



# The Baobab Tree

Quarterly Journal of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California, Inc. • Founded 1996

## TAKING BARE FACTS AND ADDING HISTORY TO TELL A STORY

By Ms. Melvyn Gillette, AAGSNC President



When I began researching the Frederick family, I knew of connections to Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Kansas City, Missouri. I first found the family in the 1900 census, in Arkansas. That census showed the first three children born in South Carolina, with the next nine born in Arkansas, the first of these in 1892. By the 1910 census, the family was in Oklahoma, where the 13th child was born.

During my research, I made contact with a family member who told me of a trip to Africa with a back-to-Africa movement. This was the only "oral" history I had and became the inspiration for the following family history that merges general United States history with the census and other records found on this family.

\*\*\*\*\*

In November 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States, and that December, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union over the question of slavery. Other states followed and in February 1861 the Confederate States of America was formed. In March 1861, Lincoln was sworn in as President and in April 1861, the Confederates opened fire on Ft. Sumter, South Carolina, igniting the Civil War.

In September 1862, President Lincoln announced that he would issue an Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. Now it's New Year's Eve, December 31, 1862, and slaves all over the south are gathered on that first "Watch Meeting" night, praying that the promise of emancipation will be kept. In

Georgia, a mother watches over her young son. His name is Henry Frederick.

On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln signs the Emancipation Proclamation, but it frees only those slaves in the states that have seceded from the Union, one of which is Georgia. Henry is now legally free. The Civil War raged on until the final surrender in 1865, and slavery continued in the border states that were part of the Union Forces. All slavery in the US legally ended when the 13th Amendment was ratified in December 1865. In May 1866, after the end of the Civil War and the end of slavery, a girl named Jane is born, free, in South Carolina.

Two more Constitutional amendments extending the rights of black Americans passed: the 14th in 1868 - granting citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the US, regardless of race, etc.; the 15th in 1870 - extending the right to vote to all men, regardless of race, etc.

In the first days after the end of the Civil War, most southern states adopted so-called Black Codes aimed at limiting the economic and physical freedom of the formerly enslaved. In addition, waves of violence and vigilante terrorism swept over the south as organized bands of white vigilantes terrorized black voters. Although Federal policy effectively eliminated most organized forms of white terrorism in the 1870s, it did little to assist the formerly enslaved in gaining economic security. As a result, the vast majority of southern blacks had become penniless agricultural workers, indebted to and controlled by white landlords and merchant suppliers.

By the time of the 1880 census, Henry and Jane had met and married and were living in Zion Township, Orangeburg County, South Carolina. Both are able to read; Henry can write, and is a schoolteacher. His wife, Jane, is "keeping house." Keeping house was a new and highly prized role for formerly enslaved black women, most of whom had been field hands under slavery. By 1890, Henry and Jane had three children: Lemuel, Carrie and Allison.

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# CONTENTS

“Taking Bare Facts and Adding History to Tell the Story,” by Ms. Melvyn Gillette ... 1

Society News ..... 3

“The Next Generation of Genealogists,” by Gigi Gregory ..... 5

“Arthur Primrose Simms - a Profile,” by Barbara Tyson, AAGSNC Writer’s Group .... 6

“A Man Called Dan,” by Horace House ... 8

Slave Schedules give slaves’ names .... 13

West Coast Summit ..... 14

Index of Surnames ..... 15

Summit Registration Form..... Insert

## EDITOR’S NOTE



Yes, this issue is late -- *really* late. It’s all my fault. In February, I was laid-off from a job where I’d worked for a dotcom as a Systems Administrator for the past seven years. The severance package allowed me to take some much needed time off from the world ... which I did, and I enjoyed it immensely. But all good things must come to an end, and when my severance checks started to run out, I decided to get another job -- as a professional poker dealer. As you can imagine, my life has totally changed, and though I’m enjoying the challenges this new life has presented me, it has left me with really strange work hours and not as much free time as I once had. I will do all possible to make sure that the Summer and Fall editions are published on time. My apologies.

As always, we welcome our members to submit their stories, accomplishments, questions, suggestions, letters, photos, etc., for inclusion in a future edition. The Baobab Tree is mailed to every black genealogy society in North America, and most genealogical libraries and archives in the United States. Your published works will be read by thousands of people, possibly one of your relatives. So keep those cards, letters and photos coming.

Submissions: newsletter@aagsnc.org or via postal mail to our PO Box 27485, Oakland, CA 94602-0985.

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Two different styles, each with a flat bottom, heavy canvas fabric with sturdy handles.

- Beige with burgundy trim, AAGSNC logo (left)
- Beige with black trim, AAGSNC logo (left)
- White with dark blue trim, baobab tree photo (right)

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# SOCIETY NEWS

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### • SUNDAY, JUNE 17

**Juneteenth Festival - Berkeley, CA**  
The AAGSNC will have a booth at the 19th Annual Berkeley Juneteenth Festival. Volunteers are always needed. If you're in the area of Adeline and Alcatraz, stop by just to visit. The Berkeley Juneteenth Festival is the largest and longest-running Juneteenth event in California and features local musical performers, crafts and food vendors, community organizations and lots of fun for the whole family.

## AAGSNC MEETINGS

Held at the Oakland Library, Dimond Branch (3565 Fruitvale Avenue) from 1:30pm - 4:00 pm. Guests welcome!

• June 16  
Carole Neal - "Family Reunion Planning"

• July - August  
AAGSNC Hiatus - NO MEETINGS

• September 14-15  
West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy - Phoenix, AZ (7th Annual)  
See page 14 for Summit information.

### • October 20

Finding Vital Records, including the SSDI and BMD (birth, marriage and death records).

## AfriGeneas.com Family Reunion Calendar

It's free and seen by thousands of your cousins, so why not take advantage of this feature?

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## AfriGeneas Family Reunion Calendar

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Ads by

< 2006	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun 2007	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
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Grid

List

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Today

Week

2-Week

3-Week

4-Week

Month

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Search

Add Event

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**Saturday, June 9**

- 12:00 pm -6:00 pm : [107th STEWART Reunion - Cassopolis, MI](#)

**Saturday, June 16**

- [MATTHEWS Reunion - San Antonio, TX](#)

**Saturday, June 23**

- 12:30 pm -8:00 pm : [POYNER/POYNTER Family Reunion - Leiper's Fork, TN](#)

**Thursday, June 28**

- [CLAYTON and BOLAR Family Reunion - San Antonio, TX](#)

**Friday, June 29**

- [CLAYTON and BOLAR Family Reunion - San Antonio, TX](#)
- [BASKERVILLE~WHITTHORNE Reunion - Little Rock, AR](#)
- [MARTIN Family Reunion - Greenville, MS](#)

**Saturday, June 30**

- [CLAYTON and BOLAR Family Reunion - San Antonio, TX](#)
- [BASKERVILLE~WHITTHORNE Reunion - Little Rock, AR](#)
- [MARTIN Family Reunion - Greenville, MS](#)
- [LANDRUM Family Reunion - Muskogee, OK](#)
- 11:00 am -6:00 pm : [BENSON THOMAS Family Reunion - Anderson, SC](#)



In the 1890s, southern states began to systematically rob black males of the right to vote by imposing voter registration restrictions such as literacy tests, poll taxes, grandfather clauses, etc. State constitutions were rewritten to deny blacks the right to vote. Acts of intimidation, the use of chain gangs, prison farms, debt peonage, and a wave of brutal lynchings that dominated the southern racial scene for the next 40 years backed these new legal restrictions.

Freedmen felt that ownership of land was a prerequisite to real freedom. Their new freedom to move offered landless blacks some alternative avenues of opportunity. Large numbers of freed people abandoned farm life and moved to the city. However, agriculture remained the primary occupation for black people and the bulk of black migrants who moved did so in search either of higher wages or of opportunities for land ownership.

After the Civil War, many in the Deep South had come to regard Arkansas as a "promised land." Bordering both the North and the West, Arkansas seemed to offer the best solution to their predicament. Arkansas planters eagerly sought sharecroppers to cultivate their land. Labor agents fanned out to other states to entice African Americans to come to Arkansas with tales of paradise, a land of endless sunshine and abundant crops with little work. Unable to acquire land in South Carolina and other eastern states, many looked west. Arkansas offered land, which made it a strong draw for many freed persons.

Perhaps lured by the labor agents' tales of paradise or by the possibility of owning land, like the Biblical Abraham who went out into a place he did not know, Henry, Jane and their children left South Carolina and moved to Fordyce, Arkansas about 1890. Nine more children were born in Fordyce. In the 1900 census, Henry is a farmer in Fordyce. He owns his farm, with a mortgage. Jane has no occupation listed and their three older children are farm laborers, presumably on the family's farm.

Black anger over political violence, frustration over lack of opportunity, and land hunger prompted three

large organized migrations of African Americans, one of which was the utopian black township movement to Oklahoma in the 1890s.

When the Oklahoma land run of 1889 opened more free land to settlement by non-Indians, African Americans from the old South rushed to the newly created Oklahoma Territory. Freedmen and new African American settlers in Oklahoma Territory could vote, study, and move about with relative freedom. Pamphlets distributed throughout the South urged African Americans to join land runs in Indian Territory. These pamphlets promised a black paradise in Oklahoma and lured tens of thousands of former slaves from the south. Eventually 27 black towns grew and made up 10 percent of Indian Territory's population.

Sometime between 1907 and 1910, Henry and Jane pick up stakes again and leave Arkansas for Oklahoma. The 1910 census finds Henry, Jane and family in one of the all-black Oklahoma towns, Rentiesville. He is a farmer and owns his house without a mortgage. The oldest child, Lemuel, is married, a neighbor to his parents. His brother Allison is enumerated in his household. Lemuel is manager of a gin and mill, and owns his home free of a mortgage. Henry and Allison are both farmers. One more daughter is born to Henry and Jane in Rentiesville, for a total of 13 children.

When Oklahoma became a state in 1907, prejudice increased and there was a statewide loss of voting rights that dashed all hopes for even local black independence. The blacks that had fled to Oklahoma for refuge found none, as segregation came to Oklahoma too.

Another organized migration was the back-to-Africa movement. Chief Alfred C. Sam, from the Gold Coast Colony in West Africa, now known as Ghana, appeared in Oklahoma in the summer of 1913. He began to recruit emigrants from small farms in Oklahoma, where the loss of voting rights, coupled with a cotton depression, made his promise of a better life in Africa especially appealing. They regarded him as a black Moses sent by God to deliver Negroes from their New

World bondage to an African Canaan. Mass meetings raised the money needed to purchase a ship. He ignored warnings from the British government and prominent blacks that they would not find a welcome or livelihood in the Gold Coast. Many questions were raised about Chief Sam and this endeavor, but on June 3, 1914, the ship *Liberia*, left for the Gold Coast, by way of Galveston TX, with about 60 delegates. Thirty-eight of the delegates came from Oklahoma; thirty-five gave their occupation as farmer. The consul at Galveston said this of the delegates, and I quote:

"It is reliably stated that a majority of the delegates were occupiers of land and farmers in the state of Oklahoma and made a considerable sacrifice financially in disposing of their property in order to purchase stock in the ship *Liberia* and to accompany her on her voyage to Africa. The appearance of most of them indicated that they were fairly well to do for colored people."

One of these delegates who sailed to Africa on this journey of hope was Henry Frederick.

By late January 1915, the ship arrived at the Gold Coast in Africa, but inadequate arrangements had been made and other hardships befell them, including illness among the travelers. By September 1915, amid great disappointment, the movement collapsed and most of the colonists returned to America, including Henry.

By the 1920 census, some of the children are living in Kansas City, Missouri, while some younger siblings are still living in Rentiesville with Henry and Jane, along with some of the grandchildren. Lemuel and his family are still in Oklahoma. George is married and he and his wife are also in Oklahoma.

Some time before 1930, Henry, Jane and the grandchildren moved to Kansas City. Jane died in Kansas City, and afterwards, Henry moved back to Rentiesville, where he died.

*Melvyn Gillette*  
AAGSNC President



# THE NEXT GENERATION OF GENEALOGISTS

- Gigi Gregory

*AAGSNC member, Gigi Gregory, teaches genealogy at her grandson's school, Meadows Living Stone School, in San Francisco. Several months ago, some of these budding family historians visited our meeting and presented their research. Following is an excerpt of some of those presentations. — Ed.*

My name is **Kaneem Thornton** and I am in the sixth grade. I have been studying genealogy about one year now. I really like the idea of being a genealogist because you are doing detective work which excites me.



I am looking for the Densons in Alabama, the Hollomans in Georgia, the Batts in Georgia & Virginia and the Lees in Louisiana. It hasn't been easy because first you must take the time to interview people in your family and sometimes they do not want to talk or cannot take the time to speak with you and that can be frustrating.

My experience with genealogy has been very interesting. I have learned more about my family than I ever thought possible. I now realize that all my family roots go back to the Southern part of the U.S. I also learned that there were lots of professional people in my family. For example, my great grandmother was a registered nurse, practically unheard of for black people in those days. I found out that my great great grandmother, Emma Batts, was born 2 years before slavery ended — and that is only four generations from me! I also learned that I am a distant cousin to Malcolm X's father, Earl Little. My great grandmother, Mattie Sanders, and Earl little were both from Reynolds, Georgia, We're related on the Little side.

I think that every child should have to take a genealogy class so they can learn where they come from and who are their relatives. genealogy has made me proud to be an American citizen!

Advice I would give to other children who want to do genealogy:

1. Do oral interviews. Interview the oldest people. Try to tape record it.
2. Look in places you never thought about, like family photo albums
3. Ask questions like where did they live? And who did they live with?
4. Get a binder to keep all your interviews, photos and records together.

Hi my name is **Eja Johnson**. I am 10 years old and have been studying genealogy about three months. I'm researching DeVances and is from Louisiana.

It was lots of fun tracing my great grandma. It was not hard at all because the directions they gave you made it easy. It was fun learning all these things about my great grandma.

I found out she was the third oldest child and had seven siblings. We used computers. I picked my grandpa's brain asking him all kinds of questions about his mother. If you're going to do genealogy, try to do it early. Ask the oldest people in your family for information on your family's history/herstory.

My name is **Evander McElroy-Whorton**. I am 10 yrs old, and I have been doing genealogy for approximately one year. The first thing I did when I became a genealogy student was to ask relatives, like my mom and my mom's mom, for help. They told me names and stories. I found out more information when I went to Ancestry.com.

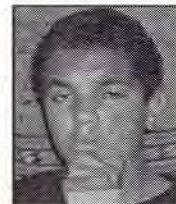


The last names I researched were: Mackins from Louisiana; Garrison, also from Louisiana; McElroy, from Arkansas, and Whorton, from

Indiana and Alabama. When I looked on Ancestry.com I discovered contact information for my dad's mom, Lenora Whorton, which I didn't have before.

The hardest thing about being a genealogist is staying up late at night doing the research that's needed to complete the assignment! Another really hard thing about the work is that sometimes it's hard to keep all the information you find straight, especially when you're tired from staying up late. Since my dad doesn't live with me and I haven't seen him in a while I didn't know that much about him or his family, but after I called my grandma, I started to know her a little better and she told me how to get in contact with my uncle Brandon. Now I feel like I have lots more people who care about me, and I am happy to finally know and be able to talk to my dad's side of my family.

I am **Makalani Salaam**. I am ten years old, in the sixth grade and have been researching for a year. The surnames I am looking for are Simon, Floyd, Johnson and Broussard in Louisiana; Adams/Bush and Thomas in Virginia, Maryland, D.C. and New York and Davis in Georgia.



I have had a good experience with genealogy and found out lots of things I did not know. For instance, my great great Uncle, Bunny, owned a famous bar in San Francisco, called the Anxious Asp. I haven't really gotten anywhere with my dad's family, the Davises, even though my dad knows a couple of things. It's been really hard for me because I have a side of my family I don't really know about.

With the Bush/Adams family I got back to Betsy Bush who was born in 1800 in Virginia. We found her in the 1850 and 1860 census living free in D.C. With the Johnson family I got back to Tanace Johnson who was born around 1827. Seeing his name in the 1870 and 1880 census I called him Tah-NAYCE but my great great uncle Bunny told me his name was really pronounced Tah NAWs. My advice to other kids: I would say the internet is a great place to do genealogy but oral interviews count too.

Continued on page 15



# ARTHUR PRIMROSE SIMMS - A PROFILE

- Barbara Tyson  
AAGSNC Writer's Group

I was reminded of my maternal grandfather's unique walk by a complete stranger who described him to a "T" as we sat several empty tables apart in a Chinese restaurant in Salt Lake City several winters ago. My friends at the table with me must have thought me incredibly rude to be talking across them to the lone figure sitting across the large expanse of the Garden Dragon Chinese Room.

The man introduced himself as John (can't recall his last name right now) and he told me that he "sore" me on the ski slopes earlier in the day. His pronunciation of the word, "saw," prompted me to immediately inquire if he was from New York or New Jersey. John replied, and darn it if he wasn't from my own home town of Pleasantville, New Jersey! Who would have thought that here in the valley of the Mormons, surrounded by white-cliffed Wasath Mountains I would meet a man from Pleasantville who said he knew my grandfather, Arthur Primrose Simms?

"Oh, yes, I remember Mr. Simms," said the tall, distinguished looking African American man sprouting gray micro dreadlocks. "I used to see him walking around Pleasantville and I always knew it was him because he always wore a hat and he had a way of throwing out is right leg to the side as he walked."

My goodness gracious! I could have done a genealogical happy dance right there with the chicken chow mein and plum wine. We would meet later, John and I, and share many more "Do you know ..." kinds of exchanges about

mutual friends and family histories in Pleasantville.

Back to my grandfather, Arthur Primrose Simms.

As many times as I saw him during my childhood in New Jersey and Philadelphia, and my adulthood in Los Angeles, I am amazed at how little I knew about him. Like most family historians, I find that the lives of male ancestors are the least known among family members. I never knew that Arthur Primrose Simms, b. August 5, 1885, had two younger brothers, Allen R. and Archibald F. Simms, who had died in Inglewood, Nova Scotia in the

early 1900s. Arthur's mother, Olivia Anne Mitchell Simms, hadn't been seen since before 1903. She had left the family for the United States after the death of Arthur's younger brother, Allen, who died at Inglewood on June 7, 1901, at the age of 11. He'd drowned. There is no record of Arthur's older brother, Archibald, except the 1901 Nova Scotia census, which shows him as having been born in 1893.

My "Grandpup Simms" was a great walker, indeed. I remember him swinging along in New Jersey, usually dressed in a white short-sleeved shirt and slacks, wearing a hat and a

**ATTESTATION PAPER.**

No. 9313  
Folio

CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

**QUESTIONS TO BE PUT BEFORE ATTESTATION.**  
(ANSWERS)

1. What is your surname? Simms
- 1a. What are your Christian names? Arthur
- 1b. What is your present address? Bridgetown N.S.
2. In what Town, Township or Parish, and in what Country were you born? Bridgetown N.S.
3. What is the name of your next-of-kin? Mrs. Lila Simms
4. What is the address of your next-of-kin? Bridgetown N.S.
5. What is the relationship of your next-of-kin? Wife
6. What is the date of your birth? Aug 5, 1885
7. What is your Trade or Calling? Labourer
8. Are you married? yes
9. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated and inoculated? yes
10. Do you now belong to the Active Militia? No
11. Have you ever served in any Military Force? No  
If so, state particulars of former Service.
12. Do you understand the nature and terms of your engagement? yes
13. Are you willing to be attested to serve in the CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE? yes

**DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.**

I, Arthur Simms, do solemnly declare that the above are answers made by me to the above questions and that they are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements by me now made, and I hereby engage and agree to serve in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force, and to be attached to any arm of the service therein, for the term of one year, or during the war now existing between Great Britain and Germany should that war last longer than one year, and for six months after the termination of that war provided His Majesty should so long require my services, or until legally discharged.

Date 10th Dec 1916 Arthur Simms (Signature of Recruit)  
Mr. A. Edwards (Signature of Witness)

**OATH TO BE TAKEN BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.**

I, Arthur Simms, do make Oath, that I will be faithful and true to my true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will as my duty bound honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown and Dignity, against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of all the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

Date 10th Dec 1916 Arthur Simms (Signature of Recruit)  
Mr. A. Edwards (Signature of Witness)

Front page of Attestation Paper of Arthur Simms.  
Courtesy of data4.collectionscanada.ca



smile for everyone. That purposeful stride of his, so distinctively Arthur Simms, was noted by all who passed by him. His daughter, my mother, didn't know why he walked that way, only that it was even more pronounced whenever he got drunk, with one leg flailing comically. In his later years, he wore thick eyeglasses, the kind with the faint concentric circles for those with seriously impaired vision. He'd had cataracts removed at the famous Willis Eye Hospital on Spring Garden Street in Philadelphia. It prevented his complete blindness and I'm sure it restored his vigor as a man and allowed him to be out and about as he so loved to be.

Perhaps he'd been wounded in the leg during the Great War. I had heard only vague stories from him about his service in World War I for the Canadian Army. Through research, I uncovered his Attestation Papers where he enlisted in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force (CEF) on December 30, 1916 at Bridgetown, Nova Scotia. Arthur "Sims" scratched out his "X" mark as signature for

his willingness to be among the first black military units in Canada to go abroad to the vicious trenches of World War I Belgium and France. He became a member of the No. 2 Black Construction Battalion, CEF.

To enter the WWI military, Arthur had left his wife, Ethel, with five children, and pregnant with her seventh child (an infant, Charlotte, had died shortly after birth, of scarlet fever in March 1914). That seventh child was born while Arthur was away soldiering, and the local newspaper announced that his homecoming furlough would be brightened by the sight of his new infant daughter, Kathleen Avour Simms. Kathleen, my mother, would grow up to be the most successful of Arthur's and Ethel's 10 surviving children, and the visionary in that Simms clan who immigrated from Nova Scotia to Pleasantville, New Jersey in 1926-27.

Much later in our family's history, Grandpup and Grandmom came to live with us in Los Angeles. I have a photo of him and my mother sitting at a table in the back yard playing checkers. Grandpup was laughing, his face nearly obscured by those big thick glasses he wore all the time. He was probably thinking of finishing his defeat of his daughter and taking off on one of his beloved walks through the neighborhood, throwing out that right leg.

3

**The AAGSNC Writers Group** was started about two years ago. Its purpose is to provide mutual support in getting our family histories into writing and published, whether it is as a reunion book, a formal family history, a series of stories, or a novel. Annette Madden has served as the nominal point person for the group and has taken on the responsibility of preparing a topic of discussion for each meeting.

The group is working principally with two books: *You Can Write Your Family History* by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack and *Producing a Quality Family History* by Patricia Law Hatcher, CG. The group covers a topic from one of these books at the start of each meeting and then spends the rest of the time reading and critiquing each other's submissions. The group meets bimonthly at Annette's home.

Membership in this group is closed but Annette would be very happy to assist interested persons in starting another group.

Description of Arthur Sims on Enlistment

Apparent Age <u>22</u> years .....	Distinctive marks, and marks indicating congenital peculiarities or previous diseases.
Height <u>5 ft 4</u> ins.	Should the Medical Officer be of opinion that the recruit has any defect, he will indicate the same accordingly to any defect, attach a slip to this sheet, for the information of the appointing Officer.
Girth when fully expanded <u>36</u> ins. Range of expansion <u>3</u> ins.	
Complexion <u>Dark</u>	
Eyes <u>Brown</u>	
Hair <u>Black</u>	
Religious denomination	
Church of England <u>Church of England</u>	
Presbyterian	
Methodist	
Baptist or Congregationalist	
Roman Catholic	
Jewish	
Other denominations (denomination to be stated)	

**CERTIFICATE OF MEDICAL EXAMINATION.**

I have examined the above-named Recruit and find that he does not present any of the signs of rejection specified in the Regulations for Army Medical Services.

He can see at the required distance with either eye; his heart and lungs are healthy; he has free use of his joints and limbs, and he declares that he is not subject to fit of any description.

I consider him Fit for the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force.

Date Dec 29<sup>th</sup> 1916

Place Treasure Mt H. V. Keel - Major AMCE  
Medical Officer.

\*Insert here "61" or "62" only.

NOTE.—Should the Medical Officer consider the recruit unfit, he will fill in the following Certificate only in the case of those who are fit to enlist, and will indicate the nature of the defect.

---

**CERTIFICATE OF OFFICER COMMANDING UNIT.**

Arthur Sims having been finally approved and inspected by me this day, and his Name, Age, Date of Attestation, and every prescribed particular have been recorded, I certify that I am satisfied with the correctness of this Attestation.

Arthur Sims  
Commanding Officer, No. 2 Construction Battalion, C.E.F.

Date 1916

Back page of Attestation Paper of Arthur Simms. Courtesy of data4.collectionscanada.ca



# A MAN CALLED DAN

- Horace House

Dedicated to the memory of Uncle Dan and the Hill-House extended family.

Around 1996 my uncle, Daniel House, Sr., suggested that, as a family, we should leave a written history of the Hill House family and, most preferably, his father, the Reverend Daniel Webster House. I agreed but before the work was completed, uncle Dan passed away, in December of 1998. This is my attempt to fulfill that promise to him.

On most of the work there was consensus and assistance and I took advantage of all the outside sources reasonably available. I joined a genealogical society, I went back to school to learn computer science, I hired a writing coach (and I am still involved in a writing class), I studied at the Mormon Temple with History experts and attended as many seminars on family history as possible. Now that this effort is completed, I am hoping it will inspire more written history of our family.

## 1900-1925

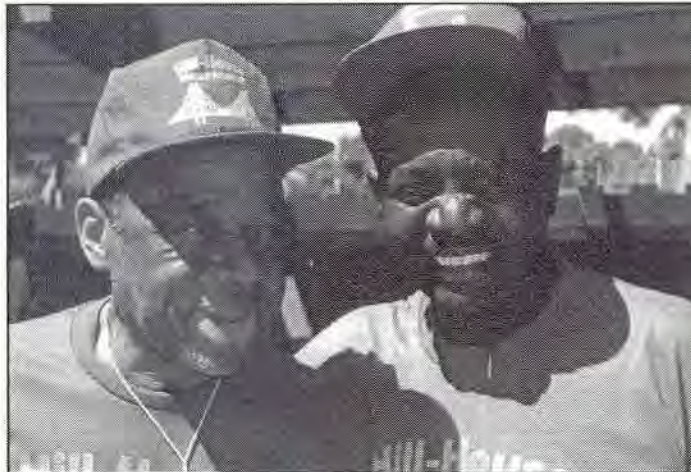
The Reverend Daniel Webster House was born on March 15, 1879 in Snow Hill Alabama. He was the 15th of 16 children born to Daniel and Mariah House. From the 1820's to the 1860's there was a great increase of slaves into Alabama, and though the family originated in South Carolina, they moved westward during slavery, when Alabama opened up as a new territory. There is no record of all of his brothers and sisters, however, we can assume that at least three of them were born in slavery and were emancipated with their parents in 1865: Uncle Ned, Aunt Siby, and Aunt Millie.

From 1879 to 1900, I can assume grandfather went through the usual of growing up in the south. In 1900, grandpa was 21 and still at home with his mother, who is listed as head of household on the 1900 U. S. Census. I assume that my

great grandfather had died and some of grandpa's brothers and sisters had moved out to form their own families. The other members of the household were his sister, Jane, and brothers, Mitchell, Robert, and Elbert. Elbert was widowed and has a 2-year-old son.

Mariah reported having given birth to 16 children, though only 10 of her children could be traced through the census:

- Aunt Millie (b. 1856)
- Aunt Siby
- Uncle Ned (b. 1864)
- Uncle Gilbert (b. 1865)
- Aunt Jane (b. 1868)
- Uncle Mitchell (b. 1870)
- Uncle Elbert (b. 1872)
- Uncle Dave (b. 1876)
- Daniel Webster Grandfather (b. 1879)
- Uncle Robert (b. 1882).



Uncle Dan House with author, Horace House

Between 1900 -1905 grandfather married Henrietta Brister and from this union came:

- Aunt Mariah (b. 1906)
- Juanita Elena (b. 1910) [my mother]
- Mary Louise (b. 1914)
- Dazzerrine Berniece (b. 1916)
- Sarah Ellafair (b. 1917)
- David Louis (b. 1921)
- John Winfield (b. 1924).

Grandfather chose to stay on the land of his forefathers and not migrate to other areas. His brother, Robert, went to Mississippi and was never heard of again, and Elbert remarried and moved to Pensacola, FL where some of his children got involved with the railroad. Other

children of his brothers and sisters moved to all points of the country and came back and visit with grandfather. Grandfather could read and write, which was unique in Alabama where the illiteracy rate was so high among blacks. He owned his own land and supplied food clothing and shelter for his family. When Snow Hill Institute was established, he attended and learned all that he could and became proficient in brick masonry, carpentry, plumbing, basket weaving, making of cane bottom chairs, as well as agriculture.

As a boy, I can remember grandfather relating how he used to attend the conferences Dr. George Washington Carver gave at Tuskegee to benefit the black farmers. He said all the white folks were up front with their note pads and the black farmers had to stand on buildings

or whatever to hear and see what was going on. Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, and Thomas Edison were trying to hire him but Dr. Carver refused to leave. Because his demonstrations were not reaching the masses of black farmer,s he would sometimes show up unannounced and give personal demonstrations. He taught crop rotation, proper application of fertilizer, hillside farming, swamp drainage and much more. Dr. Carver could have moved North

and made substantially more than the \$1,500.00 annually he was paid from Tuskegee. Dr. Carver decided not to. He and Henry Ford concurred on the fact that there needed to be alternative fuel for the automobile and were working on a soybean project together.

Though grandfather was a producer, the only viable crop to sell was cotton. He would have to hire himself out to pay the taxes on his land and sometimes he would take one of his sons or nephews with him. There were times when he wasn't paid. Nevertheless, he always believed the Lord would provide. Reverend House was a very religious man who lived his religion daily. He was a circuit rider, meaning he





had certain churches he was responsible for and he would visit them on a monthly basis. He was a tall, light complected man with a booming voice like Paul Robeson's. A voice like that was needed because these are the days before the microphone and teleprompter. He told me that Dr. Carver had a weak voice but Dr. Booker T. Washington had a strong voice and he talked through his nose, "Just like you, boy."

In 1918, Professor W. J. Edwards, the founder of Snow Hill Institute, came out with his dissertation, "Twenty-five Years in the Black Belt." Professor Edwards also initiated the Black Belt Improvement Society, which resembled Marcus Garvey's movement. Grandfather benefited greatly from the influence of the society. By being uplifted morally, spiritually and financially, and as much as possible, he eliminated credit and bought only what was necessary from the stores and raised the rest at home. He involved himself in the community associations that were related to the general welfare of the race and especially to farmers. He was taught to practice the strictest economy, which led to the improvement of and diversification of crops and to stimulate the love of labor and the appreciation of a job well done, and to try to eliminate those evils which destroy the social fabric; intemperance, gambling and all other social impurities. It was constantly impressed upon him to refrain from spending money and time foolishly and to take an interest in the care of his property and the education of his children and to bring his home life up to the highest standards of civilization.

Most of the above Grandfather was doing anyway however in order to gain entrance into the Society required a member to;

- have a good moral standing and a desire to better their condition
- own at least three chickens and a pig.
- own a Cow.
- own an acre of land.
- have erected a house on that land having at least four rooms.
- own twenty acres of land.
- own forty acres of land.
- own sixty acres of land
- own eighty acres of land.
- own one hundred acres of land.

In 1920 Grandfather was heading a household consisting of a wife, five daughters, a father-in-law and the father-in-law's brother. There were no stipends for those who served in the military. Black people who gave there most productive years of their lives in making someone else rich and had now grown too old to support themselves. This caused many benevolent societies to be set up for the poor blacks who in some cases were not able to be properly buried.

My great grandfather, Henry Brister, and his brother, Andrew, were prime examples of ex-slaves who received no compensation and if it wasn't for the compassion shown by my grandfather, they would have been homeless, naked, and destitute in a world where there was no Social Security, General Assistance, pensions, or retirement for slaves and ex-slaves who could no longer work. They had to take in their sick and elderly while raising their own small children as grandfather did.

Mother was afflicted with polio in 1920. Being in a rural setting there was no way to get her the medical attention she needed. The polio vaccine was available in urban settings, but to get it to the backwoods of Alabama would have been next to impossible. Mother struggled with her affliction all her life and towards the end of her life, she was bedridden. She had wanted to become a nurse but was persuaded to make another choice because she would have to be on her feet most of the time and she was already having problems moving around.

Grandpa never had any problem with the Klan, although there were plenty of them around. One of our relatives had a problem but someone in the family was in the Masonic Order and they were told, or allowed to let the suspect go free if he got out of town quickly, which he did.

In the spring of 1925, Grandmother Henrietta died. She left Grandpa with seven children, the youngest being nine-months-old. She had given him two

sons and had been a loving and faithful wife. I never knew too much about her except that she taught school. She died from gastrointestinal. After a period of mourning and intense prayer, my grandfather was introduced to a widow, by one of the church elders. Daisy Hill married Reverend House and became the only mother that my uncle John knew.

### 1925-1962

Grandfather's world in the twenties living in the microcosm of Snow Hill, Alabama, would see my mother stricken with polio, lose his wife, remarry and father a son, and merge two families. James Hill, George Hill, Samuel Hill, Robert Hill and Erie Hill were blended into the existing House family as Mama Daisy moved to Snow Hill. Grandpa said in the blending of the two families there would be no "steps (children)." "The only steps would be the ones on the outside of the house."

Uncle Daniel, who was born as a result of this union, was the driving force behind the writing of this family history about his father. Daniel was schooled in Snow Hill and moved to Chicago to be with

an older brother, James. Daniel was known around the Snow Hill community as "the Professor," because of his analytical mind. He worked for the federal government for 48 years and died in December 1998. Uncle Daniel and I had many spirited debates on all issues from food to politics. I wish I could have taken on this project earlier, before so many of our other elders departed this life.

In 1930, mother graduated from Selma University. She had been living with our cousin, John Brister, who was the grandson of Andrew Brister. John was also a product of Snow Hill Institute and was an accomplished printer and business man. He was also a patron of Snow Hill Institute and gave monetary incentives to the graduating and underclassmen who demonstrated academic excellence. John had acquired a name for himself in Selma's black business community and help in the



John W. Brister  
Courtesy of docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/edwards/ill7.html



Continued from page 9

time of need for family and non-family alike. Andrew Brister, his grandfather, was a resident in my grandfather's house in 1920.

Sometime during the middle thirties, mother moved to Detroit and moved in with another one of her Uncle Andrew's grandchildren, Rosa Burns. Mother joined Oak Grove A.M.E. Church and became a choir member and met my father, Horace Brantley. Grandfather Dan was Holiness and most of the people in his area were Methodist. There was a Holiness church down the street from Oak Grove but mother never ventured down there until her sisters started coming up from the South during the war. Grandpa had always cautioned, "Never leave the Church of God because it is the one true Church." I guess mother gave in to pressure while Grandpa Dan was in Alabama and she was in Detroit.

In June of 1936, she gave birth to a baby boy. Cousin Rosa wanted to put me up for adoption. My father's mother said, "If you marry her you will be marrying a doctor's bill." My father's father, Grandpa Jim, said, after my god-mother and my mother brought me by their house shortly after my birth, "I will take him." Grandpa Dan said, "Send him down here to Snow Hill. That's my blood I can feed him and clothe him." He counseled my mother about being unwed he said, "You can fall but don't wallow," because she was not the first unwed mother in the family nor would she be the last. She also gained a tremendous amount of inspiration from the President, FDR, who was also a polio victim.

The thirties saw mother and me stabilizing in the hard winters and sweltering Summers of Detroit on the A.F.D.C. (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and whatever mother could get and get paid under the table. When I was six months old, I developed pneumonia, so I was in and out of the hospital a lot. I guess it was during these ordeals my paternal grandmother reconsidered and reconciled with my mother. She told my father, "You missed your wife." My father, who was a good baseball player, had met and married a woman from Cleveland, Mamma Rubye. He brought Mamma Rubye to meet his parents, and she was smoking a cigarette. My grandparents didn't like that. Grandpa

Jim had always been partial to us and when my father made his choice, that's when my grandmother Martha made her statement. The truth of the matter was that she was afraid because with my mother already being crippled, it would cost my father more money because of doctor bills. The truth, in fact, was that I was sicklier than my mother. She saw me go back into the hospital with pneumonia and spent many a sleepless night with me because I developed asthma and would wheeze and cough the whole night.

My uncles in Alabama were expecting to see me come down there and be raised by my grandfather Dan. They really didn't expect my mother to be able to handle the responsibility of raising a child by herself. We moved around a lot, made some friends and were blessed. It took me some time to figure out why they gave me father's first name and called me Junior and didn't give me his last name. Father was not a big part of my early life, although his family was a lot of help to us.

I was three years old when Hitler invaded Poland and the country began getting on a war footing again. President Roosevelt had tried every program possible to keep the country from sliding back into the depression. Then Pearl Harbor happened and we were fighting on two fronts. We saved grease, we rationed everything and used sugar and flour stamps and bought lots of bonds. We also planted lots of victory gardens. Grandpa Jim's wife, Martha, died during the war and I remember my father and his brother, Thomas Ivory, coming home for the services. Father had another brother, William, who was not in the service because of a football injury to his knees. William, or Uncle Bill as he was called, was there to help Grandpa Jim with the arrangements. Grandpa Jim could neither read nor write. Grandmother Martha Rose Wadley Brantley left a husband and five children, including Aunt Mattie and Rose.

The beginning of the forties is when I began to go to Snow Hill where I saw how important it was to have morals and character and a good work ethic. Grandpa

also taught me how to transition from a city boy to a boy that fit into a rural setting. Country life was really a culture shock for me. On my first trip down, I was tagged just like the luggage ... "Make sure this little boy get off the train at Snow Hill Alabama." The Porters would let each other know who and what I was so I could make it to my destination. As I recall, there was a change of trains in Cincinnati and from then on, it was smooth riding. Once I crossed the Mason-Dixon line, black people were put right behind the engine, which meant that we couldn't open the windows when it's hot because the cinders from the fire box would blow right in your faces. I can't exactly remember how long it took but for sure, it was an 800 plus mile



Aunt Dazzarine and her husband, Uncle James Rowe

trip. It seemed me to Snow Hill was at the end of the line. My first trip I think Papa Dan met me and we rode in a truck back to the house. On this trip Uncle John and Uncle, Dan was still at home so that had to be around 1942. Uncle John graduated in 1943 and mother sent him a ticket for graduation.

Snow Hill is in the South Central part of the state located in Wilcox County. Some time before I got there Papa Dan had moved his family off the old home place in the "Piney Woods" closer to the "Big Road." Papa Dan built a house, a barn, a smokehouse a church and dug a well.

Since Papa Dan was a skilled craftsman, he



never depended on agriculture that much although he knew what to do after sitting under Dr. Carver. I was taught all of the above and more after multiple visits and between bouts of asthma. Uncle Dan was an asthmatic also and so I figured I could survive too. Uncle Dan once told me we had a cousin who lived to be over 100 years old and was an asthmatic. Uncle Dan was a great inspiration to me.

When I first got down there Uncle Dan put me on the back of mule called Foster, seated just behind Uncle Dan. Papa Dan had some livestock: Foster, a horse named Emma and a yoke of oxen named Wilson and Brown. He had some chickens, some hogs and pigs, some cows and calves, but no dogs to speak of. Papa Dan was not into hunting, everything on his land had a purpose.

I would go back to Detroit and come back and it seems every time I came back some thing had changed down there to bring the rural setting up closer to an urban setting. For example when I first went down there was no electricity in Papa Dan's house. When it got dark, we had coal oil lanterns. Many the nights I had to escort some relative to the outhouse with these lanterns. On one of my visits one of my aunts was there with a young child whose food had to be refrigerated, they came from an urban setting. Mrs. Susie Edwards the wife of the founder of the school was nice enough to let us keep our food in her refrigerator. I would go get the food as needed. One day my cousin saw Papa Dan eating sour milk and cornbread out of a glass, and wanted some. Needless to say when my aunt found out about it there was plenty drama. Papa Dan would say, "aw go long girl that aint going to hurt that baby" Auntie knew that he wouldn't do any thing to hurt that child. Therefore, my little cousin was full, and I didn't have to make that trip in the hot sun.

As the war was over, two of my Aunts, Dazzerine and Mary, moved to Detroit to be with my mother and Uncle John. When her sisters arrived, mother moved her membership from Oak Grove A.M.E. Church to the Chippewa and Wisconsin Church of God, the same denomination as Grandpa Dan. Then mother met and married an Aderest Miller. He wasn't much of a father figure, worked on a construction

gang, was always dirty, and they always argued it seemed. So mother did something my granddad did not approve of — she told me I would from now on be known as Horace Miller.

When you say it real fast it, sounds like "horse smeller." When I was in the South, I was known as Horace House, and in the North, Horace Miller. Aderest never seemed to provide for all of us, he would buy food for him and my mother, and my aunt would ask him, "You bought steak for you and my sister, wheres Horace's steak?" There was none. We all slept in the same room and after one night of arguing I brought my baseball bat into the room and sat it in the corner. When my mother asked why, I told her I didn't want anyone mistreating her and if they did, "I was gonna crown 'em." Shortly after that I was on my way to Snow Hill again. The marriage, which was doomed from the start, dissolved while I was down there. The people in the school system were getting confused with the changes on my transfers so when I came back from the south I graduated as Horace Miller even though my birth certificate said House. When I get back to Snow Hill this time I stayed awhile. Again, there were changes; Papa Dan had electricity now, a refrigerator, and a few of the modern conveniences. He still had the outhouse with the Sears and Roebucks catalogs and the box of corncobs. I was the only one there with Papa Dan and Mamma Daisy. Uncles James, Samuel and Daniel were in Chicago. Aunt Erie and Uncle George were in Washington D.C. and Aunt Sara was in Fairfield. Aunt Dazzerine, and Mary along with Uncle John and Uncle Dave were in Detroit with mother. Uncle Robert moved around a lot as he studied for the ministry.

Grandpa enrolled me in Snow Hill Institute and I learned what it was like to go to school in a rural setting. The school was only a shell of what it had been, but in the early and mid forties, it was still a viable educational force in the community. A school day would begin with the Pledge of Allegiance, the school song and end with prayer. Then we would disperse to our individual classrooms where we stayed all day. One teacher taught everything. Grandpa was good at math and would help

me with my homework some times. He also liked history and I rummaged through some of his old books and came across some documents that didn't get recorded in the Bible. Grandpa has a nephew, Rufus, who is his older brother's (Gilbert) great-grandson, who came to stay with us his senior year in high school. Rufus was a good football player and a good student who furthered his education at Xavier, in New Orleans. He told me that his great-grandfather, Gilbert, was also a minister. Rufus also said his great-grandmother, Phylis, lived to be over 100 years old and the church still gave her a pension from her husband, uncle Gilbert, even though he had been dead for a long time. Uncle Gilbert and Aunt Phylis lived in Minter, in Dallas County, which is not that far from Snow Hill.

Some Sundays Papa Dan held Church at home and I got a chance to ring the Bell. Then we would wait and see how many people would show up. If nobody showed, we would have service any way. Sometimes only me and Mamma Daisy. Later two or three would straggle in. Sometimes there maybe Brother Tate and his family of three. There were times when there were six or seven and five of them would be sleep. It can get pretty hot in those little country churches. We would have Sunday School sometimes and Mr. Lee would bring two of his boys, Len and Cliff who were a little older than me. Len was the treasurer for the Sunday school and would sometimes read a report that had .15 on the books. Mr. Lee was the Sunday school Superintendent. After Sunday School, they would go home and the boys could play the rest of the day. I had to stay for the rest of the services. Papa Dan believed in giving the Lord a full day. A lot of the people in the area were Methodists and went to St. Pauls A.M.E. Church in another part of Snow Hill. Every now and then some of the members from the urban churches with whom Papa Dan was affiliated would come down to Snow Hill and, boy, that's when it really got exciting on Sundays in Papa Dan's little church.

There would be singers like, Thomasine, Georgia, and Perilee, preachers and a host of others. Mamma Daisy would do her biscuits and fried chicken, greens and

Continued on page 12



crackling bread, sweet potatoe pie, candied yams, and much more more. It was at these times a lot more locals showed up.

Papa Dan's older sister had a son named Isaiah, or Ike. Ike by modern day standards would be considered, retarded. He would runaway and stay in the woods for months on end and then finally show up at your doorstep. He would be hungry, raggedy, and full of ticks, lice and whatever else you get from being outside. Whenever he showed up at Pappa's house, he would do what was necessary for his nephew before he ran away again. The next time Ike ran he was never seen again.

Papa would tell me a lot about his brothers and sisters, 'the situation ethics' that you needed to use to survive in the white man's south. Periodically we would get mail from a relative in a faraway place, like a Reverend Paul D. House from San Antonio, Texas who sent a letter telling Papa about a revival he was running. Papa Dan verified Reverend Paul D. House. Other family members would come by and papa Dan would verify them also.



The House family in Los Angeles

I was re-establishing roots in Detroit. I got back in time to go to Uncle Dave's wedding. Uncle Dave was getting married to Allean Hines, a very pretty girl. I got to ride in the back of the car with the bride and groom to the reception. We truly had a nice time. Papa Dan and Mama Daisy couldn't make it up from Snow Hill.

Mother got married again. This time it was to a member of the Church of God, Lester Taylor. He was an older man, and working a steady job as a night watchman. This time I didn't have to change my last name. She bought some property from the people who'd originally been her landlords. And she got a good price. Aunt Dazzarine and her husband lived a few doors down so mom wanted to be close to them.

I was there for a few years before I ran away and ran out of money in Phoenix, Arizona, trying to make it to California. I stopped by

my Uncle James Hill Sr.'s house to get a few dollars and he talked me into staying. He got me back in school and showed me another positive side of manhood. Uncle James had moved his family from Chicago because his wife was an asthmatic and the weather was a problem for her.

After some time there he told me it was time for me to go back home and if I was not getting along well there, at least finish school. I graduated from Lincoln as Horace Miller and immediately enlisted in the Marine Corps. Uncle James was a man among men and I shall never forget the

times I spent with him and his family. While I was in Phoenix, Uncle Paul Binion, Sr., his brother, Jesse and a family friend, were on their way to California. Uncle Paul would eventually establish a residence in Los Angeles, as did his brother and family friend. Aunt Sarah

had never liked the cold weather and really disliked Detroit. She and her family stayed in Fairfield, Alabama until Uncle Paul got established and then he sent for them.

After discharge from the Marines, I stayed on in California and reunited with Papa Dan and Mamma Daisy in Los Angeles. The children had decided that it was not safe for Papa Dan and Mamma Daisy to continue to live in Snow Hill with his failing eyesight. Therefore, they traveled to see all the children at their different destinations, D.C., Detroit and Chicago, before coming West to live with Aunt Sarah and Uncle Paul. This took place around 1955-1956. I was discharged in 1959 and began to establish myself in the Los Angeles area.

I had just been Honorably Discharged

from the Marines and an unfortunate set of circumstances happened about a month and a half later, May of 1959. I was home on furlough the year before and Uncle Dave wanted to talk to me. I am quite sure it was about my future plans. We never got a chance to talk. He was killed in a traffic accident on his way to Alabama A&M. As an officer of the local Alumni Club in Detroit, he was bringing some resources to the ones who were still in school. He was still a young man. Technically, he gave his life in service to others.

We were quite shocked when we lost uncle Dave. He, like his mother before him, died an untimely death. I decided to stay in California since employment in Detroit was scarce.

I am quite sure a conversation with Uncle Dave would have been quite interesting, since we had never talked before. He always seemed to be too busy. And he was. He headed a family with two children, had real estate holdings, was a 32nd degree Prince Hall Mason, involved in law, involved in his church, and the Alumni of Alabama A&M. He left an example of what a breadwinner is about.

The family came together and did what we had to do. Mamma Daisy and Papa Dan were in California and didn't make the trip back to Detroit.

As a matter of fact, they didn't travel anywhere. People came to visit them, relatives and blended, extended and friends. They came from all parts of the country and I remember us all gathering around Papa Dan's bed as the last thing they did before they left, and he would pray for their safe return home.

He was totally blind then, and lived this urban life for about two more years before passing in 1962 on February 15.





# SLAVE SCHEDULES COMPLETE WITH SLAVE'S NAMES

- Lisa B. Lee, PLCGS

In general, the 1850 and 1860 US Census Slave Schedules do not list the names of the slaves owner ... only the name of the person responsible for the slaves (owner, administrator, overseer, etc.). However, there's one delightful exception to this in the 1860 Slave Schedules for Hampshire County, VA. For the entire county (and all three sub-districts), the census enumerator, Charles Blue, listed not only the given name and age of each slave, but also a notation regarding ownership of the slaves (e.g. "property of," or "administrator of ....., deceased"). Though the entire Hampshire County 1860 slave schedules exist consist of only 21 pages total (5 pages for the Eastern Dist., 2 pages for the Romney Dist., and 14 pages for the Western

Dist.), for researchers of this small county, this information could be like striking gold.

Charles Blue, the enumerator, was also a slave owner in the county. In 1840, he was also the county enumerator and listed himself on page one, line one, along with his 16 slaves. In 1850, he was listed with 12 slaves in the same county, but he didn't enumerate the county. In 1860, the 55-year-old Blue owned 13 slaves, and, as the census enumerator again, listed himself on page one, line one of the census, along with his black and mulatto slaves who ranged in age from 1 year old to 40 years. Blue doesn't appear in any further censuses and it's assumed he died prior to 1870.

1	Mrs. A. Hendall	
2	Adm. Vance E. doo	5
3	Eliza	35 F
4	Maria	33 "
5	Harriet	31 "
6	Ann	15 "
7	Levitt	10 "
8	John McDowell	
9	propety of C. W. Jack	3
10	Lacy	35 "
11	Mary	4 "
12	Juliet	2 "
13	William A. Vance	8
14	Monny	70 "
15	Mathias	35 "
16	Frances	13 "
17	John	11 M

Notice the notations of ownership, above

Page No. 1

SCHEDULE 2.—Slave Inhabitants in Eastern District in the County of Hampshire State of Virginia, enumerated by me, on the 1st day of June, 1860. Charles Blue Ass't Marshal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
				Age	Sex	Color												
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1	13								2	John A. Smith	5							
	Henry	1	40	m	B					Hortencia	24	F	M					
	Ann	37	F	M						Bill	18	M	B					
	Mary	36	F	B						Jordan	17	F	M					
	John	19	M							Bettie	11	F	B					
	Jerry	15	M	M						Charles	2	M						
	Jude	13	F	M						Samuel Hook	10							1
	Baylie	10	M	B						Virginia	65	F	M					
	Smith	10	F	M						Mary	24	F	B					
	Borat	7	F	B						Manda	20	F						
	Fanny	5	F							Harriet	18	F						

In Hampshire County, VA in 1860, every slave was listed by given name ... a rare occurrence for Slave Schedules.



7th Annual

# West Coast Summit on African American Genealogy

## “Celebrating Generations -- Past, Present and Future”

### September 14-16, 2007

### Phoenix, AZ

#### GATEWAY CENTER/DOUBLETREE GUEST SUITES - Phoenix, AZ

• **Friday, Sept. 14th 6:00 - 9:00 PM**  
Registration and Social Hour

*which can Help You Track Your  
Ancestors, by Ron Batiste*

**3:05 - 4:20 PM - Session III**

- *The Search for my Native American Identity: The Montauks, Narragansett and Nehantic of New England, by Eric Smith*
- *Search and Reward Notices -- Hidden Information About Former Slaves, by Lisa B. Lee*
- *Priscilla's Homecoming, by Joyce Reese McCollum*
- *Out of Africa I Have Called My First Family: DNA Research and Race Redemption, by Professor Gershon Williams*

• **Saturday, Sept. 15th**

**10:45 - 12:00 AM - Session II**

- *How to Find Your Family History & Cultural Roots: An Online Guide, by Dr. Andy Anderson*
- *Portable Genealogy & Disaster Prevention, by Sandra Y. Hilton*
- *Naming Patterns: Deciphering if it is the Right Man, Wrong Name, by Margaret Lewis*
- *DNA Testing and Establishing the Paper Trail, by Daniela Moneta*

**8:20 - 9:00 AM, Opening Remarks**

**9:20 - 10:35 AM - Session I**

- *So They Won't Talk: Gathering Your Family History Through Interviewing, by Charlotte Marie Bocage*
- *Writing Family History: A Gift for Generations to Come, by Duane Roen*
- *Coal Dust in Your Veins: Bringing Your Coal Mining Ancestors to the Surface, by Tim Pinnick*
- *Four Times The Fun: Four Timelines*

**12:00 - 2:45 PM, Luncheon & Keynote**  
Dr. Matthew C. Whitaker, Ariz State U.

**4:20 - 4:45 PM - Summit Wrap up**

#### Registration

- **Early registration** - \$65.00 (postmarked by **August 24, 2007**)
- **Late registration** - \$80.00. Luncheon and syllabus not guaranteed with late registration.

#### Conference Information and Registration Form:

(<http://www.bfghs.net/summit2007.htm>)

**T**his annual conference that brings together all of the independent black genealogy societies in the West, for a weekend of workshops, networking and research.

Founded in 2001 by the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California (AAGSNC), the *Summit* is hosted by a different society each year, which guarantees that the *Summit* is ever changing and unique as each group puts its own spin on the conference.

None of these societies has any affiliation with one another, so the fact that we come together each year is a testament to our commitment to continue to spread the gospel of

genealogy as we support our mutual goals.

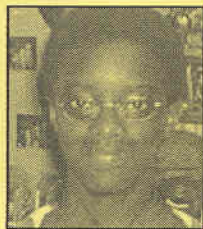
#### Summit History:

- 2001 Oakland - hosted by the AAGSNC
- 2002 Sacramento - hosted by the AAGSSC
- 2003 Los Angeles - hosted by CAAGS
- 2004 San Diego - hosted by SDAAGRG
- 2005 Oakland - hosted by the AAGSNC
- 2006 Las Vegas - hosted by the NAAGS
- 2007 Phoenix, AZ - hosted by the BFGHS
- 2008 Seattle - hosted by the BGRG
- 2009 ?????



Continued from page 5

My name is **Kore Margaret Simpich Mara Curry Washington** and I am 10 and have been studying genealogy during this



school year and last year. I researched Simpich in Missouri and in Washington, D.C., and Dietrich in Ohio. These are the surnames of my adoptive parents.

The experience was ok. The hard part was, since I have two families, it was sort of confusing. It made me feel weird. The fun part was I got to know my family better.

I found out that my mother's dad died at the age of 85, right before I was born. He didn't get to meet me. My teacher helped me do research on the computer and my dad helped me also on the computer. I interviewed my mother and dad. My mom had records in the family Bible. My advice to other kids who want to look up their families is, it is fun, and sometimes you might get confused. But it ends up turning out that you get to know more about your family, and things your parents did not tell you about.

My name is **Samali Nangalama**. I am 10 years old, and I have been studying genealogy for almost two years with our excellent genealogy teacher, Gigi. I have researched a lot of stuff about my family history. Just recently I researched my

grandfather and found his World War II draft card. His name was Quinest B. Thompson, born 1910 in Virginia.

My experience with genealogy has been very interesting because you can learn endless new stuff every day. What was fun is getting to learn new stuff about my family. What was hard for me to find was family on my father's side because he is from Africa. I research all my stuff on ancestry.com and they do not have Africa. I would like to find more stuff on my dad's side. I found all kinds of records on my mom's side.



I would tell other children to ask parents and grandparents if they have records, go online.

My name is **Elijah Hill** and I've been a genealogist for about one year. The surnames that I have been looking up are: the Hills of California, the Johnsons of Louisiana, and the Huies and Gees of China.

My experience with genealogy was great. I loved it because I got to research with my friends and I got to find out more about their families too. Researching was kind of like being part of the C.I.A. Sometimes I

would get bored from all the organizing. I think the hardest part for me was getting the right information for the research.

I found out that my family owned a laundry business in San Francisco. I also found out that my great-great grandfather was one of the first settlers of Allensworth (which is the first black community in California). When I was searching, mostly I used a computer, a binder, and some folders. We used Ancestry.com. We found social security numbers, where people worked, when they were born, and special events in their life – lots of personal stuff. I interviewed my Grandfather Ron Hill and my Grandmother Laurie Wiseman. I don't have many census records but I still have a lot of information on paper mostly. In my research I found a DVD full of old and new pictures, and photos of census records. The DVD was an exciting project.

Advice I would give to someone else doing genealogy work:

1. Try to dig as deep as you can.
2. Look in places you never thought you would look.
3. Ask questions you never thought you would ask.
4. Talk to the oldest people in your family.
5. Keep records and keep them neat.



## INDEX OF SURNAMES IN THIS ISSUE

Name	Page	Name	Page	Name	Page	Name	Page	Name	Page
Adams	5	DeBerry	16	Hatcher	7	McCollum	14	Simon	5
Anderson	14	Denson	5	Hill	8, 9, 12, 15	McDaniel	16	Smith	13, 14
Antoine	16	DeVance	5	Hilton	14	McDowd	13	Taylor	12
Batiste	14	Edison	8	Hines	12	McElroy	5	Thomas	5
Batt	5	Edwards	9, 16	Holloman	5	Melson	16	Thompson	15
Bayonne	16	Elbert	16	Hook	13	Miller	11, 12	Thornton	5
Binion	12	Firestone	8	House	2, 8, 9, 11, 12	Mitchell	6	Tyson	2, 6
Blue	13	Floyd	5	Huie	15	Moneta	14	Vance	13
Bocage	14	Ford	8	Hurts	16	Nangalama	15	Wadley	10
Brantley	10	Fox	13	Johnson	5, 15, 16	Neal	3	Washington	15
Brister	8, 9, 10	Frederick	1, 4	Kuykendall	13	Peck	13	Whitaker	14
Broussard	5	Freeman	16	Law	7	Pinnick	14	White	16
Burns	10	Garrison	5	Lee	5, 11, 13, 14, 16	Roen	14	Whorton	5
Bush	5	Garvey	9	Lewis	14	Rowe	10	Williams	14, 16
Carmack	7	Gee	15	Lincoln	1	Salaam	5	Wiseman	15
Carver	8, 9, 11	Gillette	1, 2, 4, 16	Little	5	Sam	4		
Davis	5	Gobert	16	Mackins	5	Sanders	5		
DeBartolo	7	Gregory	2, 5	Madden	7	Simms	6, 7		



The African American Genealogical Society of Northern California, Inc. (AAGSNC) was founded in Oakland, CA in 1996, under the leadership of Kathryn Burgess Smith.

**AAGSNC FOUNDING MEMBERS:**

Kathryn Burgess Smith	Charlesetta Braggs-Ford
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**OBJECTIVES of the AAGSNC:**

- To promote interest in genealogy, biography and related history among African Americans.
- To supplement and enrich the education of African Americans through the collection, preservation and maintenance of African American genealogical materials.
- To promote the accumulation and preservation of African American genealogical and related historical materials and make such materials available to all.
- To promote and maintain ethical standards in genealogical research and publications.

## It's Your History ... Isn't it Time You Told Your Story?

**MEETINGS**

Meetings are held the **third** Saturday of every month, at 1:30 pm, at the Oakland Public Library, Dimond branch, located at 3565 Fruitvale Ave, Oakland, CA. There are no meetings during the Summer hiatus (July and August). Guests and visitors are always welcome to attend these open meetings. The AAGSNC Board of Directors meets immediately following the regular membership meetings (from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm) and members are welcome to attend.

**JOURNAL**

*The Baobab Tree* is published quarterly (in March, June, September, and December) by the AAGSNC and is provided free to all members. Additional copies and past issues may be purchased for \$10.00 per copy.

- Membership categories are:
  - Regular \$25
  - Youth (16 and younger) \$15
  - Family \$35
  - Organization \$45
  - Life Membership - Individual \$200
  - Life Membership - Family \$300

- The AAGSNC accepts no responsibility for statements of fact or opinion made by contributors. Deadlines for submission of material for publication in *From the Baobab Tree* are: February 5 for the March issue, May 6 for the June issue, August 6 for the September issue, and November 5 for the December issue.

- Correspondence on editorial matters, submission requests, or permission to reprint articles may be obtained, at no cost, by written request to the editor (newsletter@aagsnc.org).

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