

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

Jacob Price

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Jacob Price

1839 - 1923

Businessman and Human Rights Leader

Jacob Price clearly left his mark as a minister, businessman and educator in an era when blacks were often delegated to menial jobs and obscurity.

He was born in Kentucky, possibly Woodford County in April, 1839.

According to an 1860 census, he was a 22-year-old freeman living in Covington. Considering that this was before slavery was outlawed, Price may have been among the few free blacks living in Kentucky.

Price was the first Afro-American businessman to own and operate a non-traditional business during those times. This business was a lumber yard, which was located across the street from the present day *Kentucky Post* office at 426-428 Madison Avenue in Covington. He later sold his business in 1914 and became a carpenter.

As a major figure in the development of black churches in Covington, he organized the first black church on Bremen Street and was its first pastor.

Price was also a prime figure in obtaining free, public education for blacks in northern Kentucky following the Civil War. He founded the Lincoln Grant School located in Covington, which is now today the office of the Covington Board of Education. His interest in education continued with starting the first private school that had a monthly tuition of approximately 10 cents. Through his continued work with the schools, he was instrumental in forming the first united Afro-American board of education in Covington and attended the first colored educational convention in Louisville sponsored by the Freedman Bureau in 1869.

For over forty years, Jacob Price was one of the leading figures in the development of educational, political, and religious values in the City of Covington. He overcame a great deal of adversity during a difficult period following the Civil War.

The first housing complex constructed for Afro-Americans in Covington still carries Price's name. Officials approved construction of this housing project for 431 families in September of 1938 through a \$1.4 million federal grant. One project was for whites and the other for blacks. Price had been so well-liked, respected and deserving of such a lasting honor, his name was immediately chosen to be placed on the new complex located at Greenup Street in Covington.

Price died on March 1, 1923, a month short of his 84th birthday. A small, front-page story the next day in *The Kentucky Post* called Price, "one of Covington's oldest and most respected residents."

Price and his wife Mary Singer Price had three children Charles W., Anna E. and John.

Nominated by Theodore H.H. Harris, Board of Trustee, Kenton County Historical Society, Covington, Kentucky.

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