



### 3 WHY DO WE DO THIS?

The importance of the work we do when we research our family histories.



### 6 ENROLLMENT IN FREEDMEN'S SCHOOLS

When education became available, freed slaves leaped at the opportunity.



### 12 ENSURING YOUR GENEALOGICAL LEGACY

Make sure your years of research survive you.



### 13 MYSTERY PHOTO: 1906 SAN FRANCISCO

Who are the fashionably dressed young people watching the fire?

# the Baobab Tree

Journal of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California, Inc. / Spring 2014 / ISSN 1543-4125

My paternal grandmother, Lois Rogers Sewell, and an unknown member of the Cherokee Nation. (Photo credit: Jackie D. Sewell, my father.)



## Rider Fields Is My 4x-Great-Grandfather

**Nicka Smith**  
Board Member, AAGSNC

All I had was a name, Sarah Vann Rogers. Here's how I discovered my ties to a Cherokee slaveholder.

Sarah Vann Rogers, wife of U.S. Deputy Marshal Isaac Rogers, died at age 24 in 1884, leaving behind two sons under the age of six. Both her sons would meet similar fates, dying before seeing age 40. Thank God my paternal grandmother, Sarah's granddaughter, lived to see age 79.

I have written on my blog (<http://www.whoisnickasmith.com/>) about discovering my links to the Cherokee Nation and the implications of that discovery. I knew then that I was in for a wild ride of more discoveries, but I don't think I was quite prepared for the pop and lock that my ancestors did out of the grave like the *Thriller* video.

### How I Cracked the Case

1901 Dawes applications, Cherokee Freedmen: Nelson Vann Rogers F853 and Theodore Cooley Vann Rogers F854<sup>1</sup>. Both my great-grandfather Cooley and his brother, Nelson's, Dawes packets (per their own testimony) listed their parents as Isaac Rogers and Sarah/Sallie Vann. They both confirmed that Sarah died

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



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*It's Your History*

Isn't it time you told **your**  
story?

The African-American Genealogical Society of Northern California (AAGSNC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated in its commitment to national and international black African-ancestry family history research. The society provides a unique approach to education, research skills, and support to anyone interested in genealogy.

### Objectives

- To promote interest in genealogy, biography, and related history of 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 material and make such material available to all.
- To promote and maintain ethical standards in genealogical research and publications.

### Membership and Its Benefits

Any person interested in furthering the objectives of AAGSNC is eligible for membership upon submission and acceptance of a completed application form and payment of dues.

Membership categories are as follows:

- Regular Membership: Age 17 and Over
- Family Membership
- Youth Membership: Age 16 and Under
- Organization Membership: Association, Library, Society, Nonprofit Group
- Lifetime Regular Membership: Age 17 and Over
- Lifetime Family Membership

Meetings: AAGSNC holds monthly meetings that include guest speakers, workshops, seminars, and networking with other members. Meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month (except July and August) from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Oakland Public Library Dimond Branch, 3565 Fruitvale Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602.

Field Trips and Support: Members can attend regularly scheduled trips to the Oakland FamilySearch Library and receive assistance with their research projects. Participation in organized research trips to the Salt Lake City Family History Library and taking part in events with other genealogical and historical organizations are included in our program.

Members Only Section of Our Web Site: Compiled databases, *The Baobab Tree* archive, meeting presentations (PDF's, video, and podcasts), ancestral charts, and more.

To join, please visit <http://www.aagsnc.org/>.

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## Why Do We Do This?



Photo courtesy of M. Howard Edwards

by **M. Howard Edwards**  
President, AAGSNC

do this to forge a sense of community through connections with other researchers.

As you prepare for your research during the summer keep in mind the work done by our ancestors to get us here. Do what you can to add to their legacy.

As you pass through libraries, courthouses, archives, and family reunions, let folks know about your AAGSNC membership and the benefits you enjoy from it. They should know about:

- The Web site, <http://www.aagsnc.org/>
- The journal *The Baobab Tree*, published to great acclaim
- The various Yahoo! Groups for researchers and special interest groups
- Our Facebook page
- Member Nicka Smith's blog, <http://www.whoisnickasmith.com/>
- This summer, commemorating Juneteenth, we will host a Black Family History Day in conjunction with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The larger our community, the greater the exchange of vital records that advance our research and increase the chance of breaking through the brick walls that bar us. When you are back home, tell everyone about us.

And do not forget to interview the old folks and get their stories; this might be the last chance you get.

Since the first imported slave in 1619, Africans suffered unimaginable mortality rates in transit through the middle passage and were marginalized, ignored, discredited, denied, refused, and discarded. Those who escaped slavery fared little better in America. It is no wonder that few records survive that document our family histories. It has been revealed recently that there is no recorded death date nor burial place for Solomon Northup, subject of the book and movie *Twelve Years a Slave*. One would think that this published author, famous in his own time, would not have been lost, but he was. Of course this problem of lost history is not unique, but it is almost expected in black American families.

We do this family history research business to establish the contributions of our specific ancestors to the building of America where no one else will. We do this to ensure that the few documents that record our passing are not lost due to lack of interest. We do this to ensure that the documents that do exist are accurate and correct. We do this to foster a sense of pride within our families and within our communities. We do this to inspire our children to work for a brighter future, as our ancestors did. We

WHY DO WE DO THIS? .....	3
GENEALOGY 101 .....	4
NEWLY EMANCIPATED SLAVES EAGERLY ENROLLED IN FREEDMEN'S SCHOOLS .....	6
A PERSONAL RETROSPECTIVE DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH .....	8
SLAVERY'S EXILES: THE STORY OF THE AMERICAN MAROONS: BOOK REVIEW .....	12
ENSURING YOUR GENEALOGICAL LEGACY .....	12
MYSTERY PHOTO .....	13
WEB NOTES .....	18
BAOBAB WRITER'S GUIDELINES ....	18

**June 21**

Reunion Planning /  
Planning Your Research Trip

**September 20**

Research Presentation /  
Braggin' and Lyin' Session

**October 18**

Navigating the AAGSNC Web Site

**November 15**

Slave Research

**December 20**

Annual Holiday Party

For more info on our events  
and meetings, please visit  
<http://www.AAGSNC.org/>

# Genealogy 101

*The Federal Census: Where were your ancestors?*

**Annette Madden**  
Board Member, AAGSNC

One of the first records we work with as genealogists is the federal census. These censuses can be a goldmine of information and can help us solve many riddles—or provide us with new ones. It helps to know that not all censuses are the same. Different questions were asked for each one.

First, here's a little background. Federal censuses have been taken every 10 years, starting with 1790. The 1890 census was lost due to water damage after a fire, although fragments remain. Each census is released 72 years after it is taken. Thus the 1940 census was released in 2012 and the 1950 census will be released in 2022.

Since most black Americans were not enumerated by name until the 1870 census, I will concentrate on the information you can find in the censuses from 1870 to 1940. But do not ignore the censuses prior to 1870. If any of your ancestors were free persons of color (FPOC), they may be listed in earlier censuses, and even some enslaved individuals were listed by name.

All of the censuses we are considering will contain the following information:

- The name of each person in the household
- Their ages, sexes, and (beginning in 1880) relationships to the head of household
- Their professions or trades
- Each person's place of birth

Each census also lists the person's color, although the designations varied from census to census. For example, the official term "mulatto" was used 1870 thru 1930, and then discarded beginning with the 1930 census. In 1940 "black" became "Negro." Some censuses use the term "colored." And all of the information relied on what was told to the census taker.

Knowing what other information was collected for each census can help you find information you are hunting down.

There were specific forms for the census of American Indians in 1900 and 1910, and supplemental questions in 1920. Some questions on the 1930 census related to unemployment. On the 1940 census, additional questions asked of 5% of the population included father's and mother's birthplaces, if the person was a veteran or wife, widow, or minor child of a veteran, if the person had a Social Security number, usual occupation, if married more than once. Questions for all the census years and lists of the instructions and questions given to enumerators can be found at [http://www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/index\\_of\\_questions](http://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/index_of_questions). The list of questions on this site is not complete for every year.

Good luck mining the census records, and as always, happy hunting!



Photo courtesy of Annette Madden

**Annette Madden** has been researching her family history since 2000 with great success. She has traced her history back to the late 1700's, has met many cousins she never knew she had, and was instrumental

in organizing a reunion of parts of her family that had not been together since the 1880's. E-mail her at [amadden45@hotmail.com](mailto:amadden45@hotmail.com).



Information	Census Year						
	1870	1880	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940
Month and year of birth			X				
If father or mother was of foreign birth	X						
Father's and mother's birthplaces		X	X	X	X	X	
If born in last census year, what month	X	X					
Is person single, married, widowed, or divorced		X	X	X	X	X	X
If married in last census year, what month	X	X					
How many years married			X	X			
If previously married, which marriage is this				X			
Age at which first married						X	
For mothers, how many children born			X	X			
How many children born are living			X	X			
Was person blind, deaf and dumb, insane, idiotic	X	X					
Was person blind in both eyes				X			
Was person deaf and dumb				X			
Was person disabled		X					
Can person read or write	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Street name and house number		X	X	X	X	X	X
Value of personal property	X						
Value of real estate	X						
Is person's home owned or rented			X	X	X	X	X
If owned, is it mortgaged			X	X	X	X	
Value of house if owned, amount of monthly rental if rented						X	X
Is person living on a farm or in a house			X	X			
Does person live on a farm now						X	X
Did person live on a farm a year ago						X	
Is person an employer, employee, or self-employed				X	X	X	
Is person a survivor of Union or Confederate Army or Navy				X			
Is person a veteran of any war? Which war?						X	
Highest grade of school completed							X
Where did the person live in 1935							X
Employment questions for those 14 years and older							X

# Newly Emancipated Slaves Eagerly Enrolled in Freedmen's Schools

*When education became available, freed slaves leaped at the opportunity*

**Jim Warren**  
Contributor

After the Civil War ended in 1865, thousands of newly emancipated slaves in Kentucky faced a desperate need for education to equip them for the unfamiliar new world of freedom. Slaves in Kentucky—and elsewhere—had received little or no schooling. But most white Kentuckians had no interest in providing schools for them, and indeed did just about everything they could to hinder blacks' hopes for learning.

Into the breach stepped the newly formed U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands. Popularly known as the Freedmen's Bureau, it provided various relief services for blacks. But it was best known for establishing "Freedmen's schools" to educate former slaves in Kentucky and other former slave states.

"You would have seen adults; you would have seen children; you would have seen a real mixture of people going to these schools," said Morehead State University historian Benjamin Fitzpatrick.

The new schools were inadequately funded, provided only basic classes, and often faced active, even violent opposition from whites. But from 1865 until Congress abolished the Bureau in 1872, Freedmen's schools provided the first organized educational opportunities that blacks in many areas had ever received.

Former slaves, hungry for learning, leaped at the opportunity.

Kentucky had 97 black schools serving 5,610 students by November 1867, according to *A New History of Kentucky*, by Lowell Harrison and James Klotter. Less than two years later, almost 250 Freedmen's schools were operating

statewide and enrollment exceeded 10,000.

According to the University of Kentucky's Notable Kentucky African-Americans Database, virtually every Central Kentucky county had at least one Freedmen's school following the war. Classes were offered in Bourbon, Boyle, Jessamine, Madison, Scott, Clark, Garrard, Harrison, Lincoln, Montgomery, and Woodford counties. Since funding was limited, the schools usually met in churches, rented buildings, or wherever facilities could be found.

According to Marion Lucas' *A History of Blacks in Kentucky*, the first such school in Lexington was opened in the fall of 1865 by the black First Baptist Church. The Pleasant Green Baptist Church, Main Street Baptist Church, Asbury CME Church, and Christian Church also opened schools, according to Lucas.

The new black schools operated under various names, some calling themselves Freedmen's schools, while others used different names but received financial support from the Freedmen's Bureau.

The list included Lexington Freedmen School, Lexington High School, Lexington Sabbath School, and Talbott School, which was located on Upper Street between Third and Fourth streets. Howard School, opened in 1866 on Church Street between Upper and today's Corral Street, was named for Gen. O. O. Howard, the Freedmen's Bureau director.

Meanwhile, just down the road in Madison County, the recently founded Berea College was making a place in higher education for blacks, who made up at least half the student body from 1866 to 1889. Berea College did not operate a Freedmen's school, but it used an \$18,000 Freedmen's Bureau grant to build Howard Hall, which might have



Photo courtesy of Berea College

been the nation's first integrated college dormitory. It too was named for O. O. Howard.

In most Kentucky cities where Freedmen's schools operated they were the first formal schools available for blacks.

Overall, about 90,000 people were attending Freedmen's schools in former slave states by the end of 1865. The Freedmen's Bureau eventually allocated more than \$5 million for black education, even developing its own textbooks for the schools.

A federal report in 1867 said the Freedmen's school program had extended black education into "the remotest counties of each state lately in rebellion." Schools were "no sooner opened than large numbers . . . apply for admission," the report said, concluding that black adults were "seizing every opportunity for improvement."

But for emancipated slaves, getting an education remained a struggle.

Marion Lucus noted in his book that many black children stopped attending school in the winter simply because they lacked warm clothing. There were other roadblocks also.

"You have to remember that many of these folks were still tied to the land," Benjamin Fitzpatrick explained. "Most of them simply didn't have much time to devote to school, because their labor was needed to work the land."

That, however, was perhaps the least of the problems faced by the schools and their students.

"In Kentucky, the Freedmen's Bureau was one of the most unpopular things the federal government ever did," Kentucky historian Ron Bryant said. "White Kentuckians were so outraged about it that riots actually broke out, and federal authorities had to be called in."

Kentuckians' anger dated back to 1863, when Union authorities put the state



under martial law. It grew with President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

The proclamation didn't actually affect Kentucky—it only freed slaves in Confederate states—but many white Kentuckians saw it as an unconstitutional abuse of federal power. White Kentuckians might willingly fight to preserve the Union, but they wanted no part of freeing the slaves.

Freedmen's schools became an easy target for their anger.

According to *A New History of Kentucky*, during one month in 1868, a black school was destroyed in Monroe County, two churches were burned in Bullitt County, and a teacher at a black school was driven out of Mayfield by a mob.

Vigilante groups, including the newly formed Ku Klux Klan, roamed in many counties, attacking Freedmen's schools and terrorizing teachers and students. State authorities looked the other way in many instances, or enacted laws making education even more difficult for blacks.

*New History* authors Harrison and Klotter wrote that Kentucky was gripped by a "bitter, unrelenting opposition to black education, advancement or rights—indeed anything that hinted at the possibility of equality." Ultimately, Bryant says, whites' opposition was

rooted in fears that blacks, whom they viewed as inherently inferior, would be completely beyond control if they were educated.

"If you see that there is a better world out there—and education does show you that—you aren't going to be content to stay in quasi-slavery the rest of your life," Bryant said.

Despite the opposition, Freedmen's schools hung on for several years. But Washington's interest in the program was fading. By the time the Freedmen's Bureau ended in 1872, it already had ceased most of its efforts in Kentucky.

Lucas wrote that Freedmen's schools were never able to fully meet black educational needs because of poor funding. *New History* authors Harrison and Klotter concluded that it was "remarkable that the Freedmen's Bureau schools did as well as they did, for almost every effort was met by resistance."

Support for black education in Kentucky almost disappeared. Berea College offered integrated classes until 1904, when a new Kentucky law made it illegal for blacks and whites to attend school together. Real change didn't come until the 1950's.

While Freedmen's schools never achieved the dream of making black education widely and routinely available, they did lay a groundwork.

"At least," Bryant said, "they were a start."

This article was first published by the *Lexington Herald-Leader* on February 2, 2013 (<http://www.kentucky.com/2013/02/03/2501396/newly-emancipated-slaves-eagerly.html>). It is reprinted with permission. You can reach Jim Warren at [jwarren@herald-leader.com](mailto:jwarren@herald-leader.com).



# A Personal Retrospective during Black History Month

*This month encourages all of us to deepen our understandings of the struggles in our history for equality.*

**Jean Williams**  
Contributor

The shortest month of our calendar year has been designated as National Black History Month. How did this happen, and what has been my personal relationship with America's racial history?

## History

Probably the first 20 Africans came to Virginia in 1619 on a Dutch ship that had taken them from a Spanish ship. The Dutchmen exchanged them for food. By 1623–1624 they were listed as servants. Because of the need for workers in England, the American colonies needed cheap laborers, and by 1640 at least one, John Punch, had been declared a slave, as he was ordered by the court “to serve his said master or his assigns for the time of his natural life ....” Within one generation race became the defining characteristic of the enslaved, as they were not Christians and therefore could be made slaves.

Slow progress was made through the American Revolution, our Civil War, internal wars, and the Korean War. In 1926 Carter G. Woodson, Ph.D., from Harvard initiated Negro History Week in February, during the same week that celebrated the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. President Ford issued a Message on the Observance of Black History Week in 1975. In 1986 President Reagan declared February as Black History Month and said that “the foremost purpose of Black History Month is to make all Americans aware of this struggle for freedom and equal opportunity.” Then in 1996, President Clinton proclaimed that during “National African American

History Month” we should celebrate the achievements of all our citizens.

In July 1946, two black military veterans and their wives were taken from their car near Monroe, Georgia, by a white mob and shot to death; their bodies were found to contain 60 bullet holes. In response, President Truman appointed the President's Committee on Civil Rights, as he stated that the United States has an obligation to see that the civil rights of every citizen were fully and equally protected.

In November A. Philip Randolph organized a Committee against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training. By 1948, President Truman had instructed the Secretary of Defense to take steps to have the remaining instances of discrimination in the armed services eliminated as rapidly as possible. The end of segregation in the U.S. Army happened near the end of the Korean War.

## Floyd

Floyd Williams was drafted into the Army and sent to Korea. While he was fighting in Korea, President Truman's orders came through. In 1951, half of his all-black unit was moved into an all-white unit, and half of the white unit was moved into the black unit. President Truman stated, “It is my deep conviction that we have reached a turning point in the long history of our country's efforts to guarantee freedom and equality to all our citizens. ... When I say all Americans I mean all Americans.”

Before this, blacks faced discrimination in the military. For example, black officers could not give direct commands to whites. They learned to fight the enemy together anyway, and many

strong friendships occurred—until they returned to the United States.

After serving in Germany, Floyd was discharged and moved to Columbus, Ohio.

## Floyd and Me

In 1967, Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered the opinion in the case of the *State of Virginia v. Loving*: “This case presents a constitutional question never addressed by this Court: whether a statutory scheme adopted by the State of Virginia to prevent marriages between persons solely on the basis of racial classifications violates the Equal Protection and Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment. For reasons which seem to us to reflect the central meaning of those constitutional commands, we concluded that these statutes cannot stand consistently with the Fourteenth Amendment.”

This was important to Floyd and me as we were married in 1968. The judge who had ruled against the Lovings (she was black and he was white) stated, “Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, malay, and red, and he placed them on separate continents. And but for the interference with his arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix.”

Floyd and I went to visit Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1968 without the fear that we could be put in jail for up to 25 years. Resurrection City on the Mall was being dismantled, and the smell of tear gas was hard to ignore.

Our families accepted our marriage and we always felt love from them. Only one



friend contacted me to say she could no longer stay in touch because of my new husband.

We continued to attend the United Methodist Church, where Floyd was elected President of the Church Council. The church was predominantly white.

When we tried, in 1970, to rent an apartment in the southern part of Columbus, we were told by the agent, "I could rent to a black couple or to a white couple but not to a mixed couple."

When we tried to buy our house in 1971, our loan was denied. Floyd went to the bank manager and asked to see the reason and to compare it to those who were granted loans. We got the loan and integrated the neighborhood.

Five years later a real estate agent came to visit and encouraged us to sell and move out before "they" moved in and ruined our neighborhood. We contacted the FBI, and they took care of it.

While we were shopping in Eastland Mall, a little boy kept looking at us. Finally he asked his mother, "Are they different religions?"

When Floyd tried to adopt my daughter Beth from my first marriage (after her father died), the system was very slow and went into great depth with us and our friends to be "sure" Floyd was OK.

We have always felt accepted at our church, however, which reinforces my belief that we are all God's children, and as He loves us we are to love each other.



Photo courtesy of Jean Williams

Jean Williams is a retired schoolteacher and lives in Columbus, Ohio. She is an active volunteer for educational and civil rights issues, and spends as much time as she can with her six grandchildren.

This article was first published on the Web site of the Church of the Redeemer United Methodist Church in Columbus, Ohio, during Black History Month 2014.

## AAGSNC Executive Committee Meeting Notes

### AAGSNC Executive Meeting February 15, 2014

#### Minutes: Recording Secretary Dera Williams

The minutes of December 21 were discussed. Corrections were made. There was no executive meeting in January.

#### Journal: Chair Janice Sellers

The winter issue of *Baobab* is almost finished and should go out next week. If election results are available they can be included.

It was suggested that T-shirts and other Society items be advertised in the journal.

#### Historian: Chair Jackie Chauhan

Jackie's goal is to be in compliance with our guidelines and 5013(c)3 regulations. She has compiled an annual activity summary for 2013. She has some past copies of the journal and is gathering more. She is in the process of obtaining historical information and bios of the founding/charter members of AAGSNC.

#### Board Meeting

On February 4, 2014 Board of Directors president Bill Melson resigned and later submitted a letter of resignation effective immediately. He will be acknowledged for his leadership at the general meeting.

At today's general meeting, President Howard Edwards will call a meeting for the purpose of an election for filling two board vacancies. This meeting is a continuance of the deferred Board of Directors meeting in January.

#### Outreach and Education: Chair Alvis Ward

AAGSNC will have a table at the San Francisco History Expo on March 1. Several of our members will give presentations at the African American Genealogy Seminar in Sacramento on March 8.

Alvis Ward will be a featured presenter on February 20 for the PG&E Black History Month program. The two-hour event will be in San Francisco.

There are 62 registered guests thus far for the AAGSNC Black History Day program at the Family Life Center on February 16.

The program committee is still looking for program topics for future meetings. Bill Melson will present probate research at the March 15 meeting.

Submitted by Dera Williams  
AAGSNC Secretary, March 11, 2014

### AAGSNC Executive Meeting March 15, 2014

#### Minutes: Dera Williams

The minutes were approved after corrections of misspelled names.

#### Membership: Upperton Hurts

AAGSNC had 154 members at the end of the year; there are now 120 members as of today, March 15, 2014.

Retaining members and reaching out to one-time members will be further discussed as an agenda item at the next executive meeting.

We are still in the process of defining committee members as well as chairs/cochairs for some committees.

#### Journal: Chair Janice Sellers

Both the journal editor and historian need all back issues of *The Baobab Tree*. An accurate inventory is needed. Past issues of the journal are valued at \$5.00 per copy.

The method for delivery of journal to new members needs to be clarified.

#### Historian: Cochair Carol Miller

The Historian committee has already begun the process of interviewing and obtaining Society historical information from longtime members.

#### Program Committee: Annette Madden

The program schedule for 2014 was distributed to the Executive Committee. Future topics include a family reunion and research panel and tips and American Indian genealogy. The budget for the Program Committee is \$600, which can be used for guest presenters.

#### Publicity: Jackie Stewart

Jackie suggested we establish a relationship with Dimond Library, since our meetings are being held there. We need to make sure flyers and announcements are displayed so the general public is aware of our meetings and availability. Other methods of publicizing our group were discussed.

#### Web Site: Upperton Hurts

Our Web site is going through an upgrade to the Base Program. There may be broken links and other deficiencies, which we will address as they come up.

Submitted by Dera Williams  
AAGSNC Secretary, March 25, 2014

# Slavery's Exiles: The Story of the American Maroons: Book Review

*Some slaves who escaped created their own communities nearby*

Annette Madden  
Board Member, AAGSNC

**Title:** *Slavery's Exiles: The Story of the American Maroons*

**Author:** Sylviane A. Diouf

**Publisher:** New York University Press

**Publishing date:** 2014

**ISBN:** 978-0-8147-2437-8

Maroons (from the Latin-American Spanish word *cimarrón*: “feral animal, fugitive, runaway”) were African refugees who escaped slavery in the Americas and formed independent settlements. The term can also be applied to their descendants. (definition taken from Wikipedia)

Sylviane A. Diouf is an award-winning historian of Franco-Senegalese ancestry who has specialized in writing about the African Diaspora. She is the author of *Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America* (Oxford University Press, 2007) and *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas* (New York University Press, 1998), both of which received awards. She also authored *Fighting the Slave Trade: West African Strategies* (Ohio University Press, 2003), the first book to study African resistance to the slave trade.

With *Slavery's Exiles*, she again breaks new ground. This extensively and thoroughly researched study brings to light a little-known aspect of slavery in the United States. We are all familiar with Harriet Tubman and the phrase “follow the North Star”, with slaves escaping the South running away to the North, even as far as Canada. But the story of slaves who ran away but stayed in the South, often near the plantations they had left, is (at least for me) an unfamiliar one.

Diouf reveals maroon communities in the slave states of the United States.

The first part of Diouf's book deals with fugitives not in cohesive communities—individuals, small groups, families—some of whom were able to effect their escape only for short periods, others who were able to remain free for years, some until after Emancipation. She divides these into two groups: the ones who remained close to their plantations, whom she calls borderland maroons, and those who moved farther away into woods or swamps, whom she calls hinterland maroons.

Borderland maroons stayed near plantations in order to be close to family members, who often aided them. They also were able to raid the plantations for supplies and food. Hinterland maroons chose to be in more distant, secluded areas, the better to avoid recapture. They were less reliant on help from others and lived off the resources of the land.

When I hear about maroons, I think of the runaway slave communities in the Caribbean and South America. The latter part of the book deals with larger,

more established maroon communities similar to these. They include the maroons of Bas du Fleuve in Louisiana, southeast of New Orleans. It flourished for a brief period in the 1780's. The maroon community of Belleisle and Bear Creek existed for a similar amount of time in the 1780's on both sides of the lower Savannah River in Georgia and South Carolina. But the Great Dismal Swamp, a marshy area along the coast of southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina, was the home of the greatest concentration of maroons and for the longest period of time, from the early 1700's until the mid-1800's. The swamp did not house a single community of maroons, but many groups of various sizes, some near the borders of the swamp, living more like borderland maroons, and others seeking to hide themselves in much more secluded and impenetrable areas of the swamp, like hinterland maroons. They supported themselves by living off the land, by raiding a plantation if one was nearby—with the aid of family members still on plantations—and perhaps more surprisingly by in some cases trading with and working for white people in the lumber camps that dotted the area.

*Slavery's Exiles* is a little fact-heavy at times, but it is a fascinating read. Diouf has done a brilliant job of illuminating a complicated, multifaceted, important, yet little-known piece of black American history. This book once again shows that many of the enslaved did not meekly and docilely accept their fate, but were willing to take great risks to be free.

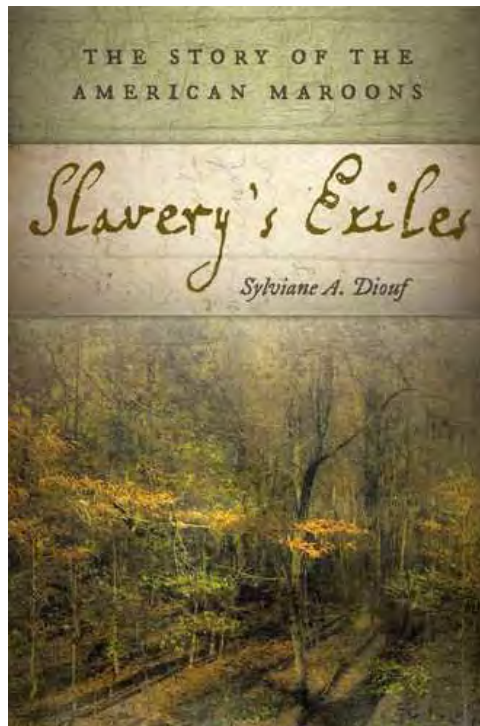


Photo courtesy of Annette Madden



**Annette Madden** has been researching her family history since 2000 with great success. She has traced her history back to the late 1700's, has met many cousins she never knew she had, and was instrumental

in organizing a reunion of parts of her family that had not been together since the 1880's. E-mail her at [amadden45@hotmail.com](mailto:amadden45@hotmail.com).



# Ensuring Your Genealogical Legacy

*What will happen to your research when you are gone?*

**Beth Galletto**  
Contributor

What's the difference between a hoarder and a genealogist? This is not a joke. I have a vision of my daughter, after my death, gazing in dismay at all my genealogy files, piles, boxes, and notebooks, throwing her hands in the air—and then throwing most of my precious (to me but not to her) stuff into big black plastic garbage bags to be hauled to the dump.

And why wouldn't she? If I have not made clear what things are important and why—and what should be done with them—she will have no way to distinguish trash from treasure.

This was the problem addressed by Patricia Burrow in her presentation on January 12, 2014 to the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society at Rhoda Goldman Plaza in San Francisco. She asked her audience to put ourselves in the place of the person who will be going through our things after we are gone, trying to decide what to save and what to discard. She has clearly thought a lot about this problem and has come up with many practical common-sense solutions.

Her first suggestion is to publish your research. She noted that the work doesn't have to be finished (which, if you are like me, it may never be). You can publish something as simple as a collection of family group charts. Then send your published product to family members. Sending family stories to the younger generation may get them interested in genealogy.

Burrow's guiding principle is to make clear how important your materials are by labeling and explaining them. After

years of research you know where each name fits in the family tree and who is in most of the photos, but you may be the only person who does. Burrow advised us to organize for the eyes of a stranger. Place an introductory letter in each file, box, and notebook explaining what the material is and how it fits into the entire collection.

When writing a will you must designate an executor. Burrow suggested that your will should also name a genealogy executor. "This person is not expected to finish your work, but to ensure the documents live for future generations to know about," she said. In addition you can set aside money for sorting, organizing, and distributing your research.

If your family members have not shown much interest in preserving your research, find other people or organizations to whom it can be distributed, and contact them to make sure they will accept your materials. In a handout Burrow listed some places where family history materials may be donated, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution Library, New England Genealogical Society, and state and county genealogical societies. For example, since both sides of my family ended up in Nebraska after immigrating to this country, I should find out whether historical societies in that state are interested in my materials. If they are, I should specify this distribution in my will.

Another suggestion was to put together a "drop dead" book. This should include an explanation of your materials in each of five categories: digital files, paper and binders, photos, books, and memorabilia. Her presentation also included discussions of ways to preserve, organize,



Photo courtesy of Jeremy Frankel

and back up all these types of materials, and how to note their importance for your survivors.

Burrow demonstrated her own organization by offering handouts, including an outline of her presentation, sources for materials to preserve your documents and photos, and sample documents, such as a codicil for your will.

*[Editor's note: The Program Committee is trying to arrange for Patricia Burrow to give a presentation to our society in 2015.]*



Photo courtesy of Beth Galletto

Beth Galletto has been working on her family history since a distant cousin made an unexpected visit in 1978 and sketched out a makeshift family tree on a napkin. When not working on genealogy, she is a freelance copywriter

and editor. This article first appeared in the February 2014 issue of *ZichronNote*, published by the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society.



# Mystery Photo

Can you identify the people in this photograph?

**M. Howard Edwards**  
President, AAGSNC

This is a nearly famous photograph of black American spectators watching the fire after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. The original is in the Library of Congress, and the photographer was Arnold Genthe. Per the 1900 United States census, the population of San Francisco was 342,782; fewer than 1% were black, as stated on InfoPlease.com, by Pearson Education, Inc. The photographer took another photo of the fire from Sacramento Street near Powell Street, and this appears to be an entirely different location. During this period, black Americans lived throughout the city, with a small concentration near Chinatown.

To capture this image by accident is remarkable, considering how few blacks were resident. Who were these folks? The earthquake occurred at 5:13 a.m. on April 18, 1906. This photo apparently was taken later the same day; it was a Wednesday. Why were these folks so turned out: hats, polished shoes, suits, finery? This was nearly 108 years ago; who are the descendants of these young people? Where are they now?

If you know the answer to any of these questions or have any other information regarding this photo, please contact the editor of *The Baobab Tree* at [journal@aagsnc.org](mailto:journal@aagsnc.org).



*American families on street during the San Francisco Fire of 1906; clouds of smoke billowing at bottom of hill in background. Even though that photo is not online, one*

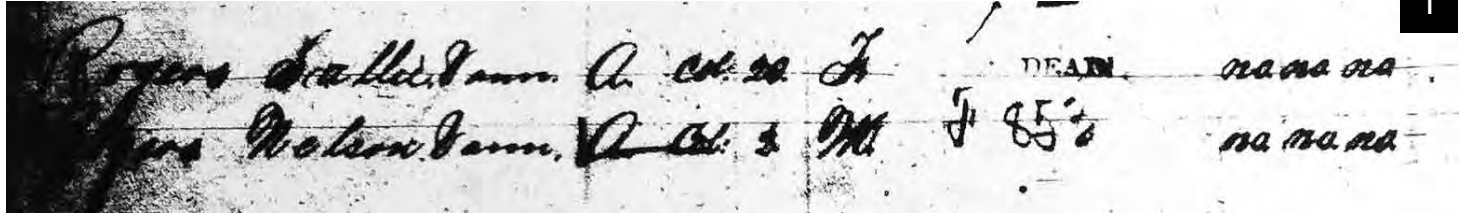
*can see from the small thumbnail that it is different from this photograph. The photo shown here does not appear to be listed in the online catalog.]*

*[Editor's note: There is a photograph listed in the Library of Congress online catalog (<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2005693294/>), by the same photographer, with the caption "African*

# Rider Fields Is My 4x-Great-Grandfather

continued from cover

Image from NARA, courtesy of Nicka Smith



1

Image from Ancestry.com, courtesy of Nicka Smith

91	88	Jesse Vann	47	M	B	Farmer	420	Georgia	M	1
		Sallie Vann	52	F	B	Housekeeper		Alabama	F	1
		Julia Vann	16	F	B	Washerwoman		Cherokee	Ind	3
		Benjamin Vann	7	M	B			do	do	3 1
		Sallie Vann	5	F	B			do	do	2
		Ruth Vann	3	F	B			do	do	2
		William Vann	1	M	B			Kansas	S	
		Irvin Vann	35	M	B	Farmer	200	Georgia	S	1
		Jesse Vann Jr	17	M	B	Farmer		Cherokee	Ind	3

2

when they were young, and that Sarah and Nelson were on the 1880 Cherokee census.

1897 Civil War pension file, Isaac Rogers, USCT 79th Regiment, Company E<sup>2</sup>. Sarah is listed ALL OVER her husband Ike's pension file, despite the fact that he had remarried twice by the time he died and she never received any of his benefits. This is thanks to depositions from Luster Forman, Dennis Hicks, Allen Lynch, Columbus McNair, William Vann (who I later discovered was Sarah's brother), and Ellis Webber. Sarah was noted as being born about 1860, dying about September 1884, and having two sons, Nelson Vann Rogers and Theodore Cooley Vann Rogers, and a sister named Ruth Vann Rogers. Ruth married her brother-in-law Ike after Sarah died and then died herself. Then I thought, "Rats. Sarah was born during slavery and died during the Black Hole" (the period of 1881–1899, when researchers have a missing federal census to contend with).

1880 Cherokee census, Sarah Vann Rogers and Nelson Vann Rogers<sup>3</sup> (image #1). A visit to the National Archives San Francisco regional branch yielded a census before Sarah passed away. As noted in the Dawes packets above, both Sarah and Nelson were listed. One might assume that Ike would be with his wife and child, but he wasn't there. (After some further Dawes research, I found that Ike had had another child around this time named Eddie Rogers [R479]; it's possible Ike and Sarah were separated.) Sarah, documented as Sallie, had the word "DEAD" stamped next to her name, while Nelson's Dawes card number "F853" is noted beside his name. These notations were made well after the 1880 Cherokee census took place and were likely done by folks working on behalf of the Dawes Commission.

Here's where I hit a dead end. I searched newspapers and many other documents for more on Sarah, but nada. Zilch. This is when I got the idea to search for Sarah and her family in southeastern Kansas.

"As the Civil War began, tribal factionalism that had begun at the time of removal resurfaced in violence over the issues of slavery and sectional loyalty. Some Indians declared their allegiance to the Union, while other groups from all of the Five Nations signed agreements with the Confederacy to

provide supplies and troops. The slaves were caught in the crossfire. The war in Indian Territory began with an attack on loyal Creeks, Cherokees, and runaway slaves retreating toward Kansas in 1861. In the next four years guerilla [sic] raiding by both Union and Confederate Indian units and desperate foraging destroyed many of the prosperous farms, businesses, and homes of the territory."<sup>4</sup>

I knew that Sarah's husband Ike, his family, and many other Cherokee freedmen migrated into southeast Kansas before and during the Civil War and stayed for a bit afterward, so I decided to see if I could find anyone fitting Sarah's and her sister Ruth's descriptions on one of the Kansas state censuses. These state censuses are valuable because they most commonly happened in years ending in 5 (e.g., 1865, 1875, 1885, etc.) and can fill in information between the federal censuses, which take place in years ending in 0 (e.g., 1870, 1880, 1890, etc.).

1865 Kansas state census, Sallie Vann<sup>5</sup> (image #2) Boom. I found something in the same county in Kansas where Sarah's in-laws were living from 1861–1880. Not only were there a Sallie Vann, and a Ruth (both born in the Cherokee Nation, with ages that matched my Sallie and Ruth), but they were in a household with a man and woman who appeared to be their parents—

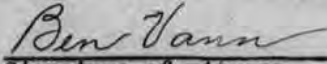
1: 1880 Cherokee Census, Sallie Vann Rogers, age 20, colored, female, and Nelson Vann Rogers, age 3, colored, male.

2: 1865 Kansas State Census, Jesse Vann and family.

3: Ben Vann, Eastern Cherokee Application (44082).



ters and brothers went on the Freedman Roll. My mother was Katie Fields and Katie Vann. She lived in Saline District. She died in 1891. She was enrolled for the bread and strip money. She was living in 1851 and I think she was enrolled at that time. She got her blood from her father, Rider Fields. He lived in Saline District, Locust Grove. I don't know whether he was enrolled in 1851 or 1855. His sisters were Ruthie, & Betty Fields. Ruthie married a Ballard and afterwards a Ross. Betty married a Springston. Richard Fields was my grandfather. I do not know any brothers and sisters. My mother never had any brothers and sisters to my knowledge. My oldest sister is named Tiney Vann. She left before the war. The next was Chick Vann, Martha Vann, and then myself, another sister called Sallie, a brother, Willie; Ruthie and Janey, were the youngest.

  
Signature of witness.

3

Jesse Vann, a farmer, and Kate Vann, a housewife—along with brothers and sisters Julia, Benjamin, William, Irvin, and Jesse Jr.

I then recalled seeing some Vanns with Dawes Commission cards issued right before my great-grandfather Cooley (F854), his brother, Nelson (F853), and his stepmother, Sarah Fry Rogers Whitmire (F852). Ben Vann (F851) and Dunk Vann (F850) appeared to be related when I found the cards for the folks I knew, but I wasn't sure at the time.

Dawes application, Cherokee, George W. C. Rider, F1563<sup>6</sup>. George Rider was the first cousin of Ike Rogers. On page 13 of his application, he noted that his sister Josie “lived around her father [Henry Rider] and with Jess Vann’s folks until she married and she married Josh Alberty and lived out around places.”

Dawes card and application, Cherokee Freedmen, Ben Vann, F737<sup>7,8</sup>. I figured that Jesse and Kate didn't live long enough to see the Dawes Commission, so I looked for their oldest son, Benjamin. A few Ben Vanns were listed in the freedmen cards, but I confirmed that F737 was Jesse and Kate's son as they were listed as his parents on the back. As I suspected, they were dead by 1901. Jesse's former slaveholder was Ave Vann or Avery Vann, and Katie's was Rider Fields. On the front of Ben's card, I noticed he had a son named “Cooley”, which is what my great-grandfather is sometimes listed as on records.

After a clue from BlogTalkRadio's Bernice Alexander Bennett, I decided to check the Eastern Cherokee applications to see if any of my ancestors were in

those. Boy, did I hit the jackpot.

Eastern Cherokee application, Ben Vann, 44082<sup>9</sup> (image #3). Sallie's brother Ben submitted an Eastern Cherokee application and stated that not only was Rider Fields his mother's slaveholder, but that he was also her father!!

I hoped to verify what Ben had stated with my DNA test results on 23andMe and AncestryDNA, and I found several genetic cousins that were tied to this same Fields family! Using this information, I've been able to find significant documentation online that goes back to Ludovic Grant, a Scottish rebel who was banished to Charles Town (now Charleston), South Carolina and eventually became a trader with the Cherokee and married a Cherokee woman. Ludovic Grant is my 8x-great-grandfather through Rider Fields. This story is still developing, but it's my first real connection that I've been able to make using traditional genealogy, oral history, and DNA.

## Endnotes

1. Fold3.com. *Dawes Packets*, NARA M1301 (*Applications for Enrollment of the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes, 1898–1914*). Nelson Vann Rogers, Cherokee Freedmen F853, Cooley Vann Rogers, F854. [http://www.fold3.com/title\\_70/dawes\\_packets/](http://www.fold3.com/title_70/dawes_packets/); accessed February 1, 2014.
2. United States Civil War Pension File, Isaac Rogers, U.S. Colored Troops, 79th Regiment, Company E; First Kansas Infantry, Date of Filing: August 18, 1890, Class: Invalid, Application Number: 882.523, Certificate Number: 712.932, State from Which Filed: Indian Territory; Date of Filing: July 3, 1897, Class: Widow,

Application Number: 657.980, Certificate Number: 460.080, State from Which Filed: Indian Territory; Date of Filing: October 27, 1900, Class: Minor, Application Number: 729.487, Certificate Number: 510.872, State from Which Filed: Indian Territory. Deposition by Columbus McNair, July 30, 1897. National Archives and Records Administration.

3. Cherokee Census, 1880. Page 161, number 2361, Sallie Vann Rogers, age 20, colored, female, and Nelson Vann Rogers, age 3, colored, male. National Archives and Records Administration, Microfilm P2072.

4. Oklahoma Historical Society. “Freedmen.” *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*. Oklahoma Historical Society, n.d. <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/f/fr016.html>; accessed May 30, 2014.

5. Ancestry.com. *Kansas State Census Collection, 1855–1925*. Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009. Osawatomie, Miami, Kansas, Line 24, Sallie Vann, age 5, child of Jesse and Kate Vann, born in the Cherokee Nation. Accessed February 1, 2014.

6. Fold3.com. *Dawes Packets*, NARA M1301. George Rider, Cherokee Freedman F1563, page 13. Accessed February 1, 2014.

7. Fold3.com. *Dawes Enrollment Cards*, NARA M1186 (*Enrollment Cards for the Five Civilized Tribes, 1898–1914*). Ben Vann, Cherokee Freedman F737. [http://www.fold3.com/title\\_69/dawes\\_enrollment\\_cards/](http://www.fold3.com/title_69/dawes_enrollment_cards/); accessed February 1, 2014.

8. Fold3.com. *Dawes Packets*, NARA M1301. Ben Vann, Cherokee Freedman F737, page 13. Accessed February 1, 2014.

9. Fold3.com. *Eastern Cherokee Applications (Eastern Cherokee Applications of the U.S. Court of Claims, 1906–1909)*. Ben Vann, 44082. [http://www.fold3.com/title\\_73/eastern\\_cherokee\\_applications/](http://www.fold3.com/title_73/eastern_cherokee_applications/); accessed February 1, 2014.



**Nicka Smith** is a board member of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California. She has been researching her family for 14 years. E-mail her at [me@whoisnickasmith.com](mailto:me@whoisnickasmith.com).



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Tote Bag, Vintage, White with Blue Strap	\$20.00
T-Shirt, Black, S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL	\$25.00
Magnifying Glass, Plastic, 2 ½"	\$1.00
Page Magnifier, Fresnel, 2 3/8" x 7 5/8"	\$2.00

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Interested in submitting your work to *The Baobab Tree*? You don't have to be a professional writer! Just tell your story the best you can and be willing to work with the editors to polish it for publication.

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- Type all submissions. Times New Roman font, 12-point size is best.
- Write one to three pages. We always need some one-page stories; more than three pages is too long.
- We will edit. All submissions are subject to review by our journal committee and editors, and may be edited for clarity and to fit the space available.
- Send your bio along with your story; include your contact e-mail and phone number(s). Bio should be in narrative form if possible, not a resume; we will still edit as needed.
- Send your portrait. E-mail a JPG photo of yourself along with your story or article. A good clear head-and-shoulders shot of you is best, in front of a solid color background that contrasts with your hair and skin tone. If you only have a shot of yourself with other people, we may be able to crop it (*i.e.*, cut out the other folks).
- Photos, documents, and other graphics are always welcome, in JPG format. Make sure pictures are at least 300 dpi (dots per inch), sharp, and clear and have enough contrast to show up well in black and white. All photos and documents must have credit and captions submitted in a separate document.
- Respect the deadlines you're given for submissions and corrections. If your material is late, it might have to be held for the next issue or drastically altered to fit the space.

E-mail us at [journal@aagsnc.org](mailto:journal@aagsnc.org).

# Web Notes

*Resources, stories, and other things found while wandering the Web*

**Janice M. Sellers**  
Editor, *The Baobab Tree*

Black women in the North who railed against slavery before the Civil War

<http://hnn.us/article/15761>

*Antiques Roadshow* appraisal of the first black American beauty book, published by the first female American self-made millionaire

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/archive/201307A06.html>

Monthly articles about "world genetic structure and relationships", going back to 2008

<http://www.dnatribes.com/library.html>

*Antiques Roadshow* at the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum

[http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/fts/kansascity\\_201307F01\\_ss.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/fts/kansascity_201307F01_ss.html)

Negro Leagues Grave Marker Project places tombstones on the graves of those players who do not have them

<http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/otl/news/story?id=6136800>

*New York Times* 1853 press coverage of Solomon Northup after his rescue

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/new-york-times-1853-coverage-solomon-northup-hero-12-years-slave-180949944/>

*Twelve Years a Slave* presented by Northup's great-grandson

<http://www.c-span.org/video/?c4486019/12-years-slave-presented-solomon-northups-gr-gr-grandson-clayton-adams>

The historian who unearthed *Twelve Years a Slave*

<http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/culture/2014/03/the-historian-who-unearthed-twelve-years-a-slave.html>

Searching for the real Patsy of *Twelve Years a Slave*

<http://www.vanityfair.com/vf-hollywood/patsy-12-years-a-slave>

*Memoir of Quamino Buccau, a Pious Methodist*, free PDF download of a slave memoir

<http://books.google.com/books?id=0w1aIXL1cRUC&oe=UTF-8>

Digitized collection of photographs includes black communities in Alabama and South Carolina

<http://images.library.amnh.org/digital/collections/show/6>

Oral histories of early black faculty at UC Berkeley

<http://newscenter.berkeley.edu/2014/06/03/life-stories-of-early-african-american-faculty-administrators-offer-window-onto-history/>

Maya Angelou video about being San Francisco's first black streetcar conductor

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/14/maya-angelou-teenage-years\\_n\\_3267233.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/14/maya-angelou-teenage-years_n_3267233.html)

Podcast of interview with contributor to *African American Connecticut Explored*

<http://www.fieldstonecommon.com/african-american-ct-katherine-harris/>

Yale's first black graduate earned his degree in 1857

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/01/nyregion-discovery-leads-yale-to-revise-a-chapter-of-its-black-history.html>

The former slave who provided cadavers for Medical College of Georgia

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/meet-grandison-harris-grave-robber-enslaved-and-then-employed-georgia-college-medicine-180951344/>

Integrating the history of the house's slaves into a museum's presentations

<http://www.connectsavannah.com/savannah/what-the-butler-did/Content?oid=2446036>

Georgia group restores historic black cemeteries

<http://chronicle.augusta.com/news/metro/2014-04-12/georgia-group-aims-restore-forgotten-cemeteries>

Chemical plant may wipe out Louisiana community founded by freed slaves  
<http://m.motherjones.com/environment/2014/03/sasol-mossville-louisiana>

A historic marker for Boston's first black-owned home, in 1670  
<http://www.wbur.org/2014/05/20/boston-first-black-owned-home>

The earliest extant New Jersey birth records are for children of slaves  
<http://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog/2014/05/21/born-free/>

A search for descendants of Seneca Village, New York  
<http://www.npr.org/blogs/eprotjournalist/2014/05/06/309727058/the-lost-village-in-new-york-city>

The Duke (North Carolina) Chapel Recordings include sermons from a number of notable black preachers  
<http://blogs.library.duke.edu/rubenstein/2014/03/05/new-digital-collection-duke-chapel-recordings/>

North Carolina honors 250 black soldiers and patriots who participated in the Revolutionary War  
<http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2013/Bills/House/HTML/H113v0.html>

Photos of slave descendants on Daufuskie Island, South Carolina, donated to Smithsonian  
<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/photos-slave-descendants-donated-smithsonian>

Three new exhibitions at the Lowcountry Digital History Initiative, including reconstruction of an 1858 slave ship voyage  
<http://today.cofc.edu/2014/05/06/blacksmith-philip-simmons-featured-new-online-exhibitions/>

Web site for Fairview Cemetery, Staunton, Virginia  
<http://www.mbc.edu/fairview>

Recording of "Slavery in the North" discussion with Judy Russell  
<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/bernicebennett/2014/04/11/slavery-in-the-north-with-judy-g-russell-jd-cg-cgl>

Help index Freedmen's Bureau records  
<http://nmaahc.si.edu/GetInvolved/FreedmensBureau>

Recognition for the Civil War's 56th Colored Infantry regiment  
<http://www.ksdk.com/story/news/2014/04/21/jefferson-baracks/soldiers/7991579/>  
<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/765654048/Former-slaves-who-fought-in-Civil-War-remembered.html>

Black family history segments on *History Detectives*  
<http://ancestraldiscoveries.blogspot.com/2014/02/black-family-history-on-history.html>

Black history segments on *History Detectives*  
<http://ancestraldiscoveries.blogspot.com/2014/03/black-history-on-history-detectives.html>

Black soldiers at D-Day  
<http://thegrio.com/2014/06/06/black-soldiers-d-day/#s:omahasecured-2>

"Mirror of Race" online photograph exhibition  
<http://mirrorofrace.org/>

Recorded cases of black female lynching victims  
<http://henriettavintondavis.wordpress.com/2009/07/22/recorded/>

Online archival collections for Malawi and Nigeria  
<http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/endedangeredarchives/2014/05/new-online-collections-may-2014.html>

DNA identified as American Indian could be from Madagascar instead  
<http://rootsrevealed.blogspot.com/2014/06/got-roots-in-madagascar.html>

NARA *Prologue* article on researching ancestors from the West Indies  
<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2013/fall-winter/west-indies.pdf>

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#### Manuscripts/Articles:

- African and black genealogy, cultural traditions, and philosophy
- Church histories
- Documentation of African oral traditions and African writings
- Documentation of black families
- Ancestry charts, family group records, personal family papers
- Miscellaneous topics of interest in researching black ancestors
- Resources and methods of research in Africa

#### Abstracts:

- Census transcriptions (federal, state, city, and county)
- Church records (baptisms, burials, marriages, etc.)
- Court records
- Manumission and freedom certificates
- Missionary and benevolent society records
- Military and pension records
- Newspaper transcriptions
- Plantation family papers relating to slaves
- Tax lists naming free blacks or slaves
- Voter registration lists



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