

# Oh Freedom!

Blacks on the  
Battlefront and in  
the Aftermath of the  
American Revolutionary  
War in New Jersey

A Traveling Exhibit

*"I entered the army for the purpose of obtaining my freedom..."*

~Richard Rhodes, Rebel soldier, 1st Rhode Island Regiment, present at Monmouth

At the dawn of the American Revolution, the chains of enslaved and oppressed blacks clanged while cries for political freedom from British rule rang. Perhaps blacks could earn their freedom through serving in the impending War.

Blacks took a chance, siding with either the British Loyalists or the American Rebels—whomever they believed offered the best prospects for freedom. Blacks were present at all of New Jersey's key battles and served on both sides.

In the aftermath of the War, much was achieved while much remained uncertain. Some lost their lives or emigrated out of the new nation to realize their freedom. Others were highly esteemed for their service or spent decades more enslaved.

These black soldiers, whether Rebels or Loyalists, were pioneers of personal freedom for all blacks in the New World.

Learn more:

[www.njparksandforests.org](http://www.njparksandforests.org)

