

Hi, I'm
Harriet.



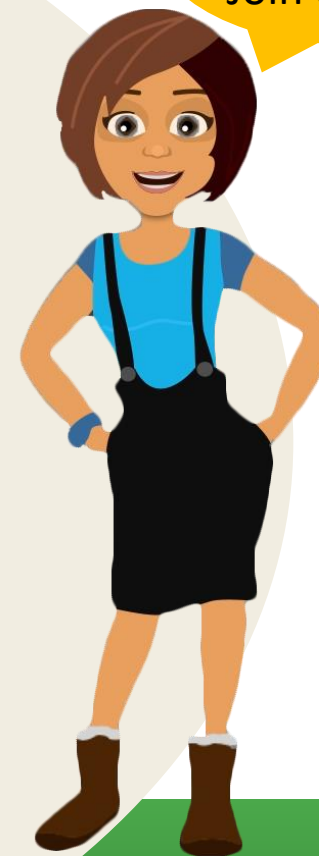
TALKING HISTORY


with

Harriet and Roxanne™

Early Black Men Doctors

And I'm
Roxanne.
Join us for...



An illustration of a classroom. On the left, a young Black woman with braids, wearing a green jacket and blue skirt, stands near a window with potted plants. On the right, a young white woman with short brown hair, wearing a blue top and black overalls, stands at a desk with her arms raised. The room features a large window, a desk with a chair, a chalkboard, and a mounted screen.

Today, I will share
five stories of early
black doctors in
America.

The first doctor
did not go to
medical school!

How did that
happen? Tell
me more!




Where are we?



This is an old pharmacy, and I will explain how our first black doctor, Dr. James Durham could get medical knowledge without going to school.

He learned a lot from being in a pharmacy like this.





James Durham was considered the first black doctor to practice medicine in America. And he was a slave!

You must tell me more about Dr. Durham!

Let's see who taught James Durham to be a doctor.




Dr. Durham (1762-1802) was a slave owned by Dr. John Kearsley, who taught him medicine and pharmacy. Durham was sold again at 15 after the death of Dr. Kearsley to Dr. George West. Dr. West continued with Durham's medical instruction. At 21, Durham was sold to Dr. Robert Dow in New Orleans, Louisiana. Dr. Dow allowed Durham to work on various patients while Dow continued Durham's medical instruction. Durham was freed in 1783 and practiced in Philadelphia.



James Durham

Wow, all those other doctors helped James.





Roxanne, while Dr. Durham practiced medicine in Philadelphia, new regulations in 1801 barred anyone from practicing medicine without a formal degree.

Sadly, by 1802, Dr. Durham disappeared.




Harriet, what is this beautiful building?



This is the University of Glasgow in Scotland, where our next doctor, James McCune Smith, received his medical degree.


Let's go inside and talk.





Dr. James McCune Smith (1813-1865), was one of the most accomplished intellectuals and the first black to graduate from medical school.

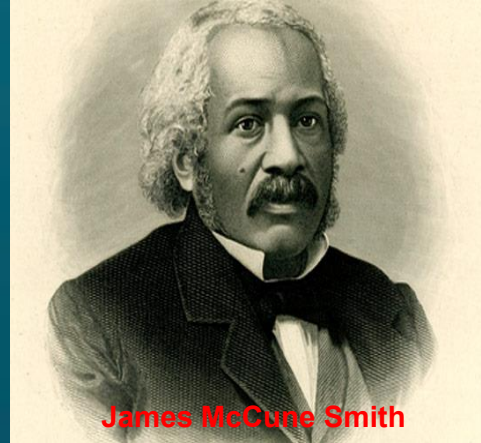
He was denied entrance to medical school in America because he was black, so he went to the University of Glasgow and graduated in 1837.



He succeeded against all odds.


Dr. Smith completed his internship in Paris and returned to open his practice in New York City with an interracial clientele.

He worked with Frederick Douglass and other abolitionists to end slavery.



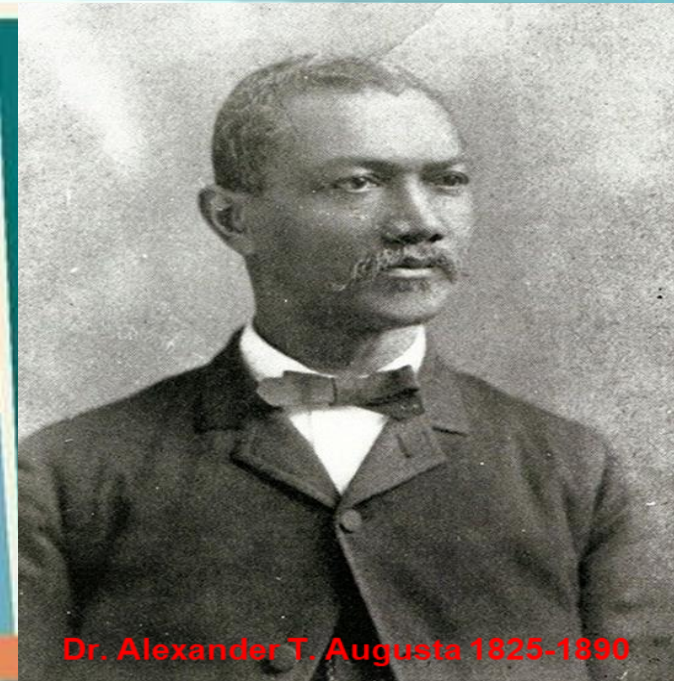
We need to share his amazing accomplishments with all our students.





Well, we have learned about Drs. Durham and Smith. I'm so excited! Who is next?

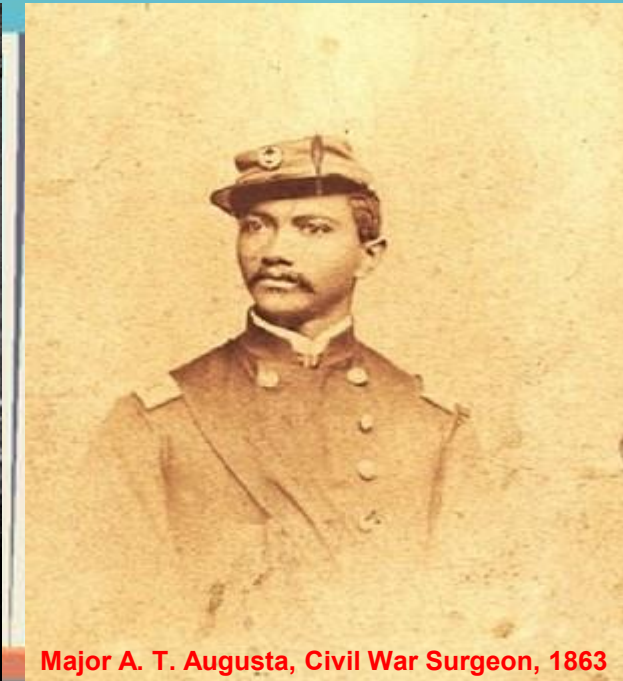
You are going to enjoy this next story about Dr. Alexander Augusta.



Dr. Alexander T. Augusta 1825-1890



Faculty of Howard University, Medical Department 1869-70



Major A. T. Augusta, Civil War Surgeon, 1863



Alexander moved to Philadelphia in hoping to attend medical school but was denied. He supported himself as a barber and secretly found a professor to tutor him. Alexander married Mary Burgoin and moved to California for the gold rush. He and Mary eventually moved to Toronto, was accepted to Trinity College, and graduated in 1856, and built a successful practice. At 38, he returned to America and was a Civil War Union Army surgeon for the 7th USCT. After the Civil War, he was later retained by the Freedmen's Bureau to help newly freed slaves. He became part of the medical staff at Howard University.




Roxanne, meet our fourth doctor, Dr. Robert Boyd (1855-1912).

This gifted man dreamed of becoming a doctor but achieved so much more in his life. Look at the scroll on your left to see what I mean!

That's amazing!



- Teacher
- School Principal
- Doctor
- Pharmacist
- Professor
- Dentist
- Politician
- President of the National Medical Association

An illustration of a classroom. A female teacher with dark skin and braided hair, wearing a green headband, a green jacket over a red top, and a blue skirt, stands with her arms outstretched. Behind her is a white cabinet with books and a globe. To the right, a large bulletin board is mounted on the wall, displaying several papers and notes. The room has blue walls and orange chairs.

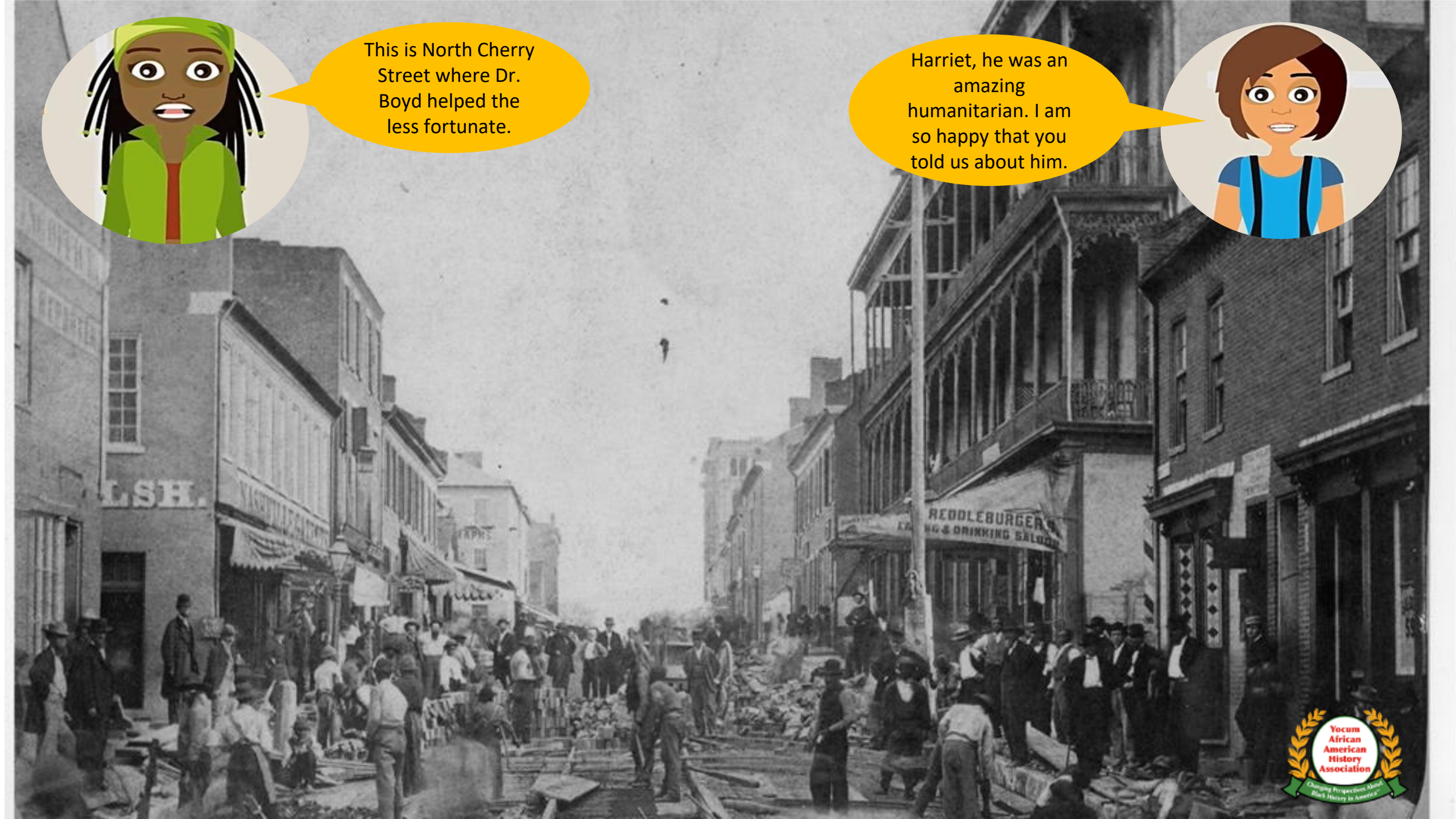
In 1887, Boyd opened an office on North Cherry Street (Fourth Avenue) in Nashville to practice his profession among the less fortunate.

Dr. Boyd was very concerned about the health of blacks and others and taught them ways to combat diseases.



This is North Cherry Street where Dr. Boyd helped the less fortunate.

Harriet, he was an amazing humanitarian. I am so happy that you told us about him.





I have another doctor to share, Dr. Daniel Hale Williams (1856-1931). He was the first black physician to perform successful open-heart surgery.

Tell me more about this open-heart surgery.

In 1893, Dr. Williams operated on James Cornish, who had a stab wound to the heart. Dr. Williams successfully sutured Cornish's pericardium, which is the membranous sac enclosing the heart.

He saved James' life and Dr. Williams and Providence Hospital became famous.

James Cornish

Harriet, tell me about Providence Hospital.



Dr. Williams founded the Providence Hospital and Nursing Training School in 1891 in Chicago, Illinois, because blacks were not accepted to nursing schools or white hospitals. As a result, Providence was the first black-owned and operated hospital with an interracial staff in the U.S.

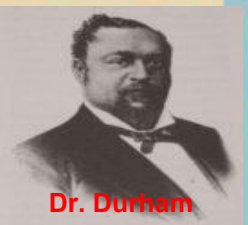
Dr. Williams was a highly-skilled surgeon and teacher. Williams taught Charles Mayo, who later founded the Mayo Clinic. By 1894, Dr. Williams became the surgeon-in-chief at the Freedmen's Hospital in Washington D.C., where he served the poor and former slaves. In addition, Dr. Williams co-founded the National Medical Association.



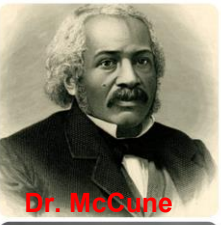
Yes, these pioneer doctors faced discrimination but would not be denied an education. We hope they inspire you to follow your dreams.

Come back soon for more **Talking History** with Harriet & Rozanne.

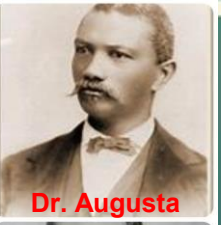
Is there anything you want to tell us in closing this lesson?



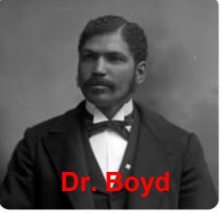
Dr. Durham



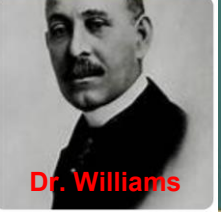
Dr. McCune



Dr. Augusta



Dr. Boyd



Dr. Williams





Help us keep educating America about black history. To keep this information coming, consider supporting us by donating at

<https://www.yocumblackhistory.org/donate/>

