



Frederick Douglass and Isaac Myers Short Biographies

Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass was born enslaved on a farm in Talbot County, Maryland in 1818. And for six years, he lived on this farm-with his grandparents-until his slaveholder sent him twelve miles away to the Lloyd Plantation. In 1826, when he was eight years old, young Frederick was sent to Baltimore to work for the Auld family. During his stay with the Aulds, he learned to read and became aware of the abolitionist's movement. Douglass spent his 12 years in Baltimore before he ran away to gain his freedom in 1838. After claiming his freedom, Douglass worked tirelessly to end slavery. He became an abolitionist, orator, and author. He served the nation as US Marshal for the District of Columbia and as a Minister and Consul to Haiti. Following emancipation in Maryland (1864), Douglass returned to Baltimore many times re-establishing relationships began decades before. He mentored Isaac Myers and other Chesapeake Marine Railway and Dry Dock Company founders, spoke at public events and monitored the city's social and economic progress.

Frederick Douglass moved from New York to the nation's capital, a few years before his death. He purchased an estate, Cedar Hill, in Washington, D.C and served as the District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds. Douglass died at Cedar Hill in Anacostia, a Washington, D.C. community in 1895.

Isaac Myers

Isaac Myers was born in Baltimore, Maryland, to free parents, on January 13, 1835. He received his education in a private day school taught by Rev. John Fortie. At age sixteen, he began a caulking apprenticeship with James Jackson, one of the city's leading African American caulkers in the 1850s. By the time he was twenty years old, Myers had become foreman for caulking jobs on the largest ships in the Fells Point harbor. Myers also worked for a major grocer, Bridges and Company. Following the Civil War, Myers and others organized the first black owned and operated shipyard in the United States, the Chesapeake Marine Railway and Dry Dock Company. It was located in Fell's Point.

Isaac Myers was a member of Baltimore's Bethel A.M.E. and served as its Sunday school superintendent for fifteen years. He was an active member of the labor union movement. He helped found one of the country's first African American Labor Unions. Myers worked for the United States Post Office and supervised the mail service of the Southern States. He also organized and managed a grocery store. Myers died at his home in Baltimore City in 1891.