

July 2010 Valley Journal Historical Question

Question: Cottonwood Heights has an interesting ethnic heritage. What African-Americans were early settlers in Cottonwood Heights?

Answer: Four African-American settlers made their homes in the Cottonwood Heights area: Daniel Freeman, George Stevens, Green Flake, and Hark Lay Wales. In 1855, Freeman was the first non-slave African-American born in Utah Territory. In the 1870s, he homesteaded 160 acres in the heart of what is now Cottonwood Heights. His land extended from Chris Lane (later the Stelter property) over to the land owned by Charles Boyce and then up to 23rd East (later the John Antczak property). Stevens originally owned the land that became the property of William Panter, first president of Brown and Sanford Irrigation Company. Flake and Wales were in the vanguard company of pioneers, entering the Salt Lake valley on July 21, 1847. All four men owned several mining claims in Big Cottonwood Canyon Mining District: Union Blue Lode, Abraham Lincoln Lode, Wales Lode (named after Hark Wales), O. K. Lode, and Poor Man's Friend Lode. In 1872, Freeman and Flake signed the memorial of Utah citizens to Congress against Utah Territory becoming a State. Green Flake and Hark Lay Wales are buried in the Union Pioneer Cemetery.