

# NARA BLACK HISTORY BASIC TRAINING

## Feb 2 – Solomon Johnson

Solomon Johnson was one of the first African Americans to work for the Department of the Treasury. He first started at the Treasury in 1864, with a personal recommendation from President Abraham Lincoln (whom Johnson attended to as a bodyguard and as his barber). His [personnel file](#) tells a unique and fascinating story of the distinguished career of an early Black federal employee. In correspondence it is recorded that Johnson voted in every election, was regularly promoted, and after 17 years of service wrote to the Secretary of the Treasury making his case for recognition of his achievements. Solomon Johnson first took his oath for employment as a Laborer at the Treasury on Feb 2, 1864. At the time of his death in 1885, Johnson was a Clerk of Class Two.

**“I trust that I may receive such recognition...you may find proper to give me, and that my unfortunate race relations may not be a bar to such recognition.”**

### Records:

- ✓ [Personnel File of Solomon Johnson](#), NAID 6705920
- ✓ [Solomon James Johnson Collection](#), Howard University

### Reading:

- ✓ Racism in the Nation's Service: Government Workers & the Color Line in Woodrow Wilson's America (UNC Press)
- ✓ First Freed: Washington, DC in the Emancipation Era (Howard University Press)

