

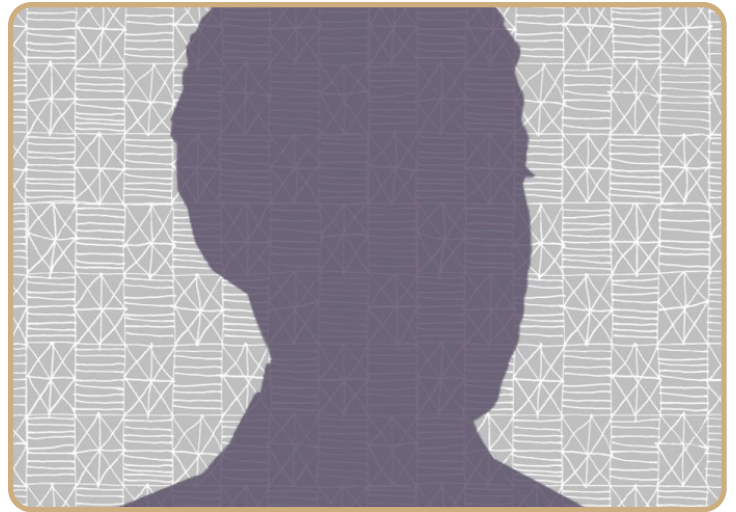
# Cato

**Author:** Emily Libecap,  
Graduate Student Intern

**Places:** Maryland; Louisville, Kentucky

**Birth:** Unknown **Death:** Unknown

**Professions:** Jockey



## Childhood and Family

Researchers are seeking more information about Cato's origins, his parents, and his own family. He was an enslaved person and became free around 1839.<sup>1</sup>

## Historical Victory

Cato was an important rider in a legendary race. The race took place at the Oakland Race Course in Louisville, Kentucky, on September 30, 1839. Two horses faced off in an anticipated match between rivals: Wagner, owned by John Campbell of Maryland, and Grey Eagle, owned by A. L. Shotwell, of Kentucky.<sup>2</sup> Cato rode Wagner to victory in both heats.<sup>3</sup>

## Legacy

Though so little is known about Cato and his life, he remains part of a larger legacy of skilled African American horsemen who shaped the racing world.

## Sources

American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine (1829-1844). 1840. "Wagner and Grey Eagle's Races at Louisville, Kentucky," March 1840.

"Cato (Slave Jockey) [Grey Eagle v Wagner]." 2018. In Notable Kentucky African Americans Database. <https://nkaa.uky.edu/nkaa/items/show/2105>.

Davis, John H. 1906. *The American Turf*. New York, NY: J. Polhemus Printing Company.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Wagner and Grey Eagle's Races at Louisville, Kentucky."

<sup>2</sup>Davis, The American Turf.

<sup>3</sup>Cato (Slave Jockey) [Grey Eagle v Wagner]."

