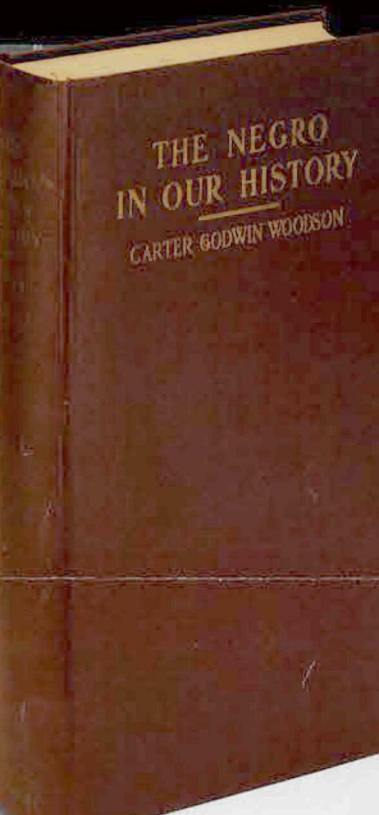


Carter G. Woodson Home

Carter G. Woodson Home
National Historic Site
Washington, DC

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



- Visionary
- Publisher
- Historian
- Educator
- Founder
- Advisor
- Activist
- Curator
- Scholar
- Mentor
- Leader
- Writer

LEFT TO RIGHT Dr. Woodson (center) with Morgan College students, 1931; Woodson office-home; Thaddeus School students
AFRO AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS ARCHIVES; NPS / ASALH; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; BOOK—IAN BRABNER, RARE AMERICANA; WOODSON—WEST VIRGINIA ARCHIVES & HISTORY; ANCELLA BICKLEY COLLECTION

Birthplace of Black History Month

Welcome to the office-home of Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson (left), "the Father of Black History" and founder of Black History Month.

Dr. Woodson institutionalized the study of Black history by founding the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), today the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). Its office operated from the first floor. From the second-floor office and library Dr. Woodson wrote 20 books and countless articles and trained the next generation of Black historians. He lived on the third floor.

Dr. Woodson devoted his life to Black history. He saw the creation of Negro History Week, now Black History Month, as a catalyst to inspire people to learn about and appreciate Black historical achievements all year.

This place was—and is—an active center for Black history, heritage, and progress. With the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site invites all to explore Dr. Woodson's home, work, and legacy.

We should emphasize not Negro History, but the Negro in history. What we need is not a history of selected races or nations, but the history of the world, void of national bias, race, hate, and religious prejudice. . . . The case of the Negro is well taken care of when it is shown how he has far influenced the development of civilization.*

Dr. Carter G. Woodson, *Journal of Negro History*, 1927
*Today, Negro is an outdated term for a person of African descent. In Dr. Woodson's day it was commonly used in a less offensive way.

A N U N A P O L O G E T I C R A D I C A L



The following events are related to Dr. Woodson's life and home. The * symbol indicates books he wrote.

- December 19, 1875 Born to formerly enslaved parents in Virginia
- 1892–95 West Virginia coal miner
- 1895 Enters Frederick Douglass High School in Huntington, West Virginia

- 1903 Earns first bachelor's degree at Berea College in Kentucky
- 1908 Earns second bachelor's degree and a master's degree at University of Chicago
- 1912 Earns history PhD at Harvard
- 1915 *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861**; cofounds ASNLH on September 9
- 1916 Starts *Journal of Negro History*
- 1918 *A Century of Negro Migration**

- 1921 *The History of the Negro Church**; launches Associated Publishers, Inc.
- 1922 *The Negro in Our History**; buys DC home on July 18
- 1926 Creates Negro History Week
- 1928 *African Myths and Folk Tales**
- 1930 *The Rural Negro**
- 1933 *The Mis-Education of the Negro**; his preeminent work

- 1937 Launches *Negro History Bulletin*
- 1939 *African Heroes and Heroines**
- 1948 Introduces Negro History Week kits
- April 3, 1950 Dies in his bedroom
- 1971 Associated Publishers dissolves; ASNLH relocates (renamed ASALH, 1973)
- 1976 ASALH redesignates Negro History Week as Black History Month; home designated a national historic landmark

- 2003 Congress names Woodson home a national historic site
- 2006 Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site becomes 389th unit of National Park System

TYPEWRITER—© JETT MORTON

WHO WAS CARTER G. WOODSON?



Born in 1875 to formerly enslaved parents who were poor landowners, young Carter Godwin Woodson (left in 1915) worked as a sharecropper, manual laborer, and garbage truck driver.

His education began in earnest at age 18. As a West Virginia coal miner, he discovered books about African Americans written by self-trained Black historians. This ignited his passion for Black history.

GETTY IMAGES / HULTON ARCHIVE

Facts set properly forth, will tell their own story.

Carter G. Woodson
Negro History Bulletin
1938

He became the second African American to earn a PhD from Harvard University.

Dr. Woodson became a respected, skillful, and inspiring leader. For a few years he held various positions, including principal at the Armstrong Manual Training School in Washington, DC, and dean at Howard University.

Later he realized he needed to devote his life to forming his own organization to popularize and institutionalize Black history.

His steadfast dedication to his cause sparked volumes of work to flourish here at his home—and beyond. Among his many accomplishments, he founded ASNLH (now ASALH), Negro History Week, and Associated Publishers, Inc. Negro History Week is now Black History Month, a worldwide celebration that encourages us to learn, reflect, and feel inspired.

Dr. Woodson is now part of history himself, yet his work lives on through these efforts. What legacy will you leave?

Higher Strivings in the Service of the Cause

How can we achieve a better future together?

Dr. Woodson lived during Jim Crow and “separate but equal” laws. US educators and publishers marginalized and mischaracterized Black Americans as inferior, uneducated, and poor. He warned that this “mis-education” led Blacks to despise their own race and to be dependent on Whites. He believed this hurt all races.

He saw history as a way to racial harmony and Black empowerment. Educating people about Black experiences could bring all Americans together. Training historians could shed light on African American contributions to the nation despite the abuses of racism.

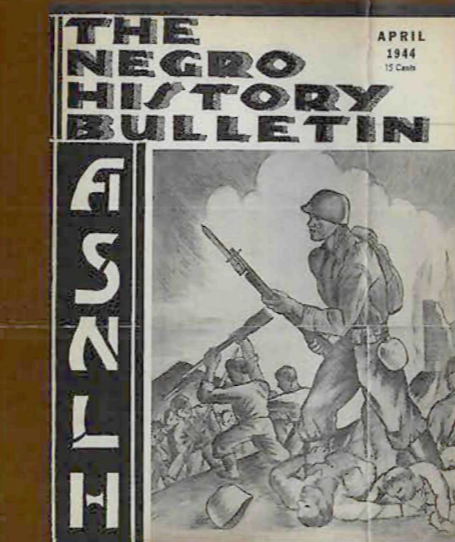
For African Americans learning about Black history could build pride in one’s heritage. It could inspire action for equality, civil rights, prosperity, and more.

For nearly 30 years inside these walls Dr. Woodson and his associates worked day and night to make this broad vision a reality. They expanded and promoted Black history, documented African journeys, preserved Black culture, published Black authors and subjects, and supported Black organizations.

Their work tiled a mosaic of Black history for all the world to see. What paths would you forge to benefit everyone?



Teachers got lesson ideas from Dr. Woodson’s monthly bulletin.



NPS / ASALH

Willing to Sacrifice

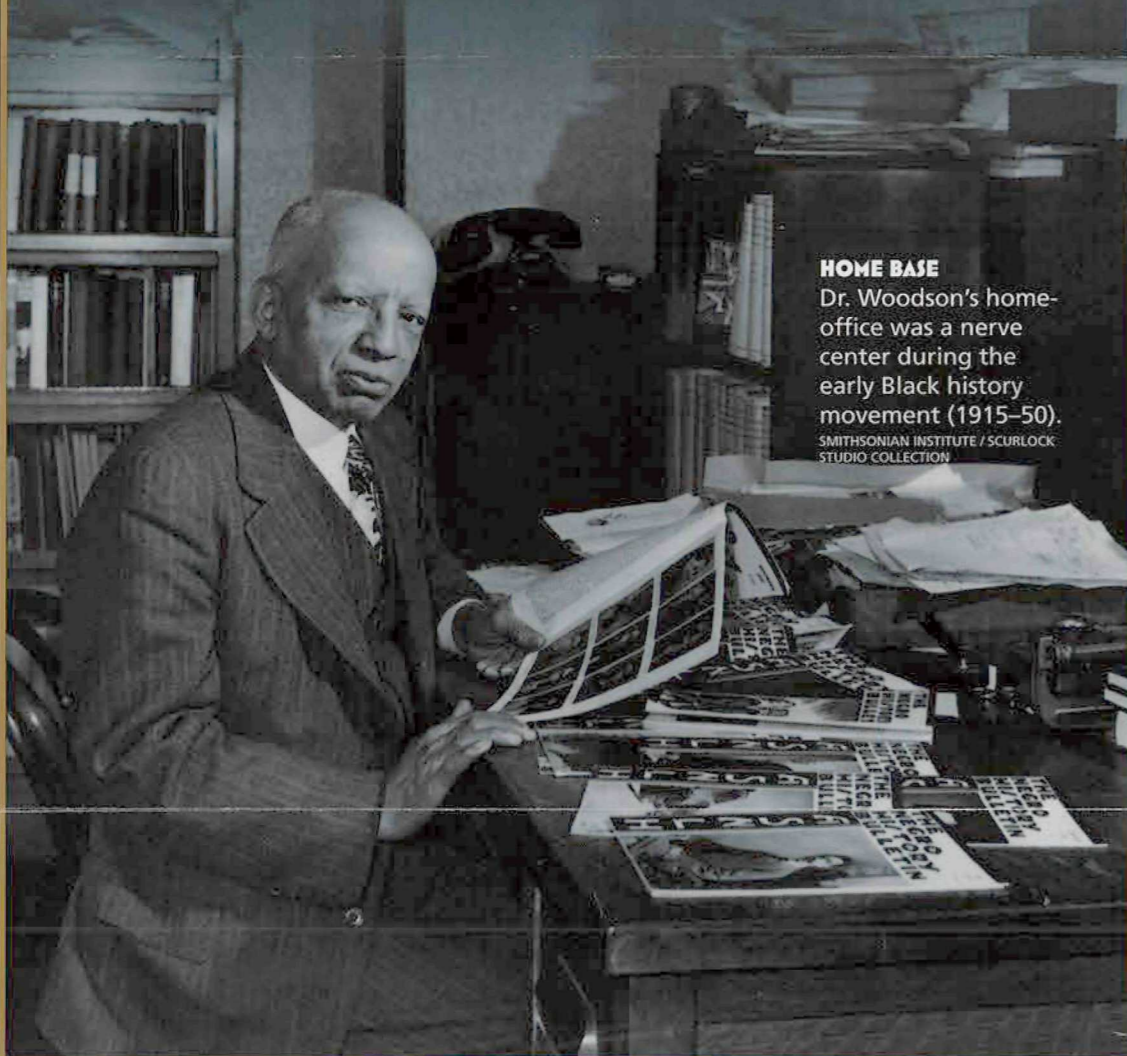
What does sacrifice mean to you?

The United States was racially segregated in the early 1900s. Laws disempowered Blacks. Racism and discrimination ran rampant. Three years before Dr. Woodson bought this home he was nearly killed in a Washington, DC, race riot. In spite of this he was determined to locate his organization in the Nation’s Capital.

Threats like these did not stop Blacks from organizing their own marches and movements. In 1915 thousands went to Chicago to celebrate African American progress in the 50 years since emancipation (when the Thirteenth Amendment

ended slavery in all states). At the event Dr. Woodson presented Black history as integral to the history of all Americans. Encouraged by the response, he founded ASNLH (1915), Negro History and Literature Week (1924), and Negro History Week (1926).

Achieving his vision meant long days and intense dedication for Dr. Woodson and his mentees. They spent countless hours researching, writing, and fundraising. Dr. Woodson remained single and selflessly devoted his income to ASNLH. What are you willing to sacrifice for your beliefs?



HOME BASE

Dr. Woodson’s home-office was a nerve center during the early Black history movement (1915–50).
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION / SCURLOCK STUDIO COLLECTION



Rayford Logan
WILLIAMS COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Charles H. Wesley
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Lorenzo Greene
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Mentorships and Alliances

How has someone inspired you?

The Woodson home was a hub for Black leaders and scholars. School and government officials, writers and activists, church and community leaders: All visited the home seeking Dr. Woodson’s advice.

Many in the early Black history movement worked or visited the home, including Nannie Helen Burroughs, Langston Hughes, George Cleveland Hall, and Charles Wesley. Lois Mailou Jones provided artwork for some of Woodson’s publications. These leaders, often allies, aimed to ensure civil rights, share and preserve African American experiences, nurture pride in Black heritage, and make a better future for all.

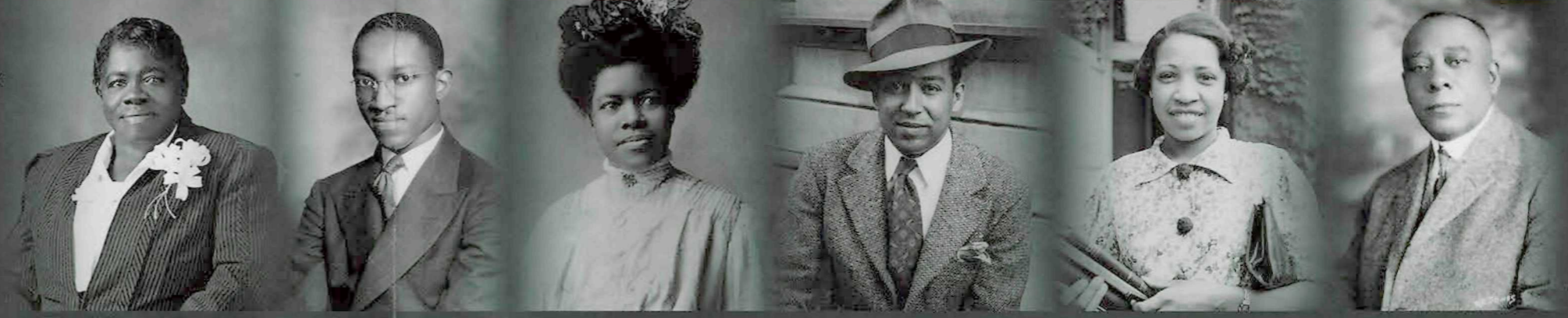
Dr. Woodson skillfully communicated across race, sex, and age. He welcomed Black women as equals at a time when many did not. His friend and neighbor Mary McLeod Bethune was the first woman and longest-serving president of ASNLH (1936–52).

Dr. Woodson mainly trained Black scholars here, including Lorenzo Greene, Rayford Logan, and John Hope Franklin. Their work went far to institutionalize Black history in America. They prepared paths for future historians, authors, intellectuals, and activists. Take some time to learn more about these people. How do they inspire you?



“I, TOO, AM AMERICA” wrote Langston Hughes, one of many African Americans with whom Dr. Woodson worked in his DC office-home (more at right).

Left: Lois Mailou Jones artwork for ASNLH poster, 1936
© ASALH



Mary McLeod Bethune
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION / SCURLOCK STUDIO COLLECTION

John Hope Franklin
JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN PAPERS, DUKE UNIVERSITY

Nannie Helen Burroughs
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Langston Hughes
COURTESY OF BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Lois Mailou Jones
NATIONAL ARCHIVES

George Cleveland Hall
RD-JONES

PLAN YOUR VISIT

Check the park website for information on hours, closures, ranger-led tours, programs, and events.

GETTING HERE

By metro: The park is a three-minute walk from the Shaw-Howard University stop (Green Line). From the 8th and R streets exit, take R St. one block west to 9th St. Turn left onto 9th St. After crossing Rhode Island Ave., the park is the third house on the right.

By vehicle: Limited parking. From Rhode Island Ave., turn onto 9th St. The park is the third house on the right.

VISITOR CENTER

The visitor center has a water fountain, restrooms, exhibits, and NPS Junior Ranger booklets.

TOUR THE HOME

Explore the home only by ranger-led tour. Please visit the park website for tour information and reservations (first-come, first-served; fee).

School groups: Please contact the park to arrange your tour.

PROHIBITED INSIDE

Large bags, eating, drinking, gum, pets, and smoking.

SAFETY

Please be mindful of your surroundings in this busy, urban area. Be careful on sidewalks, streets, steps, and uneven or slippery surfaces.

EMERGENCIES CALL 911

ACCESSIBILITY

We strive to make facilities, programs, and services accessible to all. Ask a ranger, call, or check the park website.

The visitor center has an elevator to all floors. Braille and audio-described materials are available. Service animals are allowed.

EXPLORE MORE

Use the official NPS App to guide your visit.

PARK PARTNER

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History continues Dr. Woodson’s legacy to promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about African American life, history, and culture to the world.

To learn more, please visit www.asah.org.

MORE INFORMATION

Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site
1538 9th St. NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-426-5961
www.nps.gov/cawo

Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. Learn more about national parks at www.nps.gov.

National Park Foundation
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

