



2024 NATIONAL INVENTORS  
HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

**Born:** Sept. 22, 1853

**Died:** April 21, 1926

**Primary Connections:**

- U.S. House of Representatives, 1893-97

**Education:**

- University of South Carolina: 1874-77

## 10 Things You Need to Know About

# George Washington Murray

## Agricultural Machinery

U.S. PATENT NO. 517,960

---

1. Born enslaved in Sumter County, South Carolina, in 1853, Murray had lost both of his parents by the end of the Civil War in 1865.
2. Though he never received a formal primary education, he attended the University of South Carolina and the State Normal School in Columbia.
3. At the age of 18, Murray began teaching at a local school for the three months of the year that classes were held. He taught school for nearly 20 years.
4. In addition to working as a teacher, he became a landowner and a successful farmer — both of which were exceedingly rare among formerly enslaved people at the time.
5. In the early 1880s, Murray found inspiration for his inventions when he watched his wife work with sewing machine attachments in their home.
6. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served as the only Black representative in the 53rd and 54th Congresses, from 1893 until 1897.
7. Murray championed recognition of Black inventors and submitted into the Congressional Record a document from patent examiner Henry E. Baker. Known as “Baker’s List,” this document named 92 U.S. patents that had been granted to Black inventors.
8. After leaving Congress in 1897, he returned to his farm and invested in land.
9. U.S. Rep. James E. Clyburn of South Carolina is a distant relative of Murray.
10. He had nine U.S. patents.