The largest African American community in Boston during the decades before the Civil War was on the northern slope of Beacon Hill, in the shadow of the Massachusetts State House. Although some black Bostonians lived in the North End and on the West End north of Cambridge Street, most called the city’s 2,000-acre block in Beacon Hill just below the homes of wealthy whites. The historic buildings surrounding “Black Heritage Trail” were the homes, businesses, schools, and churches of a thriving black community that thrived. From the nation’s earliest years, to sustain those who sought local discrimination and national slavery, struggling toward the equality and freedom promised in America’s documents of national liberty.

During the revolutionary era, black society joined other Bostonians in the fight for freedom. After the British were defeated in 1783, the city hosted a school, community center, and construction of its First African Baptist Church.

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