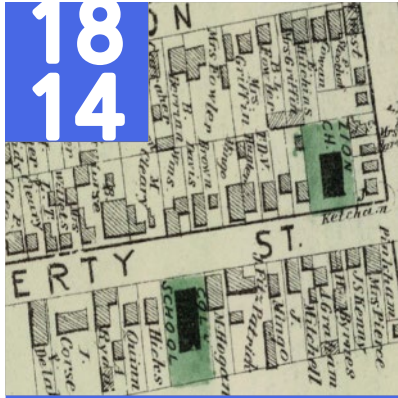


# FLUSHING COLORED SCHOOL TIMELINE: 1814-1851

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were no public schools in Flushing, Queens. The children of families who could afford to pay attended private schools.

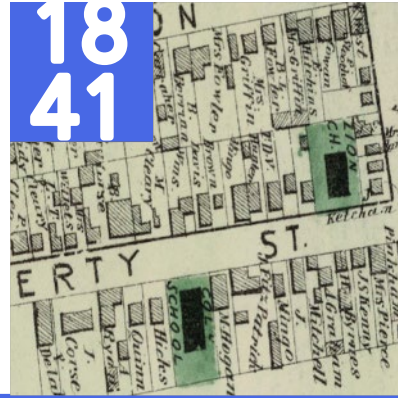
The first free (and integrated) public school in Flushing was founded in 1814 by the Flushing Female Association, an organization of Quaker women.

When the public school system was established in 1841, this school was absorbed and in 1847 became a segregated school known as the Colored School.



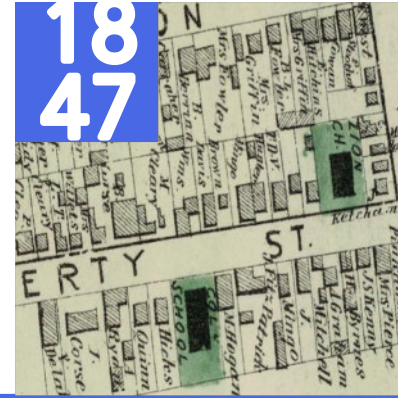
QUAKER WOMEN OPEN  
FREE PUBLIC SCHOOL  
(IMAGE: 1; SOURCES: 1, 2, 3)

The Flushing Female Association (FFA), an organization of Quaker women, establishes the town's first free and integrated public school, in a rented space, to serve the children of families who cannot afford the private schools.



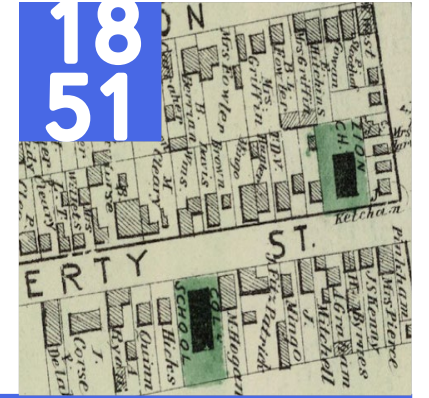
PUBLIC SCHOOL  
SYSTEM ESTABLISHED  
(IMAGE: 1; SOURCES: 1, 2, 3)

Flushing establishes its first public school system. The school run by the Flushing Female Association continues to operate as part of the public system.



THE FFA SCHOOL IS  
SEGREGATED  
(IMAGE: 1; SOURCES: 1, 2, 3)

In 1847, the public schools are segregated and from that time the Flushing Female Association school is known as the Colored School. Some sources place this transition in the early 1850s.



SELAH MILLS  
AFRICANUS (1822 –  
1870), TEACHER  
(IMAGE: 1; SOURCES: 4)

The educator and abolitionist Selah M. Africanus has the charge of 69 pupils. Subjects include spelling, reading, writing, geometry, arithmetic, and drawing.

# FLUSHING COLORED SCHOOL TIMELINE: 1861-1870

With the passage of time, the original wooden schoolhouse had fallen into disrepair. It was not until 1861 that a new brick schoolhouse was constructed on the same site. By 1864, Thomas w. Cardozo had been hired as principal, and oversaw two benefit exhibitions by pupils at Flushing Town Hall that year. In February 1870, the *Flushing Journal* published a brief notice of the death of Selah Mills Africanus, who had been a teacher at the school In 1851.



NEW SCHOOLHOUSE  
CONSTRUCTED  
(IMAGE: 2; SOURCES: 5, 6)

A brick schoolhouse replaces an aging wooden structure that occupied the same site on Liberty Street (today 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue). This photograph was taken in 1922.



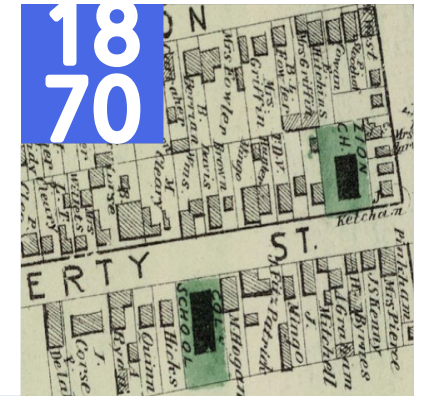
OPENING EXERCISES  
HELD  
(IMAGE: 2; SOURCES: 7)

Opening exercises for the new schoolhouse are held on Monday, February 3, 1862. An announcement appeared in the *Flushing Journal* on the previous day.



T.W. CARDOZO (1838-  
1881), PRINCIPAL  
(IMAGE: 3; SOURCES: 8)

Thomas W. Cardozo, Principal of the Colored School, oversees two exhibitions at Flushing Town Hall, in February and December. The proceeds are donated to a freedmen's aid society in Port Royal, Jamaica.



SELAH MILLS  
AFRICANUS DIES  
(IMAGE: 1; SOURCES: 4)

Selah Mills Africanus, principal of the Colored School, died, perhaps in early 1870. No date of or location of death was given in the brief notice published in the *Flushing Journal* on February 10.

# FLUSHING COLORED SCHOOL TIMELINE: 1871-1900

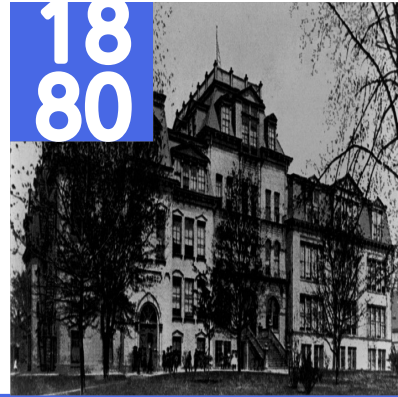
In 1880, the Flushing Board of Education established a rule that students from the Colored School would be admitted to Flushing High School upon satisfactory completion of an entrance examination. But when four girls from the Colored School passed the examination, the Board shut them out. The Cisco family of nearby Jamaica had fought for admission of their children to white schools in their district for many years, ultimately losing an appeal in the State Supreme Court in February 1900. The defeat spurred the passage of the Elsberg Bill in the State Legislature in April, abolishing so-called “separate but equal” schools in the State of New York.



MISS I.E. SMITH,  
PRINCIPAL

(IMAGE: 1; SOURCES: 9)

The full name of Miss Smith is unknown. A report in the *Flushing Journal* on September 2, 1871 noted that as many as 100 pupils were expected for the fall term.



FLUSHING HIGH  
SCHOOL OPEN TO ALL  
VIA EXAMINATION

(IMAGE: 4; SOURCES: 11)

Four girls from the Colored School pass the entrance examination for Flushing High School but are not allowed to attend. The refusal of the Board of Education and the organized resistance of the Black community are reported in the Queens and Brooklyn newspapers.



MARY ANN ELIZABETH  
SHAW (1850-1905),  
PRINCIPAL

(IMAGE: 5; SOURCES: 11)

Shaw is in charge of the Colored School and the Night School, which meets two evenings per week.

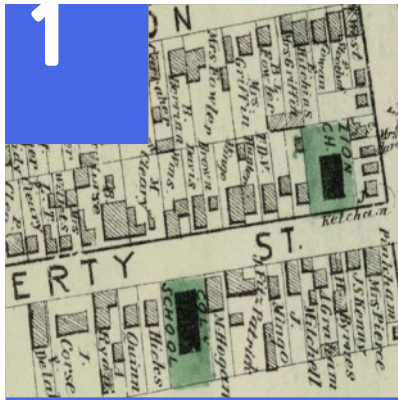


CISCO CASE AND END  
OF SEGREGATION OF  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(IMAGE: 6; SOURCES: 12)

Elizabeth Cisco's long battle to fight segregation in the Jamaica public schools ends in a defeat in the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of New York on February 6. In April the Elsberg Bill is signed into law, abolishing segregated public schools in the State of New York.

# SOURCES: FLUSHING COLORED SCHOOL, 1814-1900



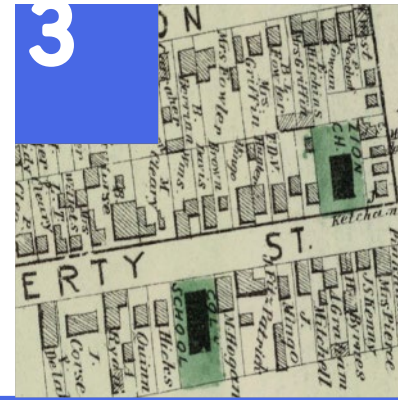
SOURCES: FLUSHING  
FEMALE ASSOCIATION  
SCHOOL

Kearns, Betsy, and Cece Kerkorian. *Phase 1A archaeological assessment report for the Flushing Center Project, Queens, New York, CEQR 86-337 Q. Riverside: Historical Perspectives, Inc., June 30, 1988.* [https://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/arch\\_reports/526.pdf](https://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/arch_reports/526.pdf)



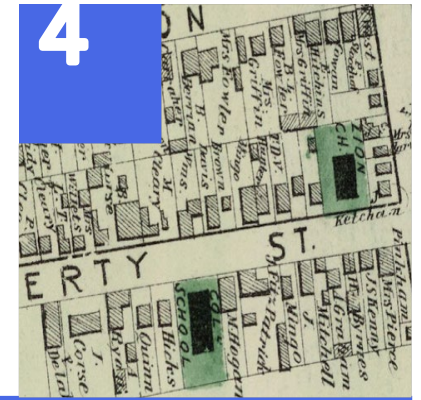
SOURCES: FLUSHING  
FEMALE ASSOCIATION  
SCHOOL

Spindler, Ellen M., and Charlotte Jackson. *Independent minds: Bowne and Parsons women.* Flushing: Bowne House. Accessed April 20, 2024. <https://www.bownehouse.org/bowneandparsonswomen>



SOURCES: FLUSHING  
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SCHOOL

Thomas L. Wall: Friends in Flushing. *Friends' Intelligencer*, 84, no. 4 (First Month 22), 1927. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pst.000060068934&seq=25>



SOURCES: SELAH M.  
AFRICANUS (1822–1870),  
TEACHER

*Flushing Journal*. December 27, 1851, 2:3; *Flushing Journal*. February 10, 1870, 2:5.

Horatio T. Strother: *The Underground Railroad in Connecticut*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1962.

# SOURCES: FLUSHING COLORED SCHOOL, 1814-1900



SOURCES: NEW SCHOOLHOUSE

Kearns, Betsy, and Cece Kerkorian. *Phase 1A archaeological assessment report for the Flushing Center Project, Queens, New York, CEQR 86-337 Q. Riverside: Historical Perspectives, Inc., June 30, 1988.* [https://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/arch\\_reports/526.pdf](https://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/arch_reports/526.pdf)



SOURCES: NEW SCHOOLHOUSE

*Flushing Journal*. October 19, 1861, 2:4.



SOURCES: OPENING EXERCISES FOR NEW SCHOOLHOUSE

*Flushing Journal*. February 2, 1862, 2:2.



SOURCES: T.W. CARDOZO (1838-1881), PRINCIPAL

*Flushing Journal*. February 6, 1864, 2:2.

# SOURCES: FLUSHING COLORED SCHOOL, 1814-1900



MISS I.E. SMITH,  
PRINCIPAL

*Flushing Journal*, September  
2, 1871, 2:4.



FLUSHING HIGH SCHOOL  
OPENED TO ALL ON BASIS OF  
EXAMINATION

*Newtown Register*, December  
23, 1880, 1:1.



SOURCES: MARY ANN  
ELIZABETH SHAW (1850-  
1905), PRINCIPAL

*Newtown Register*, January 30,  
1890, 3:3; *Brooklyn Daily  
Eagle*, June 28, 1890, 1:1.

Mabee, Carleton. *Black  
Education in New York State:  
From Colonial to Modern  
Times*. Syracuse: Syracuse  
University Press, 1979, 227-  
238. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv9b2x9d.19>



SEGREGATION OF NEW  
YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ENDS

*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. "The  
Elsberg Bill Signed." April 20,  
1900, 9.

*People ex Rel. Cisco v. School  
Board*, 161 N.Y. 598, 56 N.E. 81  
(N.Y. 1900)

# IMAGES: FLUSHING COLORED SCHOOL, 1814-1900



FLUSHING FEMALE  
ASSOCIATION SCHOOL  
(COLORED SCHOOL)

Beers, F. W. *Atlas of Long Island, New York, From Recent and Actual Surveys and Records*. New York: Beers, Comstock & Cline, 1873.

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e2-635b-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>



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1861

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T.W. CARDOZO (1838-  
1881)

Anderson, S. *Thomas W. Cardozo*. 1876. Photographic print. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

<https://loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3b46483/>



FLUSHING HIGH  
SCHOOL (ORIGINAL  
BUILDING)

NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission. *Flushing High School Designation Report, LP-1798*, January 8, 1991. <https://s-media.nyc.gov/agencies/lpc/lp/1798.pdf>

# IMAGES: FLUSHING COLORED SCHOOL, 1814-1900



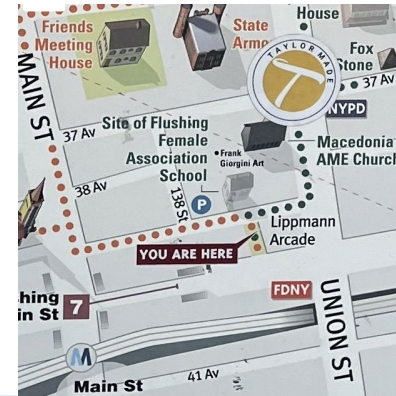
MARY ANN ELIZABETH SHAW (1850-1905), PRINCIPAL

*Mrs. Mary Ann Shaw, Principal of the Colored School at Flushing.* 1890. Black-and-white photograph. The Archives at Queens Library.



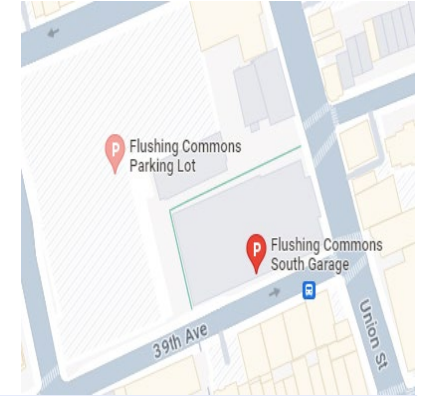
ELIZABETH CISCO

*Elizabeth Cisco.* In *The Autobiography of Dr. William Henry Johnson.* Black and white plate, 122. Albany: Argus Company, 1900.



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Jones, Devry Becker. *Macedonia A.M.E Church Marker.* March 5, 2022. Photograph. Historical Marker Database. <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=193361>



CURRENT SITE: FLUSHING COMMONS MUNICIPAL PARKING FIELD #2

Google Maps. "Municipal Parking Field 2." Accessed May 20, 2024. <https://www.google.com/maps/search/Municipal+Parking+Field+2/@40.7614242,-73.8305488,17.5z?entry=ttu>