

From Slavery's Shadow to Freedom's Light

The Enslaved African-Americans of Rich Hill and the story of Mary Swann

From the early 1700s to 1864, over 100 men, women and children were enslaved at Rich Hill. Although their names appear in estate wills, inventories, and distributions, they have been forgotten—relegated to the shadows of history.

Enslaved persons labored in the tobacco fields, served in the house, and engaged in a variety of other tasks vital to daily life at Rich Hill. Through images and the voices of others, we hope these panels will shed some light on the lives of the people who toiled at Rich Hill.

The quotes or voices within the panels come from former slaves who were interviewed as part of the Federal Writers Project (1936-1938) under the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt. These interviews were assembled by the Library of Congress and include the narratives of former Charles County slaves Charles Coles, James V. Deane, Page Harris, and Richard Macks.

The following panels are an attempt to represent those enslaved peoples of Dr. Gustavus Brown; his son, Reverend Richard Brown; Samuel Cox, his wife Sarah Cox and their sons John Chandler Cox and Samuel O. Cox; and their grandson, Colonel Samuel Cox.

This presentation seeks to recognize and respect the lives of the people who toiled at Rich Hill.

For most of them, a name is all that remains of their story.

This Exhibit is sponsored
through a partnership with

**The African-American Heritage Society of
Charles County**

and

The Historical Society of Charles County

and funded in part by

**Preservation Maryland, the Maryland
Historical Trust & the Friends of Rich Hill.**



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