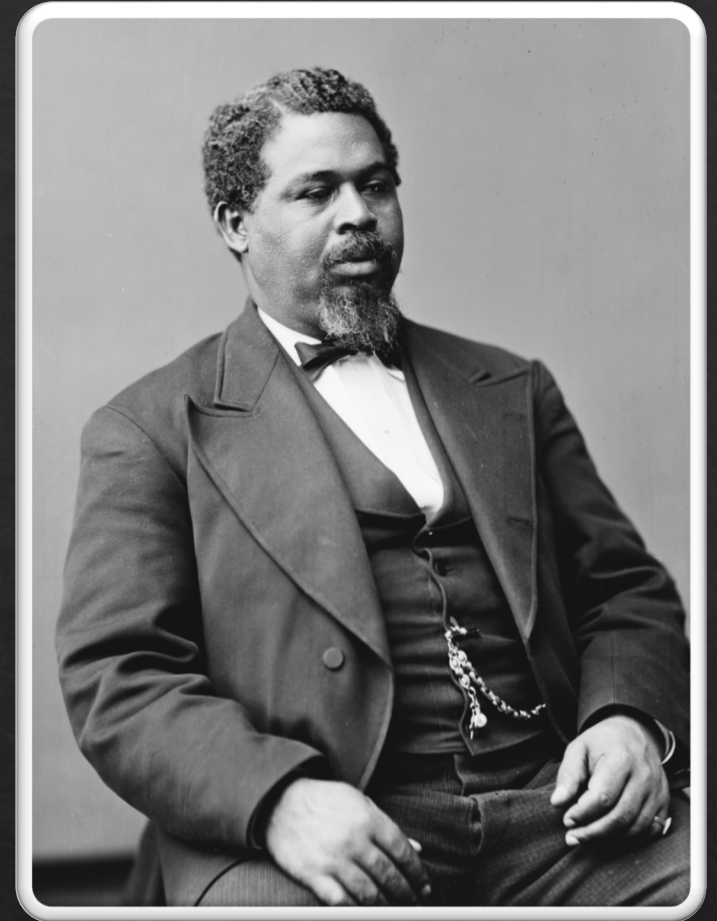


NARA BLACK HISTORY BASIC TRAINING

Feb 10 – Robert Smalls

[Robert Smalls](#) was born enslaved on April 5, 1839, in Beaufort, South Carolina. His owner hired him out as a waiter, ship rigger, and sailor in Charleston. As part of being hired out, Smalls was allowed to keep a tiny portion of the money he earned, which he used to purchase the freedom of his wife and daughter. In 1861, Smalls was hired as a deckhand on the Confederate transport the *Planter*. On the evening of May 13, 1862, he was left alone to guard the ship while the white sailors went ashore. Smalls quickly loaded his wife and children, along with several other enslaved men and women, and set sail towards the Union blockade. Smalls was successful with delivering the *Planter* to the Union and became a war hero. After the War, Smalls was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives and Senate, and served two terms in the US House of Representatives from 1874.



Viewing:

- ✓ [The Audacity of Robert Smalls](#), TEDx
- ✓ [The Story of Robert Smalls](#)

Reading:

- ✓ Be Free or Die: The Amazing Story of Robert Smalls' Escape from Slavery to Union Hero (St. Martin's Press), 2017
- ✓ Gullah Statesman: Robert Smalls from Slavery to Congress (University of South Carolina Press), 2008

Inspired by [GirlTrek](#)