

LYMUS ANDERS



Born: Abt. 1830

Appointment(s):
New England Freedmen's
Association
Hilton Head
1864

Lymus was born about 1830 to slave parents. He was an illiterate fugitive slave and soldier in the Union Army who settled in Mitchelville.¹ He was a full-blooded African and although he was about 50 years old with a family, he learned to read and write by teachers giving him lessons in the evenings². He assisted the teachers in ensuring that students attended lessons and helped maintain discipline. Most importantly, he built a simple church in Mitchelville and later added windows and benches in order for it to be used as a classroom. He accomplished this with the help of other freedmen and a \$350 contribution from Northern white people, a donation of \$94 by other freedmen and \$87.85 collected from soldiers in the 32nd US Colored Infantry³. The records state that he had finished this combo schoolhouse/church by September 1864 and it measured 20' x 40'.⁴ He also built a separate cabin for the teachers from Northampton, Massachusetts, so they no longer had to live in one of the classrooms⁵. Sometimes, he furnished the lumber and other materials needed for construction, but also wrote letters to the American Missionary Association humbly requesting financial support for the freedmen of Mitchelville⁶. Lymus was appointed before December 1864 by the New England Freedmen's Association as a teacher in Mitchelville and sponsored by the John Woolman Society NEFAS in Brattleboro, Vermont⁷. Lymus also assisted the Pastor of the small Baptist church which he had helped build. On the second Sabbath of

¹ Woodson, Carter, ed. *Journal of Negro History*, Vol 8, # 1
Jan1923. Watson, Carl Godwin & Rayford Whittingham, p 38-39.

² Pearson, Elizabeth Ware. Letters from Port Royal Written at the Time of the Civil War 1862-1868. Boston, Mass: W.B Clark, 1906, Reprint by Arno Press, New York, NY: 1969, p 37.

³ National Freedmen's Aid Society.
Freedmen's:Journal, 1865:13.

⁴ Woodson, p 39.

⁵ Ware, p 38.

⁶ National Freedmen's Aid Society. *Freedmen's Record*,
Vol I, #3, Mar 1865; Vol I, # 4, Apr 1865, Vol I #5, May 1865, p 87;
Vol I #7, Jul 1865, p118 and Vol I, #8 Aug 1865.

⁷ Ibid. Vol I, #1, Jan 1865, 'Teacher's List', p 3, p 61.

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December 1864, Rev Willard T. Louis of the Baptist Church in Beaufort, preached at the church in Mitchelville. When he arrived he found "Brother Lymus sick with fever". Rev. Louis called Lymus his 'Brother' and his helper. After Rev. Louis returned to Beaufort, he became very ill himself. Lymus stepped up and became the substitute preacher at Mitchelville until Rev. Louis recovered.⁸

After the end of the Civil War, Lymus had saved about \$400-\$500 which he used to buy land at the government's tax sales of abandoned properties⁹. Among all freedmen on Hilton Head, he led them in both ambition, enterprise and achievement. Lymus Anders was a real entrepreneur, taking advantage of opportunities to provide services for soldiers of the Union troops, government agents and other white folks. He ran a transport barge providing produce to outlying islands, a small passenger boat, maintained a supply of lumber, tacks, hardware, and tools which earned him the nickname of 'Black Yankee' for his work ethic.

⁸ Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, New York..
Missionary Advocate. Vol XX, No 10. Jan 1865, p77.
[Imageserver.library.yale.edu/digcoll:322593/500.pdf](http://imageserver.library.yale.edu/digcoll:322593/500.pdf).

⁹ Woodson, Carter, ed. Pp 39-40.