892.

Edward David Bland was born a slave in Prince George County in 1848. Edward David Bland, the son of Frederick Bland, a shoemaker and minister, came to Petersburg following the American Civil War and attended night school. In 1882 he returned to Prince George County, where he lived with his family the remainder of his life. He was a teacher, minister, shoemaker, and lighthouse keeper. He purchased property in City Point. Mr. Bland represented Prince George and Surry in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to 1884, where he served three terms and was a member of the House Committees on Executive Expenditures, Schools and Colleges, Agricultural and Mining, Claims, Retrenchment and Economy, Propositions and Grievances, Enrolled Bills, and Officers and Offices at the Capitol. Mr. Bland died in 1927 and is interred at the People's Memorial Cemetery in Petersburg.

Phillip S. Bolling, a farmer and brick mason, was born a slave in Buckingham County around 1849 to Samuel P. and Ellen Munford Bolling. He purchased his mother's and possibly his own and other relatives' freedom from the prominent Eppes family of Buckingham and Cumberland Counties. His father owned land in Farmville and Lynchburg, and Phillip Bolling bought the Lynchburg property from his father in 1872. He worked for his father's brickyard in Farmville, according to the 1880 census. He became very interested in politics and ran for the Virginia House of Delegates as a Readjuster in 1883. On election day, Democrats campaigned that Mr. Bolling was a Prince Edward resident and ineligible to represent Buckingham and Cumberland Counties. Voters ignored the warnings. Winning the election by 538 votes and certified by the local board of elections to represent Buckingham and Cumberland Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates, he was appointed to the House Committees on Banks, Currency, and Commerce; on Officers and Offices at the Capitol; and on Rules. However, although he

had been a registered voter in Cumberland County and had voted there from 1881 to 1883, the Democratic majority on the House Committee on Privileges and Elections successfully challenged his election on the technicality that he had worked at the Prince Edward brick kiln before the election. Therefore, the Committee found that he was not a resident of the district from which he had been elected and was ineligible to serve in the Virginia House of Delegates. It is believed that during the election, due to the similarity in their names, voters confused Phillip S. Bolling with his father, Samuel P. Bolling, who later won the seat and served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1885 to 1887. Phillip Bolling was later elected to the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors. He died on April 18, 1892, in Petersburg.

Samuel P. Bolling, a farmer, bricklayer, and brick manufacturer, and the son of Olive Bolling, was born into slavery in Cumberland County in 1819. He was trained as a skilled mechanic, and purchased his freedom shortly before the American Civil War. He also purchased land and started a brickyard, which employed many individuals who helped construct many of the brick buildings in Farmville. He eventually amassed more than 1,000 acres in Cumberland County. He agreed with those in the General Assembly who proposed to scale down the principal and interest to be paid on the antebellum debt in order to pay for new public schools and other public projects. Mr. Bolling served in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing Cumberland and Buckingham Counties, from 1885 to 1887. He was a member of the following House Committees: Claims; Manufactures and Mechanical Arts; and Retrenchment and Economy. He was active in the Mount Nebo Baptist Church in Buckingham County as a deacon, trustee, and treasurer. Mr. Bolling died in 1900.

Tazewell Branch was a shoemaker, storekeeper, and deputy collector of internal revenue. The son of Richard Branch and Mary Hays, Tazewell Branch was born a slave in 1828 near the town of Farmville in Prince Edward County and served as a house servant. He learned to read and write as well as the skill of shoemaking during slavery. He purchased land and a home, and also purchased land for what was to become Beulah African Methodist Episcopal Church. He married and raised a family. His children included Clement Tazewell Branch, who received his M.D. degree from Howard in 1900 and settled in Camden, New Jersey, to become the first African American to serve on the city's school board, and Mary Elizabeth Branch, who attended Virginia State University and taught there for 20 years. Branch Hall is named in her honor. In 1930, she became president of Tillotson College in Austin, Texas. Tazewell Branch refused pay for service in party campaigns and quit politics when he observed politicians becoming corrupt. He represented Prince Edward County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1877. He died in New Jersey on April 30, 1925, and was buried in the Odd Fellows Cemetery in Farmville.

William H. Brisby was born free in New Kent County in 1836 to Roger Lewis, an African American, and Miranda Brisby, a Pamunkey Indian. He taught himself to read and write and learned blacksmithing as a trade. Mr. Brisby worked as a blacksmith, farmer, and lawyer. He worked on the construction of the Richmond and York River Railroad. He was a landowner and his chief interests were the study and practice of law. William H. Brisby represented New Kent County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871, serving on the Officers and Offices at the Capitol Committee. He later served on the New Kent Board of Supervisors from 1880 to 1882 and was a justice of the peace from 1870 until 1910. Mr. Brisby claimed to have helped Union prisoners of war escape from Richmond during the American Civil War, stowing them away in his cargo transports. Mr. Brisby died in 1916.

Goodman Brown was born free in Surry County in 1840, a member of three generations of free men. His father was a landowner and at the age of 19, Goodman Brown enlisted in the U.S. Navy as a cabin boy aboard the USS *Maratanza* during the American Civil War. He was discharged December 20, 1864. A farmer, he attended night school and was later instructed by his wife, one of the first African American school teachers in Surry County. He represented Prince George and Surry Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1887 to 1888, where he served on the House Immigration and the Retrenchment and Economy Committees. He died on July 4, 1929, in Surry County and is buried near Bacon's Castle.

Peter Jacob Carter, the son of Jacob and Peggie Carter, was born in 1845 in the town of Eastville in Northampton County. His occupations included farmer, storekeeper, lighthouse keeper, and oysterman. He worked as a house servant while in slavery; however, he ran away during the American Civil War and enlisted on October 30, 1863, in Company B of the 10th Regiment United States Colored Infantry. He mustered out on May 17, 1866. After the war, Carter was educated at Hampton Institute, now Hampton University. He became an important figure in Republican politics on Virginia's Eastern Shore and served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1878, one of the longest tenures among the 19th Century African American members of the General Assembly. He introduced measures concerning taxes on oysters, the boundaries of election precincts, correcting prisoner abuse, and improving the care and housing of elderly and disabled African American people. A large landowner, he also introduced bills to combat the exclusion of African Americans from jury service and to improve the treatment of

prisoners and abolish the whipping post as a punishment for crime. He was in the delegation from the General Assembly that met with President Grant to support the Civil Rights Act of 1875. He served on the following House Committees: Asylums and Prisons, Agriculture and Mining, Retrenchment and Economy, Claims, and Militia and Police. Later, Mr. Carter was a doorkeeper of the Senate of Virginia from 1881 to 1882. He was appointed by the General Assembly to the Board of Visitors of Virginia State College, now Virginia State University. His son Peter J. Carter, Jr., studied medicine at Howard University and became a physician at the Veterans Hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama. Peter Jacob Carter died in 1886.

Matt Clark, a farmer, was born a slave in 1844 to Matt and Chaney Clarke. He became a landowner in Halifax County. In the General Assembly, he often signed his name simply "Matt Clark," without the "e." He represented Halifax County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875 and served on the House Committee on Asylums and Prisons. He introduced a resolution supporting the improvement of living conditions at the Central Lunatic Asylum in Petersburg and agreed to the refinancing of the state war debt at a lower interest rate or repudiating a portion of the debt and using the remaining revenue to support the new public school system and other public programs.

George William Cole, a teacher and farmer, was born free in Athens, Georgia, in the late 1840s to William and Martha Cole. Inspired by his parents and perhaps by Emancipation and Reconstruction, he developed a desire for education and self-improvement. He entered Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, now Hampton University, in 1872. By 1879, Mr. Cole had made his way to Essex County, was married with a daughter, and emerged as the Republican candidate for the county seat in the Virginia House of Delegates. He won election to the House seat to represent Essex County from 1879 to 1880. On December 3, 1879, Mr. Cole joined 15 other Republicans, of whom 10 were African Americans, to form a wedge between an equal number of Republican Funders and Republican Readjusters that resulted in a new slate of House leaders, among them a few African American office holders, to replace Confederate veterans in insignificant functions. Mr. Cole served as a member of the House Committee on Labor and the Poor. During his tenure, he did not introduce legislation; however, he supported a measure that would lower taxes on malt liquor, spirits, and wine vendors and supported the constitutional amendment to repeal the poll tax. Little is known about Mr. Cole after his term in the Virginia General Assembly. The date of his death is unknown.

Asa Coleman was born a slave in North Carolina in the early 1830s to Matthew and Frances Coleman and moved to Halifax County about 1868. Before the American Civil War, he lived in Louisiana. He had a limited education, but he was well versed in politics. Mr. Coleman purchased 150 acres of land in 1875 with money he earned as a legislator. He represented Halifax County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873, serving three sessions. He was a member of the House Committee on Asylums and Prisons and was with the General Assembly delegation that met with President Grant to support the Civil Rights Act of 1875. A farmer and carpenter, Mr. Coleman is believed to have died sometime after February 24, 1893.

Johnson Collins, a native of Virginia, was born in slavery in August 1847. In 1870, he lived with his family in Brunswick County and earned his living as a laborer. In November 1879, he won a three-way race for a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing Brunswick County from 1879 to 1880. He served as a member of the House Committees on Federal Relations and Resolutions and on Public Property. He supported legislation to eliminate the poll tax, reduce the tax on malt, liquor, spirits, and wine vendors, and reduce the principal of the public debt and refinance the interest. After his service in the Virginia General Assembly, Mr. Collins relocated to Washington, D.C., with his family, where he worked as a watchman for 20 years. Mr. Collins died on November 3, 1906, and is buried in Columbian Harmony Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Aaron Commodore was born between 1819 and 1824 as a slave in Essex County. A shoemaker, he purchased a home and land in Tappahannock three years before he became a member of the General Assembly. He was an influential community leader and represented Essex County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877, where he served on the House Militia and Police Committee. He was a member of First Baptist Church, Tappahannock. Mr. Commodore died in June 1892.

Miles Connor was a farmer and minister born a slave in Norfolk County in 1832 to parents Richard and Matilda Connor. He served as a valet and house servant. He was educated and could read and write. After emancipation, Mr. Conner emerged as a leader among the freedmen of Norfolk County, assisting in the organizing of schools, churches, and fraternal societies. He represented Norfolk County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877, serving on the House Militia and Police Committee. After leaving the General Assembly, he served as a justice of the peace from 1887 to 1889 in Norfolk County. His son Miles Washington Connor became the first president of Coppin State Teachers College (later Coppin State University) in Baltimore, Maryland. Miles Connor was buried at Churchland in June 1893.

Henry Cox was born free in Powhatan County in 1832. A shoemaker, he became a landowner early,

purchasing 37 acres in 1871. He represented Chesterfield and Powhatan Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1877, serving on the House Officers and Offices at the Capitol Committee. Mr. Cox was with the delegation that met with President Grant to get his support for the Civil Rights Act. Mr. Cox died sometime after 1910.

Isaac Dabbs, a farmer and minister, was born a slave in 1846 in Charlotte County to George and Frankie Dabbs. He had a limited education. He represented Charlotte County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877.

McDowell Delaney was a bricklayer, teacher, minister, and mason. He was born free in Amelia County in 1844 to parents Edmund and Sally Hughes Delaney. His father was a miller and teacher. Mr. Delaney attended the school in which his father taught and he later became a teacher and pastor for several churches and organized a Baptist Association. Mr. Delaney represented Amelia County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873. He died in 1929.

Amos A. Dodson was born a slave in Mecklenburg County in 1856. He worked as a farmer, Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue, teacher, and newspaper editor. The son of a blacksmith, Mr. Dodson attended school. He was a born orator and was active in politics. He moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, and edited a newspaper there. He represented Mecklenburg County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1883 to 1884.

Shed Dungee was born free in 1831 to Cumberland County parents who had been free for several generations. Mr. Dungee earned a living as a shoemaker, farmer, and licensed preacher. He learned the trade of shoemaking and attended night school after the American Civil War. He owned and operated a small farm and promoted the development of schools and the founding of churches. He represented Cumberland and Buckingham Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to 1882. He died in 1900.

Jesse Dungey was born free in 1812 in King William County to Joseph and Betsy Collins Dungey of African American, white, and Native American ancestry. A shoemaker and minister, Mr. Dungey derived his income from making shoes as well as leeching, a custom of the day. He owned land and, after the American Civil War, he founded and pastored several churches. He abandoned the Republican Party when it nominated a former congressman for mayor of Richmond who had voted against the Civil Rights Act of 1875. As a result, Mr. Dungey was driven from his pulpit by irate parishioners. He represented King William County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873 and served as justice of the peace for the county.

Isaac Edmundson, a property owner with little education, was born in 1846. Mr. Edmundson represented Halifax County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871.

Ballard T. Edwards, a bricklayer, plasterer, and contractor, was born free in Manchester, Virginia, in 1829 of black, white, and Native American ancestry. His mother was a teacher, and he also taught at a night school for freedmen after the American Civil War. He was a delegate to the 1865 Virginia Black Convention, and during Reconstruction he held office as overseer of the poor, justice of the peace, and assistant postmaster at Manchester. He represented Chesterfield and Powhatan Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871, where he proposed a measure banning racial discrimination by railroad and steamboat companies. A leader in the Manchester First Baptist Church, Mr. Edwards was also active in the Masons. He died in 1881.

Joseph P. Evans was born a slave in 1835 in Dinwiddie County and purchased his freedom in 1859. During Reconstruction, he was a prominent leader of Petersburg's African American community, serving as a delegate to the Republican state convention of 1867, and in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873, representing Petersburg. Mr. Evans also served in the Senate of Virginia from 1874 to 1875. While a member of the General Assembly, Mr. Evans introduced bills to require compulsory education, guarantee African Americans the right to serve on juries, and require landlords to give ten days' notice before evicting a tenant. He also held positions as a letter carrier and as deputy collector of internal revenue. He was elected president of a Black labor convention in Richmond in 1875, where he urged African Americans to organize themselves independently in politics and as workers. He ran unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for Congress in 1884. His son, William Evans, represented Petersburg in the General Assembly from 1887 to 1888. Joseph P. Evans died in 1888.

William D. Evans was born free in Farmville in 1831 to a family that had been free since before 1800. Mr. Evans earned a living as a painter, grocer, and contractor. He was a relative of James W.D. Bland, the senator who represented Prince Edward County. He learned the trade of painting and paperhanging as an apprentice to a master before the American Civil War. After learning to read and write in night school, he became interested in politics. Following in the footsteps of his uncle, Dennis Evans, a landowner in Prince Edward County before the war, William Evans purchased property in Farmville. He received contracts for the interior decoration of buildings in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. William D. Evans represented Prince Edward County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1877 to 1880. He died in 1900.

William W. Evans was born a slave in 1860 in Dinwiddie County. The son of Joseph P. and Josephine Evans, William Evans began his working career as a barber, but ended it as a self-made lawyer. He attended school in Petersburg and purchased real estate. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1887 to 1888.

William Faulcon was a blacksmith and merchant who operated a blacksmith shop and a store at Surry Court House. He purchased land and represented Prince George and Surry Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1885 to 1887.

George Fayerman, a storekeeper, was born free in Louisiana in 1830 to George and Phoebe Fayerman. His father fled from Haiti to Louisiana during the slave insurrection led by Touissant L'Ouverture. Mr. Fayerman was literate in both French and English. After the American Civil War, he came to Petersburg where he established a grocery store and became an official of the Union League and a delegate to the 1867 state Republican convention. Mr. Fayerman served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871, where he sponsored civil rights legislation. He served as overseer of the poor from 1872 to 1874, and as a member of the Petersburg City Council from 1874 to 1876. He died in 1891.

James A. Fields was born a slave in Hanover County in 1844. He was the son of a shoemaker and became a teacher and lawyer. As a young man, he served as caretaker of the horses used by lawyers attending court at the Hanover Court House, and he spent considerable time in court observing the proceedings, which very likely inspired him to become a lawyer and a Commonwealth's attorney. James Fields and his brother George became refugees during the American Civil War. He graduated from Hampton Institute, now Hampton University, shortly after the war in 1871 as a member of the institution's first graduating class. He also attended Howard University, graduating in 1881. Mr. Fields taught school before and after law school, and was later elected doorkeeper of the Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to 1880. He was eminently successful as a lawyer, as was his brother, George. Mr. Fields represented Elizabeth City, James City, Warwick and York Counties and Williamsburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1889 to 1890. He died in 1903.

Alexander Q. Franklin, the son of Benjamin and Martha Franklin, was born in 1851 in Henrico County. His father was born a slave but purchased his freedom from income earned as a brick mason. Alexander Franklin was educated and was the first African American to teach in Charles City County, where he taught two years. He taught 36 years in Powhatan County. He purchased land and devoted his life to leadership, schools, and church. He represented Charles City County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1889 to 1890, and also served as the commissioner of revenue. Alexander Franklin died in 1923.

William Gilliam was born free in 1841 in Prince George County of African, white, and Native American ancestry. He owned his own farm. Mr. Gilliam served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1875, where he sought to prohibit discrimination in railroad and steamboat travel. He gave an eloquent speech in 1873 against the use of the whipping post as a punishment for crime. Mr. Gilliam died in New York City in 1893.

James P. Goodwyn was born in Petersburg and married there during the American Civil War. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875.

Armistead Green, a grocer and mortician, was born a slave in 1841 in Petersburg. His parents were Amos and Gracie Green. He was one of several prosperous African American grocers in the area. He purchased land in Petersburg before his election to the Virginia General Assembly, where he represented Petersburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1881 to 1884. For a number of years he served as a deacon in the First Baptist Church in Petersburg. Mr. Green died in 1893.

Robert G. Griffin represented James City and York Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1883 to 1884.

Nathaniel M. Griggs was born a slave in 1857 in Farmville to Matthew and Nicy Washington. He attended night school and was a tobacco factory worker but was soon discharged for making political speeches. He entered politics and was appointed deputy collector of internal revenue. He represented Prince Edward County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1883 to 1884. Later, he was employed by the Bureau of Printing and Engraving in Washington, D.C. After the failure of the Republican Party to win reelection in the presidential election of 1892, Mr. Griggs went to work as a jeweler for the Wanamaker Company in Philadelphia. He died in 1919.

Ross Hamilton was born a slave in Mecklenburg County in 1838 or 1839. He earned a living as a carpenter and storekeeper. He served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1882, and from 1889 to 1890. Mr. Hamilton was considered one of the legislature's "parliamentary authorities." He spent the last part of his life working for the federal government in Washington, D.C., where he died. He married twice and is buried on the grounds of Boydton Institute.

Alfred W. Harris, a lawyer and the son of Henry Harris, was born free in Fairfax County in 1854. The family traced ancestors back to those living in Fairfax County in 1776. He attended the public

schools in Alexandria, studied law privately with African American attorney George W. Mitchell, and enrolled in and graduated from Howard University in 1881. He began the practice of law in Petersburg in 1882. Alfred Harris owned 12.5 acres of land in Dinwiddie County. He was regarded as one of the ablest debaters in the General Assembly. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1881 to 1888 and served on the City Council of Alexandria. Mr. Harris died in 1920.

H. Clay Harris was not a native of Virginia, and the date of his birth is unknown. He came to Halifax County from Ohio shortly after the American Civil War and took an active role in politics. He was well educated and purchased 24 acres of land in Halifax County. He represented Halifax County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875.

Henry C. Hill was born a free man in Amelia County, the son of Henry Hill. The date of his birth is unknown. He represented Amelia County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875, and was a justice of the peace in Amelia County. Mr. Hill became a landowner after his term in office.

Charles E. Hodges was born in 1819 to well-to-do African American Virginians. His family moved to Brooklyn, New York, in the 1830s after his brother William was accused of forging free papers for slaves, leading to the persecution of his father. Charles Hodges was a minister. He became involved in the abolition movement and the struggle for African American suffrage in New York State and was a delegate to the National Black Convention in Philadelphia in 1855. Returning to Virginia after the American Civil War, he served in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing Norfolk County from 1869 to 1871. He failed to win reelection after his term. Three of his brothers were also involved in Reconstruction politics. Charles Hodges died in 1910.

John Q. Hodges, the brother of office holders Charles, William, and Willis Hodges, was born to a prosperous Virginia free African American family that was forced to leave the state for Brooklyn, New York, in the 1830s after his brother was accused of aiding fugitive slaves. The date of his birth is unknown. John Hodges represented Princess Anne County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871, but failed to win reelection.

Henry Johnson was born a slave in Amelia County in 1842. His parents were David and Louisa Johnson. During slavery, he was taught to read by a white man to whom he gave food in exchange for his lessons. After slavery, he continued his informal education at the home of James Ferguson, a Richmond native who was the first African American school teacher in Princess Anne County. Mr. Johnson was a shoemaker and teacher. He purchased land in Princess Anne County shortly after Emancipation. He represented Nottoway and Amelia Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1889 to 1890. He died in 1922.

Benjamin Jones, a farm manager, was born in 1834 or 1835. The slave overseer on his master's plantation before the American Civil War, Mr. Jones was sent to the North for education in 1865 by his former owner and was given 35 acres of land. He represented Charles City County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871, where he introduced legislation to make gambling a felony. According to the U.S. Census in 1870, he owned $600 in real estate. Benjamin Jones died in 1880.

James R. Jones was a storekeeper and postmaster. His date of birth and death are unknown. Mr. Jones served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1885 to 1887, representing Mecklenburg County. He also served in the Senate of Virginia from 1875 to 1877 and from 1881 to 1883.

Peter K. Jones, a native of Petersburg, was born in 1838. He worked as a shoemaker and carpenter. Mr. Jones was a delegate to the 1865 Virginia Black Convention and represented Greensville and Sussex Counties at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. He served in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing Greensville County from 1869 to 1877.

Robert G. W. Jones, farmer, mail carrier, and music teacher, was born free in 1827 in Henrico County. He moved to Charles City County before 1860, where he acquired considerable landholdings. In 1865, he purchased 500 acres for $900. In 1870, he bought 70 acres for $179, and finally, in 1876, he purchased 31 acres for $300. He organized the first music classes in Charles City County and represented the county in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. It is believed that Mr. Jones died in 1900.

Rufus S. Jones, a storekeeper, was born free in 1835 in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to William and Louisa Jones. He came to Warwick County at the end of the American Civil War. In the U.S. Census in 1870, Mr. Jones was listed as a teacher who owned no property, but he subsequently became a grocer, purchased a lot in Hampton in 1871, and engaged in a number of real estate transactions. He represented Elizabeth City and Warwick Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1875.

William H. Jordan was born a slave in 1860 in Petersburg, the son of Armistead Jordan, a contractor. Mr. Jordan received some education and earned a living as a barber, lawyer, and railway mail carrier. In 1884, before entering the General Assembly, he bought a house and lot in Petersburg but spent the latter part of his life in the North. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1885 to 1887 and also served on the Petersburg City Council.

Alexander G. Lee was born a slave in Portsmouth, the son of Richard B. and Lyndia Ann Butler.

The date of his birth is not known. He attended schools in Portsmouth and later moved to Hampton. He was a lighthouse keeper and boatman. He engaged in several real estate transactions during his career in Portsmouth. His son, Alexander G. Lee, Jr., was born in 1871, and was alive in 1946 when Dr. Luther Porter Jackson's book, *Negro Office-Holders in Virginia 1865-1895* (1945), was published.

Neverson Lewis, a farmer, was born a slave in Powhatan County. The date of his birth is unknown. Although Mr. Lewis had little education, he had a reputation for common sense and honesty in politics. He represented Chesterfield and Powhatan Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to 1882.

James F. Lipscomb, a farmer and merchant, was born free in Cumberland County in 1830 to a family whose freedom was first granted in 1818. Although he was born in poverty, he learned to read and write and rose by his own efforts from the position of a hack driver in Richmond to the owner of a canal boat on the James River, and finally to the ownership of three farms in Cumberland totaling 510 acres. He built a 12-room house and eight smaller dwellings, which he rented out to his farm tenants. After ending his eight-year career in the General Assembly, Mr. Lipscomb opened a general country store, which was later operated by his grandson. He represented Cumberland County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1877. Mr. Lipscomb died in 1893.

William P. Lucas, who was born free in Prince William County in 1843, the son of Jerry and Fanny Lucas, was a teacher and postal clerk. In 1874, he purchased 68 acres of land in Louisa County for $350. Before his election to the General Assembly, he taught school. Mr. Lucas represented Louisa County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875.

John W. B. Matthews was born in 1840 to a prosperous free African American family, and was educated in Petersburg. His grandmother, mother, and Mr. Matthews owned slaves before the American Civil War. He served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873, representing Petersburg. He also served as a deputy customs collector. After Reconstruction, he moved to Massachusetts.

J. B. Miller, Jr., a teacher, was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1869 as a Radical Republican to represent Goochland County from 1869 to 1871. Little is known about Mr. Miller's life.

Peter G. Morgan, born a slave of African, Native American, and white ancestry in 1817, in Nottoway County, was a storekeeper and shoemaker. He represented Petersburg in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. He served on the Petersburg City Council from 1872 to 1874 and was a member of the Petersburg School Board. Mr. Morgan died in Lawrenceville in 1909.

Francis "Frank" Moss was a farmer and minister who was born free in 1825 in Buckingham County. Mr. Moss served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, served in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing Buckingham County from 1874 to 1875, and also served in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871.

Armistead Nickens, a miller and farmer, was born free in 1836 in Lancaster County, the son of Armistead and Polly Nickens. His Virginia ancestry extended back to the 17th century. Eight of his ancestors fought in the American Revolution. His father taught him to read and write. Before his 1870 election to the General Assembly, he purchased 135 acres of land in Lancaster County, and in 1876, he built and gave to the county the first school for African American children. He represented Lancaster County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1875. Mr. Nickens died in 1907.

Frederick S. Norton, a shoemaker, was the brother of Virginia legislators Robert Norton and Daniel M. Norton. The dates of his birth and death are unknown. Mr. Norton represented James City County and Williamsburg in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871.

Robert Norton was born a slave in Virginia. The date of his birth and death are unknown. Robert Norton and his brother Daniel ran away to the North around 1850. He returned to Virginia in 1864, established himself as the leading African American merchant in Yorktown, and served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1872 and from 1881 to 1882, representing Elizabeth City and York Counties. He ran unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for U.S. Congress in 1874.

Alexander Owen, a slave, was a rock mason who was born in 1830 or 1831 to Patrick and Lucy Hughes Owen. Mr. Owen represented Halifax County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. He did not own property according to the U.S. Census of 1870, but used his legislative salary to purchase 54 acres of land.

Littleton Owens, a farmer and the son of John W. and Meheatable Cuffee Owens, was born free in 1842 in Princess Anne County. The exact date of his birth is unknown. He taught himself to read and write. Mr. Owens served three years in the American Civil War and owned a farm of 75 acres in the Kempsville district. Mr. Owens represented Princess Anne County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to 1882. He died in 1894.

Richard G. L. Paige, a lawyer and assistant postmaster, was born a slave in Norfolk and was reared by a free African American woman. According to the report of his descendants, Mr. Paige was the son of a white woman of high social standing. He was sent away to Boston where he was trained as a

machinist. After the American Civil War, he returned to Virginia and studied law at Howard University, where he graduated in 1879. He acquired extensive holdings in real estate, and opened a law practice in which he represented both African American and white clients. He represented Norfolk County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1875 and from 1879 to 1882. Mr. Paige died in 1904.

William H. Patterson, a minister by profession, was born in 1809 or 1810 to a New Kent County family that had been free landowners for several generations. According to the U.S. Census in 1870, he owned $1,000 in real estate and $200 in personal property. Mr. Patterson represented Charles City County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873.

Ceasar Perkins was born a slave in 1839 in Buckingham County, the son of Joseph and Clarey Mosely. He adopted the name "Perkins" from the name of his last master. Ceasar Perkins, a brick mason, farmer, storekeeper, and minister, was self-educated. He made bricks on his farm, built homes, promoted education, and organized churches, serving as pastor for them. He also entered politics and represented Buckingham County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871 and from 1887 to 1888. Although from 1890 to 1903, he lived in Clifton Forge, and from 1903 to 1910, he resided in Richmond, he spent the greater part of his life in Buckingham County. Mr. Perkins died in 1910 and is buried in Buckingham County on land he purchased in 1906.

Fountain M. Perkins was born in 1816. He was a minister and farmer. As a Virginia slave, Perkins was educated by his owner's wife and worked as a plantation overseer. He attended a school run by a Northern teacher after the American Civil War. Mr. Perkins organized Baptist churches in Louisa County, was a landowner during Reconstruction, and served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. Mr. Perkins died in 1896.

John W. Poindexter, a teacher, was born free in Louisa County. He received his education at Howard University, where he graduated in 1872. He became the first African American school teacher in Louisa County. Although he never married, he purchased property in the county and represented Louisa in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877. Mr. Poindexter died in 1903.

Joseph B. Pope was elected as a Republican Readjuster to a single term in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing Southampton County from 1879 to 1880. He was recognized as a "pioneering African American." Little is known about Mr. Pope's life.

Guy Powell, a minister, was born a slave in 1851 in Brunswick County, the son of Milton and Pythena Powell. He was educated at Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C. He became a property owner and, in 1879, he and his brother bought 217 acres. In 1881, he bought the half-interest in the land from his brother. Mr. Powell represented Brunswick County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1881 to 1882. For a number of years he served as the pastor of a Baptist church in Brunswick County and spent the last years of his life in Franklin County. The date of his death is unknown.

William H. Ragsdale, the son of R. Edward and Fannie Ragsdale, was born a slave in 1844. He became a teacher. He purchased 122 acres of land in Charlotte County in 1871 for $1,400. Mr. Ragsdale represented Charlotte County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871.

John H. Robinson, a teacher and lawyer, was born a slave in 1857 in Gloucester County, the son of Edward and Cordelia Robinson. He attended Hampton Institute, now Hampton University, and graduated in 1876. He owned his home in Hampton and purchased additional property in Elizabeth City County. He was active in his church, Queen Street Baptist Church of Hampton, as deacon and clerk. He represented Elizabeth City County, James City County, and York County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1887 to 1888. Mr. Robinson died in 1932.

R. D. Ruffin, a lawyer, was born a slave in 1837 in King and Queen County. Mr. Ruffin fought in the American Civil War and became a sergeant. He studied law at Howard University and graduated in 1874. After graduation, he first settled in Alexandria, but later moved to Dinwiddie County to practice law and enter politics. He represented Dinwiddie County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1876 and served as the sheriff of Alexandria County from 1873 to 1874. The date of Mr. Ruffin's death is unknown.

Archer Scott was a farmer who had a limited education. Mr. Scott purchased property and was very engaged in the affairs of his community. He represented Nottoway and Amelia Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877 and from 1879 to 1884. The date of Mr. Scott's birth is unknown; he died in 1908.

George L. Seaton was a contractor and grocer. He was born free in 1826 in Alexandria to George and Lucinda Seaton. His father was a carpenter, and he taught the trade to his sons, George and John. The Seatons were successful business owners. George Seaton represented Alexandria County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. Mr. Seaton died in 1882.

Dabney Smith, born a slave in Charlotte County in 1846, was the son of William Henry and Francina Smith. A house servant with some education, he earned a living as a merchant, farmer, and mail carrier and purchased 194 acres of land in Charlotte County. He was deeply involved in politics and held office in the Republican Party organization, representing Charlotte County. He represented

Charlotte County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1881 to 1882. He died in 1920.

Henry D. Smith, a farmer and distiller, was born a slave in Greensville County in 1834. He was self-educated. He amassed an estate of 965 acres and purchased "Merry Oaks," the farm and residence of his former owner. He supplemented his income from his farm by manufacturing brandy and whiskey in his distillery. He married three times and was the father of seventeen or more children. He represented Greensville County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1879 to 1880. Mr. Smith died in 1901.

Robert M. Smith, born free in New Kent County, was a blacksmith, merchant, and collector of customs. Robert Smith was a war refugee with other members of his family in 1864 in the town of Hampton. He attended night school with hundreds of other freedmen quartered there. He learned the trade of blacksmithing. Establishing his home in Hampton, Mr. Smith first operated a blacksmith shop with his brother and later opened a grocery store and was appointed collector of customs at Old Point Comfort. He served his community for over 40 years; he was deacon of his church and served in several state and national offices in fraternal orders. He represented Elizabeth City and Warwick Counties in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877. He also served as Commissioner of the Revenue from 1883 to 1889 for Elizabeth City County and was a member of the Hampton City Council from 1895 to 1899. Mr. Smith died in 1925.

John B. Syphax was born free in Alexandria County (Arlington) in 1835 on the Parke Custis estate. He was the son of Charles and Maria Custis Syphax. His parents, once enslaved, had been freed by the will of Parke Custis. John Syphax was educated in Washington, D.C., and became a property owner in Alexandria County. His brother, William, was a pioneer in establishing the Washington, D.C., school system. John Syphax represented Arlington County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1874 to 1875. He served as Alexandria County's Treasurer from 1875 to 1879, and as a justice of the peace. John Syphax died in 1916.

Henry Turpin, a carpenter, was born a slave in Goochland County in 1836. He and six brothers and one sister were emancipated by their master, Edwin Turpin, five years before the American Civil War. Henry Turpin was taught the trade of carpentry and bought 25 acres of land in Goochland County shortly after 1865. He moved North after serving in the Virginia General Assembly and was employed by a sleeping car company. Henry Turpin represented Goochland County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873. He died in 1905.

John Watson was born in Mecklenburg County and served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and in the House of Delegates in 1869. Mr. Watson was active in promoting schools and churches in the county. He died while in office.

Maclin C. Wheeler, a farmer, was born a slave in Brunswick County in 1854, the son of Buck and Eliza Wheeler. He was highly regarded as a citizen of the county and purchased land in 1885 and 1889. He represented Brunswick County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1883 to 1884. The date of his death is unknown.

Robert H. Whitaker was a farmer who was born a slave in Brunswick County. He was highly respected by his fellow citizens. He purchased property in the Powellton district of the county. He represented Brunswick County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1875 to 1877 and served on the Brunswick County Board of Supervisors. The date of his birth and death are unknown.

Ellis Wilson, a farmer and minister, was born a slave in Dinwiddie County in 1824. He spent his entire life in Dinwiddie County as a minister and community leader. In 1870 and 1871, he purchased four tracts of land comprising 624 acres. He represented Dinwiddie County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1869 to 1871. It is believed that Mr. Wilson died in 1904.

Senate of Virginia

James William D. Bland, a carpenter, a cooper, and a U.S. tax assessor, was born free in Farmville in 1844. He represented Prince Edward County and Appomattox in the Virginia Constitutional Convention and in the Virginia Senate from 1869 to 1870, where he served on the Senate Committee for Courts of Justice. At the Virginia Constitutional Convention, Mr. Bland proposed a resolution requesting military authorities to direct railroad companies to allow convention delegates to occupy first-class accommodations, which many railroads had refused to do. He also introduced a measure guaranteeing the right of "every person to enter any college, seminary, or other public institution upon equal terms with any other, regardless of race, color, or previous condition." He was considered to be the voice of compromise and impartiality in an age of turmoil and partisanship. James Bland was one of 60 persons killed in 1870 when the second floor of the State Capitol collapsed.

Cephas L. Davis, a minister and teacher, was born a slave in Chase City, Mecklenburg County, in 1843, the son of Charles and Frances Davis. He was educated at the Richmond Theological Institute in Richmond and ordained in the Baptist church. He was the first African American school teacher in Chase City. He served as pastor of some of the largest churches of his day in Virginia and North Carolina. Mr. Davis represented Mecklenburg County in the Senate of Virginia from 1879 to 1880. In

the 1890s Mr. Davis ran for Congress unsuccessfully in a district in North Carolina. The date of Mr. Davis' death is unknown.

John M. Dawson was born in 1835 in New York. He was the pastor of First Baptist Church in Williamsburg. He was educated at Oberlin College's preparatory department from 1862 to 1865. Mr. Dawson owned about 60 acres of land in James City County as well as property in Williamsburg. He served on the Williamsburg Common Council and was elected to the Senate of Virginia, where he served from 1874 to 1877. In 1882, he ran unsuccessfully as an independent for Congress. Mr. Dawson died in 1915.

Joseph P. Evans was born a slave in 1835 in Dinwiddie County and purchased his freedom in 1859. During Reconstruction, he was a prominent leader of Petersburg's African American community, serving as a delegate to the Republican state convention of 1867, and in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1871 to 1873, representing Petersburg. Mr. Evans also served in the Senate of Virginia from 1874 to 1875. While a member of the General Assembly, Mr. Evans introduced bills to require compulsory education, guarantee African Americans the right to serve on juries, and require landlords to give ten days' notice before evicting a tenant. He also held positions as a letter carrier and as deputy collector of internal revenue. He was elected president of a Black labor convention in Richmond in 1875, where he urged African Americans to organize themselves independently in politics and as workers. He ran unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for Congress in 1884. His son, William Evans, represented Petersburg in the General Assembly from 1887 to 1888. Joseph P. Evans died in 1888.

Nathaniel M. Griggs was born a slave in 1857 in Farmville to Matthew and Nicy Washington. He attended night school and was a tobacco factory worker but was soon discharged for making political speeches. He entered politics and was appointed deputy collector of internal revenue. He represented Prince Edward County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1883 to 1884. Later, he was employed by the Bureau of Printing and Engraving in Washington, D.C. After the failure of the Republican Party to win reelection in the presidential election of 1892, Mr. Griggs went to work as a jeweler for the Wanamaker Company in Philadelphia. He died in 1919.

James R. Jones was a storekeeper and postmaster. His date of birth and death are unknown. Mr. Jones served in the Senate of Virginia from 1875 to 1877 and from 1881 to 1883. He also served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1885 to 1887, representing Mecklenburg County.

Isaiah L. Lyons, a native of New York born in 1842 or 1843, may have come to Virginia before the American Civil War, as the U.S. Census of 1870 lists him as living with a New York-born wife and a 12-year-old son born in Virginia. He represented Surry, York, Elizabeth City, and Warwick Counties in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871. In the Virginia General Assembly, Mr. Lyons did not oppose segregated schools; rather he insisted that African American schools should have African American teachers. Mr. Lyons was a member of the First Baptist Church in Hampton. He died while a member of the Senate on February 21, 1871. After his death, the Virginia General Assembly awarded his wife $52 to cover funeral expenses.

William P. Mosely, a slave born in Virginia in 1819, was a house servant and operated a freight boat. He obtained his freedom before the American Civil War and became well educated. Mr. Mosely was a delegate to the Virginia Black Convention of 1865, represented Goochland County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and served in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871. He ran for Congress as a Republican in 1880 but was defeated by the Readjuster candidate.

Francis "Frank" Moss was a farmer and minister who was born free in 1825 in Buckingham County. Mr. Moss served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and served in the Virginia House of Delegates, representing Buckingham County from 1874 to 1875. He represented Buckingham County in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871.

Daniel M. Norton was born a slave in Virginia in 1840 and escaped to the North with his brother Robert around 1850. He studied medicine in Troy, New York, and was licensed as a physician. Dr. Norton returned to Virginia in 1864 and became one of Hampton's most important political leaders. He was elected in December 1865 to represent African Americans on a Freedmen's Bureau Court. Early in 1866, as a representative of Hampton area African Americans, he testified before the Joint Congressional Committee on Reconstruction. Daniel Norton represented James City and York Counties in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and also represented these counties in the Senate of Virginia from 1871 to 1873 and from 1877 to 1887. He built an effective political machine in Hampton, and for 40 years he was a justice of the peace in York County. He was appointed collector of customs in Newport News in 1862, and served on the board of visitors of Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute. He ran unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for Congress in 1869. The exact date of his birth is unknown; according to descendants researching the family, Dr. Norton died in November 1918 in Yorktown.

Guy Powell, a minister, was born a slave in 1851 in Brunswick County, the son of Milton and Pythena Powell. He was educated at Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C. He became a property

owner, and in 1879 he and his brother bought 217 acres. In 1881, he bought the half-interest in the land from his brother. Mr. Powell represented Brunswick County in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1881 to 1882. Mr. Powell also served in the Senate of Virginia, representing Nottoway, Lunenburg, and Brunswick Counties from 1875 to 1878. For a number of years he served as the pastor of a Baptist church in Brunswick County and spent the last years of his life in Franklin County. The date of his death is unknown.

John Robinson was born in 1822. He was a lawyer and graduate of Hampton Institute, now Hampton University. He represented Cumberland County in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1873. He also worked as a mail carrier and operated a saloon and general store during the 1870s. The date of his death is unknown.

William N. Stevens was born in 1850 to a Petersburg family that had been free for three or four generations. Mr. Stevens was a lawyer and represented Petersburg in the Senate of Virginia from 1871 to 1878, and represented Sussex County from 1881 to 1882. He wrote to Charles Sumner in 1870 on behalf of the Civil Rights Bill: "We are as much today the victims of this hateful prejudice of caste as though we were not men and citizens." Mr. Stevens died of cancer in 1891. His father, Christopher Stevens, served on the Petersburg City Council, and a brother, J. A. C. Stevens, served as justice of the peace.

George Teamoh, a carpenter, was born a slave in Portsmouth in 1818. An accomplished orator, he was a delegate to the Virginia Black Convention of 1865 and was a Union League organizer. He served in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, but generally remained silent. He wrote, "agricultural degrees and brickyard diplomas were poor preparation for the complex proceedings." He supported the disenfranchisement of former Confederates. Mr. Teamoh served in the Senate of Virginia from 1869 to 1871, where he supported the formation of a biracial labor union at the Gosport Navy Yard. Later, due to party factionalism, he was denied re-nomination to the Senate of Virginia in 1871, and ran unsuccessfully for the Virginia House of Delegates. He was an advocate of African American self-help, was a founder of Portsmouth's first African American school, and was active in African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) church affairs in the city.

WHEREAS, there is little, if any, mention in the public records about the historical significance of the election and service of the aforementioned African American men to the Commonwealth; however, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission will make complete biographical information concerning each gentleman available on its website to facilitate education, scholarship, and public awareness of the role and contributions of these valiant men in Virginia's history; and

WHEREAS, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission offers the roll call of African Americans elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868, and to the Virginia House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia during Reconstruction from 1869 to 1890, as an appropriate tribute during the commemoration of the Sesquicentennial of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 2013, and the Commission hereby recognizes, honors, venerates, and celebrates the bravery and dedication of the African American men who were pioneers in elected office in Virginia and whose commitment to public service in the face of deep resentment, racial animus, violence, corruption, and intimidation is an exemplary legacy; and

WHEREAS, the people of the Commonwealth are indebted to these African American public servants and are the beneficiaries of their tremendous contributions and service to help promote the promise of racial equality, justice, and full citizenship for all citizens; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That African American members elected to the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and members elected to the Virginia General Assembly during Reconstruction be recognized for their outstanding service to the Commonwealth on the occasion of the Sesquicentennial of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 2013; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates shall post this resolution on the General Assembly's website as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation of their dedicated service to the people of the Commonwealth; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate, with the assistance of the Capitol Square Preservation Council and the Library of Virginia, shall develop a proposal for consideration by the Joint Rules Committee regarding appropriate commemorative plaques listing (i) the names of the African American members of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and the locality represented by each member as noted herein and (ii) the names of the African American members elected to the Virginia House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia during Reconstruction as noted herein, together with their tenure and the House or Senate district that they represented, to be displayed in a prominent place in the Capitol; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate shall submit the proposal to the Joint Rules Committee no later than September 1, 2012; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate shall coordinate with the MLK Commission to recognize the African American members of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and the African American members elected to the Virginia House of Delegates and the Senate of Virginia during Reconstruction as part of the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Honorable Mamie E. Locke, Chairwoman of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus; Dr. Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Peter A. Blake, Interim Director of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, requesting that they further disseminate copies of this resolution to their respective constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.