

## **Railroad Ticket Booth**

The transparency is a depiction of James Matthews escaping from work on the railroad.

***Below is the story of James Matthews a slave who escaped slavery to Maine. His story was published in an abolitionist newspaper "The Advocate for Freedom," in 1838.***

James Matthews was born at Four Holes Swamp on a plantation in 1808. His mother and father died when he was young. He learned to be a driver, a person who took care of horses and carriages, and drove supplies and people here and there. He escaped to the swamp and found a group of maroons, and stayed with them until he was captured. He was punished by whipping. He was often loaned out to other plantations and was able to escape again near Bradwell Plantation. He was later caught and taken to the Sugar House in Charleston. The Sugar house, next to the City Jail on Logan Street, was where owners took their runaways for discipline. There he was whipped and put in a cell. He was also put on a treadmill for grinding corn.

Eventually, an owner in Orangeburg rented him out to the railroad. He dug pits for clay to use for building embankments for the rail line. Men dug the clay, the women hauled it out of the pits. One time he did not get his quota and received a whipping – he decided to leave. Instead of heading to the swamp as maroons did, he jumped a train to Charleston. Once there he joined in the work with some longshoremen. He found a slave tag by chance, so when he was "checked" he was approved. He met a steward from a ship docked in Charleston and asked him where he was from. He was told "where I am from, they had no slavery." He asked the steward if he could go with him, but the steward said no it was too dangerous. Eventually, the steward relented and allowed James to hide on the ship. He stowed away on the ship for 3 weeks and was beginning to have doubts. The fourth week they docked in Boston. He had only the clothes on his back and it was cold and miserable in Boston. In Boston he met a black man whom he went with and eventually ended up in Hallowell, Maine. His story was told and printed in the Advocate for Freedom newspaper, but did not use his name. The 1850 Census in Hallowell, Maine has listed a 40-year-old free man. He died and was buried at Hallowell.