

Establishment of Mitchelville

The choice having been made to attack the Confederacy in the Deep South, a Union fleet of about 60 ships and 20,000 men under the direction of General T.W. Sherman arrived off the coast of Beaufort, S.C. on November 3, 1861. The attack on the Confederate forts began November 7, and by that afternoon the Confederate forces had retreated, leaving the Beaufort area to Union forces.

Within two days of the Union victory, Sea Island blacks descended on the outpost. A place was "selected near the Drayton Plantation for a Negro village." By March of 1863, the town of Mitchelville was built and named in honor of Maj. Gen. O.M. Mitchel. The village was divided into districts for the election of councilmen and charged with establishing police and sanitary regulations. Children between the ages of six and 15 were required to attend school.

By 1865, about 1500 people lived in simply built houses. Each house had approximately a quarter of an acre for planting gardens. Some residents worked for the Union army, while others worked for wages.

Photographs taken around this time give us some idea of how people lived. But, for the most part, historical records have left us little information about their daily lives.

Post-Civil War Congress passed laws restoring land confiscated by the US government to the Southern landowners who had owned the land prior to the Civil War.

Land was also purchased by free Blacks who eventually lost most of their property to taxes.



Photo courtesy of Chicora Foundation

South Carolina African American History Calendar

April

Celebrates 25 Years.

2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 APRIL FOOLS' DAY	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 <small>1877 – Reconstruction came to an end in South Carolina</small>	12
13 PALM SUNDAY	14 PASSOVER BEGINS <small>1868 – SC voters approved constitution, 70,758 to 27,228, and elected state officers, including the first black cabinet officer, Francis L. Cardozo, secretary of state. New constitution required integrated education and contained a strong bill of rights section: "Distinctions on account of race or color, in any case whatever, shall be prohibited, and all classes of citizens shall enjoy equally all common, public, legal and political privileges."</small>	15 TAX DAY	16	17 <small>1911 – Senator Isaiah DeQuincy Newman was born in Clyde Township, SC. Newman was the first African American to serve in the South Carolina Senate since Reconstruction</small> <small>1968 – Malcolm X gave an address at the Mosque in Columbia, SC</small>	18 GOOD FRIDAY <small>1963 – Brown vs. SC Forestry Commission case opens</small>	19
20 EASTER SUNDAY <small>2010 – Steve Benjamin wins election with 56% of the vote becoming Columbia's first African American mayor</small>	21	22 PASSOVER ENDS EARTH DAY	23	24	25 <small>1968 – Robert Kennedy spoke at the University of South Carolina about the national government's role in eliminating racial discrimination</small>	26 <small>1938 – Jasper Cureton, the first African American appellate judge in South Carolina since reconstruction was born in Walhalla, SC</small>
27	28	29	30			