

Are your ancestors calling on you to tell their stories?

Many records document the enslaved in the North.

How many Manuel Babilonias were there really?

Legislators, judges, and family history.

# the Baobab Tree

Journal of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California, Inc. / Vol. 22 No. 3 / Summer 2017 / ISSN 1543-4125

**Driver, David H.** F&D CO LABORER

ASSIGNMENTS		Military NO	Years	Mo.
		Army	Navy	War
<i>Dist. Sec.</i>	<i>2</i>			
<i>7-20-21</i>				
<i>7-23-21</i>	<i>2</i>			
<i>9-17-34</i>	<i>2</i>			
<i>4-26-37</i>	<i>2</i>			
<i>1-20-38</i>	<i>2</i>			
<i>1-28-38</i>	<i>2</i>			

*Handwritten notes: "Return to G.S.A.", "7/19-38", "30-38", "2-28-37"*

Military NO: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Years: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mo.: \_\_\_\_\_  
 War: \_\_\_\_\_

Substitute July 20, 1921  
 Regular July 20, 1921  
 M 1873\*  
 Date of birth May 24, 1875  
 Birthplace Memphis, Tenn.  
 Previous occupation Porter  
 Separation with cause: *Retired*  
 May 31, 1938 (age)

PREVIOUS SERVICE: *TShal<sup>2</sup> 8-11-20 TLab<sup>3</sup> 8-16-20*

\* *date of birth corrected 12-28-37 (birth cert)*

**Oral History?  
Prove It!**

**Janis Minor Forté**  
Contributor

Having oral histories passed down through the generations presents genealogists with both an energetic charge and a genealogical challenge. The charge is the inquiries created from the testimonial history, and the challenge is confirming the story. So it was with one of my family legends. This story reported that during some part of their employment lives, all four sons of William and Sallie

Driver worked for the U.S. Post Office in Chicago.

Validating this story involved years of research that were broad in scope and deep in range. Confirmation required securing records that documented the employment history of each son. Locating those historical records took years of searching. Their contents would release the energy.

**Background**

During the course of their long married life, my maternal great-grandparents William Goodrich P. Driver, born about 1847 in Tennessee, and his wife Sallie S. (Campbell) Driver, born about January 1848, also in Tennessee, survived slavery and produced fifteen children. Ten survived to adulthood. Of these, four were boys: David, born May 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) nonprofit 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:

- 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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## Before the Memories Disapper

Photo courtesy of M. Howard Edwards



**M. Howard Edwards**  
President, AAGSNC

be worth contacting a local newspaper reporter for an article in the newspaper.

Do not forget to make a few notes about what you tried that did NOT work or did NOT produce the results you expected. Over time, researchers may forget those experiences and resources because they sound so right and appropriate, and inevitably will try the same thing with the same result—what a time-waster! And that is a commodity few of us have to waste. It is not unknown that researchers end up duplicating research done before, feeling that it is eerily familiar as they go along. If properly recorded in the first place, this might not happen to you.

Above all, share your hard work with the family. After all, in addition to yourself, that is for whom you are doing all of this. Be sure they benefit.

### Contribute to *The Baobab Tree*

As I said last year, in addition to the editor's entreaties, allow me to encourage you also to provide an article for the journal. It will be a great bid for personal and family immortality, and immortality for the topic of your submission. You may have talent you did not know you had. If you want to develop an article, consult with the editor; help is available if you are uncomfortable with your writing skill level. We really would like to hear your story, and I am sure you have a story you are aching to tell.

Let us assume for a minute that you read, believed, and followed my suggestions in the Spring 2016 issue of *The Baobab Tree*:

1. Over the summer return to the “Old Country.”
2. Interview the old folks (include a video or audio recorder).
3. Contact the local historical or genealogical society and let them know you are on your way.
4. I implied that you should record all of this activity that provided new data.

Welcome back!

Now what?

Before it gets stale, write a page or two (or many) summarizing your findings. Share these remarks with those whom you visited, especially the old folks you interviewed. It is kind of a kick to see our remarks in print, and that will probably be true with them. If you did a particularly thorough job, it might

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## Correction

In the Fall 2016 issue of *The Baobab Tree* (Volume 21, Number 4), a mistake was made in the list of original members of AAGSNC on page 7. Juliet Crutchfield, Lisa Lee, and Carole Neal were not original members of the society. In addition, Carole Neal did not attend the planning meeting.



## 2017 Calendar of Events

Meetings are held from 1:30–4:00 p.m. at the Oakland Public Library, Dimond Branch, 3565 Fruitvale Avenue, Oakland, unless otherwise noted.

### September 16

AAGSNC Book Sale and Reception  
Home of Electra Kimble Price  
San Leandro

### October 21

SF Bay Area Black Churches

### November 18

Using Freedmen's Bureau Records for Slave Research

### December 16

Annual Christmas Party

Meeting program topics are subject to change. For more information and updates on our events and meetings, visit <http://www.AAGSNC.org/>

## Solano County

## Discussion Group

## 2017 Calendar

Meetings will take place from 1:00–3:00 p.m. on the second Saturday of the month from September–November at Solano Community College, Fairfield Campus, Building 400 1st Floor.

The meetings have open discussion and on-site computer research. For more information, contact facilitator Corvin Tademay at [tadcor@aol.com](mailto:tadcor@aol.com).

# Welcome to Kingstree

## The Shaw family in South Carolina

### Sharon Styles AAGSNC Member

Descendants of the Shaw family from Marlin, Texas recently traveled to South Carolina in search of our roots. Robert Dary of Ft. Worth, Barbara Shaw of Florida, Angela Shaw Ross of New Mexico, and I went to Kingstree, Williamsburg County, South Carolina to visit the land our Shaw ancestors left more than 150 years ago.

For years we worked independently on our family histories. In 2015, with the assistance of DNA, we found one another and began to share information. We finally met face to face at the 2016 Shaw Family Reunion in Marlin, Texas.

Robert Dary and I are first cousins, so we've always known each other. Our great-grandparents Harvey and Eliza Shaw migrated from South Carolina to Marlin circa 1867. Records from the Freedmen's Bureau indicate Harvey Shaw (born about 1846) was party to an 1867 complaint of failure to pay against Churchill Jones and Nicholas Stallworth of Marlin.

Angela Shaw Ross is the great-great-granddaughter of USCT Anthony Shaw (born circa 1843–1941) and great-great-great-granddaughter of Joseph Shaw (born about 1810). Both men and their families were part of the 1867 migration to Marlin.

Barbara Shaw, a DNA cousin from Florida, has compiled extensive data on her Shaw family and is a descendant of Isaac Shaw (born about 1808). She has an idea of how our families are connected but needs additional documentation to confirm it.

DNA testing, oral history, and genealogical research have confirmed all of our ancestors were enslaved in the Kingstree, Williamsburg County, South Carolina area. We've determined they were on the Henry D. Shaw, James Tisdale, William Tisdale, and

surrounding plantations. In addition to Shaw, family surnames include McCleary, Tisdale, Strong, Mouzon, Fluitt, McCrea, Bradley, Manigo, Gamble, Witherspoon, Nesmith, and more.

Shortly after the 2016 Shaw Family Reunion, a suggestion was made to organize a research trip. Everyone quickly agreed and began making plans for 2017. In early May we met in South Carolina for a week of research and discovery. It was life changing.

We spent a day at the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston, where we located newspaper articles and regional information about Williamsburg County. We spent another day at the Williamsburg County Historical Society in Kingstree, where we found will and probate information on former slave owners Henry D. Shaw and James Tisdale.

Armed with the probate information, we visited the Williamsburg County Courthouse in Kingstree and obtained a copy of the probate records for James Tisdale. The records include 54 names of enslaved black Americans along with the value placed on each. James Tisdale died in 1816. His widow, Agnes Strong Tisdale, married Henry D. Shaw in 1818. Henry Shaw took control of the property and slaves that his new wife had inherited from her late husband. It will take time to compare the names on Tisdale's probate records to possible ancestors of our family research group.

Tiffany Mouzon, another DNA cousin and descendant of Isaac Shaw, drove up from Atlanta to meet us in Kingstree. The Mouzon family still operates a farm on the land they've owned since Emancipation. Tiffany, a recent law school graduate, supports the Gullah Geechee Nation in its efforts to help other families maintain control of their ancestral lands.

We also confirmed the Shaw families of Marlin are descendants of the



Shaw family members come to Kingstree:

Women L-R: Barbara Shaw, Sharon Styles, Angela Shaw Ross, Tiffany Mouzon, Joyce Dary

Men L-R: William Stillings, Billy Ross, Ernest Shaw, Robert Dary

Gullah people of South Carolina and can rightfully claim membership in the Gullah Geechee Nation. For decades the Gullah people have been looked down upon and misunderstood. Recent interest and historical research has changed that impression. The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission states, "Gullah is a unique creole language spoken along the Sea Islands and adjacent coastal areas of South Carolina and Georgia.

The residents in Georgia are typically referred to as Geechee."

Ernest Shaw, another DNA cousin and descendant of Isaac Shaw, gave us a guided tour of Kingstree. I have been in touch with Ernest since 2011, but we were never able to make a connection until DNA testing asserted we are fourth cousins. He is a leading expert on the South Carolina Shaw families.

We visited cemeteries, funeral homes, churches, community members, and the Henry D. Shaw plantation where our ancestors toiled for so many years. The plantation is no longer there. It has been replaced with a modest home in which his descendants still reside. But we stepped on the ground our ancestors worked. We stood under trees dripping with Spanish moss and imagined the difficult lives



Former Henry D. Shaw plantation land

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All photos courtesy of Sharon Styles

they endured. There are no words to describe it.

It was a wonderful week of discovery, revelations, and connections. We met so many kind people. We made contacts I'm sure we will continue to call upon for assistance.

A few of us worshipped at St. Paul United Methodist Church on Sunday. Many of our relatives are members there, and many more are buried in the church cemetery. After the service, several of the older relatives greeted us with hugs and welcomed us home.

Shaw family members at St. Paul United Methodist Church in Kingstree (above)

Sharon Styles and Geneva Shaw Burgess in Kingstree (right)



Shaw family members with Mr. Mouzon on the family farm in Kingstree (below)



Later that afternoon we visited 92-year-old Mrs. Geneva Shaw Burgess. Her mind is still sharp and she provided valuable oral history. We gave her photos and answered questions about the Texas Shaw family. At one point, Miss Geneva looked at me and said, "You sound like a Shaw." I smiled and said, "Yes, ma'am, I am a Shaw."

Miss Geneva agreed to take a DNA test to help our research efforts. I pray we are a match!

**Sharon Styles** is a resident of Sacramento, California. She began researching her family in 2007. Now that she is retired, she plans to continue researching her roots. Fortunately, her parents, four grandparents, and great-grandparents all came from the same little town of Marlin, Falls County, Texas. Sharon is a member of AAGSNC, AAHGS, Central Texas Genealogical Society, and St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church Library Ministry, which hosts a genealogy seminar each year. Sharon can be reached at (916) 275-8084 or Sharon.kay@sbcglobal.net.

# Answering the Ancestors' Call

*Don't put off sharing their stories!*

Photo courtesy of Ellen Fernandez-Sacco

**Kathy Lynne Marshall**  
AAGSNC Member

The clock is ticking faster and faster now that I am in my 60th year of life and longevity issues have begun creeping into my thoughts. I am the fourth-oldest member of my mother's family! I have been futzing around with gathering family history information for 40 years, even before Alex Haley's *Roots* hit the world to grand acclaim. On crowded shelves in my home library are several three-ring binders filled with printed census, vital records, and other official documents for each of my six main family lines:

- Williams (Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Ohio)
- Marshall (Georgia, Missouri, and Ohio)
- Carter (Virginia and Ohio)
- Booker (Virginia and Ohio)
- Myers (Germany, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Ohio)
- Dooley (Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio)

But what will happen to all of my precious containers full of priceless genealogy information? Nobody can really ferret out what all those individual documents mean, unless they are written in a narrative form that compiles those disparate facts into an interesting story, right?

After my birthday in 2016, I really felt the pull of the ancestors. I began researching how to write interesting histories about my relatives, utilizing as much data from official sources as possible. Initially, I had two main goals in mind. First was to find out about my enslaved great-great-grandfather Otho Williams, who was born in 1834 in Washington County, Maryland; I had never been able to go back further than the 1870 census for him and his wife, Alice Logan. This goal included old-fashioned family history research utilizing as much GPS (Genealogical Proof Standard) as I could muster, in

addition to getting as many relatives as possible to take DNA tests, so we could find out about our ethnic heritage.

Equally as important as conducting slave research, though, was my second goal of commemorating the lives of my ancestors who descended from Otho Williams. I initially decided to dedicate myself entirely to creating one book that would explore both of those lofty goals. That meant no more diddling around with online *Scrabble* games until I had completed this monumental task!

On October 1, 2016, I listened to an online Webinar which encouraged black Americans to start writing our own stories, instead of letting others write our history for us. That Webinar, and other sources from genealogy conferences and books, suggested that one could start writing a book by revealing what you already know about your own family. That would mean writing about myself first, including my childhood memories, adulthood, my children, etc. Then I would write stories about my parents, grandparents, and so forth.

## The Key Is to Start Writing Now!

Even though I may never find out answers to all of my questions, I needed to start writing now. "But I hardly know anything about my enslaved ancestors," I whined to myself. Many sources indicated it would be acceptable to simply acknowledge that some historical unknowns might have to be researched at a future date. "Just start writing now" became my mantra.

I finally understood how to begin this monumental project and felt a strong assurance that I would be successful this time! The ancestors want their stories to be told, and they want me to complete this inspirational writing journey now. Once I truly believed that, the words began to flow from my excited synapses through my fingertips

and onto my laptop computer. I found it easy to create an outline for the book, including about 50 questions about my enslaved ancestor, such as: Where did Otho Williams live? Who were his parents and his slave owner? What daily duties did he perform? Did he fight in the Civil War? Was he successful after slavery? Was he a metalworker like many of his descendants after slavery? So many questions had to be researched and answered.

I wrote an initial introduction stating what I intended to do. I had read that it can be effective to write the book as you are making discoveries. That way, the reader can share in your exciting finds and disappointments as the research progresses. Plus, it is motivating to know that your book is actually being written! So that is the tactic I took for this project.

The first month, I wrote feverishly about my immediate family's upbringing. Although my beloved mother, Mary Carter Marshall, passed away in 2007 from breast cancer, I am fortunate enough to have her personal journal, called *Reflections from a Mother's Heart*. Therefore, I can share heart-warming details about her childhood in Ohio; her marriage to my father, Thomas Marshall; her job as a teacher and principal; and her thriving watercolor art business in retirement. This wealth of information, which came directly from her typed memories, allows me to write her story, using her own words, in her own voice.

I also had a few letters from my grandmothers and uncles from 40 years ago, containing important family history. Since 2006, I have been inputting family history information from our 1983 and 2003 family reunions, and official census and other documents into my Ancestry.com account and *Family Tree Maker* on my personal computer. Although data for most of my relatives only go back as far as the end of slavery, I still have a lot of information to help me write creative nonfiction memoirs and accounts for



several family members. Also during the first month, with a little financial help from me, I was able to get several relatives to take autosomal, Y-DNA, and mt-DNA tests, realizing that the results would take up to two months to come back.

By the end of the second month of nonstop composing, I had nearly 90 pages of narratives, photographs, and charts! I sent a copy of that first draft to my Aunt Myrtle “Lavata” Williams, who is not only the 85-year-old great-granddaughter of the slave I am investigating, but also our beloved family historian. She sent me back pages of typed feedback, corrections, and additional stories. Her first-hand accounts of living with my great-grandparents Otho Sherman Williams and Myrtle Booker Williams were very helpful, since I was too young to know either of them. Aunt Lavata’s insights were invaluable for the “16 People Lived in My House?”, “A Super Star at 106!”, and “The Designated Genealogist” chapters in my book.

I carefully incorporated all of the references and resources to help me develop stories that seem to come directly from the mouths of my ancestors. As I wrote every page, I could hear them talking to me, saying, “No, write it this way,” or “Yes, that’s exactly how it happened!”

By the third month, though, I was running out of stories I already knew and began attempting to break through that blasted 1870 brick wall that is the bane of many a person doing slave research. Based on the phenomenal success I had had by the end of the first month, I began to think I would have a decent draft of the book by the end of the third month. Wrong! The roller coaster ride that is black American genealogy research shifted again! I could not find Otho Williams’ slave owner or parents, even after perusing Maryland land records, censuses, and slave schedules morning, noon, and many nights!

For several years, I did have a phenomenal theory of Otho’s parentage. During a 2012 trip to the Ohio State

Archives, I found there were several white men with the same name as my great-great-grandfather: Otho Williams and Otho Holland Williams. All were from Hagerstown, Maryland in the late 1700’s and 1800’s. I mused “how many Otho Williams could there be in such a small town?” Now I knew nothing about Maryland, just that it was a small state, compared to California. And once I found out that Brigadier General Otho Holland Williams, 1749–1794, from Washington County, Maryland, had ties to English royalty, I immediately thought of a great title for my book: “The Cream in Our Coffee Wore a Crown.” I even pitched that story to Ancestry.com in 2015 and was in the final running for the commercials they ran during the Olympics in 2016! But alas, our story was not selected, perhaps because their ProGenealogists did a little digging into my theory and found out that it was wrong, or perhaps because I was not enthusiastic about my high percentage of European DNA. I was unable to prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that my theory was true about our nexus to the white Otho Williams, even though quite a bit of circumstantial evidence kept me insisting it was true for a long time. Word to the wise: Be flexible in your theories until you are positive they are right or wrong!

In the beginning of my fourth month of work, I found several momentous “smoking guns” which led to exciting answers to terribly important questions about Otho Williams’ parents and his slave owners. Read and reread land records, especially every bill of sale, deed of manumission, and contract, but there are also some slave transactions in regular deeds. Once you know who the owner is, peruse the family’s wills and other probate records to (hopefully) learn specific information about their slaves. My book was filling out quite nicely by the end of the sixth month.

I even spent the first two weeks of the seventh month in Maryland doing “boots on the ground” research to see where my family lived, to smell the air they breathed, to touch the ground they walked on in the 1700’s and 1800’s, and to take plenty of photographs for inclusion in the book. I also spent many

happy hours in the Washington County Free Library, Western Maryland Room, and Historical Society taking photos of original documents that I had only seen online before that trip. I even drove 90 minutes away to Baltimore to do more research in the Enoch Pratt Free Library, drove through Kent and Cecil counties in Maryland, and went to the home where my grandmother was born in Germantown/Philadelphia to check out other places where my Williams family lived. It was truly a magical experience! As soon as I got home, I wrote up my travels for “The Journey Home” chapter.

But I started having concerns that the slave research portion of the book was fairly academic, with lots of charts and graphs, and the DNA chapter was somewhat technical. Both of those more scholarly segments contrasted a bit awkwardly with the folksy stories of my Williams descendants. I agreed with some of my editors that it seemed like I had two separate books: one about the slave Otho Williams and one about his descendants. So in the eighth month on this project, I decided to split my writings into two separate books.

One book is called *Finding Otho: The Search for Our Williams Ancestors*, which includes the exciting discoveries I was able to finally make regarding my 2nd- and 3rd-great-grandparents. “Exhilarating” describes the satisfaction I feel in the information I am finding about my enslaved ancestors. This book is still in progress.

The other book contains stories about the indomitable spirits of the descendants of my enslaved Williamses, as well as profiles about me and my immediate family, including my father and a few of his family members. Many of these stories are about regular black people who led typical, hardscrabble lives as domestics and cooks and laundresses in racially divided America. Some stories tell of remarkable successes of their children, who made their way into the highly regarded professions of medicine, engineering, computers, and education. The tenacity and fortitude of all of my relatives have driven them to ensure that each new generation is better off than the last. I feel the stories





Photo courtesy of Kathy Marshall

Collage of photos of Kathy Lynne Marshall (upper left) and of several of her ancestors

- Reba Williams: a cook for a Pulitzer Prize-winning author; at the age of 106, she was profiled on the Jay Leno TV show and in *Essence Magazine*.
- Pearl Williams Carter: a hard-working domestic employee all of her life who instilled in her seven children how to be contributing American citizens.
- Myrtle “Lavata” Williams: the Designated Genealogist, the appointed keeper of our family history, who was almost abducted in Egypt.
- Mary Carter Marshall: who went from a small-town existence in Ohio to become a beloved educator and professional artist in California.
- Dr. Thomas R. Marshall: who delivered many hundreds of babies while perhaps being the first Iron Man who grew up in a funeral home.

Last but not least are me, my siblings, my children, and my grandchildren. We are the proud descendants of these remarkable ancestors.

Many thanks go to African American Genealogical Society of Northern California members Janice Sellers, Diana Ross, and Michael Willis, as well as many other people in Maryland and Ohio and California, for helping me with various components of these genealogy books. I am so very excited that my ancestors will be coming to life for everybody to enjoy.

Photo courtesy of Kathy Marshall



**Kathy Marshall** was a researcher/analyst with the California Highway Patrol for 36 years and has been exploring her family roots for four decades. This article is about motivating herself to work on the first in a planned series of books investigating her enslaved ancestors and their descendants. Marshall truly believes that *The Ancestors Are Smiling!* Contact Kathy at [kanikaas@me.com](mailto:kanikaas@me.com).

contained in this book are not only meant for my family, but for anyone interested in learning about the history of a resilient black American family.

So what is the best way to get a book finished? Agree to speak at an author event, which will force you to finish writing and print several books for sale in a short turn-around timeframe! After I uploaded to Facebook a picture of me with an advance reader copy of *The Ancestors Are Smiling!*, which I had printed from Lulu.com, my Facebook friends asked when they could have a copy. Then, in early June, the Elk Grove Fine Arts Center asked me to participate in its annual September Authors’ Reception, with the deadline for delivering the printed books being no later than mid-August! Agreeing to speak at this event forced me to get busy and finish the book! I had to find volunteers to help me do the final copy-editing; create an appealing cover; ensure that I used proper formatting for the copyright and other pages in the

book; make sure all of my citations and bibliography were complete; figure out how to purchase ISBN numbers so the book could be sold on Amazon.com and in stores; determine how long it would take to get the book printed and mailed to me so I could schedule deadlines; arrange to sell the books on my KanikaMarshall.com site and Amazon.com; etc. Believe me, my head was swimming, trying to get it all done in time for my mid-August book delivery deadline!

Here is a sneak peek of some of the heroes telling their stories in *The Ancestors Are Smiling!*

- Otho Sherman Williams: His Mount Vernon, Ohio home was a sanctuary for up to 16 of his descendants, for decades. He was the son of the slave Otho Williams, who is profiled in the upcoming *Finding Otho: The Search for Our Williams Ancestors*.

# Oral History? Prove It!

continued from cover

428 CLERKS IN POST-OFFICES.					
Illinois.					
Name.	Where born.	Whence appointed.			Where employed.
		State.	County.	Cong. dist.	
William C. Dressler	Illinois	Illinois	Cook	3d	Chicago, Ill.
Richard C. G. Dreves	Germany	do	do	3d	do
John F. Driscoll	Canada	do	do	2d	do
William A. Driver	Tennessee	do	do	1st	do
Thomas F. Drury	Illinois	do	do	2d	do
Edward Dubsky	do	do	do	2d	do
Ralph M. Duddles	do	do	do	2d	do
John Duff	Canada	do	do	6th	do
Matthew Duff	Ireland	do	do	5th	do
Mrs. Belle L. Dunbar	New York	do	do	4th	do
Fred J. Dunas	Illinois	do	do	2d	do
Thomas F. Duncan	Iowa	do	do	4th	do
William E. J. Dunlop	Pennsylvania	do	do	3d	do
John E. Dunn	Canada	do	do	3d	do
William H. Dunn	New York	do	do	2d	do
John T. Dunne	Illinois	do	do	2d	do
John Dvorak	Missouri	do	do	4th	do
Charles Dvorak	Illinois	do	do	4th	do

Image courtesy of Janis Minor Forte

William A. Driver's name listed in the register of clerks in the Post Office in Chicago.

1868; William, born June 24, 1876; my maternal grandfather, Edgar, born April 25, 1883; and John, born November 3, 1890. They all eventually migrated from their Memphis birthplace to reside in Chicago.

In 1997 my Uncle Arthur, Edgar's youngest son, told me that "at some point in time, all four brothers worked at the Chicago Post Office." During their adulthood (from the turn of the century through the post-Depression era), securing such government employment established their intellectual credentials and confirmed their economic security. Their civil service employment would move these Negro men from the "lower labor class work" of their Southern peer group into the burgeoning black urban middle class.

## Broad and Deep Study

In an effort to validate the family legend, it was necessary to confirm the employment history of each Driver son. How I approached that study would have an impact on its outcome. Studying an ancestor's history may involve two methods of record search that, in summary, can be described as broad (or wide) in scope, and deep (or narrow) in range.

The philosophy behind broad research involves investigations where all easily

On the cover: Front of David H. Driver's Post Office employment record card.

accessible records are reviewed. These records include census and vital records usually classified as traditional sources of research. Wide record study occurs at specific intervals or events: for example, every ten years for federal censuses, or in the event of a birth, marriage, or death. Deep search focuses on identification and assessment of less accessible, nontraditional records such as state censuses, court files, city directories, newspapers, employment files, etc. While harder to locate, these usually occur at more frequent intervals. Their review enables the researcher to look deeply into that data source to fill the gaps between census years. For example, city directories are printed annually and often reveal employment and employer information. Frequently, these directories include marital status and, in the case of widowed women, some city directories published the names of deceased husbands.

An uncommon entry I located in an 1889 city directory reported a death in its listing. The 1889 Dow Memphis City Directory identified "Countee, A. L. died, March 20, 1888." Offering genealogical information, city directories often listed names of post-school adult children still residing in the homes of their parents and identified as boarders.

Deep search investigation adds personality content to our study. As a method, it enables a more intimate investigation, as tracking occurs in shorter time spans. Deep search

methods may require repeated and systematic information requests over several years, however.

Whether broad or deep, wide or narrow, both methods reveal a variety of information that genealogists must determine to be primary or secondary and then assess credibility. To confirm the validity of the oral history of the Driver brothers' employment, I first conducted a broad search for each man to identify his employment. The results of that study led to a deep search—over time—for specific postal employment records.

## Initial Study

To begin the investigation, I conducted a broad record search for each son. My quest was to identify their employment history on available censuses and vital records. The search covered each census from birth to the 1930 census for each brother. Here I cite only those censuses that recorded relevant employment information. A summary of the broad search census for each revealed:

- David H. Driver: The 1930 census indicates he was employed as a laborer at the Post Office. No relevant vital records.
- William A. Driver: No census reported Post Office employment. No relevant vital records.
- Edgar A. Driver: No census reported Post Office employment. No relevant vital records.
- John G. Driver: On the 1930 census, he was a clerk in the Post Office. On his April 27, 1942, World War II draft registration, he reported that he worked at the U.S. Post Office. No relevant vital records.

The above review shows that only two of the sons were recorded as having been employed by the Post Office. However, since it was possible for William and Edgar to have been employed there between census years, this supports the



need to conduct a deep record search on all four brothers for their employment files. This search would also confirm the census employment information but would take years.

## Deep Search Process

On July 14, 2006 I wrote to the National Archives, Old Military and Civil Branch, Record Group 18 and quickly received relevant pages of the "Official Register of the United States... Clerks in the Post Office" for the years 1897, 1903, and 1909. These records confirmed that William A. Driver had been a Chicago postal employee. When he began employment in 1897, his salary was \$600 annually. At the end of his employment in 1909 his annual salary was \$1,100.

In 2006 a request was submitted to the Civilian Personnel Records Section in St. Louis for the files of David H. Driver and John G. Driver. Both requests were returned with "no record found." Two years later this request was refreshed and resubmitted to the same agency. One month after that, I received the U.S. Post Office Employment Record file for John only; files for David were not discovered. Reviewing the file, I discovered that John Goodrich Driver began his U.S. Post Office employment on September 21, 1925. While his employment file contains much genealogical and personal information, it did not list his salary. John remained with the Post Office until his death in 1945.

On April 1, 2011, I submitted a request for the files of David H. Driver to four federal agencies:

- Office of the Postmaster General U.S. Postal Service
- Old Military and Civil Branch Record Group 18
- Civilian Personnel Records
- Civilian Archives Division

The third request proved successful. From the Civilian Personnel Records Office, I received U.S. Post Office employment records for David. The file indicated that David H. Driver began his Post Office employment on August 12, 1920 as a temporary employee. His annual pre-Depression salary was \$1,350. Using the Department of

Image courtesy of Janis Minor Forté

### OATH OF POST OFFICE EMPLOYEE

(TO BE FILED IN THE POST OFFICE)

I, John G. Driver, being employed  
(Name)  
as SUBSTITUTE CLERK, in the post office  
(Title)  
at Chicago in the County of Cook and

State of Illinois, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter: So help me God. I do further solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully perform all the duties required of me and abstain from everything forbidden by the laws in relation to the establishment of post offices and post roads within the United States; and that I will honestly and truly account for and pay over any money belonging to the said United States which may come into my possession or control. So help me God.

John G. Driver  
(Signature to oath.)

Sworn to and subscribed before me, the subscriber, a NOTARY PUBLIC  
(Title of certifying officer.)  
for the County of Cook, this 21 day of SEP, A.D. 1925

OFFICIAL  
SEAL

W. Jan Ben  
(Signature to certificate.)

NOTARY PUBLIC  
(Title of certifying officer.)

Note.—This oath may be taken before a justice of the peace, mayor, judge, notary public, clerk of a court of record competent to administer an oath, or any officer, civil or military, holding a commission under the United States. If the oath is taken before an officer having an official seal, the seal should be affixed to the certificate.

Form 9005

6-3431

John G. Driver's Oath of Post Office Employee form, recording his start date of September 21, 1925.

Labor's Inflation Calculator, if this wage were computed for inflation in today's market, his salary would be \$15,085.02. Years later at retirement his 1938 salary was \$1,600 annually. In today's economy this salary computes to an annual income of \$25,357.96. While David's file contains no genealogical information, it did list eight home addresses during his 18 years of employment. The success of this deep search resulted from persistence and systematic inquiry.

## Validating the Family Story

Family folklore told of the employment history of the four Driver sons. Passed down through the generations, family legends mandate that genealogists assess their validity. Confirmation presented new research challenges and required both broad and deep study to resolve. Our deep search took more than five years and covered four governmental agencies. Its focus was specifically on the employment files of the U.S. Post Office. We have confirmed that between 1897 and 1945, three of the brothers—David, William, and John—did work there. Short-term or superficial searches would not have revealed these employment histories. Only persistence, dedication,

and diligence produced these quality results. Has the oral history been proven? We're now on the deep search trail to uncover validation of the fourth son's records.

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Photo courtesy of Janis Minor Forté

An award-winning writer, editor, and publisher, **Janis Minor Forté** has lectured at national genealogy conferences. She teaches a variety of

lectures featuring methods and technology. She is experienced in African-American slave-era research and family history. A founding coordinator of the Midwest African American Genealogy Institute, Janis is a retired child welfare administrator with a Master's degree from the University of Chicago. She can be reached at [fortejm@yahoo.com](mailto:fortejm@yahoo.com).



# Black Slavery Emancipation Research in the Northern States

*Multiple records provide genealogical data on enslaved people in Northern states before the Civil War*

**James W. Petty, AG**  
Contributor

On December 18, 1865 ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution abolished slavery in America. Like Southern slaves, enslaved people in the North, entangled in “gradual emancipation” laws, cast off their shackles.

Most Americans whose African ancestors were in the United States before 1865 can point to enslaved forebears—chattel property that could be bought, sold, traded, and inherited. Such slavery existed in both North and South:

According to American public memory, slavery in the United States was peculiar to the South. Unless explicitly reminded of the North’s history of slavery, most Americans associate the North with abolitionists rather than slaveholders.<sup>1</sup>

Records identifying individuals and families, and demonstrating the evolution of black American culture and history, exist throughout the North. Researchers who recognize their potential can use them effectively.

## Legislative History

During and after the American Revolution every state north of the Mason-Dixon Line discussed and passed legislation establishing immediate or gradual slave emancipation. Vermont’s constitution (1777) freed all slaves outright.<sup>2</sup> New Hampshire’s constitution (1783) declared “all men born equal and independent”, but no additional clarification was ever added and slaves appeared in the census as late as 1840.<sup>3</sup> Massachusetts championed freedom and rights of all men in its new constitution in 1780, but only after two important

legal cases were slaves freed.<sup>4</sup> The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 outlawed slavery in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota, but its effect was neither immediate nor perfectly upheld.<sup>5</sup>

Five Northern states addressed freedom in gradual steps:

- Rhode Island (1784)—children of slaves to be freed at age 25; those born before the act enslaved for life<sup>6</sup>
- Connecticut (1784)—children of slaves to be freed at age 25; those born before the act enslaved for life<sup>7</sup>
- New York (1799, 1817, and 1828)—male children born to enslaved mothers after July 4, 1799 to be freed at age 28, and female children to be freed at 25; all slaves born after July 4, 1827 to be freed, while children born 1799–1828 to be indentured until age 28 for males and 25 for females<sup>8</sup>
- New Jersey (1804)—children to be freed gradually; all enslaved people born before the act to remain slaves for life<sup>9</sup>
- Pennsylvania (1780)—children born to enslaved mothers after March 1, 1780 freed gradually through a complicated set of constantly moving target dates<sup>10</sup>

## Records of Emancipation

The enforcement of gradual emancipation laws created records. When laws required slaves to be freed at a specific age, records provided evidence of compliance. Northern states and the federal government created at least five categories of records relevant to the North’s gradual emancipation laws. Together these constitute a genealogical archive of the black American experience.

## Slave Birth Records

Recording slave births allowed the enforcement of new emancipation laws. Since settlement, New England town clerks registered slave births alongside white births. Mid-Atlantic states were not yet recording births, marriages, or deaths for the general population; consequently, their slave birth registrations predate records for free and white children by up to one hundred years.

A 1780 Pennsylvania law required each county and community to list all slaves and their ages for each household or estate affected by the new laws.<sup>11</sup> For example, the “Slave Returns Register”, later known as a “septennial census”, for Cumberland County, Pennsylvania (1780–1833), filed in the office of the Clerk of General Quarter Sessions, lists the following as the first of hundreds of such entries:

Francis West, of Tyrone Township in Cumberland County & State of Pennsylvania, Esquire, hath this day delivered in writing to Clerk of the Peace for the said County the Names of all his Mullatloe Slaves, Vizt.:

Sligoe, a Negro aged about 50 years [born about 1730]  
Jacob, a Mullatloe for Life about 34 years [born about 1746]  
Poll, a Negro woman abt. 26 years [born about 1754]  
Chamont, a Mullatloe abt. 9 years, for Life [born about 1771]  
Mila, a Mullatloe Girl abt. 3 years, for Life [born about 1777]  
Lewis, attest (?) male child, born November 10th, 1779. For Life.  
John, a Negro, about 29 years [born about 1751]  
Debby, a Negro Woman, 50 years [born about 1730]  
August 22d, 1780: Frans. West.<sup>12</sup>

Owner Francis West observed the letter of the 1780 emancipation law and designated young children born prior to 1780 as “slaves for life.”

In New Jersey a typical page of the “Registration of Slave Births” comes from the Clerk’s Office of Essex County:

January 24th, 1805. Born a Negro boy named John belonging to Helmich Sip. Received in the Office 21st and Recorded 25th September 1805. Silas Condit, Clk. NewArk, October 17th, 1805. This is to certify that my Negro woman had a mail [sic] child born February 16th, 1805. The child’s name is John Jackson. Syrus Coe. Received in the Office & Recorded 17th Octr. 1805. Silas Condit, Clk.

Caldwell, 3rd December 1805. This is to certify that Marg, a negro woman, my Slave, was delivered of a female child on the 27th February 1805, whom I have named Bet. Ephraim J. Van Ness. Received in the Office 3rd December 1805 & Recorded the same day. Silas Condit, Clk.<sup>13</sup>

Overseers of the poor in New York made similar records as part of the town clerk’s minutes. The following example comes from the town minutes of Brookhaven, New York.

Agreeable to a Law of the State of New York for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery Passed the 29th of March 1799 – The Wido Ruth Woodhull of the Town of Brookhaven had a Male Child Born of a Slave of hers on the 18th Day of October in the year of 1800; Childs, name is Paul. Entered November 3, 1800.<sup>14</sup>

These examples identify children with surnames different from their owners or with no surname, the latter perhaps implying the owner’s surname applied to the children. Also, the records refer to state laws requiring slave birth registration, demonstrating these were not serendipitous or unique recordings.

The Genealogical Society of Utah has microfilmed New Jersey Negro birth records in Bergen, Essex, and Sussex counties. These collections



Historic American Buildings Survey, creator; R. Merritt Lacey, photographer, March 22, 1937. *Blauvelt House, Old Hook Road, Emerson, Bergen County, NJ, “Slave House”, Emerson, Bergen County, New Jersey. Documentation compiled after. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/nj0225/>; accessed August 8, 2017.*

start in 1804, when the state passed slave emancipation laws.<sup>15</sup> Passage of the gradual emancipation laws meant all the state’s counties should have created such records. Unfilmed records from Somerset, Burlington, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Warren counties exist in various formats.<sup>16</sup> The remaining counties’ records are unaccounted for. These counties, where abolitionists and Quakers were numerous, may have had few, if any, enslaved women.

Pennsylvania and New York are represented in Family History Library collections by a small number of filmed town and county records. Registers were filmed for Pennsylvania in Cumberland, Lancaster, Bucks, and Washington counties.<sup>17</sup> The jurisdictions keeping these records were not standardized—registers were kept by the Court of Quarter Sessions in some counties, by the Court of the Prothonotary in a few, and the Register of Deeds in still others.

Records for Adams, Fayette, Dauphin, and Centre counties have been located.<sup>18</sup> Undiscovered records may be in yet different hands.

In New York in 1976 a project to identify, catalog, and microfilm town records began as a joint state archives and Family History Library bicentennial project. At the time the library did not separately catalog slave birth and manumission records resulting from 1790’s New York laws and found among the town and overseer of the poor records.<sup>19</sup> To date, more than one hundred such town records have been filmed or digitized.<sup>20</sup> Slave births from additional New York towns have been published.<sup>21</sup> More are undoubtedly waiting to be identified.

### *Enumeration Records*

Besides slave birth lists, Pennsylvania created a series of enumerations taken every seven years beginning in 1780. These “septennial censuses” can identify estates containing slaves, who are enumerated by name and age.<sup>22</sup> Septennial censuses in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania were titled “Negro Slaves’ Names and Age Returns.” Known lists exist for 1780, 1791, and 1828.<sup>23</sup> Several counties’ enumerations are microfilmed, for example, 1842 and 1856/1857 censuses of Chester County.<sup>24</sup> These represent a small percentage of the enumerations that



should exist. These septennial censuses were created as a result of legislation that pertained to all Pennsylvania counties, so others may await discovery in county or regional archives.

From 1790 through 1840 federal censuses recorded the numbers of slaves and other inhabitants of each household and the household head's name, whether white or a free black. New Jersey is the only Northern state with an 1850 census slave schedule. In it 236 slaves are enumerated.<sup>25</sup>

### *Manumission Records*

As colonial and national discussion continued on emancipation, some Northern states passed additional laws removing burdensome restrictions on private manumissions. Manumission was “the act of liberating a slave and giving him his freedom.”<sup>26</sup> Early laws often set expensive penalties for manumissions to be paid to local county entities such as the overseers of the poor, relieving the government of the expense of caring for potentially indigent people. In 1714 New Jersey passed “An Act for Regulating of Slaves”, encouraging that slaves not be freed and requiring a bond of 200 pounds and additional fees for each manumitted slave's support. This bond, repealed by a 1786 manumission law, reappeared in a gradual emancipation law in 1804.<sup>27</sup>

In 1788 New York passed legislation removing the 200-pound bond required to manumit a slave, resulting in increased voluntary manumissions. New York's 1799 gradual emancipation law stipulated that owners free their slaves within one year and that each county's overseers of the poor would bear the responsibility of managing the manumitted slaves' care. When the slaves had been freed the former owners could provide board for them and be compensated at the rate of \$3.50 per month per slave. This removal of onerous fees and addition of slave-owner benefits brought about numerous manumissions.<sup>28</sup>

In Rhode Island town overseers of the poor felt the impact of manumissions. From their formation New England towns were required to support any



Historic American Buildings Survey, creator. *Caleb Smith Slave House, Commack, Suffolk County, NY, Commack, Suffolk County, New York, 1933.* Documentation compiled after. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/ny1840/>; accessed August 8, 2017.

indigents with a settlement within their boundaries. Ordinarily birth or ownership of land in a town was sufficient for settlement. After the 1784 gradual emancipation law in Rhode Island, formerly enslaved people, even those who had lived in the community their entire lives, were considered “new” to the town and could be “warned out” if the community doubted they could be self-supporting. Rhode Island, historically a large slave-trading colony, had the largest black population of any New England state, and the newly free were among the destitute who were warned they would have to leave if they could not provide for themselves.<sup>29</sup>

An example of an early manumission is taken from the published town records of Huntington Township, Suffolk County, New York:

Negro Set Free. Huntington, January Ye 30th A.D. 1800.

To all People to whom these presents shall Come Greeting, Know ye that I Jonah Wood of the Town of Huntington in the County of Suffolk, on Nassau Island and State of New York do Manumit and set free A Certain Female Slave by the Name of Mary aged about fifty three years, Agreeable to a Law of the State of New York passed

29th March 1799 Specifying That it shall be lawfull for the owner of any Slave Immediately after the passing the said act to Manumit such Slave by a certificate for that purpose under his hand and Seal.\* Jonah Wood. In witness of Epenetus Platt. Melancthon B. Wood. (File #316).

(Note by Charles R. Street, author, in 1889) \*Negro slaves were held in Huntington from the first settlement down to the early part of this century, and in 1755 there were eighty-one slaves here, forty-six males and thirty-five females, distributed among fifty-three families. By act of the Legislature, passed after the Revolution, provision was made whereby slave owners could voluntarily free their slaves, provided such slaves were under fifty years old and capable of supporting themselves. *The Town Clerk's office abounds in records of the manumission of slaves during this period, but it is not deemed important to print more than a few, and these are given as examples.*—C.R.S. [emphasis added]<sup>30</sup>

### *Records of Indentures and Apprenticeships for Life*

A governmental response to the new manumission regulations was to offer



new opportunities, if not to ex-slaves, at least to former slave owners. Several Northern states encouraged owners to free their slaves and then indenture or apprentice them, depending on their age. This would provide training and support for the former slave, and the ex-slave-owner would benefit from continued service, possibly receiving remuneration from the county coffers.<sup>31</sup>

In Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York these legal forms of bondage were referred to as indentures for life. This became the new term in Northern states' lexicon for "slave." Consequently, many former slave owners "retained" their slave labor, but subsequent federal census enumerations reflected only "free Blacks" on the estates of the former slave owners. By 1860 eighteen slaves were counted in New Jersey. Later identified as "apprentices for life", they were recorded in censuses as slaves.<sup>32</sup>

The extensive collection of manumissions and indentures in the records of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, shows another way slave owners could circumvent the law:

This Indenture Witnesseth, That Pierre a black boy aged ten years born in the Island of Saint Domingo in the West Indies who is henceforth to be called and known by the name of Pierre Pitray, In consideration of his being this day manumitted from slavery by John Pitray, with the approbation of Thomas Harrison member of the Abolition Society, as also for other good causes he the said Pierre Pitray hath bound and put himself, and by these Presents doth bind and put himself Servant to the said John Pitray of the City of Philadelphia, to serve him, his executors and assigns from the Day of the Date hereof, for and during the full term of eighteen years from thence next ensuing. During all which Term the said Servant his said master, or his Executors or Assigns faithfully shall serve, and that honestly and obediently in all Things, that a faithful and dutiful Servant ought to do. And the said John Pitray, his Executors and Assigns, shall find and provide for the said Pierre Pitray, sufficient Meat, Drink, wearing apparel, Washing and Lodging during

the said Term of Eighteen years shall cause him to read and write well, and when free shall give him two suits of Clothes one whereof to be new. And for the true Performance hereof, both the said Parties bind themselves firmly unto each other by these Presents, In Witness whereof they have hereunto interchangeably set their Hands and Seals. Dated the eight [sic] Day of December, Annoque Domini, One thousand seven hundred and Ninety eight. Signed: Jn. Pitray, Sealed and delivered in the Presence of Thos. Harrison and Robert Merton.<sup>33</sup>

John Pitray "of Philadelphia" was not an American citizen. A French merchant who in 1804 applied for naturalization at Philadelphia as a Santo Domingo native, he did not become a citizen until 1809.<sup>34</sup> He appears on Philadelphia passenger arrival lists in 1806 and 1807 and received a U.S. passport in 1811.<sup>35</sup> Pierre (or Peter) Pitray seems not to appear in United States censuses between 1800 and 1850. John Pitray and possibly other foreign merchants may have owned slaves in the Caribbean, France, or elsewhere and registered them as apprentices or indentured servants in America, perhaps to qualify for financial benefit, without actually keeping those servants in America.

### *Identification Papers*

As freedom for Northern blacks evolved, concern grew about runaway slaves. In 1780 Pennsylvania safeguarded against out-of-state slave catchers by providing emancipated blacks with "freedom papers."<sup>36</sup> To protect these papers from theft or destruction, counties established registries and maintained copies, sometimes in the Registry of Deeds. In 1786 New Jersey passed laws prohibiting blacks from traveling out of their home county without a "freedom certificate."<sup>37</sup> Where are these freedom certificate registries?

The Ordinance of 1787 establishing the Northwest Territory and banning slavery in that area north of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi River created a false hope among Southern slaves that freedom was available there. The area (now the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin),

under the Ordinance of 1787, was a free jurisdiction. Yet all of the states of the territory, except Wisconsin, adopted Black Laws, legislation designed to subjugate black Americans. The Northwest Territory wasn't just antislave in its interpretation of the law; it was antiblack. Penalties were placed on Negroes who entered the area, free or slave, or on the people who brought them there.<sup>38</sup>

As states were formed out of the territory, new constitutions reinforced these antiblack prejudices. In 1804 the new state of Ohio put laws into effect forbidding Negroes, slave or free, from crossing its borders without papers establishing who was responsible for them. Both slaves and free blacks were limited in the length of their stay in Ohio, and blacks who did not carry identity papers could be arrested and sold or resold.<sup>39</sup> Many other states began to require papers from blacks crossing their borders.<sup>40</sup>

As a result county and town offices throughout the country registered blacks from 1804 to 1860. This matter became more important after 1808, when the federal government banned the Atlantic slave trade. The ban caused Southern slave owners to redouble their efforts to find and reclaim runaway slaves in the North.<sup>41</sup> Slave catchers indiscriminately kidnapped blacks in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, and other Northern states. Without papers, any person of color could be captured, presented in court, transported, and sold back into slavery. Records of these activities are buried in court orders, minute books, and other records.

Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, was captured by a gang and dragged before a magistrate on the claim that he was a runaway slave. He might have been sent South, but he was so well known that the magistrate recognized him, and the slave catcher was arrested instead.<sup>42</sup>

The Compromise of 1850 included the Fugitive Slave Act. It authorized appointing federal marshals to work with slave catchers to locate, arrest, and transport slaves into Southern

captivity.<sup>43</sup> Abolitionists and antislave societies posted notices in Northern cities warning black inhabitants that conversing or interacting with officers of the law could result in their being arrested and enslaved.<sup>44</sup>

Information about slave catchers and their kidnapping attempts appears in thousands of Northern newspapers. They may provide victims' full names, occupations, and circumstances, often with flowery hyperbole.<sup>45</sup>

## Conclusion

People in slavery appeared in records before and after achieving freedom. As emancipation crept upon the historical stage, towns, counties, and states responded differently to the changing social paradigms. Historical events and attitudes defined laws and the records created in their enforcement.

Tracing black Americans in antebellum Northern states can be accomplished not only through census, deed, probate, and church records, but also through careful study of court records, where the exodus from bondage may be detailed. New investigations of black Americans in the American North and identifying previously unheralded records pertaining to them will improve our understanding of the roles all people played in shaping America's history and open the door to further historically and genealogically effective research.<sup>46</sup>

### A Slave-Catcher Defeated

The Hillsdale County (Mich.) Gazette gives an account of a slave case. . . . The slaveholder was from Maysville, Ky., and testified in his warrant, that the colored man, who called himself George Branegan, and who was cook at the Jonesville Exchange, escaped from the former place about three years before, and that he was his slave. The colored man denied being the person named in the warrant. . . .

The plaintiff was proceeding to prove property in the defendant, when his counsel raised the objection that the authenticated laws of Kentucky should be first produced, in order to ascertain

**A SLAVE-CATCHER DEFEATED.**

The Hillsdale County (Mich.) Gazette gives an account of a slave case of a somewhat novel character, which was decided in that county in September last. The slaveholder was from Maysville, Ky., and testified in his warrant, that the colored man, who called himself George Branegan, and who was cook at the Jonesville Exchange, escaped from the former place about three years before, and that he was his slave. The colored man denied being the person named in the warrant. We copy the remainder of the account from the paper above mentioned.

The plaintiff was proceeding to prove property in the defendant, when his counsel raised the objection that the authenticated laws of Kentucky should be first produced, in order to ascertain whether that state recognized property in human flesh, before our courts could go into evidence as to the title of property in slaves, (slavery not being recognized in our constitution,) and second, that parol testimony could not show what the laws of Kentucky were.

The court, upon consideration, decided the objections to be valid, and gave an hour to the plaintiff to procure the laws of Kentucky, at the expiration of which time, the plaintiff gave notice that he could not obtain the laws of Kentucky, and therefore withdrew his suit. Since the trial the prisoner has politely 'stepped out,' having received assistance from the friends of freedom in this village.

This is the fourth attempt made by the slaveholders to remove the defendant to Kentucky. He was assisted by four other Kentuckians, who came with him, and who were all 'nigger hunters,' one of whom said he had lost six slaves, all of whom were now in this state, and that this is the most difficult state in the Union to arrest and remove slaves. The former attempts to take the slaves were made at Ardian.

Even if he had succeeded in obtaining the Judge's warrant, we doubt much if the removal could have been effected, the excitement in favor of the poor slave was so strong.

We understand the defendant is a remarkably quiet, hard working man. In proof of this, we may mention the fact, that since his 'absquatulation' from Kentucky, he has purchased and paid for 160 acres of land in this state. He was in deep distress at the idea of returning to Kentucky, and seemed quite overjoyed at the issue of the case. He made his escape with six other slaves from Maysville, only one of whom was ever re-taken.

whether that state recognized property in human flesh, before our courts could go into evidence as to the title of property in slaves, (slavery not being recognized in our constitution,) . . . .

The court, upon consideration, decided the objections to be valid, and gave an hour to the plaintiff to procure the laws of Kentucky, . . . [but] he could not . . . and therefore withdrew his suit. Since the trial the prisoner has politely 'stepped out,' having received assistance from the friends of freedom in this village.

This is the fourth attempt made by the slaveholders to remove the defendant to Kentucky. He was assisted by four other Kentuckians, who came with him, and who were all 'n\*\*\*\*r hunters,' one of whom said he had lost six slaves, all of whom were now in this state, and that this is the most difficult state in the Union to arrest and remove slaves.

The former attempts to take the slaves were made at Ardian [sic].

Even if he had succeeded in obtaining the Judge's warrant, we doubt much if the removal could have been effected, the excitement in favor of the poor slave was so strong.

We understand the defendant is a remarkably quiet, hard working man. In proof of this, we may mention the fact, that since his 'absquatulation' from Kentucky, he has purchased and paid for 160 acres of land in this state. He was in deep distress at the idea of returning to Kentucky, and seemed quite overjoyed at the issue of the case. He made his escape with six other slaves from Maysville, only one of whom was ever re-taken.

—*Liberator* (Boston, Massachusetts), November 22, 1839, page 187, col. 3

## Endnotes

1. David Menschel, "Abolition Without Deliverance: The Law of Connecticut Slavery 1784–1848", *Yale Law Journal* 111 (2001):183.
2. Stanley L. Engerman and Robert E. Gallman, *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States*, 3 volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996–2000), 2:336.
3. *Ibid.* For examples of New Hampshire contradictions, see 1840 U.S. census, Grafton County, New Hampshire, Thornton, page 22, Robert Burnham household; microfilm M704, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), roll 236. Burnham included two boys under 10 whom he described as slaves. Also, *ibid.*, Strafford County, New Hampshire, Strafford, page 457, George Foss household; NARA microfilm M704, roll 246. Foss included a man more than 100 years old whom he called a slave.
4. The two cases were *Brom and Bett v. John Ashley, Esq.* in 1781, and Quock Walker, also known as *Jennison v. Caldwell*, in 1781–1783. For the first, see "The Massachusetts Constitution, Judicial Review, and Slavery: The Mum Bett Case", *Massachusetts Judicial Branch* (<http://www.>



Mass.gov/courts/sjc/constitution-slavery-d.html; accessed November 27, 2012). For the second, see “African Americans and the End of Slavery in Massachusetts”, *Massachusetts Historical Society* (<http://www.masshist.org/endofslavery/index.cfm?queryID=54>; accessed November 27, 2012).

5. *Miscellaneous Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789: Records of the Continental and Confederation Congresses and the Constitutional Convention*, Record Group (RG) 360, microfilm publication M332, 10 rolls (Washington, D.C.: National Archives Trust Fund Board, 1988), roll 9, for Northwest Ordinance, July 13, 1787. For many chapters of discussion on the imperfect progress of this law, see Christopher P. Lehman, *Slavery in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1787–1865* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and County, 2011).

6. The topic of gradual emancipation and the law is well addressed in John R. McKivigan, *Abolitionism and American Law* (New York: Garland Pub., 1999). For the classic historical treatment of this legislation and its repercussions, see Arthur Zilversmit, *First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 120–122. Both address Rhode Island.



Mum Bett, aka Elizabeth Freeman, aged 70. Painted by Susan Ridley Sedgwick, aged 23. Watercolor on ivory, painted circa 1812. Photo courtesy of Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.



Historic American Buildings Survey, creator; Clement Moran, photographer. *General John Sullivan House, Newmarket Road, Durham, Strafford County, NH, “Rear of House & Slave Quarters”, Durham, Strafford County, New Hampshire, 1933.* From an old print, October 1934. Documentation compiled after. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/nh0167/>; accessed August 8, 2017.

7. Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and Race in New England, 1780–1860* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 68, citing Zilversmit, *First Emancipation*, 125–126.

8. For a careful history of the many times this legislation failed and its final passage, see David Nathaniel Gellman, *Emancipating New York: The Politics of Slavery and Freedom, 1777–1827* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006).

9. “An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery”, Act of February 15, 1804, in *Laws of the State of New Jersey* (Trenton: James J. Wilson, 1811), 103–109.

10. Gradual but very complicated emancipation was passed in Pennsylvania in 1780. See “An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery”, *The Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania* (1780), 10:67–72, sections 881.001–014.

11. “An Act to Explain and Amend an Act Entitled ‘An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery’”, *The Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania*, sections 394.002–006.

12. Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, Slave Returns, 1780–1833, vols. 1780–1781; Clerk of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, Carlisle; FHL microfilm 1,449,138.

13. Essex County, New Jersey, Birth Records of Black Children, 1804–1843; County Records Building, Newark, New Jersey; FHL microfilm 1,305,755.

14. Town of Brookhaven, *Records of the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, N.Y.*, 3 volumes (Port Jefferson, New York: Times Steam Job Print, 1888), 2:36.

15. Bergen County, New Jersey, Black births, 1804–1846; Clerk’s office, Hackensack, New Jersey; FHL microfilm 1,317,500, item 5. Also, Essex County, New Jersey, Birth records of Black children, 1804–1843; Clerk’s office, Newark, New Jersey; FHL microfilm 1,305,755. Also, Sussex County, New Jersey, Births of slaves, 1801–1835; Clerk’s office, Newton, New Jersey; FHL microfilm 1,294,805, item 3.

16. As U.S. research specialist for the Genealogical Society of Utah, the author inventoried these records in the 1970’s and directed filmers in their microfilming assignments. The records went unrecognized as a consistent source when microfilming was being done. For Somerset records, see A. Van Doren Honeyman, “Additional Slaveholders’ List in Somerset”, *Somerset County Historical Quarterly* 6 (1917):95–98 and 201–203, it being “a list of the persons in Somerset in whose families slave children were born between the years 1805 and



1844.” Original records for a different time span are Somerset County Birth Certificates of Children of Slaves, 1805–1830; New Jersey Department of Archives and Records Management (NJDARM), Trenton. For Burlington records, see Burlington County, Birth Certificates of Children of Slaves, 1804–1826, 15 certificates in one bundle; NJDARM. The register is unknown and unlisted in the 1939 WPA survey of county clerk’s records. For Gloucester records, see Gloucester County, New Jersey, Birth Certificates, 1805–1825; NJDARM. For Hunterdon records, see Hunterdon County, New Jersey; Birth Certificates of Children of Slaves, 1804–1835; NJDARM. For Middlesex records, see Middlesex County, Record of Slave Births, 1804–1844; NJDARM. This volume was at Rutgers University Special Collections in 1994. For Monmouth records, see Monmouth County, New Jersey, Black Births 1804–1851; Monmouth [archival] Repository, Freehold. Also, Ellen Thorne Morris, *Black Birth Book A, 1804–1851* (Freehold, New Jersey: Office of the Monmouth County Clerk, 1989). Also, six additional births discovered after 1989 and published at Black Births, *New Jersey’s Monmouth County* (<http://countymonmouth.nj.us/page.aspx?ID=1690>; accessed December 3, 2012). For Warren records, see Warren County, New Jersey; Slave Births manual, 1804–1833; Clerk’s Office, Newton. Also, “Warren and Sussex Counties Slave Births, 1804–1833”, from *The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey* 54 (May–September 1979), *Raub-and-more.com* (<http://raub-and-more.com/slavebirths.html>, accessed December 3, 2012).

17. Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, Court of Quarter Sessions, Slave returns, 1780–1833; Clerk of the Court, Carlisle, Pennsylvania; FHL microfilm 1,449,138. Also, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Returns of negro and mulatto children, 1788–1793, and index to slaves, 1780–1834; Clerk of the Court, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; FHL microfilm 1,433,968. Also, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Register of slaves, ca. 1783–1830; Prothonotary, Doylestown, Pennsylvania; FHL microfilm 1,433,970. Also, Washington County, Pennsylvania, Recorder of Deeds, Negro register, 1782–1851; Recorder of Deeds, Washington, Pennsylvania; FHL microfilm 1,449,139 item 3.



Historic American Buildings Survey, creator, and Adrian Van Houten; Nathaniel R. Ewan, photographer, July 17, 1936. *Van Houten House, Totowa Avenue, Paterson, Passaic County, NJ*, “Interior: Slave Stair Door”, Paterson, Passaic County, New Jersey. Documentation compiled after. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/nj0735/>; accessed August 8, 2017.

18. For Adams records, see “Slave births and registration, 1799–1820”, *Adams County History*, 9 volumes (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: Adams County Historical Society, 1995– ) [volume and page] XXXXX. For Fayette records, see, Fayette County, Birth Records for Negroes and Mulattoes, 1788–1826, digital images, *Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission* (<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/rg/di/r47-SlaveRecords/r47-SlaveRecords-Fayette/r47-SlaveRecords-FayetteInterface.htm>, accessed December 3, 2012). For Dauphin records, see Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, Register of black and mulatto children born 1780–1825; William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. For Centre records, see Centre County, Pennsylvania; Slave Records between 1803 and 1820, Centre County Government Historical Records Imaging Project, *Centre County Government* (<http://www.countycentre.pa.us/hrip/slave/slavery.asp>, accessed December 3, 2012).

19. The author was working with officials of the New York State Archives who directed

this project in 1976. Slave registration and manumissions were not presented in the records as a separate category and were not identified at the time in the description of the records.

20. For example, Westchester, New York, Records of the town of Westchester, New York, 1665–1827; Clerk’s office, Westchester, New York; FHL microfilm 484,030. Also, Newtown New York, Records of the town of Newtown, New York, 1656–1857; Clerk’s office, Newtown, New York; FHL microfilm 484,027. Also, Poughkeepsie, New York, Village of Poughkeepsie minutes, 1769–1831; Poughkeepsie town office, New York; FHL microfilm 930,254, item 4. Also, Ovid, New York, Records of town meetings, 1794–1860; Clerk’s office, Ovid, New York; FHL microfilm 812,867.

21. *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* 110 (October 1979):196–97, for “Slave births, Castleton, 1800–24.” Also, *ibid.*, 111 (January 1980):13–17, for “Slave births in New York County, 1799–1817.” Also, “Town of Warwick, N.Y., Slave births and manumissions”, Albert Wisner Library, *Albert Wisner Public Library* (<http://www.albertwisnerlibrary.org/Factsandhistory/History/Slave%20Records%20by%20Tate.pdf>, accessed December 3, 2012). Additional records appear in *New York Slave Births and Manumissions* (New York: Greater Ridgewood Historical Society, 1995).

22. James M. Beidler, “Tax Records and Their Cousins, the PA Septennial Census”, *Penn in Hand* 21 (June 2000):5.

23. Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, Court of General Quarter Sessions. Negro Slaves Name and Age Returns, 1780, 1791, 1828; FHL microfilm 1,465,915, item 1.

24. Chester County, Pennsylvania, Septennial enumeration of the taxable inhabitants, slaves, etc., 1842; Assessor, West Chester, Pennsylvania; FHL microfilm 20,897. Also, Chester County, Septennial census for 1857; list of taxable inhabitants taken in 1856 in Chester County, Pennsylvania; Assessor’s Office; FHL microfilm 565,660.

25. Some slaves appear as apprentices in the 1850 free schedules. For example, Gideon Ross of Westfield, New Jersey did not manumit Philip Henry Vandervere until

October 17, 1853. Essex County, Certificates and Deeds of Manumission, 1805–1856, Ross–Vandervere (1853); County Clerk; FHL microfilm 1,305,755, item 8. Yet in 1850 Philip is enumerated in the free schedule. See 1850 U.S. census, Essex County, New Jersey, Westfield, page 338B, Phillip Vandervere; NARA microfilm M432, roll 450.

26. Henry Campbell Black, *A Law Dictionary Containing Definitions of the Terms and Phrases of American and English Jurisprudence, Ancient and Modern*, 2nd edition, “Manumission” (St. Paul, Minnesota: West., 1910), 757.

27. For the act, see Bernard Rush, editor, *Laws of the Royal Colony of New Jersey [1703–1775]*, 4 volumes, *New Jersey Archives*, third series, volumes 2–5 (Trenton: New Jersey State Library, 1977–1986), 2 (1703–1745):136–40. For an example, see Hunterdon County Slave Manumissions, 1788–1836; *New Jersey State Archives* (<http://www.nj.gov/state/archives/chrnc1003.html>, accessed November 27, 2012). For the 1786 law, see “An Act to Prevent the Importation of Slaves into the State of New-Jersey ...”, *New Jersey Statutes*, Acts 10th General Assembly, chapter 119, pages 239–242.

28. Jan DeAmicis, “Slavery in Oneida County, New York”, *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History* 27 (July 2003):69–134.

29. Ruth Wallis Hearndon, *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001). As cited frequently in Hearndon, warnings out may be found in Rhode Island town records, particularly those of the overseers of the poor.

30. Charles R. Street, *Huntington Town Records, Including Babylon, Long Island, N.Y., 1776–1873*, 3 volumes (1889; reprint, n.p.: Town Historians of Huntington and Babylon, New York, 1958), 3:199.

31. DeAmicis, “Slavery in Oneida County, New York.”

32. Maxine N. Lurie, *A New Jersey Anthology* (Newark, New Jersey: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1994), 201.

33. Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Manumissions and Indentures, circa 1780–1840; Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; FHL microfilm 1,731,987.

34. *Naturalization Petitions for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 1795–1930*; microfilm publication M1522, 369 rolls (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, n.d.), roll 40, chronologically arranged, for John Pitray, June 26, 1804.

35. *Philadelphia Passenger and Immigration Lists, 1800–1882*, microfilm publication M425, 108 rolls (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, n.d.), roll 10, SS *Eleanor*, June 18, 1806, John Pitray; and roll 18, SS *Andrew*, August 21, 1807, John Pitray. Also, *Passport Applications, 1795–1905*, microfilm publication M1372, 694 rolls (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, n.d.), roll 1, chronologically arranged, for John Pitray, May 3, 1811.

36. University of Pittsburgh, *Slavery in Pittsburgh in the 18th and 19th Centuries: The Freedom Papers* ([http://www.library.pitt.edu/freetatlast/papers\\_listing.html](http://www.library.pitt.edu/freetatlast/papers_listing.html), accessed November 1, 2012).

37. *New Jersey Slave Laws: Summary and Record* ([http://slaveryinamerica.org/geography/slaves\\_laws.NJ.htm](http://slaveryinamerica.org/geography/slaves_laws.NJ.htm), accessed August 15, 2011.)

38. Steven Middleton, *Contributions in Afro-American and African Studies, Number 152: The Black Laws in the Old Northwest* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1993), 160.

39. Salmon P. Chase, *The Statutes of Ohio, and of the Northwestern Territory, adopted or enacted from 1788 to 1833 . . .* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Corey and Fairbank, 1833), 393, chapter 28.

40. Paul Finkelman, editor, *Encyclopedia of African American History*, 5 volumes (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 2:264. States enacting black laws in the North included Ohio (1804), Indiana (1816), and Illinois (1818).

41. “Petition of People of Color—1799”, *Africans in America: PBS* (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/home.html>, accessed November 27, 2012).

42. Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank, *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2005), 144.

43. Stanley W. Campbell, *The Slave Catchers: Enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law, 1850–1860* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1970), 25, 33, and 63.

44. Farrow *et al.*, *Complicity*, 141.

45. Search terms “slave catcher”, “kidnapping”, and “coloured” return thousands of hits at “Newspaper Archives”, *GenealogyBank.com* (<http://www.GenealogyBank.com/>, accessed November 27, 2012).

46. Statewide collections of legislated slave-related records in the Northern states are being gathered, studied, indexed, and made available for black ancestry research. Researchers are invited to contribute to the development of these new archives devoted to black American slavery and emancipation in the antebellum Northern states, at *Genealogist* (<http://www.genealogist.com/>).

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Photo courtesy of James W. Petty



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History and Genealogy (<http://www.heirlines.com/>). He was senior consultant of U.S. research for the Family History Library (FHL) and the U.S. records specialist over New England and the North Atlantic states, inventorying and directing microfilming in those regions during the 1970's. No comprehensive inventory of records, archives, or microfilm collections on the topic of Northern slave resources exists. This article is dedicated to Petty's brother-in-law, Ronald Baker.



# Slavery, Freedom, and the Babilonias of Puerto Rico: Re-visioning Family History, Part 2

Research reveals a complex history of ownership, survival, and social obligations

Ellen Fernandez-Sacco, Ph.D.  
Contributor

## Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez, Son of Manuel Babilonia #2

What is notable about Manuel Babilonia of Barrio Cruz and his son, Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez, is their proximity to the plantations of other Babilonia family members. Given their location, questions arise as to whether Manuel was the son of a Babilonia plantation owner, since he did not move away from the area. So far I have found no siblings for Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez, a light-skinned man described as *pardo*, who died in Moca in 1908.<sup>15</sup>

The early 20th century brought difficult times for Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez and his wife, Matilde Font, and not all of their children survived. Nicolas, who was the head of household, died suddenly at the age of 50 of *hidrohemia*, or edema, excess serum in the blood that is indicative of heart problems. Interestingly, heart problems also run among the descendants of Miguel Babilonia Polanco. On the death certificate for Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez, he was named as the son of Manuel and Joséfa, deceased. The informant for Nicolas' death was his son-in-law Quiterio Perez, so the information was given by a family member rather than a neighbor.

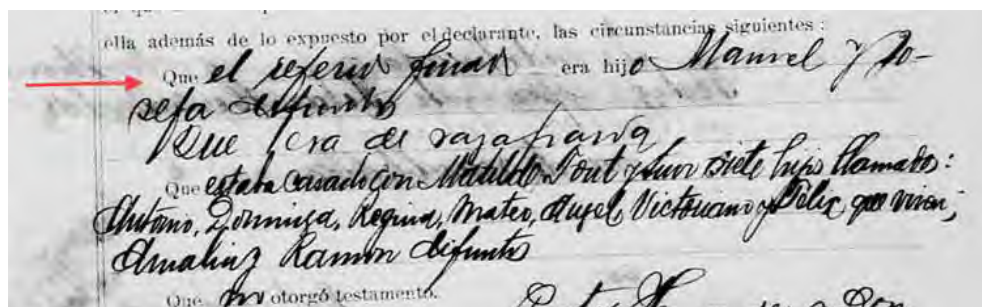
It is not unusual for the child of a single-parent household to have his father (or occasionally mother) named in a death certificate, or even marriage, once the parent is deceased. Comparing Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez's death certificate with the 1887 *Acta de Nacimiento* (birth record) for his daughter with Matilde, Filomena Babilonia Font, raises questions, however, as it lists Juana María Babilonia as the child's paternal grandmother, *i.e.*, as Nicolas' mother.<sup>16</sup> According to this birth record, for which Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez was the informant, both he and his wife came from single-parent households, and there is no mention of Manuel Babilonia as Nicolas' father.

- The legitimate daughter of the informant and Matilde Font, born in and resident of San Sebastián, married, of legal age, appropriate occupation for her sex.—
- The granddaughter on the paternal line of Juana María Babilonia, fifty years of age, born in and resident of this place, single and living in same, and on the maternal line, of Marta Font, born in San Sebastián, single, of legal age, and appropriate occupation for her sex—
- In the presence of witnesses Don Tomás Babilonia, born and resident of here, single, of legal age, employed and Don Manuel Babilonia, born here, resident of Quebradillas, married, of legal age, employed, both residing in this town, except for the second.

Of note is that the witnesses on the birth registration were two Babilonia brothers, Tomás and Manuel Babilonia Talavera. As their father was Manuel Babilonia Acevedo (Manuel #1), this raises a question as to whether any intimidation was involved in the registration—and if Nicolas was their half-brother, this document could perhaps help negate any legal claims or claim on an inheritance. For a few years, Tomás Adolfo Babilonia Talavera (1859–1933) served as a municipal judge and was responsible for entering and signing off on the civil registration entries in Moca in the 1890's. During the 1880's, he oversaw the business side of a sugar plantation in Barrio Palmar owned by his father-in-law, Enrique Kleibring Geldmeier. Named Hacienda Enriqueta, it was located on the border between Aguadilla and Moca and was later sold to another family. In 1897, just a decade later, Tomás presided over the distribution of his father's estate.

Tomás' brother was Manuel Miguel Astolfo Babilonia Talavera (1854–1926).<sup>17</sup> According to family history, as a young man, Manuel Miguel moved from Moca to Quebradillas and set up his family there as a result of a falling out over the Babilonia family's slaveholding. His wife's family, the Estrellas, helped a number of enslaved people gain their freedom.

No additional documents have turned up in my search for Joséfa Hernandez or Juana María Babilonia, who was stated to be 50 years old in 1887 and then living in Moca, probably in the home of her son in Barrio Voladoras. I hope more information will emerge to clarify what occurred and the relationship of the Babilonia Acevedo to the Babilonia Hernandez family. For the moment this discrepancy appears to point to a connection that sought to be disavowed.



Excerpt from *Acta de Defunción* for Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez, Moca, 23 May 1908.

All images courtesy of Ellen Fernandez-Sacco

La expresada hembra nació en su propia casa el día veinte y tres de Julio  
 de mil ochocientos ochenta y seis a las cinco de la mañana.  
 → Fue su hijo legítimo del declarante y Matilde Font, naturales y vecinos de  
 San Sebastián, cañada, mayor de edad de oficio el de su sexo.  
 → Fue su hija por línea paterna de Juana María Babilonia, é inconnida la a-  
 nor Dadi, natural y vecino de este, coltero domiciliado en el mismo, y por  
 línea materna de María Font, natural de San Sebastián, coltero,  
 mayor de edad, y oficio el de su sexo.  
 Fue a la expresada hembra, se le bautizó por nombre Filo-  
 mena.  
 → Todo lo cual fue reconocido por testigos Don Tomás Babilonia  
 natural y vecino de este, coltero, mayor de edad, empleado y  
 Don Manuel Babilonia, natural de este, vecino de San  
 Sebastián, cañada, mayor de edad, empleado, amilud domiciliado  
 en este pueblo, excepto el segundo.

Excerpt from Acta de Nacimiento for Filomena Babilonia Font, Moca, 23 July 1886.

### Juan Enrique Babilonia Holandesa, Son of Manuel Babilonia #3

Barrio Higuey, an area near the center of Aguadilla's urban core, is where the Babilonia Efrese branch began, with the union of Juan Enrique Babilonia Holandesa (1829–4 November 1909) and María Cleofe Efrese Reina (1861–4 December 1906). He was the son of Manuel Babilonia and Manuela Holandesa, and she the daughter of Ramon Efrese of Curaçao and Juana Bautista Reina from Venezuela. Juan Enrique Babilonia and María Cleofe Efrese had twelve children.

Today, Higuey is a small subsection within Aguadilla's urban area, where administrative and industrial work is centered. A local road winds west from Voladoras, a ward on the southern border of Moca, through Palmar, where Moca borders Aguadilla, and then another two miles to Higuey, just blocks from the beaches that run along the port. During the 19th century, Higuey was larger; its borders changed and it became Barrio Victoria.<sup>18</sup> This area of Aguadilla also borders on Aguada, where in 1872 a Pedro Olandesa was among the enslaved at the Hacienda Cano de las Nazas, a large sugar-processing plant owned by Angel Luis Santoni.<sup>19</sup>

As very few Holandesa/Olandesa appear in records, this may be a chosen surname based on a location. "Holandesa" was used to denote the Dutch nationality of some émigrés and enslaved persons coming to Puerto Rico from Curaçao.<sup>20</sup> As for Efrese, one variation of that surname appears in the Civil Registration, as Juan Efrez or Efrertz; he was born about 1836 and was also from Curaçao.<sup>21</sup> Few people bear the Efrese surname in Puerto Rico, and more research may yield further clues.

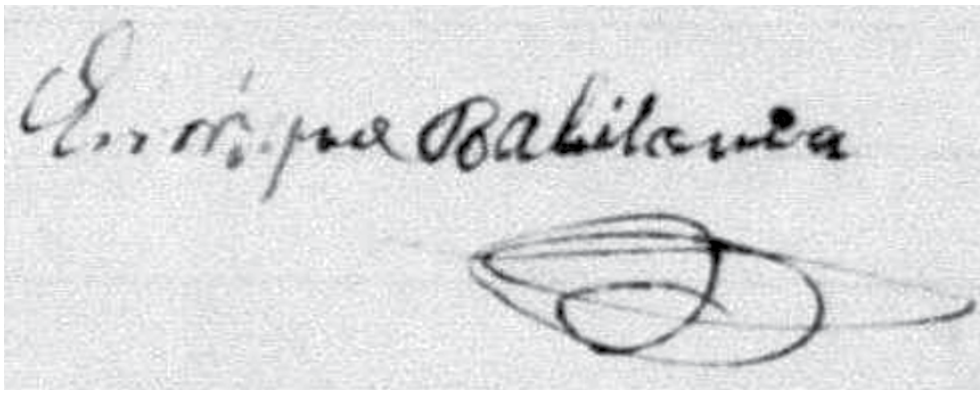
Enrique Babilonia Holandesa can be found listed across vital records and notarial documents, both with and without his maternal surname. He is mentioned in an 1874 record of sale in notarial documents, concerning a half-acre of inherited land held by Manuel Nieves Babilonia and sold to Jesus Rodriguez in Barrio Voladoras. The plot's description includes a tree on the boundary of land that belongs to Enrique Babilonia.<sup>22</sup> Manuel Nieves Babilonia was born in Moca about 1836 to José Nieves and Juana Joséfa Babilonia Acevedo, another sibling of Manuel Babilonia Acevedo (Manuel Babilonia #1). Manuel Nieves never married and died of cancer of his right leg in 1886. The informant for his death record was Enrique Babilonia, his

immediate neighbor, who worked as a mail carrier, a position of civic service. Enrique owned land by 1874, just after abolition, and was presumably literate, as this would be a required skill for his position as a mail carrier. He signed his name with a flourish when reporting the birth of his grandson in 1893.<sup>23</sup> Some years before his death, his family moved to Barrio Higuey, Aguadilla.

Enrique's 1909 death certificate states he was the son of Manuel Babilonia and Manuela Holandesa, but there are questions concerning his parentage, with a situation similar to that of Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez. The 1887 birth record for Enrique and María Cleofe's child Enrique Hemeterio lists the child's grandparents—and for the paternal line no father is listed; only Manuela Quiñones is named as Enrique's mother.<sup>24</sup> This latter record provides a potential lead to the identity of his mother.

Among the enslaved who appear in Bibiana Quiñones' will of 24 June 1848 are "Manuela Inocencia, Eugenio and Juan Enrique. Slave servants. Owners: Bibiana Quiñones, 36 & Francisco Babilonia."<sup>25</sup> Francisco Babilonia Acevedo served as alcalde (mayor) of Moca in 1849; in 1828 he had married María Viviana "Bibiana" Quiñones Vives (1810–1855). She was the granddaughter of the founder of Moca, and her will explains how through her family she inherited people, properties in several wards, and funds from several ancestors. In fact, Bibiana's parents, Francisco Quiñones and María de Vives, by 1817 had freed a family who lived in Barrio Palmar.<sup>26</sup> But Manuela Inocencia was not free according to Bibiana's 1848 will, nor do any Cartas de Emancipación de Esclavos (Slave Emancipation Letters) authorized by her exist between January 1848 to October 1855.<sup>27</sup> By 13 October 1855, Bibiana Quiñones had died, and her property was distributed.<sup>28</sup> If there was no problem with the distribution of the estate, there might be no further mention of the proceedings in the notarial documents. No information has been found as to who inherited Manuela Inocencia and Juan Enrique or when they were freed.





Signature of Enrique Babilonia from his grandson's 1893 birth record.

This network of generations of family ties was in close proximity. Manuel Babilonia Acevedo was the second executor of Bibiana's will. He was the brother of Francisco Babilonia Acevedo and owned a hacienda nearby. Was Manuel the father of Enrique? How else to explain Enrique's ownership of land and its location, and his literacy at a time when more than 85% of the population couldn't read?

María Cleofe's brother, Gregorio Efrase Reina, was the informant for her 1906 death record. In the 1910 census, his parents are listed as being from Curaçao and Venezuela. Given their locations and status, this is indicative of Puerto Rico's ties to an Afro-Caribbean world structured by trade, labor, and slavery and to the flows of emigration by those fleeing the early 19th-century wars of independence in South America.

Enrique Babilonia Holandesa was born in Moca and died in Aguadilla. He owned land in Barrio Cruz and lived in Barrio Voladoras, and eventually held the position of postal agent by 1886. The informant for Enrique's death was Camilo Font, born in Isabela. He lived nearby in Barrio Nuevo in Aguadilla and was a *jornalero*; he later worked as a cook for a local family. On 4 November 1909, Camilo notified the Registro Civil of Enrique's death and gave the details regarding the family. Enrique Babilonia Holandesa died of heart problems due to cardiac insufficiency at the age of 80.<sup>29</sup>

What these interconnected family histories point to are the network of social and legal relationships that constrained, contained, and supported

people past the cusp of freedom in late 19th-century and early 20th-century northwest Puerto Rico. Over the centuries, social status served to constrain documentation, which is directly connected to race—records that eliminated original names in exchange for a single first name, the use of single last names after freedom, the records marked *pardo*, *mulato*, *negro*, *ilegítimo*, *hijo natural*, *sin segundo apellido* (brown, mulatto, black, illegitimate, born outside of marriage, without a second surname), all to designate an oppositional difference versus *blanco* (white). Categories created a caste, visible in early census records for Puerto Rico, based in having a social status as unfree and later free people of color who worked as artisans, domestics, farm laborers, and servants—the working poor. Day laborers and women in service industries that supported the businesses of cities and towns were often people of color. Documents collected so far establish that over a 120-year period, these families moved from areas of the northwest to the northeast in search of different opportunities to sustain themselves and their families.

The issue remains of identifying the Manuel Babilonias more concretely, to determine if Manuel Babilonia of Barrio Cruz is related to Manuel Babilonia of Aguadilla or whether they are all one and the same, so that all of us are related to the slaveholder and plantation owner, Manuel Babilonia Acevedo, my 3rd-great-grandfather. A connection of some sort does exist, as there is a DNA match between a descendant from the Babilonia Font line, Joseph Torres Padin,

and me.<sup>30</sup> I welcome finding more of these family members and working with them to uncover more of this history. Only by connecting can we all heal.

## Endnotes

15. Registro Civil, Moca, Puerto Rico, Defunciones 1898–1911, L13–18. *Acta de defunción, Nicolas Babilonia Hernandez, L18, F131 #43, 23 Mayo 1908; declarante Quiterio Perez, casado, labrador; causa hidrohemia; fecha defunción 4PM, 22 May 1908, Barrio Cruz; 50 años; hijo Manuel y Joséfa, difuntos; que era de raza parda; estaba casada con Mathilde Font y tuvo siete hijos llamados: Antonio, Dominga, Regina, Mateo, Angel, Victoriano, y Felix que viven; Amalia y Ramon difuntos. Testigos: Pastor Hernandez, José Antonio Torres, Bartolo Arocho firma por el declarante no sabe firmar. Secretario Municipal: Tadeo Charneco Ruiz.* FamilySearch.org, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939Z-RT92-QD?i=1954&cc=1682798>.

16. Registro Civil, Moca, Nacimientos, 1885–1895, L1–10. *Acta de nacimiento, Filomena Babilonia Font, L2, F224–225 #85, image 434, 23 July 1886; hija legítima del declarante y Matilde Font, natural y vecina de San Sebastián, casada, mayor de edad, oficio de su sexo. AP: Juana María Babilonia, 50 años edad. AM: Marta Font, natural de San Sebastián, soltera, mayor de edad, oficio de su sexo. Declarante: Nicolas Babilonia. Testigos: Tomás Babilonia, Manuel Babilonia, vecino Quebradillas.*

17. Two Babilonia Talavera brothers were named Manuel: Manuel Ulises and Manuel Miguel Astolfo. Aside from birth and death dates, little is known of Manuel Ulises Babilonia Talavera (1857–1884), who died just before civil registration was instituted. As the birth record for Filomena Babilonia Font is from 1886, it eliminates him from consideration.

18. Rafael Rivera Caban, *Aguadilla: Notas para su historia*, San Juan: Comité Historia de los Pueblos, 1986, page 10.

19. Among the enslaved were Pedro Olandesa, 50; Enrique, 45; Dominga, 30; and Martina, 35. These individuals may or may not be connected to the families I am investigating from Moca and Aguadilla. Emilia Badillo Joy, “Los esclavos de la

Central Coloso de Aguada, 1862”; <http://www.preb.com/socios/esclav/ecoloso.htm>.

20. Among the earliest notations with Olandesa are two persons listed as “de Nation Olandeza” in 1800 and 1809 in the death records for Cabo Rojo. Among the enslaved persons owned by María del Rosado Planos de Morragas, a hacienda owner in Barrio de Río Arriba, are two women, María and Aira, and a child, Narcisa, listed as “de Olandesa” in the Partido de Añasco of 1838. Cabo Rojo Defunciones L1-5 (1781–1821), Partido de Añasco, Año de 1838; transcription by David Acevedo Pitre.

21. “Puerto Rico, Registro Civil, 1805–2001”, Defunciones 1905–1908, L. 34–37, Acta defunción, Juan Efréz Enriquez, 23 June 1906, F296 #591; citing Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, oficinas del ciudad, Puerto Rico (city offices, Puerto Rico); FamilySearch, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939Z-RPYZ-Z?mode=g&i=838&wc=9PYM-JWL%3A129445701%2C131191701&cc=1682798>, accessed February 10, 2016. His marriage of 1900 to Manuela Samples Perez is here: “Puerto Rico, Registro Civil, 1805–2001”, Plantina Enriquez in entry for Juan Efrertz and Manuela Samples, 16 February 1900; citing Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, oficinas del ciudad, Puerto Rico; FamilySearch, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVJH-TJJH>, accessed April 16, 2015.

21. Several important clues are in this document. Land in Barrio Voladoras near the Camino Real originally belonged to José Nieves and was inherited by his son Manuel Nieves Babilonia. “[T]hrough an exit on the royal road toward an orange tree that is at the middle of a [illegible] toward the south; from here to a *moralón* [Grandleaf Seagrass; *Coccoloba pubescens* or *C. Grandifolia*] tree that is to the west alongside the land of the black Enrique Babilonia, and to the north borders with José Feliú . . .” *Conste por este simple testimonio y extrajudicial documento comprobante No. 277222 que quiero tenga la misma fuerza y valor que judicial fuera como yo D. Manuel Nieves del vecindario de Moca vendo a D. Jesús Rodríguez de la misma vecindad media cuerda de terreno en el Barrio Voladoras cuyo terreno hube por herencia de mi padre D. José Nieves bajo los puntos siguientes:*

*por el saliente por el camino Real con dirección a un árbol de naranjo que queda al medio de un [illegible] al sur; de aquí a un estación de árbol de moralón que está al oeste lindando con un terreno del moreno Enrique Babilonia y de aquí a otro estación de árbol de moralón que queda al norte colindando con D 162 José Feliú; de aquí volviendo a buscarse el camino Real que es al saliente todo por la cantidad de veinte y cinco pesos convenida y ajustada en moneda usual y corriente que he recibido a mi entera satisfacción. Declaró que dicho terreno tiene algunas fincas y plantaciones que también entran en la venta. Testigos lo fueron D. Francisco Pérez, D. Felis Avilés, D. Felis Pérez, D. Antonio Vera y D. Cornelio Nieves. El presente documento extrajudicial otorgado en el año de mil ochocientos setenta y cuatro fue posteriormente presentado y validado. Carlos Encarnación Navarro, AGPR, Fondo de Protocolos Notariales, Serie Aguadilla, Pueblo Aguadilla, Caja 1434, Escribanos otros funcionarios, 1852–1878, Testimonio y extrajudicial domestico comprobante #27222, page 162, 1874.*

23. Registro Civil, Moca, Nacimientos. Manuel Babilonia, Acta de Nacimiento, Nacimientos 1885–1895, L. 1–10, F94v-95 #118 image number 2033. “Puerto Rico, Registro Civil, 1805–2001”, FamilySearch.org, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVJD-HL1N>, accessed April 16, 2015, Marciala Celedonia Babilonia in entry for Manuel Babilonia; citing Moca, Puerto Rico, oficinas del ciudad, Puerto Rico.

24. “Puerto Rico, Registro Civil, 1805–2001”, María Cleofe Efrese in entry for Enrique Hemeterio Babilonia; citing Moca, Puerto Rico, oficinas del ciudad, Puerto Rico, FamilySearch, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVJD-C94B>, accessed April 16, 2015. The document names the child as Enrique Hemeterio, which should be a boy’s name, but the child is identified as a girl.

25. Eugenio was sold by the couple in 1851 for 400 pesos. Fernandez-Sacco, “Don Miguel Babilonia Polanco (1743–1813)”, “Appendix 3: Enslaved persons purchased, sold or inherited by Babilonias during the Nineteenth Century”, pages 38–39.

26. “Manuela Quiñones, Ana María Quiñones y su nieto José Manuel Quiñones. Libertos de D. Francisco Quiñones y María de Vives.” “Tabla II: Familias distribuidas por los barrio de Moca entre 1775–1824.” The table is based on parish records from the several marriage and baptismal volumes from Iglesia Nuestra Señora de Monserrate, Moca. Antonio Nieves Mendez, *Historia de un pueblo: Moca, 1772–2000*, pages 343–349.

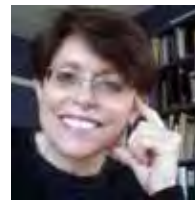
27. Various “Cartas de Emancipación de Esclavos” are in Caja 1444, the same box that contains the will of Da. María Bibiana Quiñones. They are outnumbered by the records for the enslaved who were sold. Carlos Encarnación Navarro, Archivo General de Puerto Rico, Fondo de Protocolos Notariales, Serie Aguadilla, Pueblo Moca, Caja 1444, Escribanos otros funcionarios, 1–10–1848 to 31–1–1852.

28. D. Viviana Quiñones, 13 October 1855. Parish record, Libro 1 Defunciones, Iglesia Nuestra Señora de Monserrate.

29. Registro Civil, Aguadilla, Defunciones. Enrique Babilonia Holandesa, Acta de Defunción, Defunciones 1908–1913, L. 30–34, F210, #336 im 752. FamilySearch.org, <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939Z-RYTN-R?i=751&wc=9PY3-K68%3A129440401%2C130419102%3Fcc%3D1682798&cc=1682798!19>, Testamento Da. Bibiana Quiñones, 6–24–1848 fol. 21 a 21–v quoted.

30. GEDmatch.com comparison of Ellen Fernandez-Sacco M802801 and Joseph David Torres F270238. Total of segments 59.2 cM; MCRA 4.0. Accessed 26 May 2015.

Photo courtesy of Ellen Fernandez-Sacco



**Ellen Fernandez-Sacco** is interested in the interconnections between genealogy, visual and material culture, and social history, seen through a larger framework of colonial relationships. Her

genealogical work is grounded in extensive archival research and oral histories. Her doctorate is in Art History (UCLA, 1998), and she has written articles on the history and development of American museums, art practice, genealogy, race, and the history of *mundillo*, traditional Puerto Rican lace making.



# Black Family History Day at the California State Capitol

*FamilySearch and AAGSNC help legislators and judges search for their roots*

**Sharon Styles**  
AAGSNC Member

The 2017 California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) concluded its 50th anniversary and Juneteenth celebration on June 26, 2017 with a family history event at the State Capitol in Sacramento. CLBC Chairman Christopher Holden, Senator (retired)/ Ambassador (retired) Diane Watson, and Thom Reed of FamilySearch International stressed the benefits to black Americans who trace their roots. Reed led the effort to digitize records of the Freedmen's Bureau. Those records can now be researched via <http://www.discoverfreedmen.org/>. George Davis announced that the California African American Museum in Los Angeles will soon have a family history center within the museum.

Members of AAGSNC and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, along with local black genealogists, volunteered to research family histories of members of the CLBC, their staff, and a group of black judges in Sacramento for African American Judges' Legislative Day. Volunteers were also on hand to assist anyone on site who wanted help finding information on their ancestors.

AAGSNC members who participated in this historic event were Jackie Chauhan, Kathy Marshall, Janice M. Sellers, Vernester Sheeler, Jackie Stewart, Sharon Styles, Eric Thomas, Alvis Ward, and Michael Willis.

**Sharon Styles** is a resident of Sacramento, California. She began researching her family in 2007. Now that she is retired, Sharon plans to continue researching her roots. Fortunately, her parents, four grandparents, and great-grandparents all came from the same little town of Marlin, Falls County, Texas. Sharon is a member of AAGSNC, AAHGS, Central Texas Genealogical Society, and St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church Library Ministry, which hosts a genealogy seminar each year.

*Most photos courtesy of Ruth-Marie Chambers*







1. Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the California Legislative Black Caucus
2. The program for the day
3. (front) Thom Reed, Sharon Styles; (second row) Janice M. Sellers, Jackie Chauhan; and Michael Willis (third row) in the prep room
4. Merrill White (FamilySearch), Michael Willis, Thom Reed, Sharon Styles, and Trudy Taliaferro test the computers
5. Jackie Stewart assists an attendee
6. Sam Starks assists an attendee
7. Naseer Muhajir assists an attendee

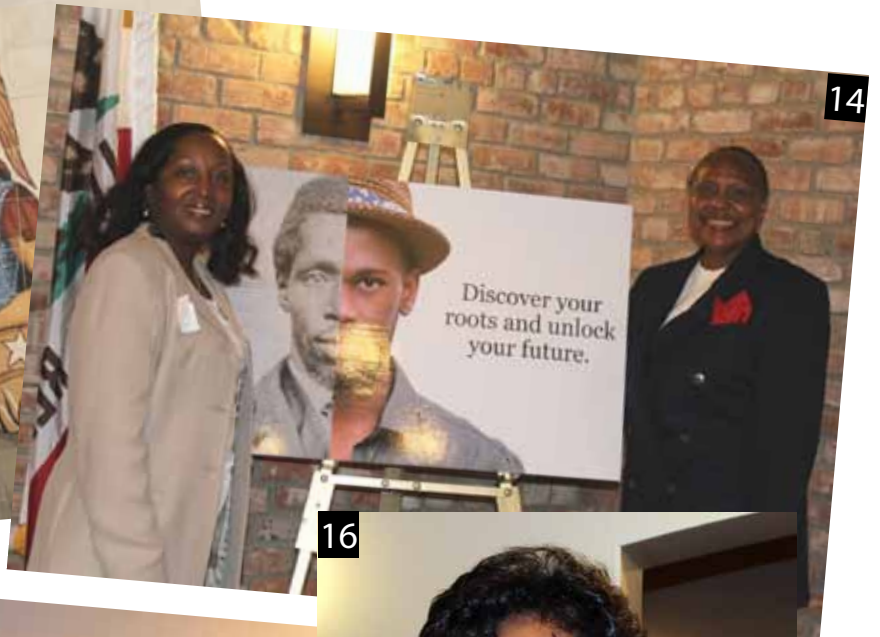




- 8. Vernester Sheeler assists an attendee
- 9. Ruth-Marie Chambers makes an exciting discovery for Judge Kelvin D. Filer
- 10. Fred Tolbert waits for someone to ask for help
- 11. Kathy Borgogno assists an attendee
- 12. Kathy Marshall and James Sweeney (Black American Political Association of California)

Media coverage:  
<https://goo.gl/3n5vK4>  
<https://goo.gl/jJW1pZ>  
<https://goo.gl/A9k9B3>  
<https://goo.gl/tpcd94>





13. Thom Reed of FamilySearch addresses the assembled group

14. Sharon Styles and Ruth-Marie Chambers promote DiscoverFreedmen.org

15. Sharon Styles, Kathy Marshall, James Sweeney, Senator (retired)/Ambassador (retired) Diane E. Watson, and Ruth-Marie Chambers

16. Senator (retired)/Ambassador (retired) Diane E. Watson

17. Janice M. Sellers presents Assembly Member Mike Gipson with his family history research (photo courtesy of Sharon Styles)



# Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery

Crowd-sourced database of family seeking kin

**Delia Cothrun Bourne**  
Contributor

Before and during the Civil War, black families were often separated, by force or circumstances, and left wondering what happened to parents, children, siblings, and spouses. After the war's upheaval, survivors began to place advertisements in black newspapers across the country, hoping to gain clues to discovering what became of their lost loved ones. These ads usually mention family members by name and provide physical descriptions, as well as including their last known locations and sometimes the names of former slave masters. Many notices end with an appeal to local pastors to read the ads from the pulpit in order to enhance the chance of success of finding lost people.

The Graduate Program of the Department of History at Villanova University, in collaboration with Mother Bethel AME Church, has created the site "Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery" (<http://informationwanted.org/>) to preserve and index these notices. The site promotes crowd-sourcing to transcribe and post records of the inquiries. A search in the query box allows one to search for specific names and places. Each entry provides the following components: the name of the person inquiring along with any aliases; the person for whom he is searching; the source, date, and place of publication; an image of the advertisement; a transcription, if one has been completed; and an invitation to transcribe the item.

In 1866, Jacob Galloway, formerly belonging to Samuel Clarke of Staunton, Augusta County, Virginia, and then living in Wilmington, Delaware, posted an advertisement in order to notify his children, Moses, William, Elizabeth, and Isaac, where he was living. In 1870, Sallie Glenn sought the

**NOTICE**  
Jacob Galloway, formerly belonging to Samuel Clarke, in Staunton, Augusta County, Virginia, now lives in Wilmington, Delaware. If his children, Moses, William, Elizabeth and Isaac are living and see this, he desires them to write to him at Wilmington, Del.      jan27-tml.

"Jacob Galloway searching for his children", Information Wanted ad, *The Christian Recorder* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), February 3, 1866; *Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery*, <http://informationwanted.org/items/show/39>, accessed August 13, 2017.

of my father, Chas. Glenn, also my mother, Sarah Glenn; also my sister Ludie; also my brothers Scott and Peter. They lived near Chicken-town, Campbell Co., Va. They belonged to a man named Glenn. Any information please address— Sallie Glenn, box 192.

"Sallie Glenn", Information Wanted ad, *The Christian Recorder* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), November 19, 1870; *Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery*, <http://informationwanted.org/items/show/379>, accessed August 13, 2017.

Information wanted of my brother Lindsley Teasley, and Betsey and Milly Ann Norman. I was sold from Georgia in 1861, and have only heard from them once since. Any information of them will be thankfully received.

They will find their brother, Henry Teasley, 37 Wirpland St., Boston, Mass., who is now Henry Hurd.  
March 18—1m.

"Henry Teasley", Information Wanted ad, *The Christian Recorder* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), March 18, 1871; *Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery*, <http://informationwanted.org/items/show/389>, accessed August 13, 2017.

locations of her father, Charles Glenn; mother, Sarah Glenn; sister Ludie; and brothers Scott and Peter. They had lived in Campbell County, Virginia and had belonged to a man named Glenn. In 1871, Henry Hurd, formerly Teasley, submitted a query seeking his siblings, Lindsley Teasley and Betsey and Milly Ann Norman. Henry had been sold from Georgia in 1861 but lived in Boston when he placed the ad.

Not all of the notices represent families separated by slavery and war. In 1899, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Davis of Roanoke County, Virginia placed an advertisement seeking the whereabouts of their teenaged son, Henry, who had gone to Braddock, Pennsylvania. Their query was rewarded, since Henry was back with the family in the 1900 census.

The coverage of the newspapers currently spans the years 1853 to 1911 and includes newspapers from cities in Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, DC, and Canada, with contributions from other, smaller cities. With the invitation to transcribe or contribute additional references, coverage of both time and place will undoubtedly expand. For anyone searching ancestors connected to slavery and its aftermath, or anyone wishing to participate, this is a terrific resource.

This article originally appeared in *Genealogy Gems* #158, April 30, 2017, published by the Allen County Public Library.

Photo courtesy of Delia Cothrun Bourne



**Delia Cothrun Bourne** is a librarian in the Genealogy Center at the Allen County Public Library, Ft. Wayne, Indiana. She holds a Bachelor's degree in English with a Teacher's Certificate from the University of Arkansas. She was a writer for the *History of Fort Wayne & Allen County, 1700–2005*. At the state level, she has been a contributor and is a past editor of *Indiana Genealogist* and was that quarterly's indexer for its first ten years.

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- Type all submissions. Times New Roman font, 12 point 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 credits 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.

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# Web Notes

*Resources, events, and stories found while wandering the Web*

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

Note: All URL's are valid as of the date of publication.

19th-century black actor who left U.S. to be successful but continued to fight slavery  
<http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/ira-aldridge-black-actor-shakespeare-african-american>

Photo album of 25th USCT with all 17 soldiers identified  
<http://www.npr.org/2016/09/21/494734329/family-heirloom-national-treasure-rare-photos-show-black-civil-war-soldiers>

Nice photo of USCT regiment  
<http://www.geneabloggers.com/genealogy-blogging-beat-sunday-22-may-2016/>

Rare surviving discharge certificate of a USCT soldier  
<http://www.progress-index.com/news/20170807/civil-war-usct-discharge-certificate>

Online archive of photographs depicting black American life from mid-19th to mid-20th centuries  
<http://news.cornell.edu/stories/2017/02/online-photo-collection-documents-african-american-life>

Site documenting lynchings for a century after the Civil War  
<http://www.monroeworktoday.org/>

Nat Love, famous black cowboy  
<http://narrative.ly/the-fearless-black-cowboy-of-the-wild-wild-west/>

Black progress 40 years after the end of slavery  
<https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=eiQMAQAAMAAJ>

1912 essay on the truth of being a black "servant" in the South  
<http://usslave.blogspot.com/2013/02/we-are-literally-slaves-early-twentieth.html>

Two black songs about World War I  
<http://blogs.loc.gov/folklife/2016/11/trench-blues/>  
<http://blogs.loc.gov/folklife/2017/06/when-i-first-got-ready-for-the-war/>

Library of Congress post featuring W. E. B. DuBois' *The Brownies' Book*  
<http://blogs.loc.gov/loc/2017/02/rare-book-of-the-month-w-e-b-du-bois-brownies/>

Negro Leagues Baseball e-Museum  
<http://coe.k-state.edu/annex/nlbemuseum/>

Smithsonian project to transcribe Apollo Theater booking cards  
<https://transcription.si.edu/project/8821>

National Parks Service publication about black history (PDF)  
<https://www.nps.gov/CRMJournal/CRM/v20n2.pdf>

90% of people in U.S. 2000 census with last name Washington were black  
<http://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/washington-the-blackest-name-in-america/>

Timeline of removal of Confederate iconography across the United States  
<http://cwmemory.com/2017/07/31/the-long-retreat-of-confederate-heritage/>

"Conducting African American Research in University Libraries"  
Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/BlackGenealogistsInUniversityLibraries/>

Giphy curating more representative collection of GIF's  
<http://mashable.com/2017/02/21/giphy-black-history-month-gifs/>

Freeman who petitioned court to be enslaved  
[http://www.decaturdaily.com/news/morgan\\_county/decat/archivist-unravels-mystery-of-why-freeman-entered-slavery/article\\_17b42d9b-81ca-5033-a6ee-d34beecc99a3.html](http://www.decaturdaily.com/news/morgan_county/decat/archivist-unravels-mystery-of-why-freeman-entered-slavery/article_17b42d9b-81ca-5033-a6ee-d34beecc99a3.html)

Early Los Angeles was founded by black and mixed-race individuals  
<http://californiahistoricalsociety.blogspot.com/2017/02/early-los-angelesan-afro-latino-town.html>

Pacific coast's only black whaling captain lived in Oakland  
<https://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/californias-only-black-whaling-captain-william-shorey-lived-in-oakland/Content?oid=5321404>

The *Laura Beecher Comer Papers, 1862–1899* include writings about her family's slaves in Columbus, Georgia  
[http://www2.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/c/Comer,Laura\\_Beecher.html](http://www2.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/c/Comer,Laura_Beecher.html)

50th anniversary of General Association of Colored Baptists in Kentucky  
<https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=wc8zAQAAIAAJ>

Photograph collection of blacks in Kentucky 1935–1946  
[http://collections.carli.illinois.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/nby\\_morriso](http://collections.carli.illinois.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/nby_morriso)

St. Louis black history museum  
<http://news.stpublicradio.org/post/st-louis-museum-celebrates-african-american-history-found-artifacts#stream/0>

Wilmington, North Carolina black newspaper saved and digitized  
<http://www.starnewsonline.com/news/20170721/students-help-preserve-copies-of-wilmington-record-burned-by-whites-in-1898>

New International African American Museum in Charleston, South Carolina  
<https://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/TheBattery/archives/2017/07/18/international-african-american-museum-launches-genealogy-center-research-initiative>

International African American Museum receives \$500K donation from Michelin  
<https://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/TheBattery/archives/2017/07/31/international-african-american-museum-receives-500k-donation-from-michelin>

Tina Turner museum in former one-room black schoolhouse

<http://www.atlasobscura.com/places/tina-turner-museum>

Fayette County, Texas slave transactions from 1827–1867  
[http://www.fayettecountyhistory.org/slave\\_transactions.htm](http://www.fayettecountyhistory.org/slave_transactions.htm)

Free e-book on black history in Texas  
<https://tshaonline.org/membership/african-american/>

George Washington's escaped slave who was never caught  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/06/arts/george-washington-mount-vernon-slavery.html>

Culinary historian Michael Twitty is first Revolutionary in Residence at Colonial Williamsburg  
<http://wydaily.com/2017/01/23/colonial-williamsburg-welcomes-its-first-revolutionary-in-residence/>

Historic black cemeteries in Virginia want same support as that given to Confederate cemeteries  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/historic-black-cemeteries-seeking-the-same-support-virginia-gives-confederates/2017/02/11/888b8ec0-de67-11e6-acdf-14da832ae861\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/historic-black-cemeteries-seeking-the-same-support-virginia-gives-confederates/2017/02/11/888b8ec0-de67-11e6-acdf-14da832ae861_story.html)

"Africana Historic Postcard Collection" at Library of Congress  
<http://blogs.loc.gov/international-collections/2017/02/africana-historic-postcard-collection/>

Former slave cemetery discovered under beach in Guadeloupe  
<http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/raisins-clairs-beach-cemetery-slavery>

Mid-19th-century maps of Liberia  
<http://blogs.loc.gov/maps/2017/08/from-colony-to-independence-mid-19th-century-maps-of-liberia/>

Project to document the lives of Africans and their descendants in Spanish and Portuguese colonies, including the Caribbean  
<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/esss.pl>

Thanks to Howard Edwards, Annette Madden, and Dera Williams for posting some of these links.

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- Miscellaneous topics of interest in researching black ancestors
- Resources and methods of research in Africa
- Mystery photos

#### 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
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- Newspaper transcriptions
- Plantation family papers relating to slaves
- Tax lists naming free blacks or slaves
- Voter registration lists





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