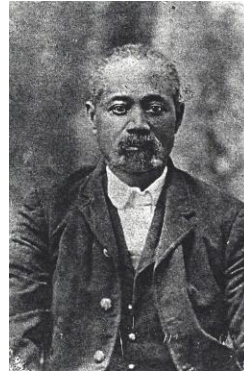


# The Bosticks

# Who Were They?



Stephen Bostick



Chaney Bostick

- The Bosticks were a family of freedmen who settled in Murphysboro after the Civil War



Bostick Cemetery sign – present day



Bostick School, taught by Grace Bostick, daughter of Stephen

# Military Men

- Shortly after the Emancipation Proclamation, several Bostick individuals fled their enslavers in Arkansas and enlisted in the Union Army in Memphis
- For the next few years, they would serve in the US Navy aboard the USS General Bragg

## TO COLORED MEN!

### FREEDOM, Protection, Pay, and a Call to Military Duty!

On the 1st day of January, 1863, the President of the United States proclaimed FREEDOM to over THREE MILLIONS OF SLAVES. This decree is to be enforced by all the power of the Nation. On the 21st of July last he issued the following order:

#### PROTECTION OF COLORED TROOPS.

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
WASHINGTON, July 31.

"General Order," No. 233.

"The following order of the President is published for the information and government of all concerned:—

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, July 30.

"It is the duty of every Government to give protection to its citizens, of whatever class, color, or condition, and especially to those who are duly organized as soldiers in the public service. The law of nations, and the usages and customs of war, as carried on by civilized powers, permit no distinction as to color in the treatment of prisoners of war as public enemies. To sell or enslave any captured person on account of his color, is a relapse into barbarism, and a crime against the civilization of the age.

"The Government of the United States will give the same protection to all its soldiers, and if the enemy shall sell or enslave any one because of his color, the offense shall be punished by retaliation upon the enemy's prisoners in our possession. It is, therefore, ordered, for every soldier of the United States, killed in violation of the laws of war, a rebel soldier shall be executed; and for every one enslaved by the enemy, or sold into slavery, a rebel soldier shall be placed at hard labor on the public works, and continued at such labor until the other shall be released and receive the treatment due to prisoners of war.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

"By order of the Secretary of War.

"E. D. TOWNSEND, Assistant Adjutant General."

That the President is in earnest the rebels soon began to find out, as witness the following order from his Secretary of War:

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON CITY, August 3, 1863.

"Sir: Your letter of the 2d inst., calling the attention of this Department to the cases of Orlin H. Brown, William H. Johnston, and Wm. Wilson, three colored men captured on the gunboat Isaac Smith, has received consideration. This Department has directed that three rebel prisoners of South Carolina, if there be any such in our possession, and if not, three others, be confined in close custody and held as hostages for Brown, Johnston and Wilson, and that the fact be communicated to the rebel authorities at Richmond.

"Very respectfully your obedient servant,

"EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

"The Hon. GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy."

And retaliation will be our practice now—man for man—to the bitter end.

### LETTER OF CHARLES SUMNER,

Written with reference to the Convention held at Poughkeepsie, July 15th and 16th, 1863, to promote Colored Enlistments.

BOSTON, July 13th, 1863.

"I doubt if, in times past, our country could have expected from colored men any patriotic service. Such service is the return for protection. But now that protection has begun, the service should begin also. Nor should relative rights and duties be weighed with nicety. It is enough that our country, avowed at last to a sense of justice, seeks to enred colored men among its defenders.

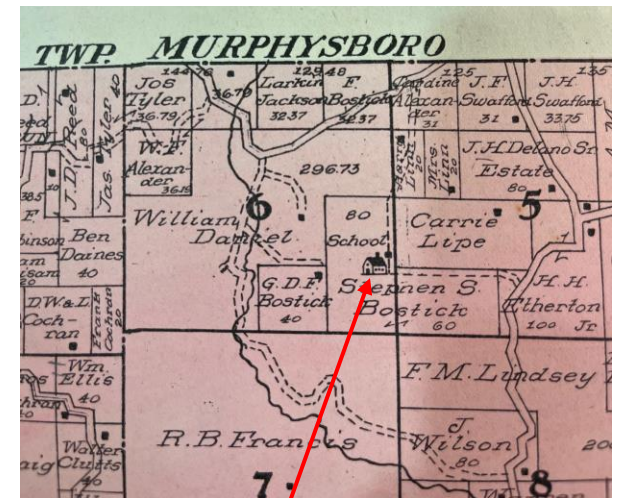
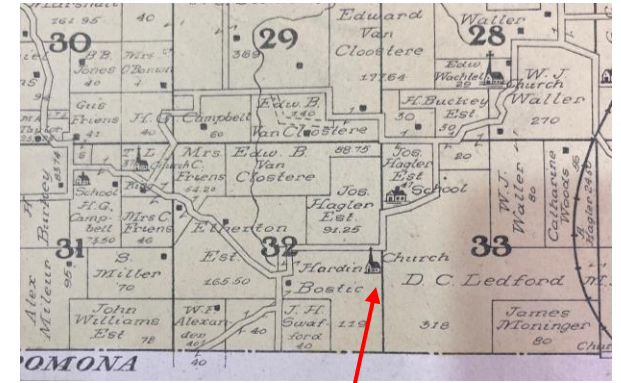
"If my counsels should reach such persons, I would say: enlist at once. Now is the day and now is the hour. Help to overcome your cruel enemies now battling against your country, and in this way you will surely overcome those other enemies hardly less cruel, here at home, who will still seek to degrade you. This is not the time to hesitate or to hizzle. Do your duty to our country, and you will set an example of generous self-sacrifice which will conquer prejudice and open all hearts.

"Very faithfully yours,

"CHARLES SUMNER."

# New Beginnings

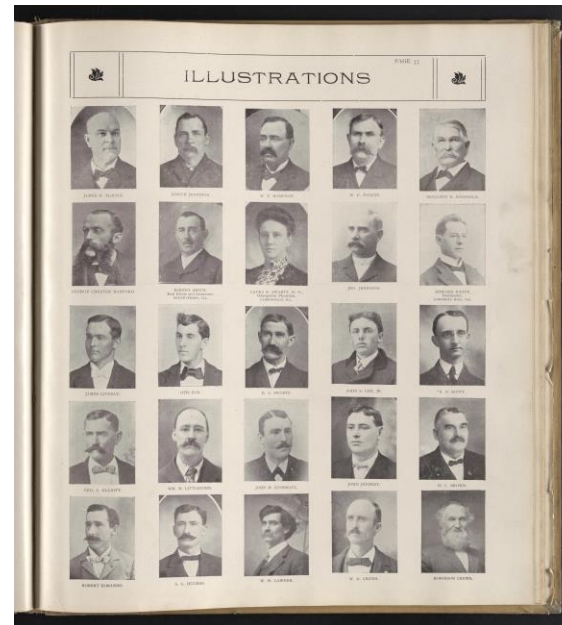
- Following the war, the Bosticks settled in Murphysboro and farmed their land
- They owned many acres and opened a school, Church, and cemetery



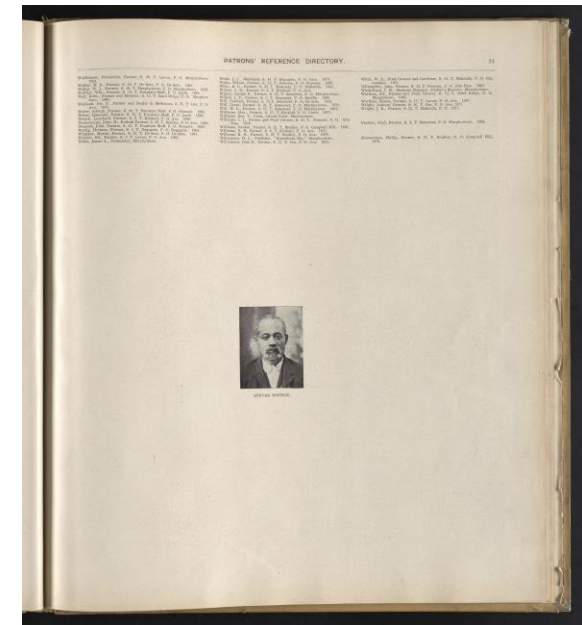


# Despite their Successes...

- Despite their successes, the Bosticks clearly still faced segregation and challenges in Southern Illinois



Where the “important people” of Jackson county had their images placed in the 1907 Atlas



Where Stephen Bostick, who also paid to have his portrait made, was relegated

# Essential Questions

- To what extent does the broader national experience for freedom seekers compare and contrast with the Bostick story?
- How did the promise of freedom and military service shape the lives of freedmen like the Bosticks during and after the Civil War?
- Which evidence best explains why African Americans like the Bosticks left the South and chose to settle in places like southern Illinois?