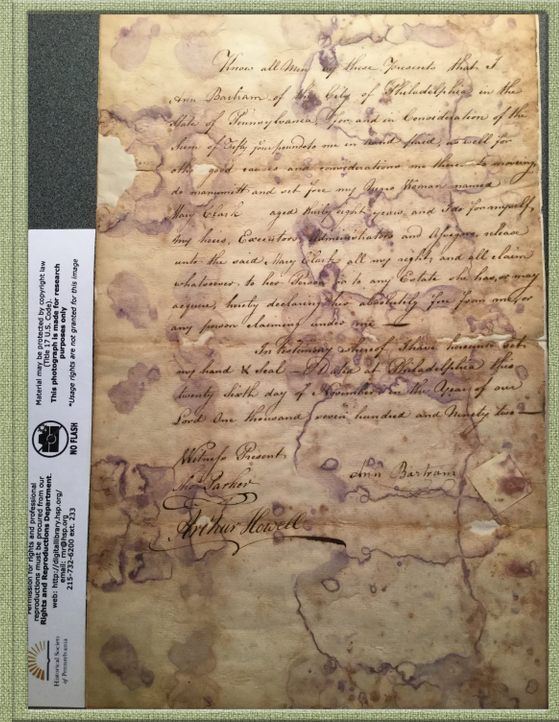
Equally Free With Myself:

Slavery, Manumission, and Indentured Servitude in Kingsessing Township, 1780-1850

Introduction:

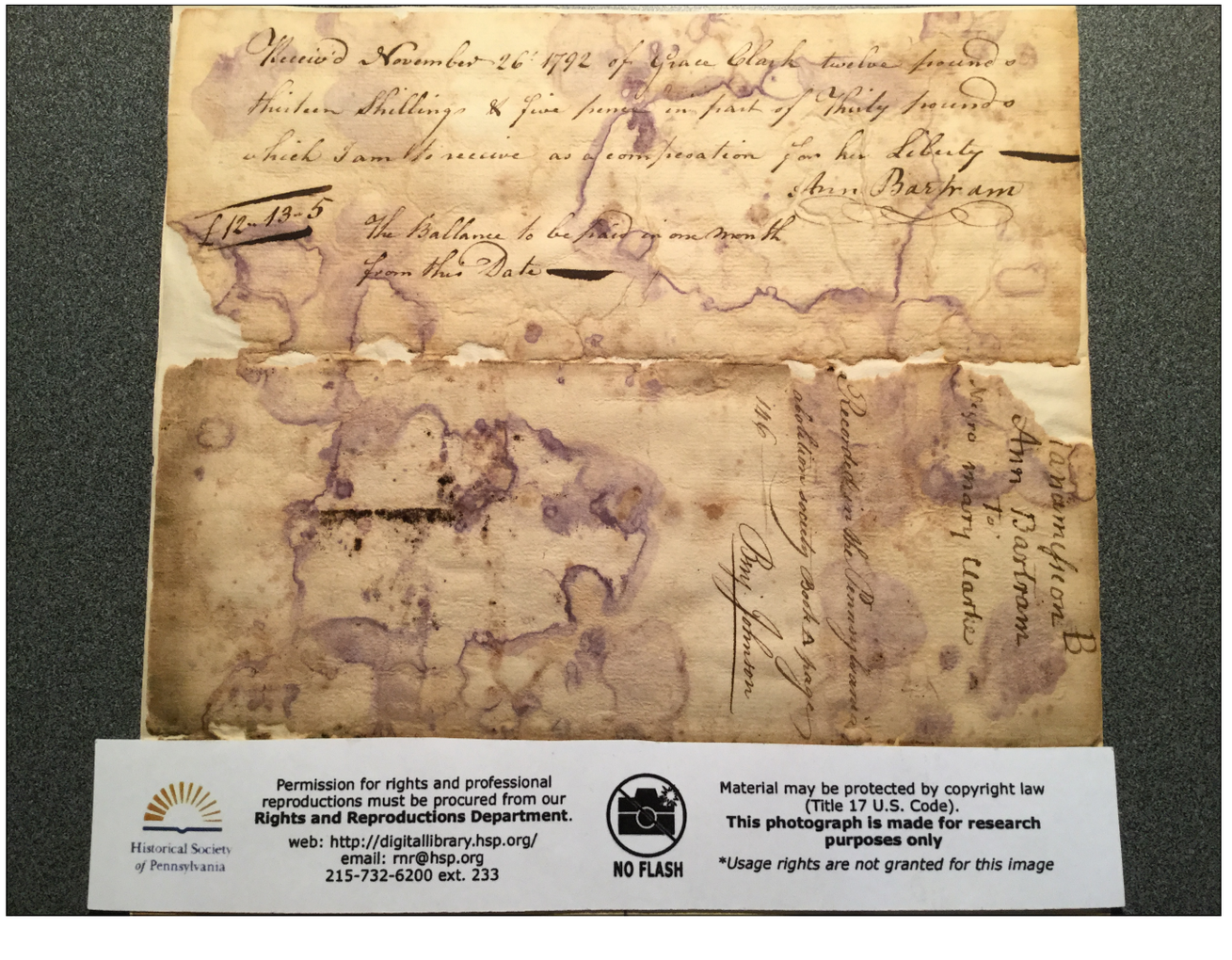
A study of African-American history at Bartram's Garden and the surrounding community presents a picture of a community that offers a glimpse into the black experience in America. Legal status aside, the experiences of the Kingsessing community have stood the test of time and are largely still relevant today. By examining documents from the period of 1780 to 1850, three major themes run through the history of this community: Slavery, Manumission, and Indentured Servitude. These themes impacted not only the Kingsessing neighborhood, but also the Bartram family. An example of slavery and manumission impacting the Bartram family would be the freeing of Ann Bartram's slaves.

Manumission document of Mary Clark, owned by Ann Bartram, 1792



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Ann Bartram's Slaves. (She lived closer to NJ...NOT Kingsessing). She lived in Philadelphia on 2nd Street between Chestnut and Walnut Streets. Ann Bartram freed two slaves on November 26, 1792. Mary Clark purchased her freedom from Bartram for 54 pounds. Then Grace Clark was freed for 30 pounds, but made an arrangement to pay 12 pounds, 13 shillings, and 5 pence at that time and the rest within one month. The cost of Bartram's slaves was relatively low considering some in the area paid as much as $250 (it took him 12 years).



Rec'd November 26th 1792 of Grace Clark twelve pound s
thirteen Shillings & five pence in part of thirty pound s
which I am to receive as a compensation for her Liberty
Ann Bartram

£12-13-5 the Ballance to be paid in one Month
from this Date

Recorded in the Pennsylvania
abolition society Book A page
116
Per J. Johnson

Manumission B
Ann Bartram
To
Negro Mary Clarke

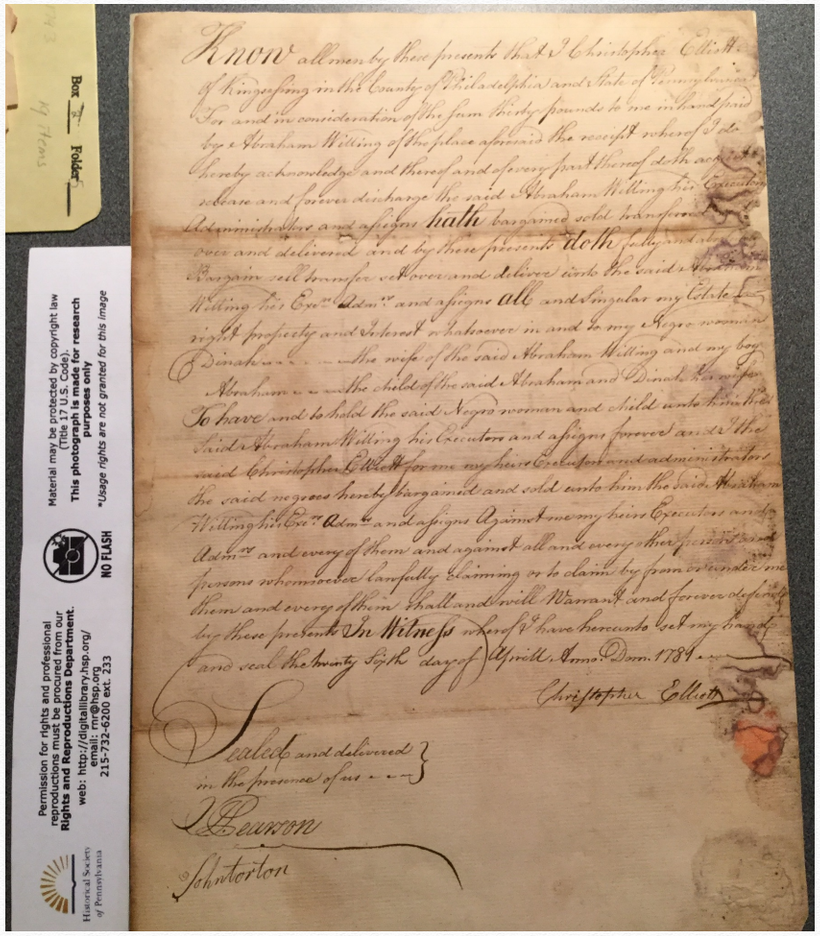
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Back of Clark Manumission doc.



Known all men by these presents that I Christopher Elliott of Kingsessing in the County of Philadelphia and State of Pennsylvania For and in consideration of the sum thirty pounds to me in hand paid by Abraham Willing of the place aforesaid the receipt whereof I do hereby acknowledge and therefrom and of every part thereof doth acquit release and forever discharge the said Abraham Willing his Executors Administrators and assigns hath bargained sold transferred over and delivered and by these presents doth fully and absolutely Bargain sell transfer Assign over and deliver unto the said Abraham Willing his Exrs Admrs and assigns all and singular my Estate right property and Interest whatsoever in and to my Negro woman Dinah — — — the wife of the said Abraham Willing and my boy Abraham — — — the child of the said Abraham and Dinah to have and to hold the said Negro woman and child unto him the said Abraham Willing his Executors and assigns forever and I the said Christopher Elliott for me my heirs Executors and administrators the said negroes hereby bargained and sold unto him the said Abraham Willing his Exrs Admrs and assigns against me my heirs Executors and Admrs and every of them and against all and every other person and persons whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim by from or under me them and every of them shall and will Warrant and forever defend by these presents In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the twenty fifth day of April Anno Dom. 1784 — — —

Christopher Elliott

Sealed and delivered in the presence of us — —

J Pearson

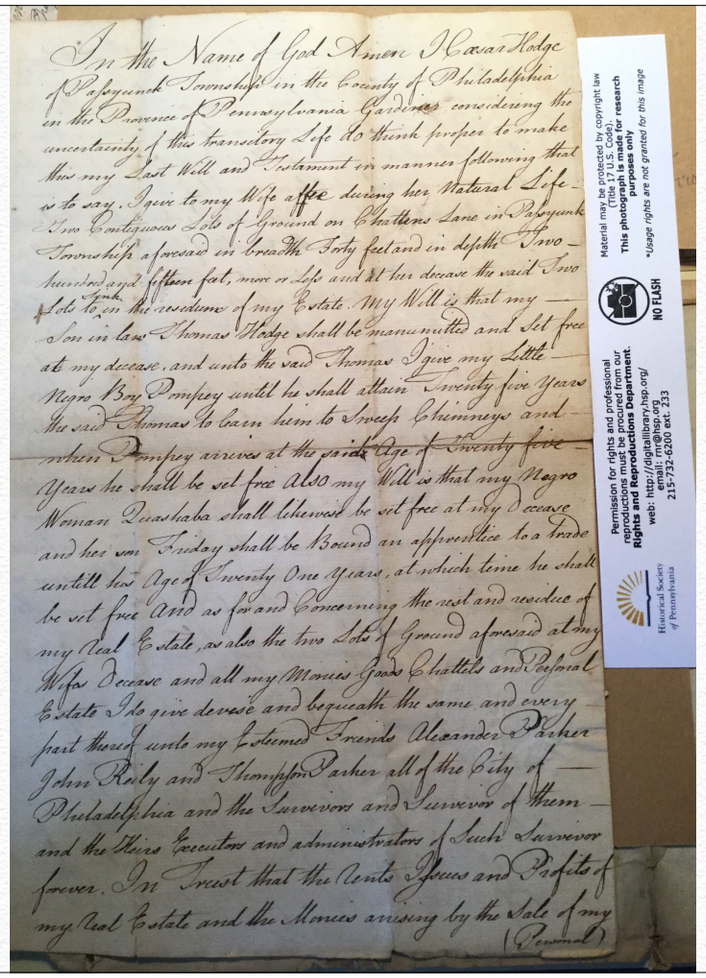
John Orton

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- Manumission. Manumitting slaves after the 1780 law mandated gradual manumission in Pennsylvania had a huge affect on African-American population growth. The Kingsessing area, like most parts of Philadelphia, was no exception.

  - The community contained free and enslaved people. Most of the African-Americans in the area in the 18th century were manumitted (as opposed to free born). Manumission happened two ways: either a slaveholder signed papers relinquishing their rights to the slave and granting their freedom OR a slave purchased themselves.

  - Thomas Shipley, orphaned at the age of 6 and raised by his older sister Sarah and her husband, Isaac Bartram Jr. Shipley worked for and later became president of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society. He frequently helped African-Americans gain their freedom, particularly free people victimized by slave related laws. **Christopher Elliott** story, based out of Kingsessing. Bequeathed 4 women, ordered to free each woman at the age of 30. The law prevented him from selling the women across state lines to avoid freeing them. Total, the women birthed 13 children. The whereabouts of 9 can be constructed through research…4 had been sold to farmers in Chester County, 5 were registered to Elliot as slaves. PAS was able to have 3 released and sent back to their parents and 6 were signed into indentured servants contracts.


In the Name of God Amen I Caesar Hodge
of Passyunck Township in the County of Philadelphia
in the Province of Pennsylvania Gardiner considering the
uncertainty of this transitory Life do think proper to make
this my Last Will and Testament in manner following that
is to say. I give to my Wife after decease her Natural Life
Two Contiguous Lots of Ground on Chatterns Lane in Passyunk
Township aforesaid in breadth Forty feet and in depth Two
hundred and fifteen feet, more or Less and at her decease the said Two
Lots to go to
Sons in law Thomas Hodge shall be manumitted and Set free
at my decease, and unto the said Thomas I give my Little
Negro Boy Pompey until he shall attain Twenty five Years
the said Thomas to learn him to Sweep Chimneys and
when Pompey arrives at the said Age of Twenty five
Years he shall be set free also my Will is that my Negro
Woman Quashaba shall likewise be set free at my decease
and her son Friday shall be Bound an apprentice to a Trade
until his Age of Twenty One Years, at which time he shall
be set free And as for and Concerning the rest and residue of
my Real Estate, as also the two Lots of Ground aforesaid at my
Wifes decease and all my Monies Goods Chattels and Personal
Estate I do give devise and bequeath the same and every
part thereof unto my Esteemed Friends Alexander Parker
John Reily and Thompson Parker all of the City of
Philadelphia and the Survivors and Survivor of them
and the Heirs Executors and administrators of such Survivor
forever. In Trust that the Rents Issues and Profits of
my Real Estate and the Monies arising by the Sale of my
(Personal)

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Black people manumitting other black people. Family mostly, but some cases such as Caesar Hodge. He was a gardener that owned 4 slaves, the closest in relation was his son-in-law. In his will he free his son-in-law and his slave woman, Quashaba. He bequeathed his slave boy, Pompey to his son-in-law, and bound Quashaba's son into an apprenticeship.

- Slavery. A discussion of slavery and the Kingsessing area lends itself to issues of the economic impression left on people who were the products of slavery, those whose labor was used, and those who used the labor of others. And examining the African-American community of Kingsessing leads to one indelible thought: slavery and poverty/wealth are inextricably linked.

  - The census of 1847 conducted by the Society of Friends was an invaluable tool. They recorded occupations, wages, rent, and many other details that help build the narrative of the community. Many African-American men worked as laborers and farm hands. While most women were domestics, seamstresses, and took in laundry. The average wage for women was around $3 per week, and for men, it was over $5. The circumstances that led to wealthy African-Americans, such as Caesar, were the same circumstances that led to people raising families in poverty: slavery. African-Americans already faced limited economic opportunities in an atmosphere clouded with discrimination and racial tension. But manumitted slaves had an even more difficult time because their resources were limited coming out of slavery.

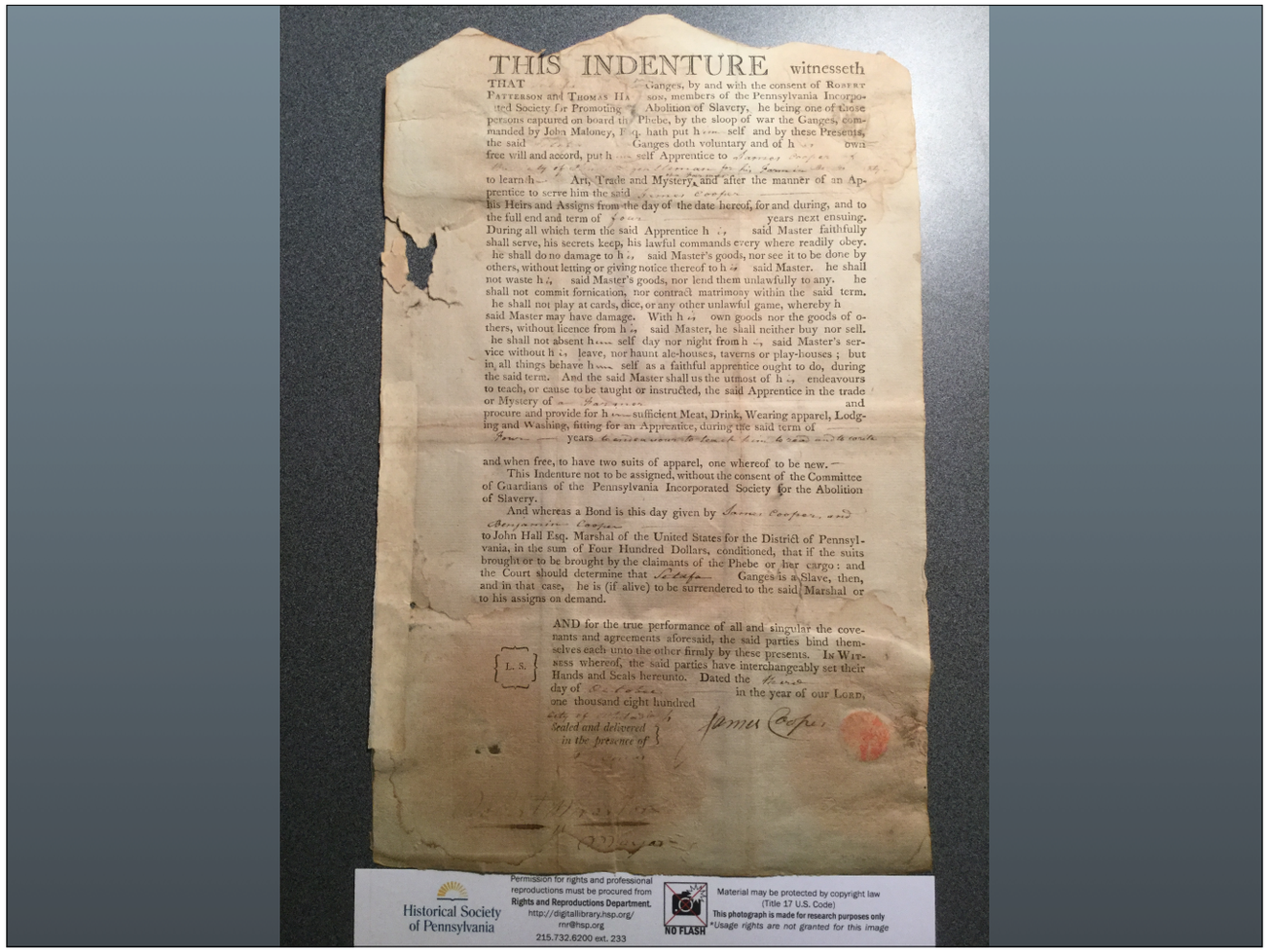
  - Agnes Hill lived on Darby Rd. and earned $2/wk as a washerwoman supporting 5 children. Hill is supporting her home (3 children are in school, 2 looking for work) while saving to purchase the freedom of her husband who is still enslaved in Virginia. $8/month in 1847 = $217.95 in 2014.



Banneker School

Darby Road (now Woodland Avenue), built in 1789

Organizations like the PAS and the local church thought that education would improve the conditions of African-Americans. While the rationale was sound, many African-Americans in this area found themselves prioritizing education and basic survival. Despite the existence of the Banneker School, majority of the African-Americans in the area were unable to read or write, and even fewer could do both. Using Darby Road as an example...there were 12 African-African households containing a total of 69 people. 38 of them were children, the Banneker School's attendance was 15 students on average. Many of the parents could not afford to let children old enough to earn money attend school.


THIS INDENTURE witnesseth
THAT Ganges, by and with the consent of Robert Patterson and Thomas Ha sos, members of the Pennsylvania Incorpo- ted Society for Promoting Abolition of Slavery, he being one of those persons captured on board the Phebe, by the sloop of war the Ganges, com- manded by John Maloney, E q. hath put h self and by these Presents, the said Ganges doth voluntary and of h own free will and accord, put h self Apprentice to
to learn h Art, Trade and Mystery, and after the manner of an Ap- prentice to serve him the said
his Heirs and Assigns from the day of the date hereof, for and during, and to the full end and term of years next ensuing. During all which term the said Apprentice h said Master faithfully shall serve, his secrets keep, his lawful commands every where readily obey. he shall do no damage to h said Master's goods, nor see it to be done by others, without letting or giving notice thereof to h said Master. he shall not waste h said Master's goods, nor lend them unlawfully to any. he shall not commit fornication, nor contract matrimony within the said term. he shall not play at cards, dice, or any other unlawful game, whereby h said Master may have damage. With h own goods nor the goods of o- thers, without licence from h said Master, he shall neither buy nor sell. he shall not absent h self day nor night from h said Master's ser- vice without h leave, nor haunt ale-houses, taverns or play-houses; but in all things behave h self as a faithful apprentice ought to do, during the said term. And the said Master shall us the utmost of h endeavours to teach, or cause to be taught or instructed, the said Apprentice in the trade or Mystery of and procure and provide for h sufficient Meat, Drink, Wearing apparel, Lodg- ing and Washing, fitting for an Apprentice, during the said term of years and when free, to have two suits of apparel, one whereof to be new.

This Indenture not to be assigned, without the consent of the Committee of Guardians of the Pennsylvania Incorporated Society for the Abolition of Slavery.

And whereas a Bond is this day given by
to John Hall Esq. Marshal of the United States for the District of Pennsyl- vania, in the sum of Four Hundred Dollars, conditioned, that if the suits brought or to be brought by the claimants of the Phebe or her cargo: and the Court should determine that Ganges is a Slave, then, and in that case, he is (if alive) to be surrendered to the said Marshal or to his assigns on demand.

AND for the true performance of all and singular the cove- nants and agreements aforesaid, the said parties bind them- selves each unto the other firmly by these presents. In Wit- ness whereof, the said parties have interchangeably set their Hands and Seals hereunto. Dated the day of in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred

{L. S.}

Sealed and delivered in the presence of

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- Indentured Servitude (slide seven). The process of indentured servitude tended to be a more controllable form of unfreedom. Around the same time of gradual emancipation, white servants were in great decline, and being replaced with newly emancipated African-Americans. In the Kingsessing area, indentured servitude was a common option used to navigate poverty.
    - Though both were a form of bondage, many African-Americans preferred indenture contracts to slavery for the simple fact that an indentured contract had an end date. Slavery was for life. Also, entering into an indenture agreement came with the ability to negotiate. The person agreeing to the contract was able to ask for provisions beyond food, clothing and shelter. We saw this most often in cases where parents indentured their children and stipulated that the child be taught to read. Anges Hill indentures 2 of her children in an effort to circumvent poverty.
    - Indentured servitude was an extremely gendered process. African-American women were signed into contracts longer than men. And were only to be apprenticed in housewifery, while men were taught trades that would allow them to not only become employable after their contracts ended (in a trade far more profitable than domestic work), but entrepreneurs if they chose to create business based on the skill they acquired.
    - The schooner Phoebe case added a great number of indentured servants to the Kingsessing and Darby area. The PAS members who took guardianship of the Africans from the schooner Phoebe were able to place many of them with indentures on farms around the garden. Again, I was not able to confirm if any of them were placed at Bartram's Garden but that's more an issue of having run out of time towards the end of the project, not a lack of evidence. Out of 15 documents, about 7 people are indentured in this area, and there are tons of documents available to be reviewed. This will determine if there were any indentured servants at the garden, and how many lived in the area in general.

The End

Emphasize the rarity of the documents found during the research process. Many communities aren't able to hold up to the process of historical scholarship because there's simply not enough surviving evidence to draw conclusions. Kingsessing and Bartram's Garden stand as a great example of how complicated slavery truly was. Not just as an institution, but in the ways slavery is taught in the present. The garden and the community also show us the long reaching effects of human bondage.