

Trip #6 – Episode 1: Repositioning Charles ... to Charleston!

As many of you may have noticed ... over the past few weeks, winter seemed to be approaching. Which meant it was time for us to start thinking about skipping town and heading south.

The problem is that one of us feels the need to be home for Christmas. But keeping Charles in the northern climate till after Christmas would mean having to “winterize” Charles, a process that neither of us wanted to attempt for fear of screwing it up and destroying everything in Charles that could be destroyed by freezing temperatures.

So, instead, we chose to “reposition” Charles, which is basically what we did last year when we stored Charles in Las Vegas. But this year, for a variety of reasons, we decided to travel straight south and east instead of going south and west.

Fortunately, the day we chose to cross the border, there were hardly any cars – and zero exploding cars! (That happened about two days later, and at a different crossing.)



The next day, it rained. From the time we left to the time we finally stopped driving. That was fun.



But by the end of the drive, we got to Mount Airy, home of Andy Griffith. It was only fitting that we stay at the Mayberry Campground, which was quite pleasant once the rain stopped.



The office was filled with Andy of Mayberry memorabilia and of course, our site was on Andy Griffith Blvd. (Did I mention that Andy Griffith is one of Jim's heroes?)



From Mount Airy, we drove to the outskirts of Charleston. We spent American Thanksgiving having a day of rest in a lovely campground, and enjoying a traditional Thanksgiving burger.



The next day, we drove into Charleston and went on a walking tour. Our guide, Dennis, told a good story, and we were not at all surprised to learn that he had a former career as a minister.

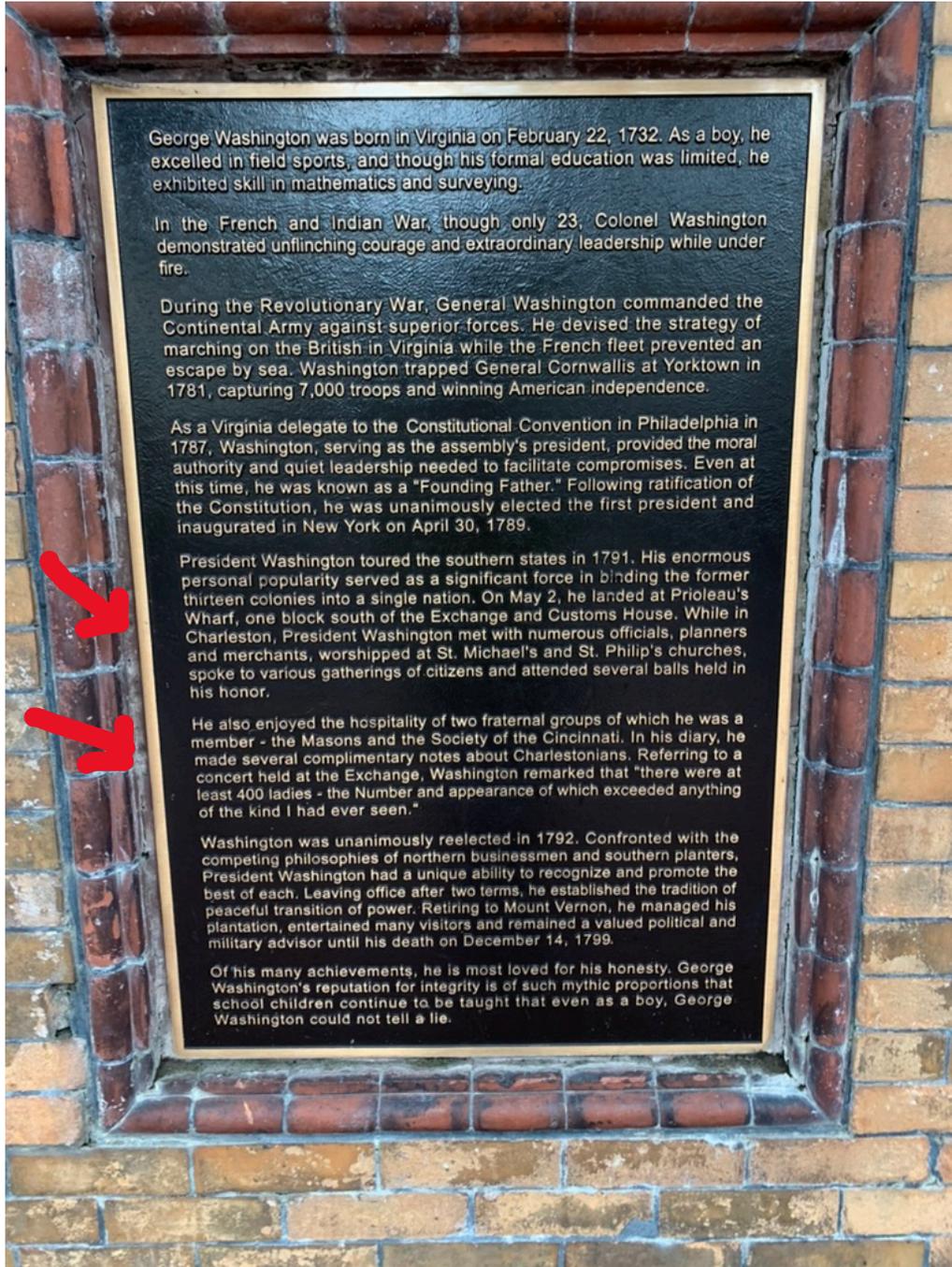
He added a lot of colour to the stories about the city's role in many of the most significant turning points in the country's history. I had been concerned that the tour might pay tribute to the Confederates, but Dennis was clearly on the "right" side of that discussion.



He started in this park with a statue of George Washington, commemorating an important visit Washington made in 1792.



Apparently, George made a lasting impression on Charleston – and vice versa.



The rest of the tour featured a combination of stories about Charleston's colourful style and its painful history.

The colourful part was everywhere – in the character of the buildings and gardens and the characters themselves.



They call this Rainbow Row ... for obvious reasons.



Even the graveyards and cemeteries had their own unique character. (And by the way, we learned the difference between the two. Maybe everyone knows, but in case you're as under-educated in these things as we are, a cemetery is on church grounds. A graveyard is not. Thank you, Dennis.)



Pink seems to be popular in Charleston.





But when it comes to pink, this Huguenot Cathedral definitely takes the prize. Built in 1844, it's recognized for having the only French Calvinist congregation in the United States, and the church itself is the oldest Gothic Revival church in South Carolina. It's been designated a National Historic Landmark.



We went to the Powder Magazine, built in the early 1700s to store gunpowder, which came in handy during the Revolutionary War.

This innocuous little building had walls so thick that if the gunpowder exploded, the walls would hold.





And here, we learned that before cotton, rice was the main driver of the economy in South Carolina, and many of the Africans who were kidnapped and carried across the ocean were valued because of their skills in growing rice.



Enslaved Africans provided the skills and labor to grow rice in the Lowcountry.

Profits from rice production fueled the economy of colonial South Carolina. Thousands of people were captured and imported from West Africa because they had the skills and knowledge to grow rice. By 1740, 66 percent of the colony's population was enslaved.

White South Carolinians feared insurrection and the Spanish policy of freeing runaway slaves who reached Florida added to their concerns. In response the government enacted a new slave code. In 1739 this volatile situation exploded into armed rebellion.

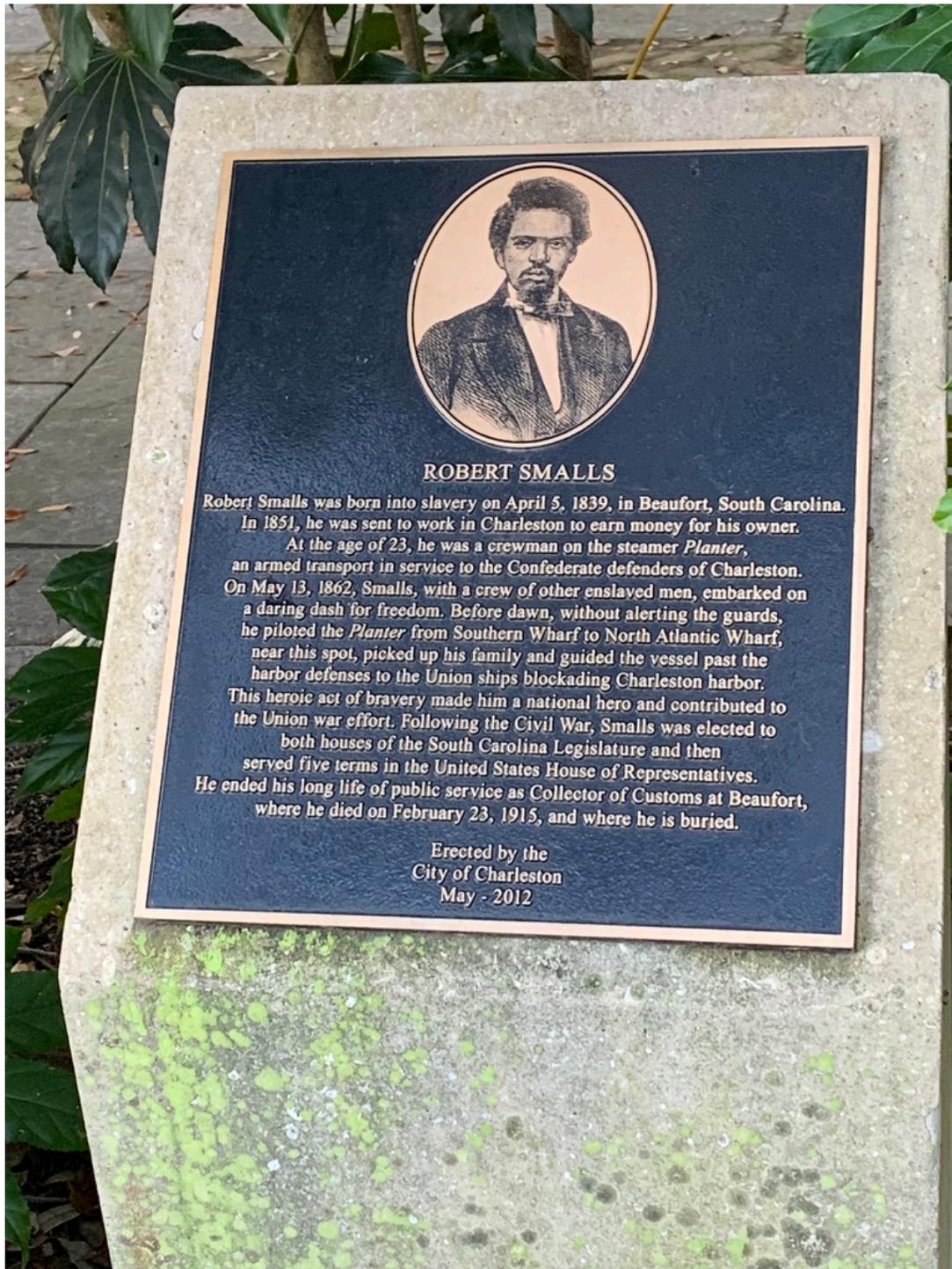
While walking down this lane, we learned about the bricks we were walking on. They were made in a time when child labour was the norm.



The bricks would be fired and then rolled in sand. But the children often picked them up before they were cooled off, so their handprints were imbedded in the bricks.



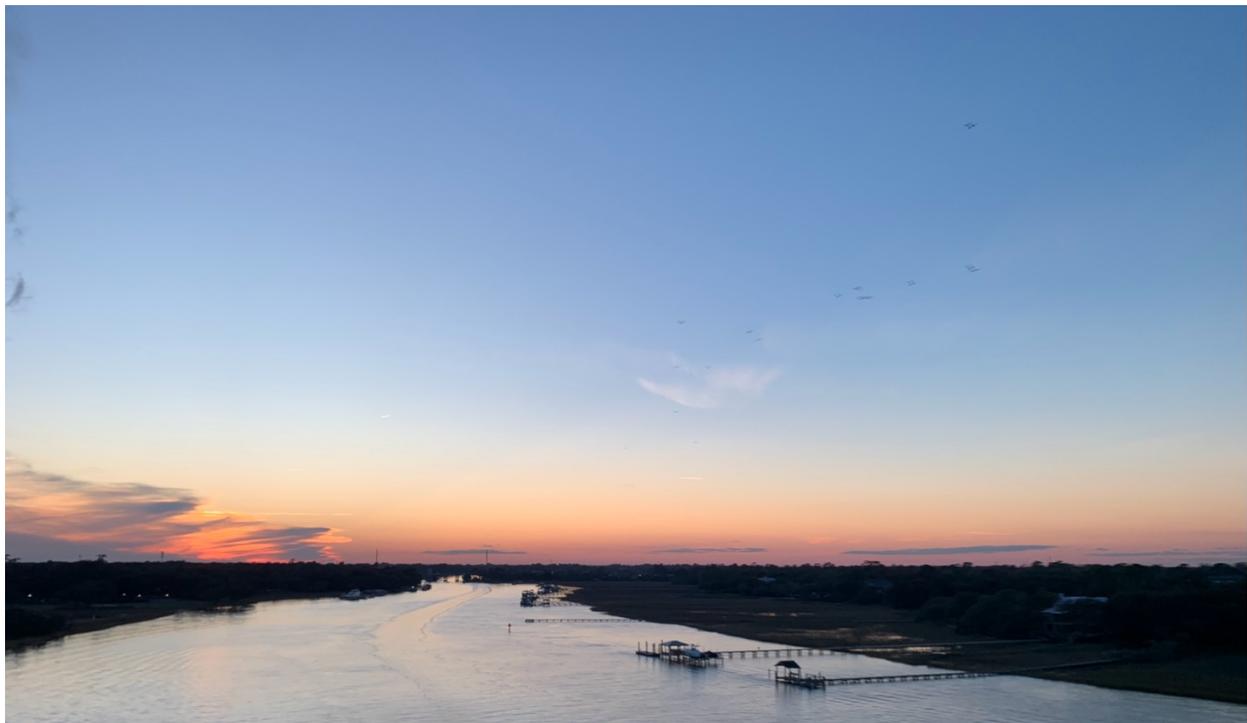
And we learned about Robert Smalls, an African American who rose from slavery to working on a ship for the Confederates. But he had been quietly learning everything about the vessel and the coastline, and when the opportunity arose, he stole the ship, gathered family members and navigated toward the Union blockade. He eventually became a 5-term representative in Congress. Apparently there's finally being a movie made about him!



After all the walking and learning so much, we decided to reward ourselves. We wandered into this very stylish hotel – the Vendue – and took the elevator to the rooftop bar for a little refreshment.



Then we headed back to Charles and our campground on James Island, a State Park just outside of town. We enjoyed the light show along the way.

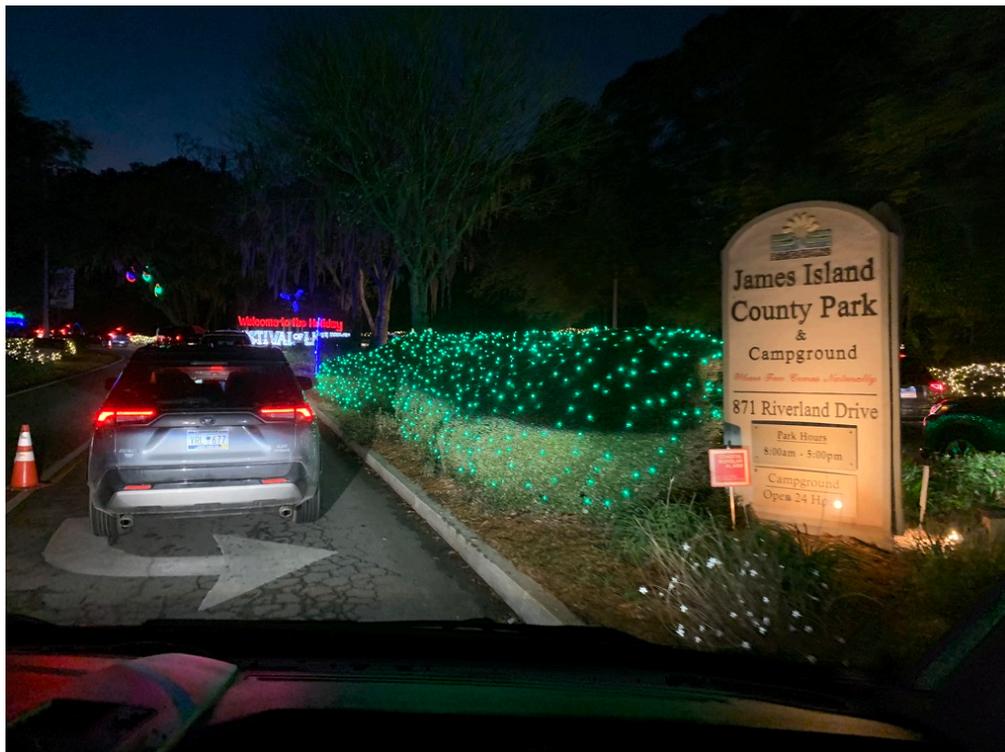


But the light show was just beginning at our campground, where we had been warned by the management that there would be a LOT of traffic coming into the park for their annual Festival of Lights that was starting that night.

They weren't kidding! It took us about an hour to get into the park.



But it was fun to see all the colourful displays.







We didn't go through the whole park, but this was the only religious display we saw.



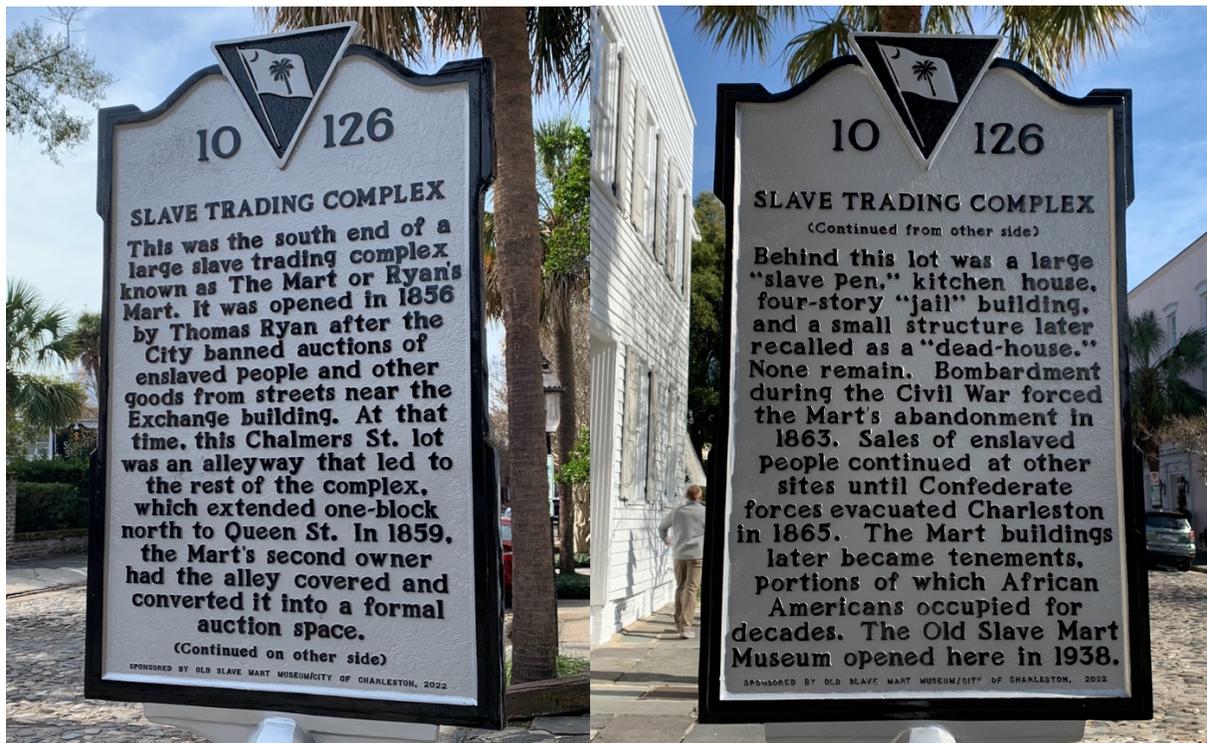
Unless down here, it's the flamingoes that came to herald the newborn king?



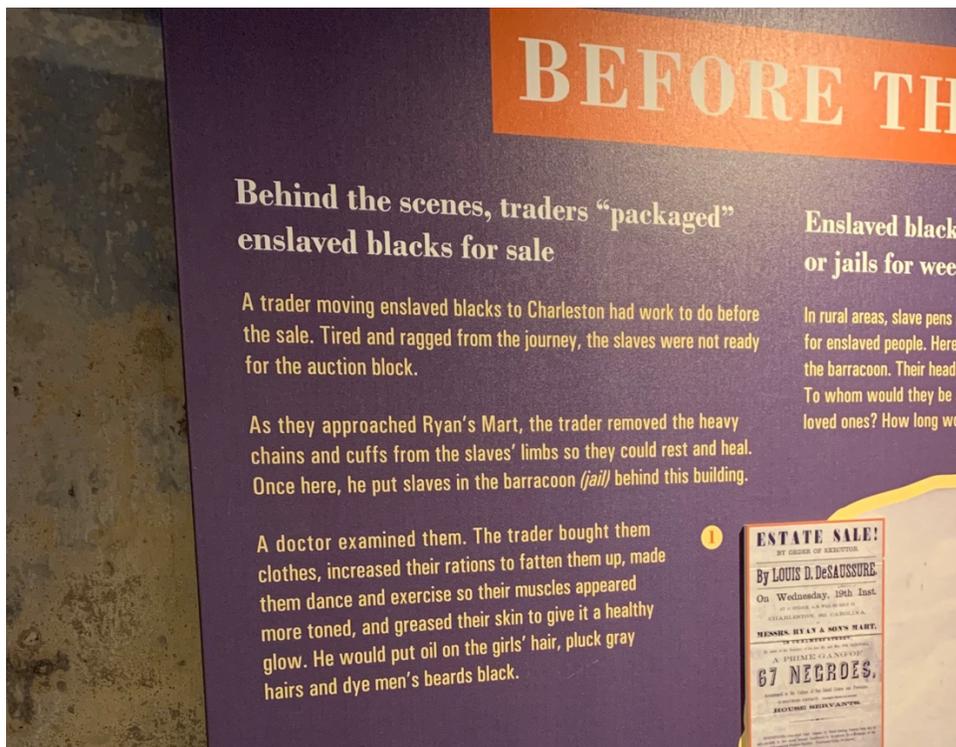
The next day, we decided we'd return to Charleston to go through a museum we had learned about during our tour the day before: The Slave Mart. Dennis had told us stories about the market and the museum, and we felt it was important to go back and understand more about this place.



These signs explain the market's history. They appeared just after the city banned selling enslaved people and "other goods" in public places.



We had tried to steel ourselves to what we would see and learn at this museum. But it was hard, and we only lasted a while.

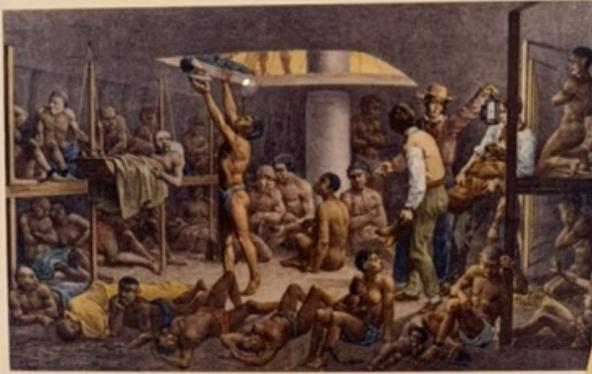


LEST WE FORGET: THE TRIUMPH OVER SLAVERY

THE SLAVE TRADE: THE MIDDLE PASSAGE

Over 27,000 of the estimated 50,000 voyages from Africa to the Americas have been documented, and an estimated 9.5 million Africans survived the Middle Passage and settled throughout the Americas. The voyage could last from one to three months. A frightening and dehumanizing experience, captains and crewmen on ships in the Middle Passage shackled male slaves below deck and subjected men, women, and children to punishment and abuse. Upward of 18 percent died or committed suicide en route. The remainder waged successful struggles against their oppression and dehumanization, survived the tortuous voyage and planted the human seeds in the Americas from which the hemispheric African-American population evolved. Today the 9.5 million original survivors have produced progeny that number between 150 and 200 million people of African descent throughout the hemisphere. They are the first and most fundamental evidence of blacks' triumph over slavery.

EL PASAJE INTERMEDIO
Se han documentado más de 27,000 de los 50,000 viajes estimados del África a las Américas, y aproximadamente 9.5 millones de africanos sobrevivieron el Pasaje Intermedio y se asentaron en las Américas. El viaje podía demorar de uno a tres meses y era una experiencia aterrizante y deshumanizante. Los capitanes y la tripulación de los barcos en el Pasaje Intermedio encadenaban a los hombres esclavos debajo de la cubierta y tanto los hombres como las mujeres y los niños eran víctimas de castigos y abusos. Más del 18 por ciento moría o se suicidaba en el camino. Los esclavos que sobrevivieron la ardua travesía lucharon con éxito contra la opresión y la deshumanización y sembraron las semillas humanas en las Américas de las cuales surgió la población afroamericana en el hemisferio. Se calcula que hoy en día en el hemisferio hay entre 150 y 200 millones de personas que descienden de los millones de africanos originales. Son la primera evidencia y la más fundamental del triunfo de los negros sobre la esclavitud.



Negres à bord de Galles, n.d. Enslaved Africans aboard a slave ship. Engraving by Deroy after a drawing by Johann Moritz Rugendas. Art and Archives Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library



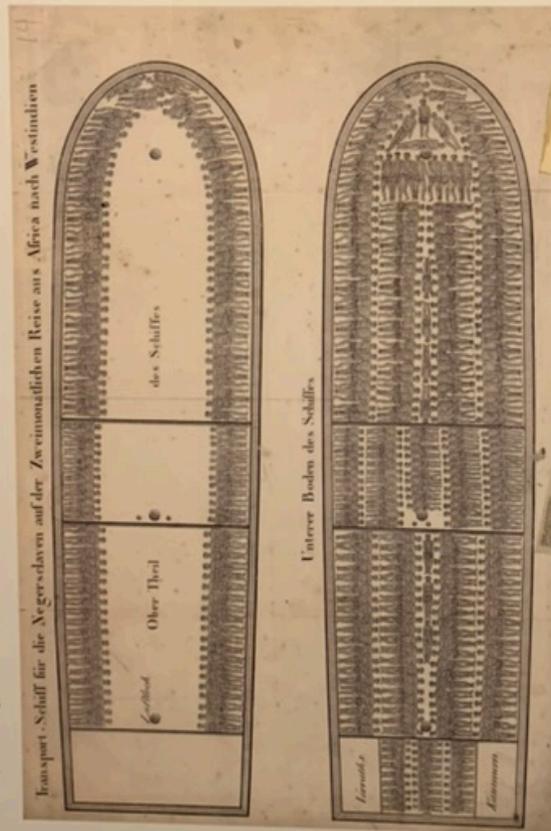
Deaths in the Sea. Artist: Rod Brown. Deaths were a daily occurrence during the sea voyage from Africa to the Americas, with sickness, disease, rebellion, and suicide taking many lives. Collection of Rod Brown



Log of Slave Ship Lawrence, 1730-1731. Commander Abraham Dumaresq's daily and hourly record of the transatlantic journey of the British slave ship *Lawrence* from Angola to Argentina details the deaths of sixty-five slaves. From November 16, 1730, to January 14, 1731, thirty-three men, thirty-one women, and one boy, as Commander Dumaresq reports, "died" (lived) during the voyage. Probably 600 or more slaves were aboard the *Lawrence* at the start of its journey. Manuscript and Archives Division, Manuscripts and Social Science Library, The New York Public Library

The Africans of the Slave Bark "Wittolin," *Slaver's Weekly*, June 2, 1860. Photograph and Engraving Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

*Engraving of cross section of slave ship *Brookes*, based in Liverpool, England, 1786.* Manuscript, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library



AUCTION

107 YEARS OF PROGRESS

Having sold my farm and am leaving for Oregon territory by ox team, I will offer at public sale at my home 2 Miles South of Versailles, Kentucky, on McConn Ferry Pike, on

MARCH 1st, 1849

all my personal property, to wit:



ALL MY OX TEAMS

EXCEPT TWO TEAMS — BUCK and BEN, and TOM and JERRY

2 Milk Cows, one Gray Mare and Colt, 1 pair of oxen and yoke, one baby yoke, two ox carts, 1500 feet of poplar weather boards, plow with wooden moldboards, 800 to 1000 feet of clap-ash timber; ten gallons of maple syrup; two spinning wheels; 30 pounds of mutton tallow; one large loom, made by Jerry Wilson; 300 poles; 100 split hoops, 100 empty barrels; one 32-gallon barrel of Johnson-Miller whiskey, 7 years old; 20 gallons of apple brandy; 40-gal. copper still; 1 doz. real hocks; two handle hocks; 3 scythes and cradles, 1 dozen wooden spades; bullet mold and powder horn; rifle made by Ben Miller; 50 gallons of soft soap; hams, bacon, lard; 40 gallons of sorghum molasses.

SIX HEAD OF FOX HOUNDS

All Soft Mouthed
Except One

At the Same Time I Will Sell My

6 NEGRO SLAVES

Two men 35 years and 50 years old; two boys, 12 and 18 years old; two molass women, 40 and 30 years old. We will sell all together to some party but will not separate them.

TERMS OF SALE — Cash in hand or note to draw 4 per cent interest with Bob McConnell as security.

PLENTY TO DRINK AND EAT

Slave auction broadside,
Versailles, Kentucky, U.S.A.
Sample Noel Pittman Collection

\$20 Reward:

Runaway or stolen, from the subscriber,
a negro woman and two children.

The woman is tall and black, and a few days before she went off,
I burnt her with a hot iron on the side of her face.

The woman's name is Bettye, commonly called Bet.

ADVERTISEMENT
NORTH CAROLINA, 1838



We decided to end our tour, knowing that as bad as things are today, and although there's still a lot of change that needs to happen, we have come a long, long way.

We decided to end our visit by driving around one more time to remind ourselves of the elegance and beauty that is Charleston.









And we pointed Charles toward another beautiful city that we both love.



Next stop: Savannah