

“THE ORIGINS OF PRINCE HALL MASONRY IN THE PEACH STATE”

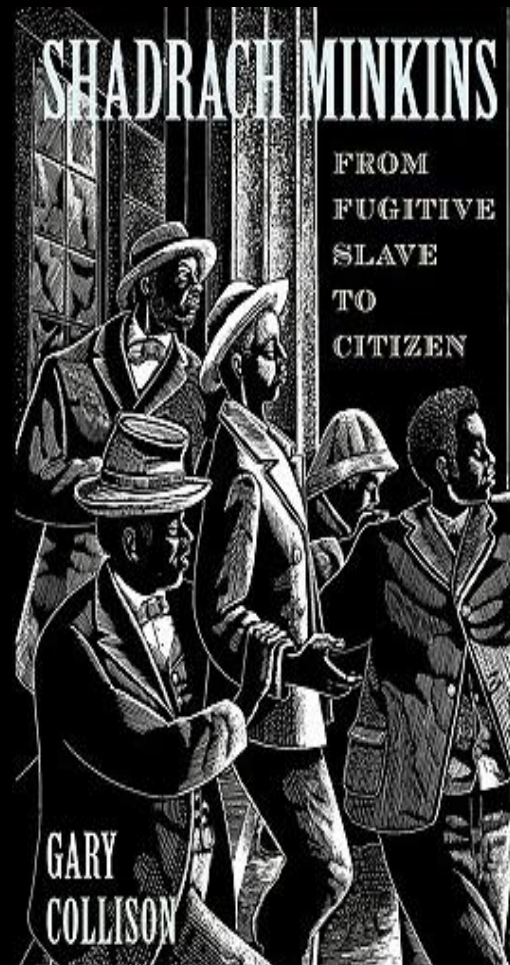
Dave Gillarm Jr.
Grand Historian
MWPHGL of GA

“The dark day of slavery is fast passing away, and as its shadows recede, it is our duty, as colored men, who were the subjects of oppression, to advance toward light and knowledge.” – PGM Lewis Hayden to PGM James Simms, 1872.

Reverend James M. Simms traveled to Boston, MA circa 1864 where he joined the Union Army, was ordained as a minister and became a Mason.



Shadrach Minkins escaped from slavery in 1850 and ran to Boston where he became a waiter. This is also the same year that Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act.



THE
**FUGITIVE
SLAVE
BILL.**

ENACTED BY THE
UNITED STATES CONGRESS,

AND APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT,

MILLARD FILLMORE,

September 18, 1850.

BOSTON:

Printed and for sale at 145 Hanover Street,
1851.

CAUTION!!

COLORED PEOPLE

OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,

You are hereby respectfully **CAUTIONED** and
advised, to avoid conversing with the
Watchmen and Police Officers
of Boston,

For since the recent **ORDER OF THE MAYOR &
ALDERMEN**, they are empowered to act as

KIDNAPPERS

AND

Slave Catchers,

And they have already been actually employed in
**KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING
SLAVES.** Therefore, if you value your **LIBERTY**,
and the *Welfare of the Fugitives* among you, *Shun*
them in every possible manner, as so many **HOUNDS**
on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.

Keep a Sharp Look Out for
KIDNAPPERS, and have
TOP EYE open.

APRIL 24, 1851.

Fugitive Slave Act

- Passed by Congress as part of the compromise of 1850
- Required that slaves be returned to their owners, even if they were in a free state.
- Slaves were denied the right of a jury trial
- Commissioners would receive \$10 (\$322 in today's money) if he found that the individual was proven to be a slave.
- Persons found to be providing shelter or food to a “fugitive” was subject to six months imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine.

Shadrack Minkins was arrested on Feb. 15, 1851 and immediately taken to the nearby courthouse. Lawyer Robert Morris (on right) was one of the lawyers who tried to assist by filing a writ of habeas corpus. His attempt was unsuccessful. PGM Lewis Hayden along with other abolitionists took matters into their own hands. They stormed the court room and seized Shadrach. They then helped him escape from Massachusetts and into Canada.





BOSTON COURT HOUSE.

TRIAL
 OF
 THOMAS SIMS,
 ON
 AN ISSUE OF PERSONAL LIBERTY.

THE CLAIM OF JAMES POTTER, OF GEORGIA,

AGAINST HIM, AS AN ALLEGED FUGITIVE FROM SERVICE.

ARGUMENTS
 OF
 ROBERT RANTOUL, JR.
 AND
 CHARLES G. LORING.

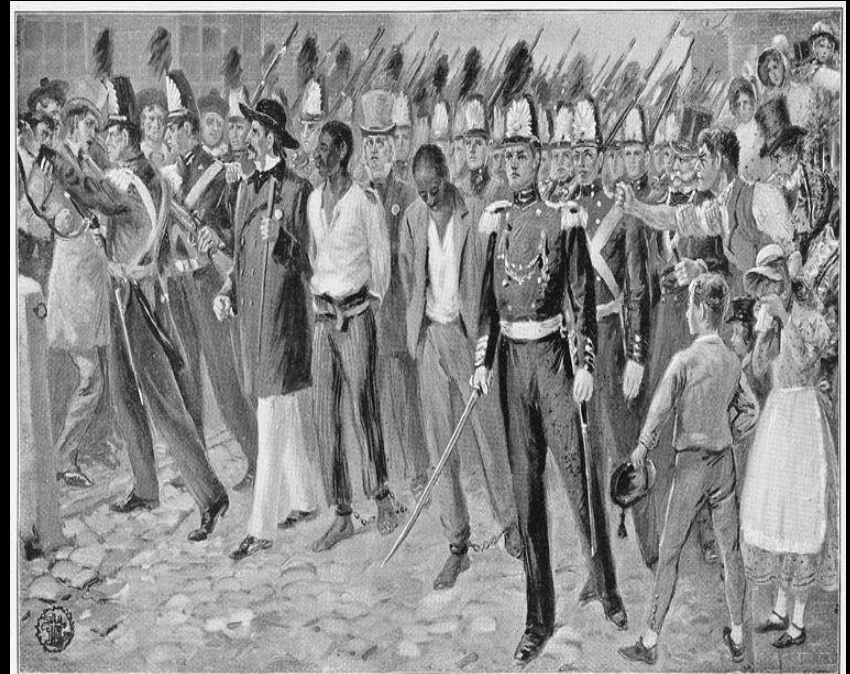
WITH
 THE DECISION OF GEORGE T. CURTIS.

BOSTON, APRIL 7-13, 1851.

PHOTOGRAPHIC REPORT BY DR. JAMES T. REESE.

BOSTON:
 WM. B. DAWBELL & CO., COMMONWEALTH BUILDING, NO. 60 WASHINGTON ST.
 1851.

Thomas Simms, the brother of PGM James Simms, escaped from slavery in Savannah and fled to Boston circa 1851. His owner, James Potter, tracked him down and demanded that city officials enforce the Fugitive Slave Act. Thomas was arrested on April 4, 1851. Fearing that he would be kidnapped by Lewis Hayden and fellow abolitionists, the mayor of Boston ordered that the doors of the courthouse be chained. He allowed his police officers to be deputized to help with the security detail. On April 11, 300 police officers escorted Thomas Simms to the naval yard where another 250 armed guards were waiting.



THE RUNAWAY SLAVES, ANTHONY BURNS AND THOMAS SIMS, RETURNED TO SLAVERY—THEIR MARCH THROUGH THE STREETS OF BOSTON.

With pinioned arms and manacled feet they marched between files of soldiers to a steamer bound for South Carolina from whence they had fled. Vast throngs of men and women watched the procession, many weeping as they gazed.

Thomas ends up in Vicksburg, MS where he escapes again in 1863. He flees north where he runs into the Union Army. He tells them about the strength of the Confederate forces in Vicksburg and the Union Army allows him to continue his travel back to Boston carrying a pass bearing Ulysses S. Grant's signature.

"THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE."
THOMAS SIMS,
THE Returned Bondman of 1851—the Welcomed
Freedman of 1863, lately from Vicksburg, Miss.,
will give a narrative of his experiences at the South,
This (Wednesday) Evening, May 6th,
At the TREMONT TEMPLE, at 8 o'clock.
WM. LLOYD GARRISON, Esq., WENDELL PHILLIPS,
Esq., and other gentlemen, may also be expected to
address the audience.
Single admission 15 cts; double admission 25 cts.
Tickets to be obtained at Ditson & Co.'s, and at the
Temple on Wednesday evening. It my6

James Simms trip to Boston was about much more than just an escape from the Civil War. He went there where he would be reunited with his brother and acquaint himself with the men who tried to save his brother from slavery years earlier.

Lewis Hayden was serving as the Grand Master of the MWPHGL of Massachusetts and Robert Morris was serving as the Deputy Grand Master when Eureka and Hilton Lodges were established.



A TRAVELLER TESTIFIES.

The last witness for the Bureau took the stand, Robert Kent. We have seen this person frequently on the street, but had always thought him a white man. Robert said that he had seen much of the wants of the freedmen. His experience differed from that of his brothers, Drayton and Frazer. "It was not the low-down ignorant class that treated the negro worst, or from whom he had the most to fear; it was the middle class." Robert thought that the Bureau was one of the greatest blessings conferred on the negro. "It was his hands, his feet, his doctor, his lawyer, his all."

- Reverend Robert T. Kent was made a Mason in Pennsylvania.
- Traveled to Georgia sometime before the civil war.
- Is presumably the first Prince Hall Mason that was in the State of Georgia.
- Passed for being white while he was preaching in Augusta. It was discovered that he was black until he was at a Freedman's Bureau meeting in Augusta in 1866.
- Became the first Grand Chaplain when the Grand Lodge formed on June 24, 1870.

June 24, 1870 the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Georgia Free & Accepted Masons was organized in Savannah

