

Southern Historical Association
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Southern Historical Association announces Bennett H. Wall Award Winner

Athens, GA: The Southern Historical Association is pleased to announce that the 2020 winner of the Bennett H. Wall Award is Shennette Garrett-Scott, Associate Professor of History and African American Studies at The University of Mississippi in University, Mississippi, for her 2019 Columbia University Press book titled, *Banking on Freedom: Black Women in U.S. Finance before the New Deal*.

The Wall Award was established in 2000 to honor the long-term service of Bennett Wall, who served as Secretary-Treasurer of the SHA for more than thirty-three years (1952-1985) and as SHA President in 1988. In keeping with Professor Wall's own scholarly contribution to southern history, the Wall Prize is awarded to the best book published in southern business or economic history over a two-year period.

In making their decision, the prize committee emphasized Garrett-Scott's "meticulous research and smooth prose" in uncovering "the story of the St. Luke Bank and how Maggie Lena Walker turned a social aid society into a financial pillar for the black community." As the committee notes, however, *Banking on Freedom* "does more than reveal the tale of Walker and the St. Luke Bank ... [it] opens up a new and important field in southern studies, one that future scholars would do well to investigate. Scores of banks owned and operated by African Americans proliferated in the decades following the Civil War, and Garrett-Scott's case study offers inspiration for further study that promises to change the ways we think about the intersections of race, gender, finance, and business development in the region."

About the SHA: The Southern Historical Association was organized on November 2, 1934 and charged with promoting an "investigative rather than a memorial approach" to southern history. Its objectives are the promotion of interest and research in southern history, the collection and preservation of the South's historical records, and the encouragement of state and local historical societies in the South. As a secondary purpose the Association fosters the teaching and study of all areas of history in the South. The Association holds an annual meeting, usually in the first or second week of November, and publishes *The Journal of Southern History*.

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