



My Face Is Black Is True: Callie House and the Struggle for Ex-Slave Reparations

Mary Frances Berry

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“My face is black is true but its not my fault but I love my name and my honest dealing with my fellow man.” –Callie House (1899) In this groundbreaking book, acclaimed historian Dr. Mary Frances Berry resurrects the remarkable story of ex-slave Callie House (1861-1928) who, seventy years before the civil-rights movement, headed a demand for ex-slave reparations. A widowed Nashville washerwoman and mother of five, House went on to fight for African American pensions based on those offered to Union soldiers, brilliantly targeting \$68 million in taxes on seized rebel cotton and demanding it as repayment for centuries of unpaid labor. Here is the fascinating story of a forgotten civil rights crusader: a woman who emerges as a courageous pioneering activist, a forerunner of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.

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