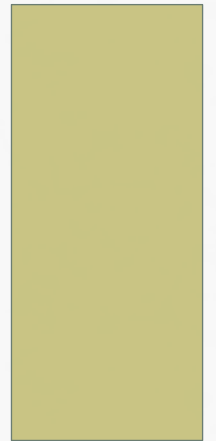


AN EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN

THE STORY OF HARRODS CREEK, KENTUCKY



I HAVE A DREAM

- ***I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.***
- When Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. shared his dream with over 250,000 civil rights supporters from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963, he was expressing the hopes and dreams of many thousands of people who had worked for justice and equality.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Source: kids.nationalgeographic.com



A FREE AND INTEGRATED PUBLIC EDUCATION

- Most families want their children to get a good education. Today it seems natural to us in the United States that all children have the right to a free public education in an integrated school, but it wasn't always like that.



EDUCATION AGAINST THE LAW

- Before the Civil War, it was actually against the law in several slave-holding states in the deep South to educate enslaved African Americans.
- There was a fear that education would encourage a rebellion against slavery.
- Many people, both African American and white, ignored the laws.
- Source: National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution



EXCERPT FROM VIRGINIA REVISED CODE OF 1819

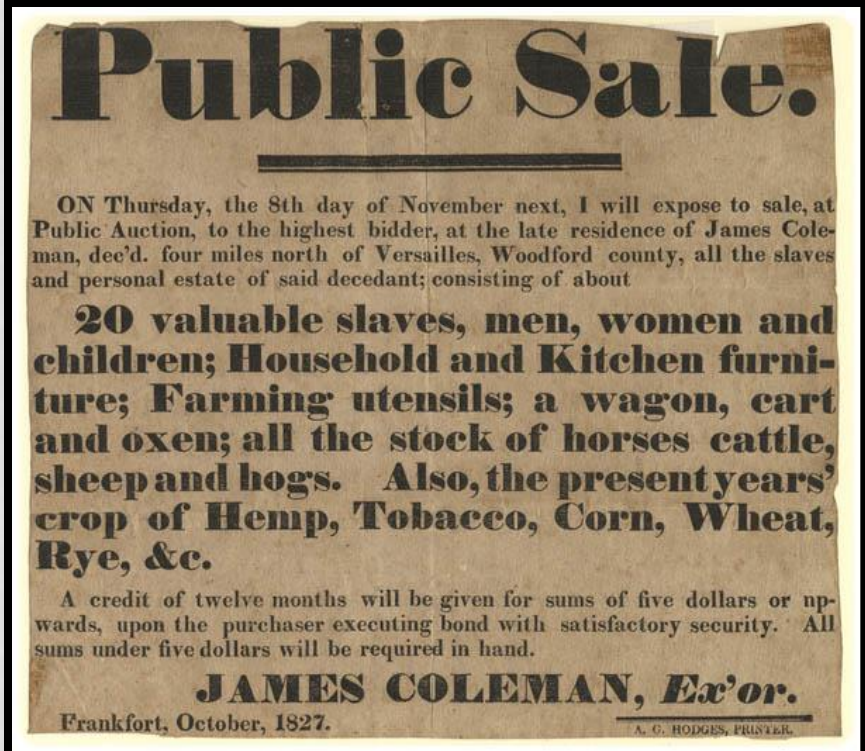
- That all meetings or assemblages of slaves, or free negroes or mulattoes mixing and associating with such slaves at any meeting-house or houses, &c., in the night; or at **any SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS for teaching them READING OR WRITING**, either in the day or night, under whatsoever pretext, shall be deemed and considered an UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY; and any justice of a county, &c., wherein such assemblage shall be, either from his own knowledge or the information of others, of such unlawful assemblage, &c., may issue his warrant, directed to any sworn officer or officers, authorizing him or them to enter the house or houses where such unlawful assemblages, &c., may be, for the purpose of apprehending or dispersing such slaves, **and to inflict corporal punishment on the offender or offenders, at the discretion of any justice of the peace, not exceeding twenty lashes.**

- Source: pbs.org

SLAVERY AND EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY

In 1798 Kentucky adopted a slave code that defined slaves as “chattel,” thereby denying them basic rights—including citizenship, education, legal marriages, and control over property and even their own bodies.

- This broadside is housed at the University of Kentucky Special Collections and Digital Programs. The printer was A.G. Hodges. The image was digitized in 2009.



Public Sale.

ON Thursday, the 8th day of November next, I will expose to sale, at Public Auction, to the highest bidder, at the late residence of James Coleman, dec'd. four miles north of Versailles, Woodford county, all the slaves and personal estate of said decedant; consisting of about

20 valuable slaves, men, women and children; Household and Kitchen furniture; Farming utensils; a wagon, cart and oxen; all the stock of horses cattle, sheep and hogs. Also, the present years' crop of Hemp, Tobacco, Corn, Wheat, Rye, &c.

A credit of twelve months will be given for sums of five dollars or upwards, upon the purchaser executing bond with satisfactory security. All sums under five dollars will be required in hand.

JAMES COLEMAN, Ex'or.

Frankfort, October, 1827.

A. G. HODGES, PRINTER.

ANTI-SLAVERY IN KENTUCKY

- As in the rest of the country, not all Kentuckians believed slavery was right. Numerous political and religious leaders and ordinary citizens questioned the morality of slavery and were willing to take risks to help enslaved African Americans escape.
- Kentucky's location on the border of slave and nonslave states and its unique geography as the only state surrounded on three sides by rivers, created opportunities for people who were willing to risk their lives to live in freedom and those willing to risk everything to help them.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IN KENTUCKY

- The Underground Railroad, a loosely organized network of supporters throughout the country, helped enslaved African Americans find freedom in the North.

Source: DigitalHistory.uh.edu

\$150 REWARD

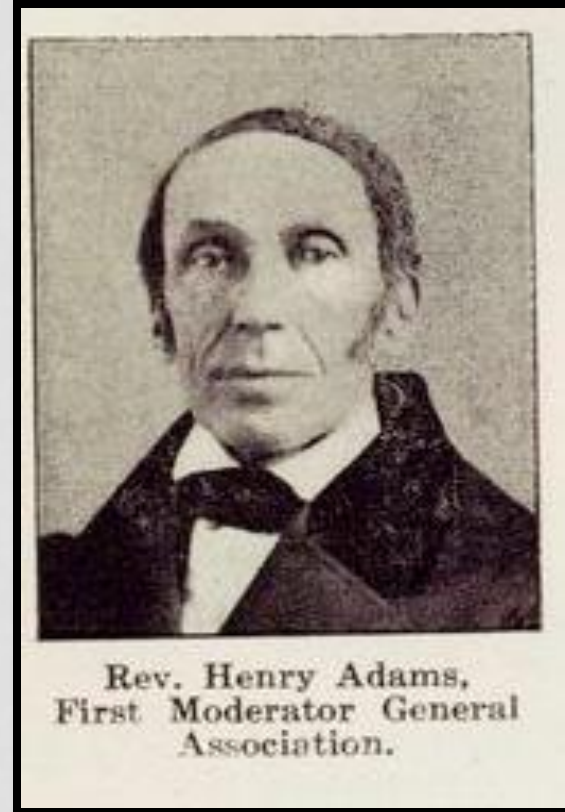


RANAWAY from the subscriber, on the night of the 2d instant, a negro man, who calls himself *Henry May*, about 22 years old, 5 feet 6 or 8 inches high, ordinary color, rather chunky built, bushy head, and has it divided mostly on one side, and keeps it very nicely combed; has been raised in the house, and is a first rate dining-room servant, and was in a tavern in Louisville for 18 months. I expect he is now in Louisville trying to make his escape to a free state, (in all probability to Cincinnati, Ohio.) Perhaps he may try to get employment on a steamboat. He is a good cook, and is handy in any capacity as a house servant. Had on when he left, a dark cassinett coatee, and dark striped cassinett pantaloons, new--he had other clothing. I will give \$50 reward if taken in Louisville; 100 dollars if taken one hundred miles from Louisville in this State, and 150 dollars if taken out of this State, and delivered to me, or secured in any jail so that I can get him again.

WILLIAM BURKE.
Bardston, Ky., September 3d, 1838.

REVEREND HENRY ADAMS

- Not all the African Americans who lived in Kentucky before the Civil War were enslaved. Louisville, Kentucky was home to the largest community of free African Americans south of the Ohio River.
- Henry Adams was a Baptist leader in Louisville, KY, where he established the First African Baptist Church. He also began a school for African American children.



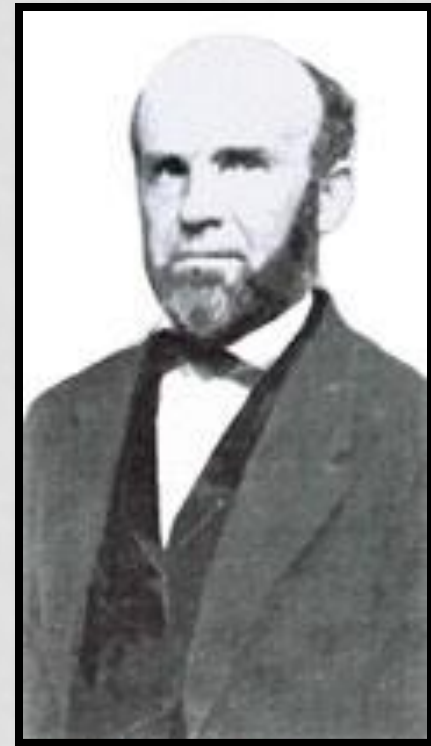
- Source: University of Kentucky, Notable African Americans Database

THROUGHOUT THE STATE

- At least four other churches in Louisville opened schools for African Americans prior to the Civil War.
- By 1850, sixteen Kentucky counties had schools for free African Americans.
- John G. Fee, a strong abolitionist, established the first integrated college in the South at Berea.

John G. Fee, Founder of Berea College

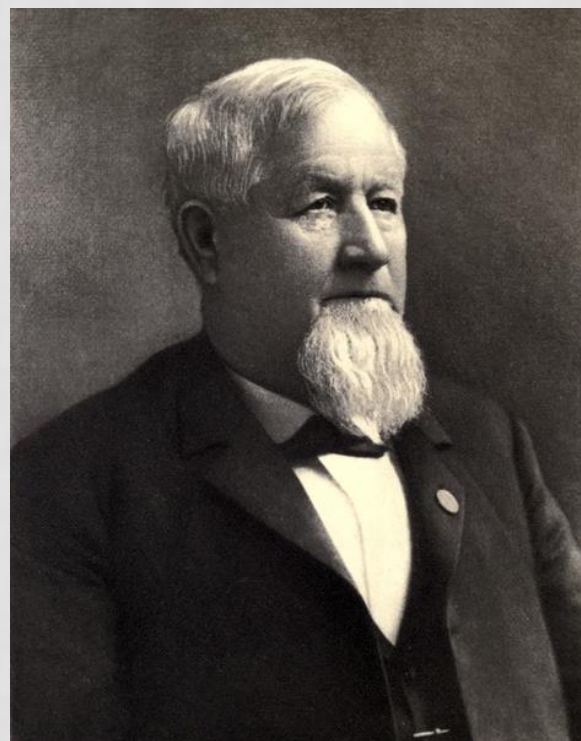
Source: <http://www.berea.edu/about/history/>



SCHOOLS CLOSED DURING THE CIVIL WAR

- Despite these efforts, few African Americans, free or enslaved, were able to get an education.
- All African American schools in Louisville were closed in 1861, during the Civil War, and remained closed until General Palmer took command of the city in 1865.

- Union General John W. Palmer
- Source: Public Domain



RUSH TO ENROLL

- After the war, local churches, the Freedman's Bureau, and missionary societies reestablished schools for African Americans until the first public school opened in 1870.
- Hundreds of former slaves rushed to enroll their children. There were so many students wanting to enroll that the schools had to limit enrollment because of a shortage of teachers. For weeks after schools opened, parents brought their children daily, hoping for a vacancy so that they could enroll.
- By 1870 there were at least 15 schools in Louisville providing education for about 1,500 African American children.

SEGREGATION LAWS

- During the 1880's and 1890's laws were passed segregating African Americans from whites in schools, on streetcars, in theaters, in public hospitals, and more.
- The schools for African Americans were in older buildings with fewer class offerings. Teachers in African American schools were paid less than teachers in white schools.
- By 1879 there was a one-room school for African American students in the rural community of Harrods Creek, north of Louisville and another closer to the town of Prospect.

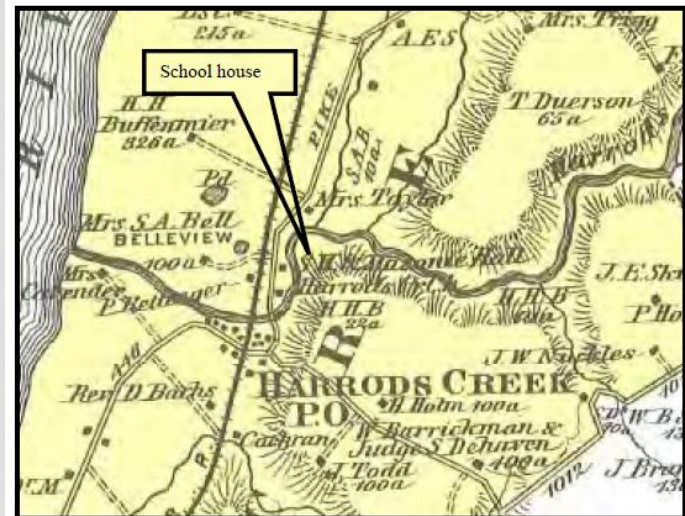


Figure 4. 154 A portion of the 1879 Atlas of Jefferson and Oldham Counties, showing the location of a school house (SH) across the road from Belleview.

A CHANCE FOR A BETTER SCHOOL

- Like most African American schools throughout the South, the school at Harrods Creek was inferior to the schools provided for white students. Local school boards did not provide equal funding for African American and white schools.
- In 1912 a philanthropist named Julius Rosenwald decided to do something to improve education for African Americans living in rural southern communities.
- Rosenwald was born in 1862 in Illinois to German Jewish immigrants. He made a fortune as president of the Sears, Roebuck Company. In 1915 he began using some of his vast fortune to support construction of better schools.

THE ROSENWALD FUND

- Rosenwald felt it was important that the local community contribute to the construction of the school buildings so that they would feel pride of ownership. He also insisted that the schools be built following professionally drawn plans and using superior construction and materials.

Julius Rosenwald

Source: Library of Congress



THE JEFFERSON JACOB SCHOOL

- The Jefferson Jacob School in Harrods Creek was one of the first Rosenwald schools built in Kentucky. The Rosenwald Fund provided \$400 and the local African American community provided \$400 in labor. The school opened around 1918 with two teachers teaching eight grades.

- The Jefferson Jacob School Source: NRHP Nomination



MORE THAN A SCHOOL

All Rosenwald schools were designed with a large auditorium for community meetings and events.

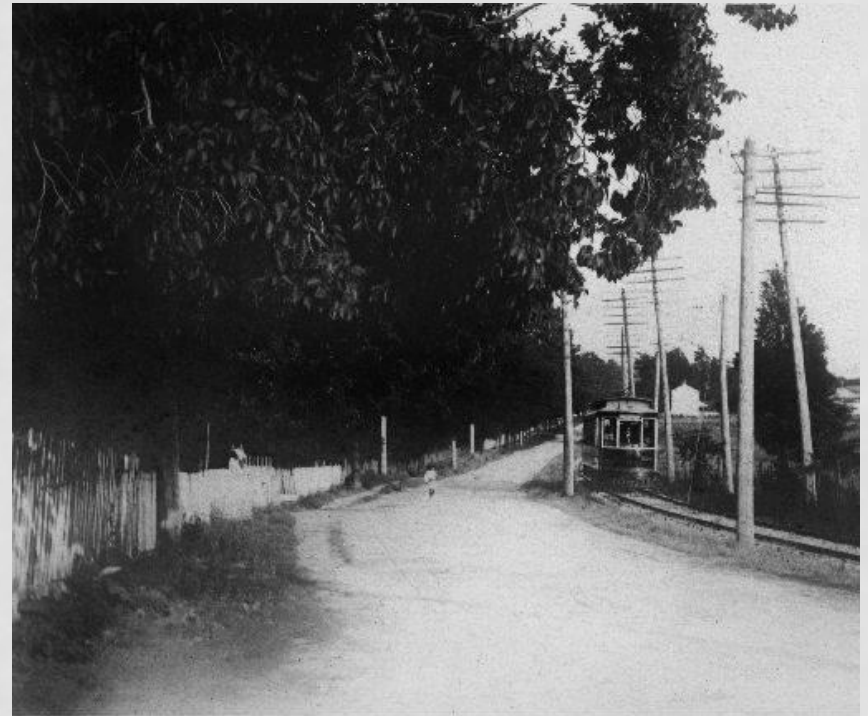
Having a building for community events helped the African American community in Harrods Creek develop a sense of community identity.



Source: NRHP Nomination Form

RIDING THE TRAIN

- Some African American students from Louisville who did not live near an African American school went to school at the Jefferson Jacob School. To get there, they rode the Interurban Railroad. Many African American families also attended church in the Harrods Creek neighborhood. Harrods Creek became an important gathering place for the African American community.



Photographic Archives, Ekstrom Library, University of Louisville

MS. LONZETTA HOWARD

This photograph shows the students and teachers during the 1927 school year.

One of the children pictured in the photo, Ms. Lonzetta Howard, remembers riding the interurban railroad to and from Jefferson Jacob School.

(Personal communication 2013).



- Source: Ms. Lonzetta Howard
- Listen to Ms. Howard tell her story in her own words:



THE JAMES TAYLOR SUBDIVISION

- One of the teachers at Jefferson Jacob School was Etta Taylor. She and her husband, James Taylor, started a real estate company and bought property in Harrods Creek near the school. They subdivided the property and sold large lots to other African American families.

The lots were big enough so that families could raise gardens, grow fruit trees, and keep chickens.



Looking south on Carlslaw Court from River Road *Source:* CULTURAL HISTORIC ASSESSMENT OF THE BASS-SHIRLEY SANITARY SEWER AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, LOUISVILLE, JEFFERSON COUNTY, KENTUCKY

COUNTRY LIVING AND COMMUTING

- They wanted to create a neighborhood where African American families could enjoy country living, have access to local employment, and also be able to commute to jobs in Louisville.



Looking south from Windham Parkway towards Taylor Subdivision. *Source:* CULTURAL HISTORIC ASSESSMENT OF THE BASS-SHIRLEY SANITARY SEWER AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, LOUISVILLE, JEFFERSON COUNTY, KENTUCKY

“JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE”

- Toni Taylor, a longtime resident, recalls life in the James Taylor subdivision that grew up around the Jefferson Jacob School. (Personal communication 2013).
- Looking north on Duroc Avenue from River Road. *Source: CULTURAL HISTORIC ASSESSMENT OF THE BASS-SHIRLEY SANITARY SEWER AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, LOUISVILLE, JEFFERSON COUNTY, KENTUCKY*



THEY DID THE BEST THEY COULD

- One thing that drew residents to the neighborhood was the presence of a school for African American children. Still, the Jefferson Jacob School was inferior in some ways to white schools in Louisville and even to African American schools within the city limits.
- Listen as Judy Grain Johnson, a former student, describes the school.
- (Personal communication 2013).



ADVOCATING FOR A CLOCK

- Mrs. Johnson's mother was the President of the Jefferson Jacob PTA. She was not afraid to try to get better materials and supplies for the school. Ms. Johnson tells the story of a clock for the school.
- (Personal communication 2013).



HER GRANDFATHER'S LEGACY

- Mrs. Johnson continued her education after leaving Jefferson Jacob School, going on to college and becoming a teacher, first in an African American school in Louisville and then in an integrated school. She states that her grandfather was part of the inspiration for her success.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

When segregation ended in 1957, the Jefferson Jacob School closed. The building was purchased by the Prospect Masonic Lodge. Today efforts are being made to have the school listed on the National Register of Historic Places because of its importance in the history of African American education in Kentucky.

The National Register of Historic Places is part of the National Park Service. Source: <http://www.nps.gov/nr/>



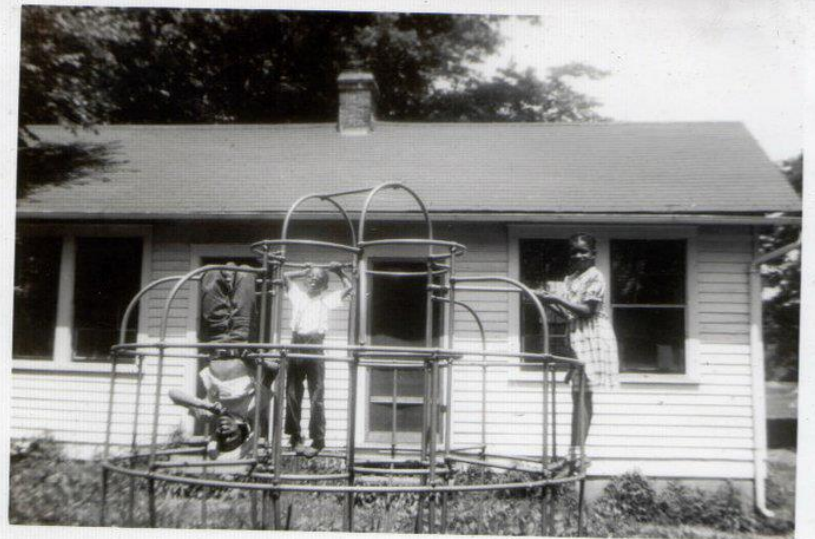
A LEGACY WORTH PRESERVING

- In one way the school is a symbol of segregation, but in another way it is a symbol of community pride. By working together, the people in the community were able to provide the best education possible for their children in the face of segregation.

LOCAL LEADERS

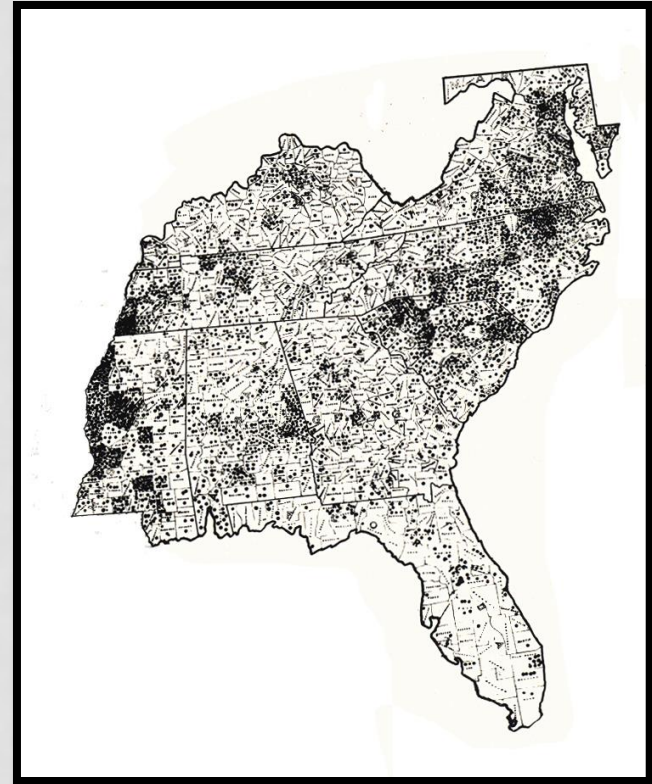
- The Jefferson Jacob School was an important step toward achieving Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream.
- The teachers and parents who advocated for their children were local leaders in the struggle for Civil Rights.

Source: NRHP Nomination Form



A HUGE IMPACT

- In all, the Rosenwald Fund spent more than four million dollars to build 4,977 schools, 217 teachers' homes, and 163 shop buildings in 15 states, from Maryland to Texas.
- Within Kentucky 155 Rosenwald Schools were built, employing 402 teachers and serving 18,090 students.



- Map showing the location of Rosenwald Schools - Source: NRHP Nomination, Jefferson Jacob School

WHAT ABOUT YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY?

- There are many different ways that people try to make the world a better place. How did Julius Rosenwald try to make the world better? What about James and Etta Taylor? What about Mrs. Johnson's mother?
- Who do you know that has tried to make your community better? What have they done?
- What would you like to do to make the world better?

PRESERVING HISTORY

- Are there any Rosenwald schools in your county or community?
- Are there any buildings on the National Register of Historic Places?
- Are there buildings that you think should be preserved because of the story they tell?
- Preserving buildings that preserve the stories of our history is another way to be a local leader.