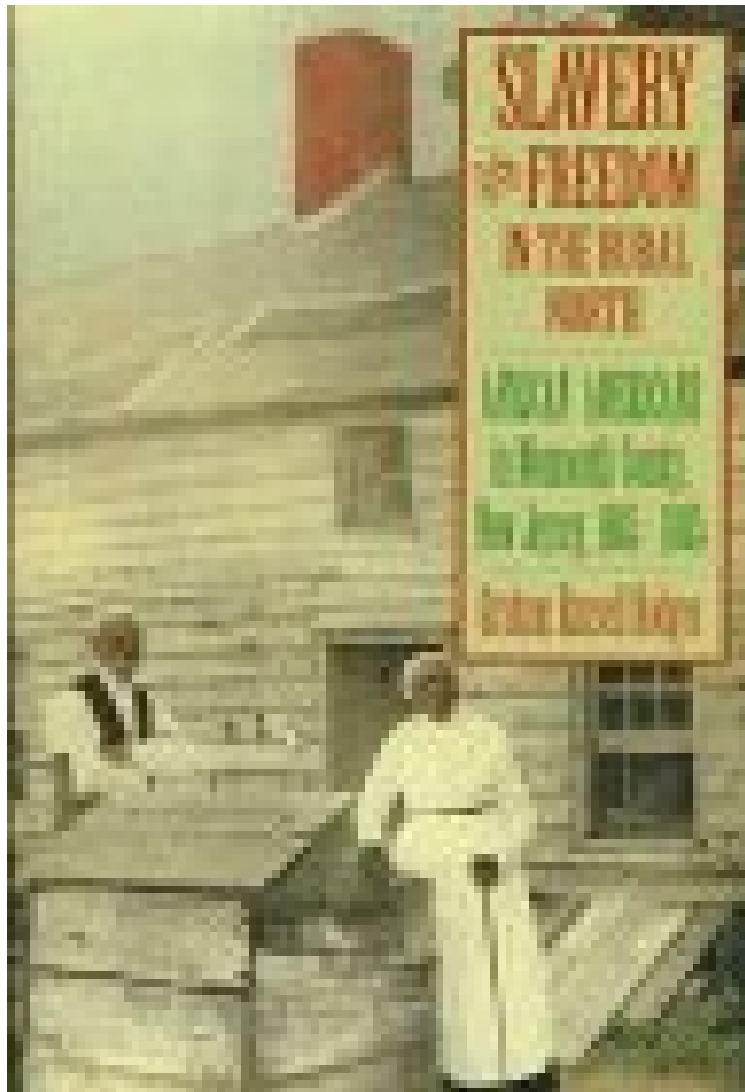


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## Slavery and Freedom in the Rural North: African Americans in Monmouth County, New Jersey, 1665-1865

Graham Russell Hodges

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**Graham Russell Hodges : Slavery and Freedom in the Rural North: African Americans in Monmouth County, New Jersey, 1665-1865** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Slavery and Freedom in the Rural North: African Americans in Monmouth County, New Jersey, 1665-1865:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Dirty Little Secret. By Customer My ancestors are from New Jersey. From their wills I discovered they owned slaves. This book even mentions them, the slave owners. This is

about a chapter in U.S. history that we overlook because we focus so much on slavery in the South, the States that rebelled. New Jersey was loyal to the Union so the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 did not apply to them. Their slaves weren't really free until the 13th Amendment was passed in 1865! The stories are harsh but fair. Mr. Hodges paints a good picture of rural life in New Jersey during colonial times up to the U.S. Civil War. He also clearly lays out the laws passed to emancipate the slaves explaining the history and impact of each law. The book is well referenced with footnotes and bibliographies at the end of each chapter. It is such a good resource on the history of my ancestors that it has become my favorite book. If you are doing genealogy research or you are an historian who wants to know how dirty the hands of Northerners were with slavery, this book will enlighten you. It is a real gem. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent hard to find facts on New Jersey and Monmouth ...By Warren AExcellent hard to find facts on New Jersey and Monmouth County in particular. It is amazing to find out details about The African American influence and struggle in Colonial America. 21 of 21 people found the following review helpful. "Slavery received an early start in New Jersey..."By DJ RixIn late 1775, sensing that the time for emancipation and liberty was at hand, a slave named Titus quietly slipped away from his master in Monmouth County, New Jersey. Richard Corliss, the slaveholder, offered three pounds reward for the capture and return of Titus. Titus did return, but as Colonel Tye, and he fought gallantly in the Battle of Monmouth, near Freehold. A year later, Colonel Tye did something even more extraordinary. Once again he returned to Monmouth County as leader of an integrated guerilla unit. Tye's intimate knowledge of Monmouth County swamps, rivers and woods served him well, as he and his group plundered the farms and estates of wealthy slaveholders, escaping to a hide out on Sandy Hook. These depredations continued for a year until Tye received a bullet wound and died of lockjaw. Tye would be an honored figure in American history but for one problem: This was the Revolutionary War, not the Civil War, and Tye was fighting on the British side. As far as he was concerned, Tye was fighting for the right side. On November 7, 1778, the Earl of Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, promised freedom to all slaves "willing to serve His Majesty's forces to end the present rebellion." If you had been a slave, which side would you have chosen? An embryonic nation apparently committed to slavery and largely governed by slaveholders, or a powerful maritime empire that promised you your freedom? This wonderful story about a courageous man, which I had never heard before, comes from an eye-opening book by Graham Russell Hodges, "Slavery and Freedom in the Rural North: African Americans in Monmouth County, 1665-1865," from Madison House Publishers in cooperation with the Friends of the Monmouth County Park System. Hodges lets the facts speak for themselves. From census figures, newspaper accounts, county and church records, business ledgers, wills, and reward postings for the capture of escaped slaves, we are reminded that New Jersey was a rural state that had much in common with the upper South - Lincoln never carried New Jersey. We did not have large plantations, but slaveholding was common and acceptable enough to make us closer to tidewater Maryland and Virginia than to New England in many of our attitudes. Slavery received an early start in New Jersey and rooted strongly enough to end slowly, grudgingly and later than any other Northeastern states. Vestiges of servitude lingered on into the Twentieth Century, with many African Americans economically bound to the same white families that had once owned them as property. Hodges gives particular attention to the role played by organized religion in the justification and maintenance of slavery, as well as in its gradual demise. The second part of Hodges' book deals with New Jersey's emancipation period, which saw a declining slave population and the growing strength of Monmouth County's free black community up to the Civil War. Local tax rolls reveal an increasing number of mostly poor, yet free, African Americans, a few of whom managed to acquire considerable farm acreage. Tables throughout the book show the distribution of free and slave populations by town and by year. Poet William Carlos Williams advises that we will find what is universal by examining what is found locally. By taking a magnifying glass to the 200 year history of slavery in a single New Jersey county, Graham Russell Hodges brings to light the degradation, violence, hypocrisy, and moral ambiguities of a terrible institution as it was experienced in this state, by people we would have known or even could have been. Its pages are filled with surnames still listed in our telephone books. It is a powerful book. Bob Rixon, WFMU-FM, Jersey City, NJ

While the transition urban African Americans made from slavery to freedom in the North has been the subject of much scholarship, the experiences of their rural counterparts has remained largely hidden. Using the development of a single community in eastern New Jersey, Hodges examines the African-American experience in the rural North. This unique social history addresses many long-held assumptions about slavery and emancipation outside the plantation South. Hodges weaves an intricate pattern of life and death, work and worship, from the earliest settlement to the end of the Civil War.