

Bill No. 5052

Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_

Requested by:

Steve Ehlmann

Sponsored by:

Joe Cronin

AN ORDINANCE TO NAME THE PARK PROPERTY PURCHASED ON W. MEYER ROAD IN FORISTELL, MISSOURI FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW COUNTY PARK WITHIN THE ST. CHARLES COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT, “OGLESBY PARK”, PURSUANT TO SECTION 100.170 OF THE ORDINANCES OF ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MISSOURI “(OSCCMo”)

WHEREAS,

the St. Charles County Parks and Recreation Department offers unique parks, diverse facilities and a broad range of programs and special events for all ages to enjoy, in addition to features that enhance the region’s historical and natural environmental heritage; and

WHEREAS,

this ordinance is requested in order to name the recently purchased park property, with a current address of 2949 W. Meyer Road, Foristell, Missouri 63348, “Oglesby Park”; and

WHEREAS,

the name “Oglesby Park” is requested for Benjamin Oglesby, who was brought from Virginia to work on a farm near the proposed park property during his enslavement; and

WHEREAS, Benjamin Oglesby escaped from enslavement and joined the 56<sup>th</sup> United States Colored Infantry Regiment where he served in the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Benjamin Oglesby was honorably discharged from the Union Army, and reunited with his wife, Patsy, and children after his emancipation and the end of the war he returned to the area and ultimately purchased the proposed park property; and

WHEREAS, Benjamin Oglesby died in 1901 and is buried in the African American Smith Chapel Cemetery, which is located approximately one mile from the property; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ordinance 04-029, as codified in Section 100.170, it is a requirement that “County buildings, parks and lots, except for the Family Arena, shall be named or renamed by ordinance.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The park, currently located at 2949 W. Meyer Road, Foristell, Missouri 63348 shall be officially named “Oglesby Park”.

Section 2.

This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after the date of its passage and approval.

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DATE PASSED

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DATE APPROVED BY COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ATTEST:

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COUNTY REGISTRAR

## Mr. Benjamin Oglesby

The property in which the park along Meyer Road now sits was originally purchased from the US government by members of the Logan family from 1835 to 1840.<sup>1</sup> However, between 1875 and 1877 the property was sold for \$2,000 to Benjamin Oglesby, a man who had been enslaved and then later freed.<sup>2</sup>

Born a slave, only contextual records exist to tell the story of Oglesby's early life. He was born around 1825 in the state of Virginia; it is unknown who his parents are. Records seem to indicate however that in the 1830s, Oglesby came to Missouri with his enslaver Marshall Bird, a farmer from Virginia.<sup>3</sup> They settled in property that sits to the southeast of the park along Meyer Road, in Sections 18 and 19 of Township 47 Range 1 East.<sup>4</sup> During this time, Oglesby lived among seven other enslaved people while working the 260-acre farm.<sup>5</sup> On this farm, he worked to cultivate corn, wheat, and tobacco, the last of which was their primary crop, producing 7000lbs in 1860 alone.<sup>6</sup>

The Civil War brought about drastic changes in Benjamin Oglesby's life. In 1864, Oglesby took the greatest possible risk, and ran away from Bird. Despite the pro-slavery sentiments in his neighborhood in northwestern St. Charles County, Oglesby successfully made it to a recruiting depot in St. Charles.<sup>7</sup> From there, Oglesby's enlistment records and muster rolls tell the story of his one year of service in the Civil War. Upon being recruited in St. Charles, he went to Benton Barracks, which sat north of St. Louis City, where he was mustered into the 56<sup>th</sup> United States Colored Infantry Regiment. He served as a private in this unit until his discharge in November of 1865. The National Park Service provides this description of the 56<sup>th</sup> USCI:

“Post and garrison duty at Helena, Ark., till February, 1865. Action at Indian Bay April 13, 1864. Muffleton Lodge June 29. Operations in Arkansas July 1-31. Wallace's Ferry, Big Creek, July 26. Expedition from Helena up White River August 29-September 3. Expedition from Helena to Friar's Point, Miss., February 19-22, 1865. Duty at Helena and other points in Arkansas till

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<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Land Management General Land Office Records, [https://glorerecords.blm.gov/details/survey/default.aspx?dm\\_id=404287&sid=wsjjqlcy.bac#surveyDetailsTabIndex=](https://glorerecords.blm.gov/details/survey/default.aspx?dm_id=404287&sid=wsjjqlcy.bac#surveyDetailsTabIndex=)

<sup>2</sup> *1854 Samuel Logan and Benjamin Oglesby Land 1877-78*, Folder 21, St. Charles County Historical Society

<sup>3</sup> *Marshall Bird Land Patent 1837*, Bureau of Land Management General Land Office Records, <https://glorerecords.blm.gov/results/default.aspx?searchCriteria=type=patent|st=MO|cty=183|ln=Bird|fn=marshall|sp=true|sw=true|sadv=false>; Ancestry.com. *1860 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009. Images reproduced by FamilySearch. Original data: 1860 U.S. census, population schedule. NARA microfilm publication M653, 1,438 rolls. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.; The National Archive in Washington DC; Washington, DC; NARA Microform Publication: M432; Title: *Seventh Census Of The United States, 1850*; Record Group: *Records of the Bureau of the Census*; Record Group Number: 29

<sup>4</sup> *Marshall Bird Land Patent 1837*, Bureau of Land Management General Land Office Records, <https://glorerecords.blm.gov/results/default.aspx?searchCriteria=type=patent|st=MO|cty=183|ln=Bird|fn=marshall|sp=true|sw=true|sadv=false>

<sup>5</sup> The National Archives in Washington DC; Washington DC, USA; *Eighth Census of the United States 1860*; Series Number: M653; Record Group: *Records of the Bureau of the Census*; Record Group Number: 29, *1860 Agricultural Census Page 62*

[https://www.sos.mo.gov/CMSImages/Archives/Census/Ag\\_1860/Ag\\_1860\\_St.Charles.pdf](https://www.sos.mo.gov/CMSImages/Archives/Census/Ag_1860/Ag_1860_St.Charles.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> *Agricultural Census Page 62*

[https://www.sos.mo.gov/CMSImages/Archives/Census/Ag\\_1860/Ag\\_1860\\_St.Charles.pdf](https://www.sos.mo.gov/CMSImages/Archives/Census/Ag_1860/Ag_1860_St.Charles.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> *Descriptive List of Colored Volunteers*, November 14, 1863

September, 1866. Mustered out September 15, 1866.

Regiment lost during service 4 Officers and 21 Enlisted men killed and mortally wounded and 2 Officers and 647 Enlisted men by disease. Total 674.”<sup>8</sup>

Oglesby’s Muster Rolls indicate he had an honorable service, and was discharged on November 13, 1865 at Helena, Arkansas.

Oglesby returned to Missouri and settled in Hickory Grove Township in Warren County, just west of Wentzville.<sup>9</sup> The 1870 census appears to indicate that Oglesby did have a family during enslavement, and that they were able to reunite after emancipation and the end of the war. He and his wife Patsy had 6 children, and they operated a farm.

On March 2, 1871, Benjamin Oglesby purchased the property located along Meyer Road for \$2000 from William Haggemann, who may have been a German immigrant.<sup>10</sup> It appears that he acquired the funds for this land through a Deed of Trust, which they entered into with Henry Reinecke in March 1871. They paid off the property on March 14, 1877.<sup>11</sup> At that point-in-time, a quitclaim deed was signed by Samuel F. Logan, Callie Logan, Frances A. Sullinger, T.M. Barron and Mary D. Barron, Harriet J. Logan, Maria E. Logan, M.F. Guthrie and Helen P.B. Guthrie, Hugh B. Logan and Elizabeth Logan.<sup>12</sup> On this farm he raised similar crops to his time in enslavement, focusing primarily on tobacco, corn, and oats.<sup>13</sup> Benjamin Oglesby and his family operated a farm on their 140 acres of land, corn, oats, and wheat, as well as raising cattle, sheep, and hogs.<sup>14</sup> In 1880, the farm’s total value was approximately \$3560 including livestock and farming implements.<sup>15</sup> The tax records tell a similar story of the type of work Oglesby did on the property. The 1890 Personal Tax record indicates that the County Assessor valued the property at \$660, with approximately \$480 in livestock as well; Oglesby paid a total of \$5.42 in taxes on October 15, 1890.<sup>16</sup>

Oglesby was widowed prior to 1900, and he himself died in 1901 at the age of 76. In his Last Will and Testament, Benjamin Oglesby stated he did not want his property to be sold for at least two years after his death, unless his children as the beneficiaries of his estate all agreed to sell sooner. After two years, Robert H. Blackwell, the executor of the estate, sold the property to Benjamin Oglesby’s children Walter, Albert, Alabama, Oglesby and Medora “Dora” Oglesby Abbington Lockett for \$2700, indicating that the land had appreciated in value between 1871 and 1903.<sup>17</sup> The children bought the property through the use of a Deed of Trust with George W. Reimeier which was paid off February 13, 1919.

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<sup>8</sup> Battle Unit Details, “56<sup>th</sup> United States Colored Infantry Regiment” *National Park Service*, <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-battle-units-detail.htm?battleUnitCode=UUS0056RI00C>

<sup>9</sup> *1870 United States Federal Census*

<sup>10</sup> *William Haggemann to Benjamin Oglesby, March 2, 1871*, Deed Book 5, Page 400.

<sup>11</sup> *Benjamin and Patrice Oglesby Deed of Trust to Henry Reinecke*, Emmons Title Abstract, St. Charles County Historical Society.

<sup>12</sup> *Samuel F. Logan Quitclaim Deed, 1877*, Folder 21 St. Charles County Historical Society

<sup>13</sup> *1880 United States Agricultural Census*, [https://www.sos.mo.gov/CMSImages/Archives/Census/Ag\\_1880/Ag\\_1880\\_St\\_Charles.pdf](https://www.sos.mo.gov/CMSImages/Archives/Census/Ag_1880/Ag_1880_St_Charles.pdf); *1876 St. Charles County Census*.

<sup>14</sup> *1880 United States Census Agriculture Schedule*, Page 164, Missouri Secretary of State.

<sup>15</sup> *1880 United States Census Agriculture Schedule*, Page 164, Missouri Secretary of State.

<sup>16</sup> *St. Charles County Personal Tax Book 1890*, Page 56, St. Charles County Historical Society.

<sup>17</sup> *Benjamin Oglesby Last Will and Testament*, Emmons Title Abstract, St. Charles County Historical Society

<sup>18</sup>Eventually, Walter and Medora became the sole owners of the land after the death of Albert and the deeding of the property by Alabama and in 1912 and 1919 respectively.<sup>19</sup> Walter and Medora utilized four different deeds of trust from 1929 to 1954, when the final Deed was paid off to H.W. Schmidt.<sup>20</sup> When Medora and Walter Oglesby died in 1946 and 1947, each of their records listed “Foristell” as their place of residence, indicating they still owned the property.<sup>21</sup>

Benjamin Oglesby was buried in Smith Chapel Cemetery, approximately one mile from his property.

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<sup>18</sup> *Walter Oglesby, Albert Oglesby, Alabama Oglesby and Medora Oglesby to George W. Riemeier, Trustee*, 1903 Emmons Title Abstract, St. Charles County Historical Society

<sup>19</sup> Emmons Title Abstract, St. Charles County Historical Society

<sup>20</sup> *Medora Lockett and Walter Oglesby Deed of Trust to H.W. Schmidt*, 1943, St. Charles County Historical Society.

<sup>21</sup> *Dora Lockett Standard Certificate of Death*, February 17, 1946, State Board of Health of Missouri, Missouri Secretary of State Missouri Digital Heritage; *Walter Oglesby Standard Certificate of Death*, April 16, 1947, State Board of Health of Missouri, Missouri Secretary of State Missouri Digital Heritage;