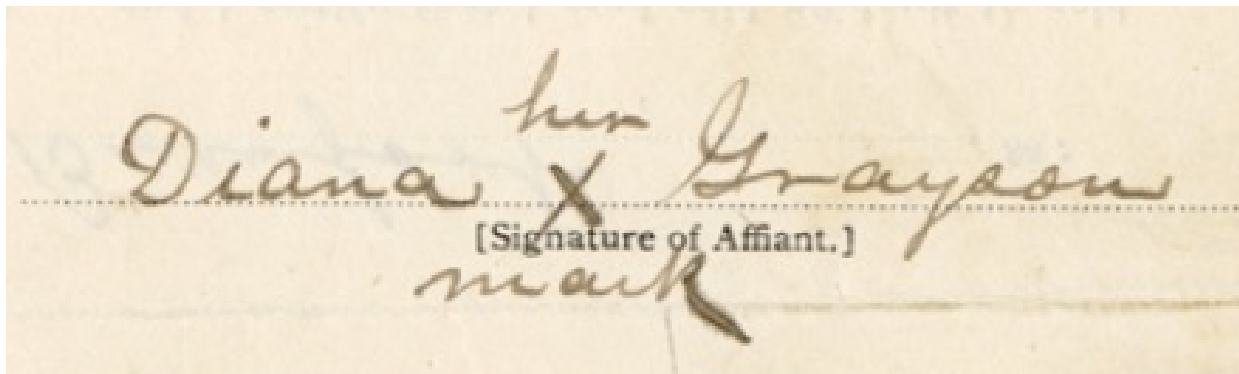


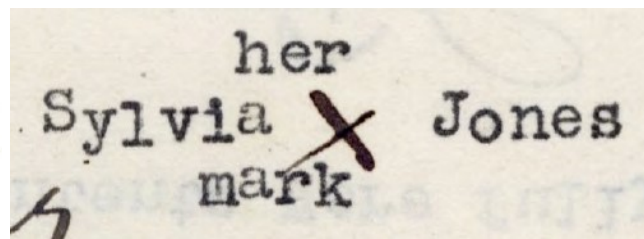
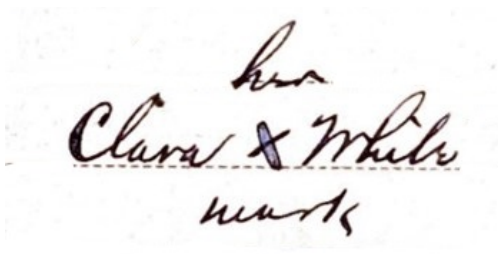
## Institute for the Study of the Reconstruction Era 2025 Symposium Theme

# Her X Mark

During Reconstruction many formerly enslaved women were illiterate but found themselves needing to sign legal documents for the first time in their lives. The standard practice at the time was for them to **sign their mark** - a simple “x” written between their given name and surname on a document.



ISRE's 2025 Spring Symposium theme **"Her X Mark"** denotes both the signature that many formerly enslaved women and poorer white women in the South used as signatures following the end of the Civil War, as well as **the contributions made by these women to their families, communities and society-at-large** during the period of Reconstruction.



*The examples above come from various Civil War Widow's Pensions at the National Archives & Records Administration.*

## ISRE Third Annual Spring Symposium Breathing Democracy into Spaces



# WOMEN'S VOICES DURING RECONSTRUCTION

Women, in various roles, are key figures in the history of the **1st South Carolina Volunteers of African Descent (33rd US Colored Troops)**, the first regiment of Black Soldiers deployed in a combat role during the Civil War.

ISRE's 2025 symposium will celebrate the many women associated with the 1st South Carolina Volunteers of African Descent, as well as **the impact made by women** throughout South Carolina during the Reconstruction Era.

The symposium will highlight contributions of women such as **Susie King Taylor, Esther Hill Hawkes, Laura Towne, Rachel Crane Mather, Charlotte Forten Grimke, Ellen Murray**, and many other women whose names are not as well known such as **Matilda Williams, Diana Grayson, Patience M. Morse, Judy Taylor** and more.



INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE  
RECONSTRUCTION ERA