

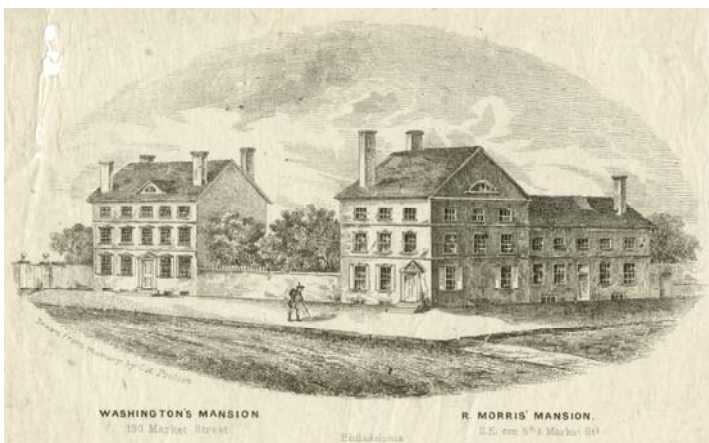


The Library Company OF PHILADELPHIA

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## Slavery at Sixth & Market Streets: Eight Years of Controversy at the President's House.

**Philadelphia: March 17, 2010:** The Library Company of Philadelphia's fourth annual Juneteenth commemoration (to be held on Monday, June 21) will feature a panel discussion on the past eight years of controversy surrounding the discovery of the slave quarters and the nine slaves who served President George Washington at his Philadelphia home at 6th & Market Streets. The President's House site is adjacent to (in fact it partially overlaps) the new Liberty Bell Pavilion. Panelists include St. Joseph's University historian Randall



"Washington's Mansion, 190 Market Street; R. Morris' Mansion, SE cor. 6th & Market St.; Philadelphia." Etching by Charles A. Poulson. Published in William Brotherhead's *The Book of the Signers* (Philadelphia, 1861).

M. Miller; architectural historian Edward Lawler; and Philadelphia lawyer Michael Coard. Moderating the discussion is Temple University Journalism professor and award-winning columnist for the *Philadelphia Tribune* Linn Washington. All participants have long been active in promoting awareness of the significance of the juxtaposition of freedom and slavery at

2002 issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. Professor Miller was a founder of a group of historians who sought recognition of slavery at the site (the self-described Ad Hoc Historians). Mr. Coard is a founder and principal spokesman for the African American community group Avenging the Ancestors Coalition that mobilized support for recognition of slavery and the nine slaves at the President's House site. Mr. Washington, along with *Philadelphia Inquirer* journalists Stephan Salisbury and Inga Saffron, was an early voice in telling the story of George Washington's slaves in Philadelphia.

this ground zero site of American liberty. Mr. Lawler wrote the seminal article on the President's House for the January

The Library Company played an early role in promoting awareness of this issue. In April 2002, it convened a gathering of over a dozen members of the historical community, the media, and other cultural institutions to discuss the plans of the National Park Service to

pave over the site as an entrance to the new Liberty Bell Pavilion. Randall Miller, Edward Lawler, and Linn Washington were in attendance. The following year Mr. Coard was on board. What resulted was a unique coalition and collaboration of academics and community activists around the goal of creating a fitting commemoration recognizing the role of slavery in the creation of American freedom. Their activities over the last eight years will be the topic of our discussion.

Juneteenth celebrates the date June 19th, 1865, when Union forces occupied Texas and first officially announced to the slaves that they were free by virtue of the Emancipation Proclamation. The date quickly became a focus of African American freedom celebrations and in recent years has become nationally recognized as a fitting occasion to commemorate the struggle for freedom in America. The Library Company program will be held on Monday, June 21 at 6:00 p.m. The program is open to the public free of charge, but seating is limited and advance registration is requested. To register, call 215-546-3181 or email [lpropst@librarycompany.org](mailto:lpropst@librarycompany.org). This event is sponsored by the Library Company's Program in African American History, with the generous support of the Albert M. Greenfield Foundation.

### **Background Information about the Library Company**

The Library Company of Philadelphia is an independent research library concentrating on American history and culture from the 17th through 19th centuries. Free and open to the public, the Library Company houses an extensive non-circulating collection of rare books, manuscripts, broadsides, ephemera and works of art. The mission of the Library Company is to preserve, interpret, make available, and augment the valuable materials within our care. We serve a diverse constituency throughout Philadelphia and the nation, offering comprehensive reader services, an internationally renowned fellowship program, an online public access catalog, and regular exhibitions and public programs. Located at 1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia, it is open to the public free of charge from 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Library Company can be found online at [www.librarycompany.org](http://www.librarycompany.org).

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