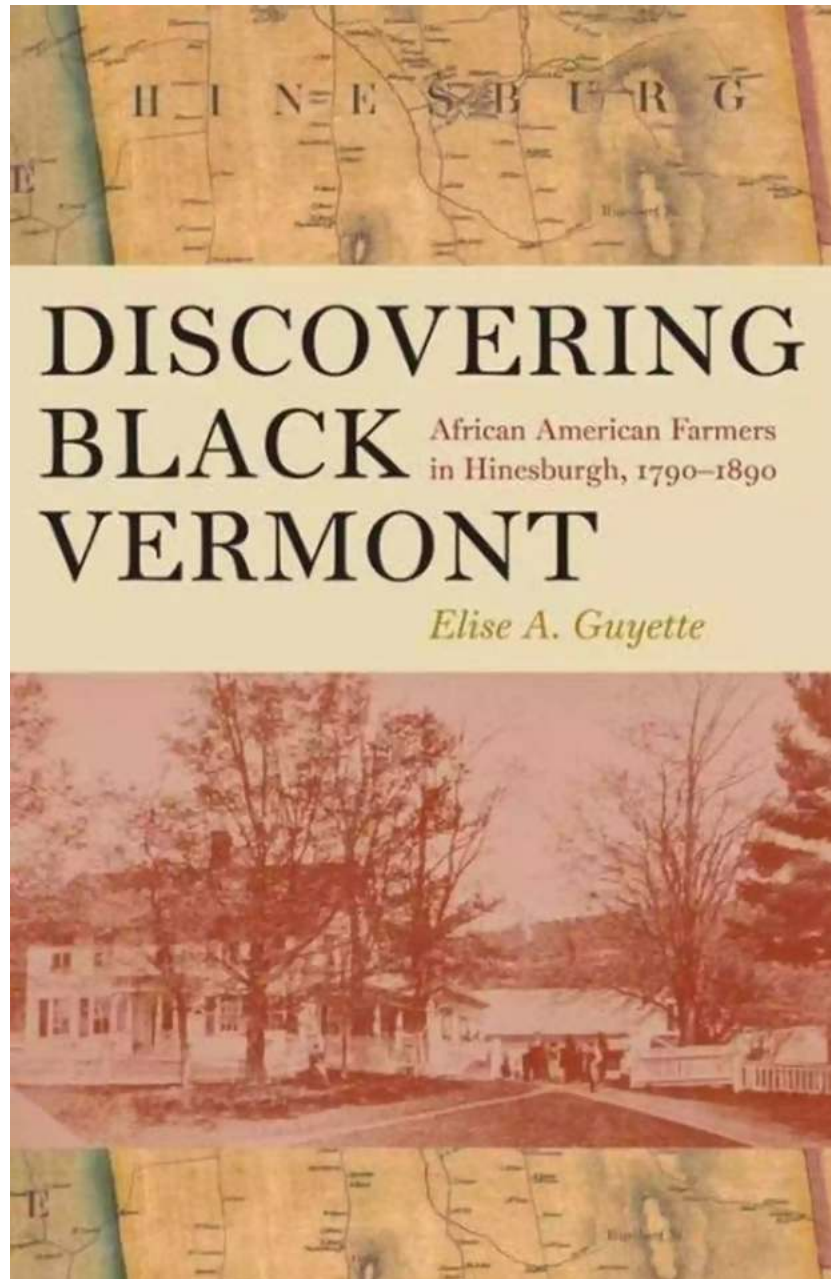


Discovering Black Vermont African American Farmers In Hinesburgh 1790-1890

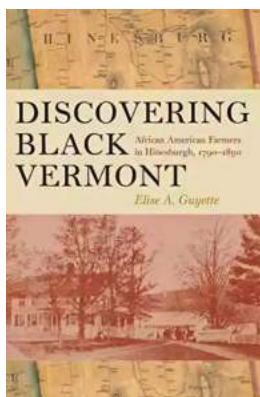


When we think of Vermont's agricultural history, most people conjure up images of white settlers, dairy farms, and picturesque landscapes. However, a lesser-known but significant part of Vermont's farming legacy involves African Americans who settled in the town of Hinesburgh between 1790 and 1890. Through primary

source research and oral histories, we can uncover a rich and diverse history of Black Vermont African American farmers and their contributions to the agricultural landscape of the region.

The Early Pioneers

At the turn of the 19th century, Vermont experienced an influx of African American settlers, many of whom were veterans of the Revolutionary War seeking new opportunities. Hinesburgh, located in Chittenden County, became home to a small but vibrant Black community, with individuals like Isaac Jackson and Lucy Roberts establishing farms and cultivating the land.



Discovering Black Vermont: African American Farmers in Hinesburgh, 1790-1890

by Elise A. Guyette (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 15852 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 281 pages



Isaac Jackson, a former slave, acquired a piece of land in Hinesburgh in 1802 through the Bounty Lands Act, which rewarded veterans with parcels of land. Jackson's farm thrived, and he grew various crops, including wheat, corn, and potatoes, becoming a prominent figure in the local farming community. His success opened doors for other African Americans to follow suit.

The Challenges Faced

While these Black Vermont African American farmers carved out a place for themselves in Hinesburgh, they faced numerous challenges due to racial prejudice and discrimination. Limited access to resources, credit, and education made it difficult for them to compete with their white counterparts.

Additionally, laws and regulations enacted during this period disproportionately affected Black farmers. For example, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 not only threatened the freedom of escaped slaves but also hindered economic opportunities for Black farmers by making it easier for slaveholders to capture and reclaim individuals who had established farms and businesses in the North.

Resilience and Legacy

Despite these challenges, the Black farmers of Hinesburgh demonstrated incredible resilience. They formed strong community networks, supporting and uplifting one another in the face of adversity. Many Black farmers ventured into livestock farming, successfully raising cattle, sheep, and pigs.

These farmers took pride in their agricultural heritage and passed down their knowledge and skills through generations. Their contributions to Vermont's farming industry played a pivotal role in reshaping the narrative of agriculture in the region, highlighting the presence and importance of African American farmers in predominantly white communities.

Preserving Their Story

Today, efforts are being made to preserve the history and legacy of Black Vermont African American farmers in Hinesburgh. Local historical societies, universities, and community organizations are conducting research, collecting

oral histories, and organizing exhibits to shed light on this hidden chapter of Vermont's agricultural past.

By uncovering and sharing these stories, we not only honor the contributions of Black farmers but also recognize the need for a more inclusive and comprehensive understanding of Vermont's history. It is crucial to celebrate the diversity of experiences and narratives that have shaped our communities.

Looking Ahead

The story of Black Vermont African American farmers in Hinesburgh serves as a reminder that history is not one-dimensional. By exploring and discussing these narratives, we broaden our perspectives and challenge the traditional narratives that have been passed down.

As we continue to uncover untold stories of marginalized communities, we must also acknowledge the ongoing challenges faced by Black farmers in today's agricultural landscape. Supporting initiatives that promote equity, access to resources, and dismantling systemic barriers is essential for cultivating a more inclusive and just farming community.

As we reflect on the past and envision the future, let us strive for a society where the contributions and achievements of all farmers are recognized and celebrated, regardless of their race or background.

Discovering Black Vermont: African American Farmers in Hinesburgh, 1790-1890

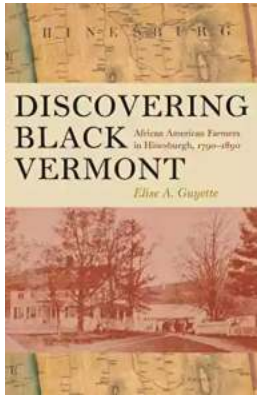
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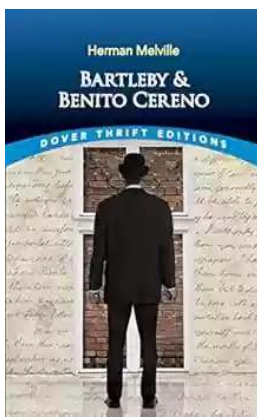
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Discovering Black Vermont by Elise A. Guyette tells the story of three generations of free African Americans trying to build a life and community in northern Vermont in the years following statehood. By piecing together fragments of the history of free black Americans in Vermont--tax and estate records, journals, diaries, and the like--the author recovers what is essentially a lost world, establishing a framework for using primary sources to document a forgotten past. The book is an invaluable resource for those conducting local history research and will serve as inspiration for high school and college students and their teachers. Originally published in 2010 by the University of Vermont and University Press of New England, it has been reprinted in 2020 by the Vermont Historical Society.



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