

Camp William Penn and the Civil War

King George III enlisted Negroes in the British Army to fight their former masters. In 1775, in order to establish early colony states and new territories in America, the Continental Army enlisted 5000 Negroes to defeat the British Army.

In 1784, Thomas Jefferson warned that survival of the country was dependent on the elimination of Constitution-based Christian slavery. Religion, used to veil the nexus of state's rights and slavery, held the Constitution as hostage. This issue was central in the Civil War that would ensue many years later.

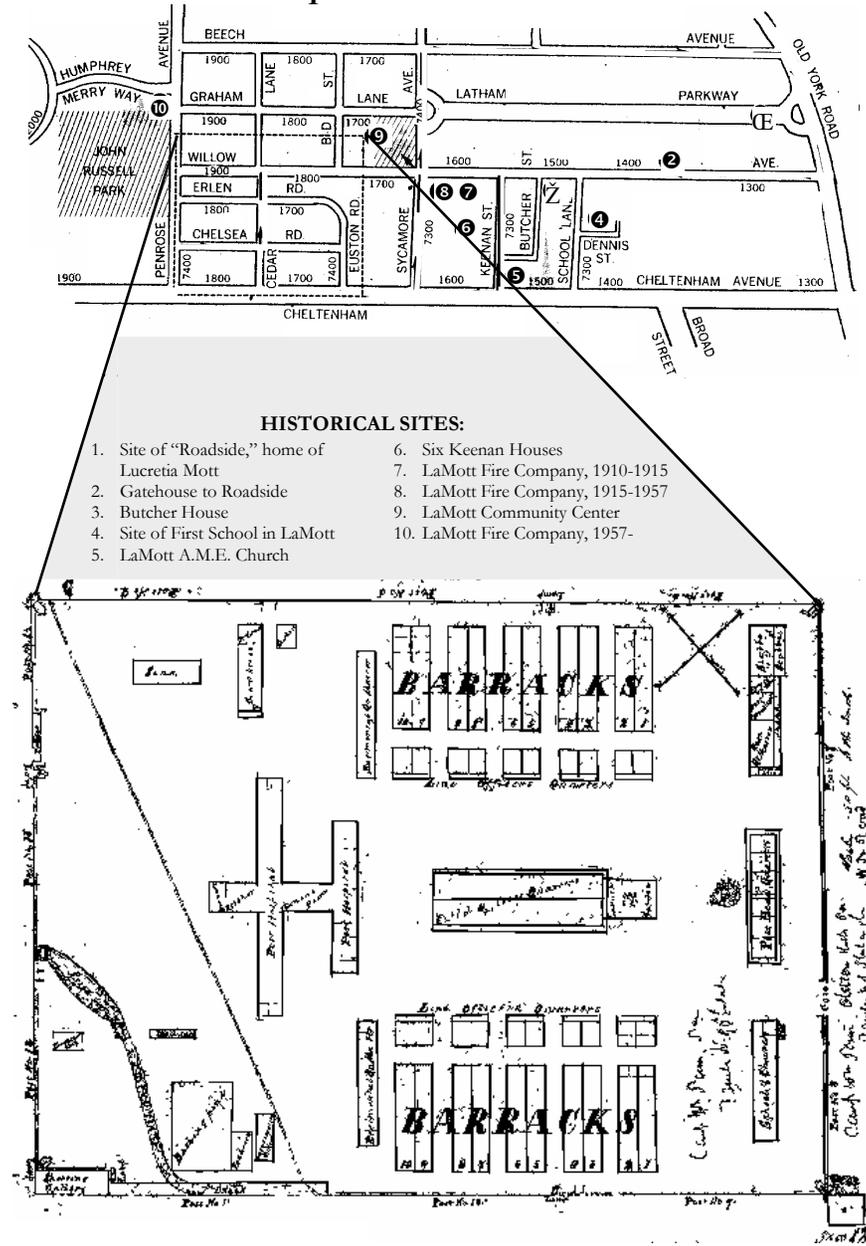
President Lincoln, in an attempt to settle the issue and end the Civil War, separated religion in the Constitution. On January 1, 1863 with the Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln paved the way for the recruitment of blacks into the federal army.

On 22 May 1863, Negro men, as persons with the right to sell their personal labor; internationally recognized as authorized federal soldiers as "troops of the United States," were employed at Camp William Penn to destroy states' rights and Biblical based Christian slavery in the Constitution. They could not be tried in court for slaying of white citizens who were in rebellion against the Republic.

By 1862, prior to being recognized as federal troops, non-federal camps were located at what is now Church Road and Washington Lane, on the property of Jay Cooke and under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Louis Wagner. It was soon determined that the site was not ideal nor parade ground level. A new site was donated by Edward Davis, beyond the existing Camp William Penn gate, and the new camp was operational by Independence Day, 1863.

Camp William Penn was the largest training camp established for black soldiers. A total of eleven regiments, the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 22nd, 24th, 25th, 32nd, 41st, 43rd, 45th, and 127th, totaling 10,940 men, and 200 black and white officers were trained here under Camp Commander Lieutenant Colonel Louis Wagner. 1,056 casualties were suffered by the men of Camp William Penn.

Map of Historic LaMott



Map of Camp William Penn

Drawn in 1863 by John McArthur, Jr., the noted architect of the Philadelphia City Hall.