

African Americans and the Palmetto State

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Preface

This book attempts to fill a gap in South Carolina social studies texts. The gap has been there for a long time, even though recent texts have reduced it a little. For most of South Carolina's history between European colonization and the early 1900s, African-Americans were a majority of the state's population. Yet histories of the state rarely give more than a few pages to the contributions of African-Americans.

Scholars have ignored or failed to emphasize the contributions of African-American for a number of reasons. Some of those reasons are not very pleasant to consider. For much of the state's history, whites believed that African-Americans were inferior. Because whites controlled the schools, that belief was built into the books they chose to use. At worst, African-Americans were called savages. At best, they were simply ignored. Of course, this made it hard for African-Americans to think well of themselves.

In spite of this, African-Americans did maintain their pride and preserve their culture. A few African-American scholars, like W. E. B. DuBois, did studies in the early 1900s that proved the great importance and value of African-Americans to the nation. However, these scholars were ignored for a long time.

As open prejudice began to decline after World War II, the explanation changed a little. Scholars wrongly assumed that African culture had been lost during enslavement. Scholars treated African-Americans as a people without a history and culture of their own. Lacking their own culture, they would adopt European culture. The only thing that slowed down the process was racial discrimination. With the end of discrimination, they could become just like European-Americans. There was a negative side to that belief, a side that still was built on prejudice. Although usually not stated, most scholars assumed that European culture was superior in almost all ways. The dominant scholarly belief was that little from African culture was worth preserving or remembering.

In recent decades, research and study have found that all this was wrong. Scholars of both races have confirmed what average African-American citizens knew in their hearts all along. African-Americans have made valuable contributions to the state and nation throughout history. For example, think about the small farmer who scratched out a living in the nearly warn-out soil between the end of the Civil War and World War II. He was not just a small farmer barely avoiding starvation. He and thousands of others were small businesspersons who were the backbone of the state's economy. Yes, their lives were often quite miserable. Many did fail. But those who endured helped build a foundation for future progress just like tiny sea creatures build coral reefs which sustain life all around them. We now know that many African-Americans went well beyond being small farmers. This is the story of all these people.

The values and institutions Africans brought with them were not all lost. Rather, they were sometimes ignored or forgotten. But they were still there. In addition, African culture influenced European culture. What we know as South Carolina is not really European or African. It is a blending of both. This is the story of the contributions of African culture to South Carolina culture.

Although the main emphasis is on South Carolina, we must also look beyond the state. More Africans came to America through South Carolina than through any other single state. This links South

Carolina to the impact of Africans on the entire nation. Just like in South Carolina, African-Americans have contributed to American life and culture in many ways that few people understand. We hope this book will help you understand.

This book falls more into the category of what historians call social history rather than political history. This means that our main emphasis will be on how people lived. We will look at the institutions African-Americans created, like churches, schools, businesses, and communities. We will look at their family lives and how they managed. We will look at the things they created, such as arts, crafts, literature, and music.

Even though social affairs are the main focus, we will also look at some political history. You cannot understand people's lives without looking at the political forces that shaped opportunities. Politics is the study of power. Indeed, much of the history of African-Americans in South Carolina is the struggle to gain enough power to increase choices and chances. This is a story of two steps forward and then one step back. It is the story of determined struggle. It is the story of persistence and endurance.

Contributions is a key idea throughout the text. What does contributions include? We take a broad view. Obviously, includes material things like buildings, wealth, inventions, crafts, and even art.

When we get into art, we have crossed over into a different area, the area of ideas. Art is not just an object. It is also the idea behind that object. It is the feelings that are inspired by that object. So contributions must also include ideas and feelings. Many ideas and feelings are found in art, such as paintings, literature, crafts, and music. Ideas and feelings are very rich and important contributions.

Ideas and feelings are also a part of human organizations, like churches and social groups that inspire and help others. So we will look at cultural institutions as well.

Institutions that help people suggest another category in addition to material and ideas. Contributions can affect our behavior. This includes speech, dress, what we eat, and how we work and relate to each other. The endurance that we will see in so many people in this book is a major contribution. Their endurance inspires us to engage in a long term struggle just as they did. The seeds we plant today may make a better world for those that live long after we are gone.

Someone very wise once said that the best thing you can do with your life is be a good ancestor to those who come after you. You will meet many good ancestors in this book.

To the Teacher

This text takes a very definite value position which the authors feel is well supported by recent scholarly research. That position is that African-Americans have made many valuable and significant contributions to the state and to its culture. We argue throughout the text that what we know as South Carolina cannot be understood apart from its African influence. Hopefully, we have come far enough so that this position is no longer controversial. We can remember the day when state authorities considered integration too controversial to discuss.

The authors also take a multi-cultural perspective. We want students to understand and respect all cultures that have contributed to our state. Looking at this text alone, one might wrongly conclude that the authors take an Afrocentric point of view. Certainly it is true that this book focuses on African influences and highly values those influences. You should remember that this is intended to be a supplementary text, not a main text. It is meant to lend a greater balance to main texts that usually give far more coverage to European culture and influence.

The authors take the position that neither of the two major cultures that have defined the state are inherently superior. Both have strengths and both have weaknesses. Neither European nor African cultures (and of course, these are summary terms for what are really many cultures within a continent) have a monopoly on virtue. One need only look around the world today and see that people of all cultures are capable of incredible violence and of incredible sacrifice.

We have accentuated the positive because the focus is contributions. But we have not avoided controversy. One cannot understand African-American contributions without looking at the struggle to survive and make contributions. That means we must cover white racism. At the same time, we tried to give the most praise to those who responded in positive ways to the hatred they encountered. That is relatively easy in South Carolina because the overwhelming majority of civil rights leaders were moderate and carried little bitterness. Even the impatient young civil rights activists of the 1960s have done positive things in building the state. The message is that understanding and respect is healthier than misunderstanding and disrespect In the last chapter, we also touch upon challenges African-Americans face today. While whites can help and be supportive, some of the solutions are coming and must come from within the African-American community itself.

Perhaps the most difficult balance to strike is that of inclusiveness versus exclusiveness. A multi-cultural approach attempts to strike that delicate balance. Everyone has a right to their own culture and to their own cultural pride, whether that be Scottish, Irish, French, Greek, German, Hispanic, Japanese, Native American, or African. But cultural pride should not be used to denigrate other cultures. As Americans we have a common culture as well. Our common culture is the product of all our individual cultures. Above all, a democratic culture values diversity, tolerance, and respect. It rejects those parts of our unique cultures that hurt others. It is the wisdom that comes from hundreds of years of trying to live together, often unsuccessfully. It is the American dream that we can do better and be better than the last generation.

Pictures are a very important part of the book. We looked at thousands of pictures and tried to select the ones that we thought students would find most interesting. We used a number of pictures from Dr. Constance Schulz's The History of S.C. Slide Collection. This collection should be available in most

schools or from the State Department of Education. We have noted the slide number in each caption. You might consider using the slides and the more complete descriptions that are with the collection as you discuss the ideas in this book with your class.

This text is designed so that it can be used in several ways. First, it can be used as a stand-alone text for a separate section of your social studies class. The chapters follow enough of the history of the state so that they should make sense to students in terms of what takes place when. If you want to use the book this way, you should allow a minimum of four weeks.

It can also be used as a supplement to a main text. You can fit the chapters between chapters in the main text. Some can be chosen on chronological grounds. Obviously, chapters on the Civil War and Reconstruction can be done after like chapters in a main text. Other chapters like those on literature and on the arts will have to be arbitrarily placed. The chapter on military service could fit in after any of the war chapters in the main text. But it might work best when you are covering the history of the early 1900s. It has a significant emphasis on World War I, a war usually not given much emphasis in main texts.

Finally, you could use a combination method. You can work in the chapters that have the best chronological fit after like chapters in the main text. Then you can set aside about a two week period to cover the chapters that focus on literature, music, and the arts. You might consider scheduling that separate module during February, which is Black History Month. Black History Month is a time when the popular press often carries stories on art and culture that can supplement what you are studying in class.

We have deliberately chosen to write in a nontraditional style for textbooks, what we call a "conversational" style. This style uses many personal pronouns, like "we," "us," and "you," and some colloquial expressions. Our reason for choosing this style is to make the book more reader friendly by engaging the student in what sounds like a personal conversation. We hope you and your students will enjoy reading this book as much as we enjoyed writing it.

To the Students

If you have an African heritage, this book is your story. It should help you understand who you are. You can be proud of your story. African-Americans have made great contributions to both the state and nation. Your ancestors included pioneers, artists, writers, cowboys, brave soldiers, successful businesspersons, doctors, teachers, college professors, political leaders, and plain hard working people who survived against terrible odds.

There is also much for which to be very thankful. You will learn of people who struggled to give you a chance to read and to reach for the stars. Many of your ancestors never had those kind of chances themselves. But you do because of what they did. You should not forget that. You should take full advantage of what they fought to give you.

If your ethnic background is not African, you may think that this book has no value for you. You would be wrong. There are several reasons why the story of African-Americans in South Carolina should be important to you. First, it is important if you consider yourself a South Carolinian. As you will learn, the place we call South Carolina has been created by the blending of several cultures. One of the main ingredients is African culture. South Carolina's cultural blood is partly African blood. If you like to sit on the front porch, if you eat "goobers," if you "sweet talk" someone, if you listen to jazz or rock and roll or the blues, you are doing things with a very heavy African flavor.

Second, the story is valuable so that we learn not to repeat the mistakes of the past. We cannot change the mistakes of our ancestors. But we can avoid repeating them. As much as African-Americans contributed to the state, contributions could have been greater had they been given a greater chance. Many brilliant people were lost to the state because they felt they had no chance here. They left. They made contributions to other states. We lost and were left poorer as a state. The point is not to feel guilty for mistakes of forefathers. The point is to be brave enough to acknowledge what was done and understand that we can make things different. If we are to live together and prosper, a good place to start is by learning about each other. We can learn, respect, and prosper. Or we can ignore, disrespect, and fight. The choice is yours.

▼ ▼ ▼ Chapter 1

Passage

Who am I? That is a question that all of us ask at some point in our lives. The answer comes from many places. It comes from family, place of birth, religious beliefs, the nation in which we live, the state we call home, our community, our school, and the history of our ancestors. That history includes the way our ancestors lived, the stories they told, the food they ate, how they worked, their loves and fears, and their hopes and dreams. Some of those dreams include you.

This book will try to help you answer the question of who you are by looking at the history of your cultural ancestors. If you claim South Carolina as home, your cultural ancestors include not just those who are related through blood lines. Cultural ancestors include all those who once shared the state you now call home. All of them helped define and create what South Carolina is today.

In particular, this book will focus on your cultural ancestors who came from Africa. For some of you these are also ancestors by blood. For others there may be no blood ties. But, as you will learn in this book, there are many cultural ties. This first chapter has two major purposes. First, we will examine African roots and the meaning of the idea of homeland. To do this we must go back to Africa itself and look at the cultures from which thousands of your ancestors were stolen. Second, we will look at the people who came and the story of their coming. It is not a very happy story, but it is an important story. It reveals the strength and endurance of a people under the worst of conditions.

Before we do any of that, let us take a glimpse at what life may have been like in a West African village in the 1500s. This short fictional story centers on a young man who was just about your age.

A Day in the Life of Baroka

Baroka awoke with a start. That pesky mosquito again, he thought. Suddenly, he raised his hand near his ear. Whop! He slapped at the mosquito. "Now, Mosquito" Baroka said with a grin, "you know that the people and the animals are still angry with you." Baroka was recalling a story an elder had told him a few days before. The story was about why the mosquito buzzed in people's ears. Mosquito had annoyed Iguana.

Iguana had then frightened the other animals and caused great alarm and confusion. When King Lion sought the source of all the confusion, Mosquito hid. So even now, Mosquito buzzed around people's ears trying tofind out if King Lion was still angry. A resounding "whop" was his usual answer.

Now there was no more time for insect pests. Baroka remembered that traders were coming to the village today. He hoped there would be a feast and perhaps another story from the elders. Quickly he splashed water from the storage jars on his face and arms and went to milk the family goats. By the time he finished, his mother had prepared a meal of rice cakes and honey.

Baroka ate quickly. He shared the excitement running through the village. The traders were Ashanti and were expected to bring much of their famous finely-woven cloth to trade for rice, or perhaps for the baskets and wood carvings that the Yoruba made so well. Baroka wanted to roam among the traders and listen to the haggling for bargains. He was annoyed when his father insisted he watch little Sidi, who had come to live with them when her own mother

died. But, knowing the importance of family and kinship which the elders taught, Baroka dutifully obeyed.

Baroka's father had decided he would bring a decorated clay water jar and two artfully woven rice baskets to trade for the Ashanti cloth. Just then drum beats and gazelle horns announced the arrival of the Ashanti.

Soon the entire village was humming as traders made bargains and elders intervened to resolve disagreements. Baroka's father traded for an exceptionally fine gold-colored roll of cloth. It would make bright new garments for Baroka's mother and sister.

By early afternoon the trading was done and feasting had begun. Baroka stuffed himself on rice cakes, roasted chicken, wild pig, yams, and pumpkin. Afterwards storytelling began. Yoruba and Ashanti competed to see who could tell the best stories. Baroka decided the story he liked best was about why Dog, rather than Jackal, had come to live with people and guard their homes in exchange for a warm place near the fire. He did not care for the tale of how Rabbit had tricked the other animals, stolen all their grain, put gravel in their storage huts, and fixed the blame on poor, innocent Squirrel. Squirrel's suffering and Rabbit's escape seemed unfair. However, Baroka thought, no doubt Rabbit would not fare as well in some future tale of the elders.

After the storytelling, Baroka had to do his regular chore of herding the goats into their pen for the evening. This done, he was quite willing to listen quietly as his mother sang and prepared the hut for sleeping. Baroka's day had been long and exciting. He was tired. Even the whispers of the adults could not stir his curiosity on this night. Had he not been so tired, perhaps he would have puzzled over their hushed voices. The adults were speaking softly of what the Ashanti had said about light-tone people, who had arrived off the coast lately. They had come in great canoes carried by the wind according to the Ashanti. Had Baroka heard this, he might have wondered what their arrival foretold.

[Story by W. Calvin Smith, based on an old African tale entitled "Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears." Versions of this story appear in many sources. You can read another, longer version of this story in a young children's book of the same title by Verna Aardema, N.Y.: Dial Press, 1975.]

African Roots

A few years ago an African-American writer named Alex Haley wrote a book titled *Roots*. Haley's book met with great success because it tapped feelings that had been neglected for a long time. Later the book was turned into a mini-series for television. Millions watched the series. Many African-Americans had never been given the chance to learn about their personal roots or had been taught they had no roots. They felt a new sense of pride. Some were learning about their homeland and blood ancestors for the first time. Whites who watched found new understanding and respect. Set in West Africa, *Roots* shows the homeland area of most of the Africans who were brought in chains to America through South Carolina.

Feelings about homeland were different for African-Americans than for most other groups. Being enslaved, forced to come, and treated as inferior once they arrived all had a great impact. An inner sense of pride came into conflict with the New World culture. That culture tried to force African-Americans to view themselves and their background as inferior. The New World culture gave them a new religion. It gave them new names, new clothing styles, and a new language. What Americans from Europe did not realize at the time was that African culture was changing the New World culture. African culture gave new styles of religion, new words, and new modes of behavior. But that comes later in the story.

For generations of African-Americans, the result was strongly mixed feelings about their homeland. They thought that something they loved had been removed from them. That left them feeling sad. They felt a sense of longing and loss. Yet they were told that the European based New World culture was better. Some parts of the new culture they did cherish. Most did become Christian and were sincerely thankful for these new beliefs.

The term for strongly mixed feelings is "ambivalent." We can see these ambivalent feelings in African-American writings as early as the poetry of Phillis Wheatley, an enslaved African, in the 1770s. On the one hand, she laments that she was forced from the roots of her homeland.

> I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate was
> snatch'd from Afric's fancy'd happy seat. . .

On the other hand, she expresses thankfulness that this "snatching" brought her Christian religion.

> Twas mercy brought me from my Pagan
> land,
> Taught my benighted soul to understand
> That there's a God, and there's a Saviour
> too . . .

We can also see how long these ambivalent feelings lasted. In the 1920s another African-American poet, Countee Cullen, expressed similar feelings. In his poem "Heritage," he asks the question of what Africa should mean to him. On the one hand he answers that Africa could be wonderful things from times long passed. On the other hand, he wonders if he should care at all, because we all must live in the present. In a sense this is the central question of this book. What does Africa mean to you? What does Africa mean to South Carolina?

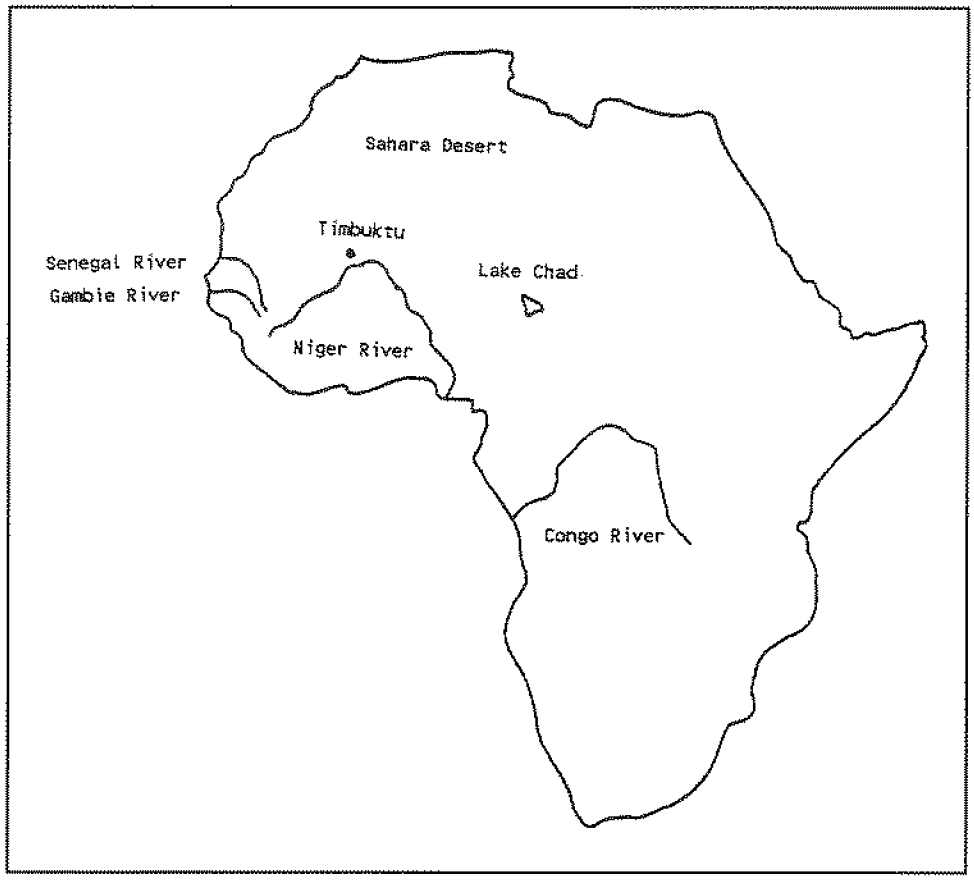
By the end of the First World War, however, attitudes did begin to change. The change was led by African-American scholars. The most important of these scholars was W.E.B. DuBois. Dr. DuBois was one of the truly great minds in all of the 1900s. He was a man of action as well as words. He was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the most well known civil rights group in the nation. DuBois helped foster a change in attitude that would eventually bear fruit in a new homeland pride. He was one of the first to describe the great medieval kingdoms of West Africa. His research taught us about the complex and sophisticated cultures below the Sahara Desert in central and southern Africa. He and other scholars began teaching us that roots of the homeland were not lost. Africa had survived the difficult passage to America. It had contributed to the lifestyle and values of African-Americans despite their ill treatment. More recent scholars have confirmed his early work. Alex Haley brought these truths to the rest of us in popular literature and television.

Let us now turn to those African roots. We need to look at two areas of Africa. The majority of Africans who were enslaved in South Carolina came from West Africa. The second largest group, roughly forty percent of those who were brought to the state after 1730, came from the central southern Atlantic coast of Africa. This is where the nations of Congo and Angola are today, the area around the mouth of the Congo River. What were these areas like in terms of geography and past history? Let us begin with West Africa.

Geographically, West Africa is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean in the West and South. The Sahara Desert defines its northern boundary. Lake Chad and what is presently Nigeria are at its eastern boundary. Its climate ranges from very dry desert to very wet rain forest. Several rivers give it access to the Atlantic coast. They include the Gambia, the Senegal, and the Niger. The region is sometimes called "Senegambia" because of the importance of the first two of these rivers.

Historical kingdoms arose in West Africa largely because of early connections with the Saharan trade routes. The routes ran from West Africa northward to the Mediterranean coast. Those routes date back to the ancient world. Gold and kola nuts from West Africa were exchanged for a variety of goods from North Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. These included dried fruit, salt, tools, copper, and cloth. From the 300s to the 1700s, or fourth to the eighteenth century, empires and kingdoms rose in succession here. They were built around the cities that controlled the trade routes.

The earliest empire was named Ghana. It dates back to the fourth century, more than 1,600 years ago. Ghana was also the name taken by the first of the modern, post-colonial states in Africa in this region. Ancient Ghana reached the height of its power in the eleventh century. For several hundred years it



Africa, showing key rivers and landmarks that define the areas from which Africans were taken to be enslaved in South Carolina.

dominated the Saharan trade routes. When you consider that the United States celebrated its own 200th birthday in 1976, this is a long time.

After repeated attacks by Moslems from the north, Ghana finally lost power to the empire of Mali in the 1200s, or the thirteenth century. Mali was founded by the Mandingo people. They founded the original state in the twelfth century. Within 100 years it was a great kingdom. It covered what today is most of Gambia, Guinea, Senegal, Mali, and Mauritania. Mali's rulers were Muslim converts. They made lavish pilgrimages to Mecca in keeping with their Islamic faith. In 1324, Mansa Mussa, the king of Mali, made such a pilgrimage. He took nearly 60,000 people with him as well as many gifts. There were thousands of guards, 500 servants, each carrying a staff made of gold, and eighty camels carrying about 24,000 pounds of gold. It must have been quite a trip.

Mali survived until the 1500s. It fell to a rival kingdom, Songhai, which had built its power base at Timbuktu on the Niger River. Songhai was even larger than Mali, stretching from the Atlantic coast westward to what today is central Nigeria. Songhai, too, was a Muslim state. It used the laws of the Koran, the Muslim holy book, for its system of justice. In the 1400s, the city of Timbuktu in Songhai was home of one of the world's great universities.

Internal strife and outside pressures eventually splintered Songhai into smaller kingdoms. No major empire replaced it before the time when Africans were enslaved and taken to the New World. Instead, a number of small kingdoms emerged. These included Dahomey, Ashanti, and Mossi. Their rivalry and intermittent warfare probably helped European traders when they began to arrive in the 1500s and 1600s. Captured enemies could be sold for a profit. Many of them were enslaved as cheap labor for the New World.

The second largest group of enslaved Africans came from the area around the mouth of the Congo River. This area and these people shared some similarities but also had some differences with those from West Africa. The climate was similar to that of West Africa. Both were tropical. Both areas were rich in fishing because of the rivers and the ocean. Both grew rice. This was important to whites who needed labor skilled in rice growing. Both areas also shared

a common heritage. Both were settled by many of the same people who had been moving south on the African continent seeking new areas to grow food. They all spoke different dialects or variations of the Bantu language.

Because the area around the mouth of the Congo River was settled much later, the civilizations of the area were not as old as those of West Africa. The kingdom of Kongo was created at the mouth of the river in the 1400s. Kongo had a well-organized government, somewhat like our own in structure. A king ruled a central government. At a lower level, governors ruled state governments or provinces. At the lowest level, districts and villages had their own rulers. This is somewhat like our national-state-county-city structure. The king had no army of his own. He had to depend on the provincial and district rulers to support him. That meant he had to be a skillful politician to hold the nation together. Outside of politics, Kongo also developed a complex culture. The nation developed its own music, sculpture, and poetry.

The Portuguese began a slow invasion of the area in the late 1400s. By the 1600s, they were enslaving people of the nation of Kongo. The king tried to negotiate to end the slave trade. It did not work. The Portuguese invaded in 1665. They defeated the army of Kongo and killed the king. By the early 1700s, invaders splintered the great nation of Kongo into several small states. Portugal and other European nations ran them as colonies.

Cultural Transmissions

The arrival of whites meant that many villages were destroyed. The arrival increased the break up of great African nations. But this break-up and even enslavement did not mean the loss of culture. Africans brought their customs and beliefs with them to the New World. As you will see, people passed these customs and beliefs down through the generations in often quiet and hidden ways. African-Americans modified their culture to fit a new place. In many cases, whites adopted parts of the African culture without knowing where the culture had come from. African culture would mix with the cultures of others who came to the New World and create a new culture. African culture became part of what South Carolina is. The important point of this complex process of transmission, modification, adoption, and mixing is that the culture of Africa endured.

Among the most enduring elements of a culture are its religious beliefs. Islam influenced much of West Africa. Most certainly, enslaved Africans brought some Islamic practices to the New World. These practices came into conflict with European Christianity.



African-Americans using the method of "head-toting" to carry cotton from the fields near Mt. Pleasant in about 1870. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide H-1 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of S.C. Historical Society.*





(Left) Head-toting by male vegetable vendor in the early 1900s. Courtesy Dr. Howard Woody, the S.C. Postcard Archive, South Caroliniana Library, USC. (Right) Head-toting by female vegetable vendors in early 1900s. Courtesy of William Davie Beard.

Christianity tried to eliminate other religious ideas and make converts, even among enslaved people. Even though Christianity won the conflict between religious practices, Christianity was changed. We can see the greatest change in how African-Americans practiced Christianity. However, we can also see that the religious practices of whites changed to include emotional expressions that have African roots.

African beliefs in many gods and reverence toward the spirits of one's ancestors merged with certain religious practices in the New World. Catholic saints were linked with African gods in the practice of Voodoo. The term "Vodun" in Haitian becomes Voodoo in English. Vodun comes from an African Dahomean word meaning "deity," or god.

"Faith healing" through the power of tribal magicians was another aspect of religion. Magicians frequently used herbs and roots in their cures. This practice would be continued by the "root doctors" that emerged in African-American communities in the New World. The use of roots and herbs continues even today. Let us take a look at this tradition.

Before modern times, most people depended on remedies made from plants, animals, or minerals. Records from pre-Civil War South Carolina show that both black and white Americans depended on a wide variety of medicinal plants. Medical care was extremely limited for everyone, but especially for African-Americans. People depended on home remedies. Herb or root doctors provided what medical care there was. Midwives delivered the babies. Often daughters learned these skills from their mothers. Usually a female member of the family was responsible for almost all family medical care. Many of the traditional treatments probably came from Africa, where herbal medicine was widely practiced. Because of a similar climate, people could find many of these same herbs in South Carolina.

In the 1700s and 1800s, people worried about different illnesses than those that concern us today. The first settlers feared fevers. Those caused by malaria, typhoid, or yellow fever were especially bad. Dysentery was another serious disease. Little was known about the causes of such illnesses. In fact, malaria was a problem at St. Helena Island, which is near Beaufort on the coast, well into the 1900s. In



A 1910 photo of "Uncle Sam Polite," who taught students at the Penn Center how to knit fish nets, a skill carried by African-Americans from their native African shores. From the Penn School Collection. Permission granted by Penn Center, Inc., St. Helena Island, S.C. In the Southern Historical Collection of the Manuscripts Department, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. This picture can also be seen in The History of S.C. Slide Collection *(Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989) as slide H-12.*

1930 Dr. York Bailey, an African-American graduate of the Penn School and Howard University's School of Medicine, managed to get the swamps drained. This eliminated many of the disease-carrying mosquitoes.

African-Americans in the Carolina low country frequently made teas from plants. The teas were used to treat colds, burns, and fevers. During the Civil War the supply of prepared medicines was cut off. People had to depend entirely on their local plants. These would be collected by enslaved African-Americans on the plantations. The designated African-American "nurse" on a plantation was responsible for giving out medicines. Even before the war, nurses of both sexes helped the doctors who were called to the plantations to treat wounds and extract teeth. Some nurses, generally women, received training so that they could care for those who were very ill. Both nurses and midwives were often older women who were no longer able to labor in the fields.

Although now there are few midwives, the tradition lives on. Sometimes it lives in the inspiration it provided to others. Dr. James A. Boykin of Lancaster, an African-American doctor, remembers his midwife grandmother, Mary Jane Witherspoon. She delivered him when he was born. During his childhood she was called out at all hours to deliver babies. She inspired him to become a doctor. The tradition lives in another way as well. Some people are returning to the practice. Nurse-midwives, trained in the ancient practice and also in modern medicine, are being used more and more in comfortable home-like "birthing centers." People find this an attractive alternative to impersonal hospitals.

After the Civil War, African-Americans still had to depend on these "nurses." Most people could not afford to pay white doctors. There were few African-American doctors. Midwives, some of them trained at the Penn Center, were delivering babies well into the 1900s. Many people lived in fairly isolated areas. Some of the healers had quite good reputations. Even today, in some areas people depend on traditional healers to treat many illnesses.

We can see this tradition most clearly in a relatively isolated community like St. Helena Island. Here the people retained many practices from the past. The island had only one local physician well into the 1900s. So people continued to depend on traditional medicine long after the Civil War was over. A researcher living on the island found that people used more than forty different substances as medicines. Various herbs were collected, washed, dried in the sun, and stored in cloth bags. In addition to herbs, other ingredients included onions, garlic, cornstarch, cottonseed oil, and turpentine. At least some of these medicines were beneficial. In fact, a number of those plants are the basis for drugs approved by the U.S. government for more than one hundred years. For example the islanders thought peach tree leaf helped reduce high blood pressure and fever. When a drug for skin problems was unavailable during World War II, the U.S. government substituted a drug made from peach tree leaf. However, Spanish moss, used by

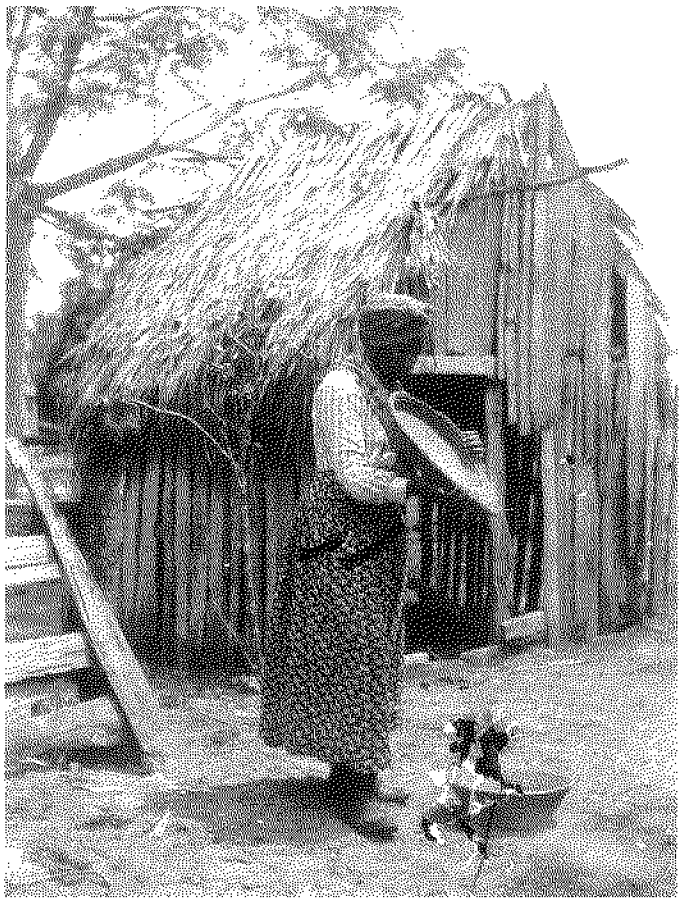
the islanders in their shoes or on their heads to relieve "high blood," does not seem to have found a wider usage!

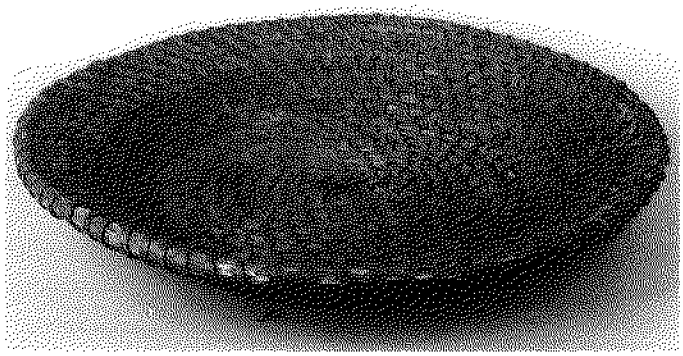
Root doctors often divided illnesses into those of the mind and of the body. They saw good health in terms of keeping the blood properly balanced. The blood could be either too sweet or too bitter, too high or too low. On St. Helena, when the blood was too bitter, the treatment was sweet medicines like carrot seed, sugar, wine, or sassafras. When the blood was too sweet, they used bitter medicines like snake root, horehound, and the root of the coral bean. Blood pressure seemed to be related to the flavor of the blood. High blood pressure went along with blood that was too sweet. Low blood pressure went with bitter blood.

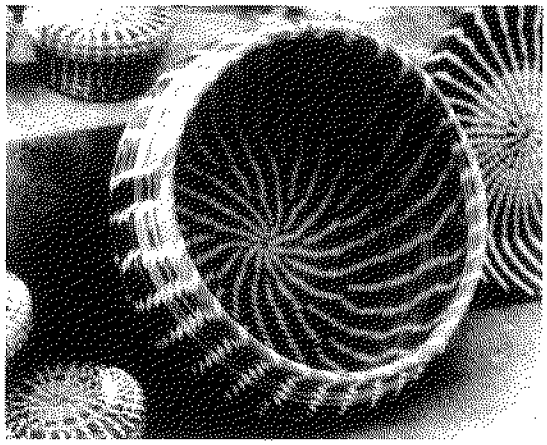
People consulted root doctors when someone was dizzy, or had a headache, or was unable to sleep. Some of the remedies suggested for these and other problems are similar to those of modern physicians. The root doctors might tell people to improve their diet or to get more sleep. Some of the practitioners sounded much like psychologists because they helped with stress related problems.

However, people thought some illnesses were caused by witchcraft. If the person had committed a wrong, the usual remedies would not work. Some special intervention and repentance would be needed. Before the time of enslavement, many people believed in the power of witches. Many African peoples thought

(Top Right) Coil Rush Basket made in the 1800s of sweetgrass and Palmetto leaves. Reproduced with permission of the Charleston Museum. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art. (Bottom Right) Sweetgrass basket made in Charleston in 1993. Photo by Aimee Smith. (Left) Woman winnowing rice in a farmer basket near Beaufort in 1907. This shows how methods and crafts survived down through time. Note the African-style thatched roof on the building in the background. From the Penn School Collection. Permission granted by Penn Center, Inc. St. Helen Island, S.C. In the Southern Historical Collection of the Manuscripts Department, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. This picture can also be seen in The History of S.C. Slide Collection *(Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989) as slide D-44.*







that witches caused incurable illness. We can find stories of witchcraft in the accounts of former enslaved African-Americans like Jacob Stroyer and Simon Brown. Mainstream medicine practiced in modern hospitals and clinics would be of no use for such problems.

Today, we are beginning to learn that the mind has the power to help in healing. To this extent, practitioners of witchcraft and voodoo were onto something. The best root doctors added to their knowledge of plants a good "bedside manner." That is, they treated the mind as well as the body by boosting the patient's confidence. Today, medical science recognizes the importance of treating the "whole person." African-American root doctors were doing this long ago. One of them said that God had provided a remedy for all illness. People just had to find the remedy. We are just now "discovering" these ideas in modern medicine.

The family was the basis of social life in Africa, as elsewhere. Even though the slave trade uprooted and separated African families, aspects of African family life reemerged in America. Perhaps the most important aspect of African family life was psychological—the belonging. The sense of belonging went beyond the family as we think of it today. Suppose a young African child lost his mother. He could turn to other "mothers" within a larger family of the clan or tribe or society for love and comfort. In some societies, men had several wives. For a child, these women could take on some of the functions of her own mother.

In the enslaved New World, a similar compensation would occur. Families were often split up because of death or because whites sold members away. Children would be accepted within another family group. They would be treated as any other child in the family. Of course, this did not lessen the pain. It was a means of survival that came from the roots of Africa. After enslavement ended, freed men and women sought long and hard to find missing family members.

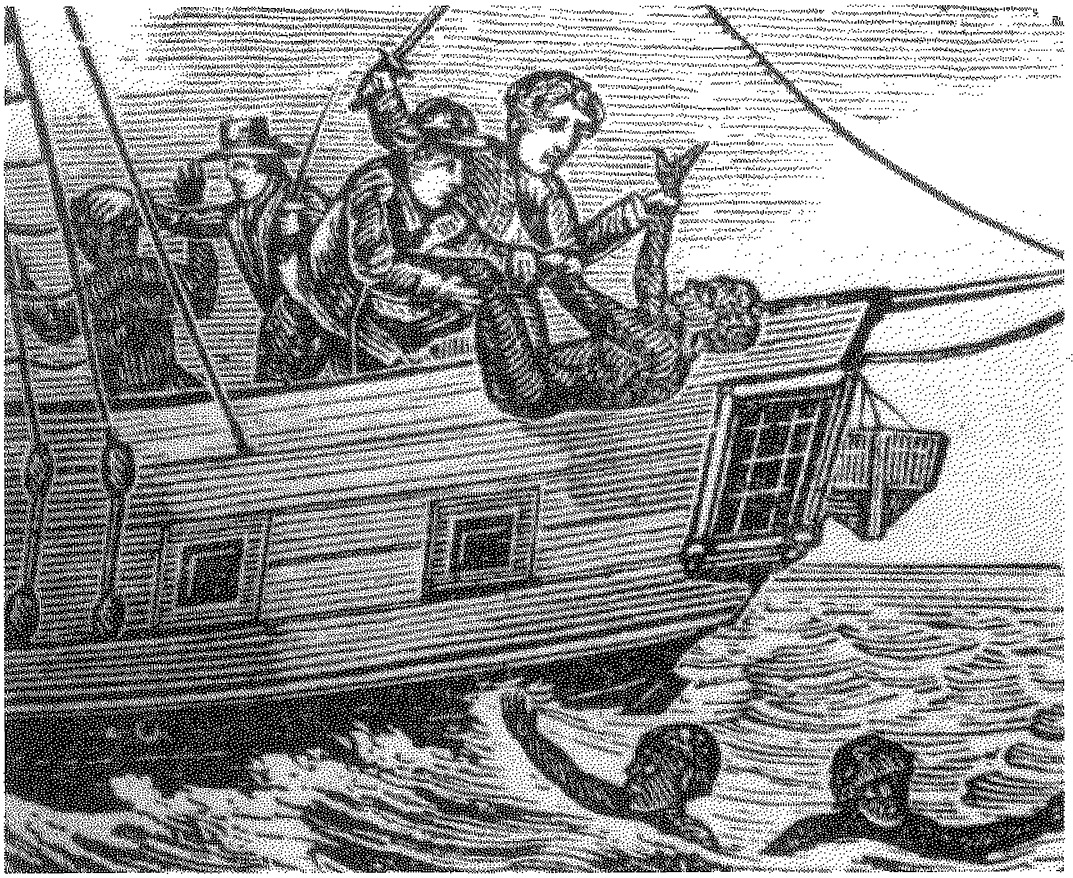
African languages affected our language. The Southern style of English uses many English terms and some African terms in a dialect that has musical qualities that partially come from Africa. Few people understand this, some scholars argue that modern whites use language that is closer to its African origin than the language used by many modern African-Americans. For reasons of safety and security, enslaved African-Americans needed to be able to talk to each other in ways whites could not understand. Whites picked up African terms. This forces African-Americans to come up with new language that was further removed from its origin. We will discuss this topic more in a later chapter when we look at Gullah.

Another area that has easily identifiable African roots is the food we eat and how we prepare it. Much of southern cooking is African cooking with new, added ingredients from both the South and Europe. The reasons are quite logical. Enslaved Africans did most of ther cooking on plantations. After the Civil War, African-American household help did a great deal of cooking for whites in their homes. They used methods and spices that had been passed down from generation to generation. We will look at this in a later chapter.

Recent scholars have found African roots in one unusual area—Southern etiquette. Etiquette means the way we behave toward each other and the terms we use in speaking to each other on a day-to-day basis. As you should know, the South is known for its manners and politeness. Whites often think that this is just the heritage of English nobility. That is certainly part of it. But it also has African roots. Great respect for elders has a definite African connection. Much of the spirit of the Southern manners is African, though the formal terms are English. One might say that Southern manners are English manners with emotion. Much of that emotion has African origins.

Much of the art and crafts we find in South Carolina has African roots. These include carving, basketweaving, a wide range of music and dance, and even painting. All of these have cultural origins from Africa. Whites have adopted much of this. In later chapters of the book, we will look at these areas in some detail.

Finally, we see African-Americans returning to African clothing styles as they rediscover their heritage. Kente cloth, which is made of woven strips of cotton, silk, or rayon sewn together, has become very popular in the United States. The Asante people in Ghana wear this type of cloth. People make this cloth in a variety of patterns and colors.



Enslaved Africans were treated harshly on ships that took them to America. Those who died were thrown overboard. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide B55 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.*

African-Americans use Kente cloth to decorate different kinds of clothes as well as personal items like pocketbooks. Ironically, it is in such high demand that large quantities are now being made by machine in countries in Asia.

Passage to South Carolina

Some of the first Africans who entered North America probably did not come under the harsh conditions of enslavement. Their exact status is uncertain. Some probably came to the New World as explorers. Others came either as servants or as enslaved people in the early 1500s. Africans were with Balboa on the expedition that discovered the Pacific, with Cortes in Mexico, and Coronado in the West. The Spanish explorer Ayllon brought enslaved Africans to the South Carolina coast in 1525. The precise location is uncertain. It was once thought to be in the Port Royal area. Later evidence is that the area was farther north, closer to where Georgetown is today. Other archaeological evidence shows that it may have been south on the Savannah River. There is even some evidence that those who were enslaved revolted against the Spanish. Some who escaped may have intermarried with the Indians of the area. Except for those who escaped, none remained there very long.

The Spanish had already established enslavement by the time the English began their permanent New World colonies. Colonial Virginia is where the horrible institution of enslavement began to evolve among the English. Most historians agree that the Africans of 1619 were not enslaved. They probably had the status of indentured servants. Indentured servitude was the form of non-free labor most often used by the English.

Over a period of fifty years or more, the Africans in Virginia gradually lost even this lowly status. They moved from temporary servitude to servitude for life-slavery. According to some sources, racial prejudice may have cause this to happen. Enslaving people of a different race is easier than enslaving those of your own race. You can rationalize that they are different. You can even fool yourself into thinking that enslavement is good for them because they are different in ways that make them inferior. This thinking is prejudiced and bigoted. These wrong ideas allowed

those who did the enslaving to live with their consciences, so long as they did not think too much about what they had done.

A more current theory adds another element. There is evidence that some Africans did have small farms in coastal areas after completing their time as servants. But these farms did not last long. The people either moved away or were enslaved. Virginia tobacco growers needed a lot of cheap labor to clear more land for tobacco. Freeing servants who had worked for the agreed time made labor more expensive. So the white planters found ways to keep Africans as servants for life. This was simple greed.

In truth, both prejudice and greed probably played important parts in creating enslavement in the early colonies. By the last third of the 1600s, the English wrote enslavement into law.

By that time, the English were emerging as the primary shippers of enslaved people. The Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and French had all been involved in the trade. But English victories at sea in various wars gave England control of the sea-lanes. Thus, the English had control of the trade of enslaved Africans. Of course, this included English-Americans who engaged in the trade either as merchants or shippers.

Once begun, the trade by the English and colonial merchants continued for a long time. One example in South Carolina was Henry Laurens, a Charleston merchant of the 1760s. Like other merchants, he shipped products from South Carolina to England and the West Indies. On return trips many of his ships carried enslaved Africans. Strange as it may seem, his son, John Laurens, argued that African-Americans who fought for the Americans against Britain should be given freedom. Sadly, most other white South Carolinians did not agree.

During the 1600s and probably well into the 1700s, many whites felt that enslavement actually saved African lives. After all, whites told themselves, these were people who were captives in wars on the African continent. Had they not been taken, they would surely have been killed. Because local rulers controlled much of the trade in Africa itself, whites assumed that those taken were in fact prisoners of war. Later whites realized this was not the case. Greedy rulers sent out raiding parties to capture people who would be enslaved. The whole purpose of the raid was "human-stealing." Offers to buy people created those raids, not wars. Clearly this had no humane justification, but by then the trade was so profitable that it was difficult to stop.

Even after the United States banned the trade of enslaved people by law in 1809, it continued across the Atlantic illegally right up to the Civil War. The last known "slave ship" was a former racing yacht named *The Wanderer*. A Charleston resident was the owner. He pretended it was to be used in racing. Instead, he fitted the ship with large water tanks, eating utensils, and provisions for many people. In 1858 the ship headed for Africa, though officially it was supposed to be going to the Caribbean. The ship was 114 feet long, a little more than 30 paces. It left Africa with 490 mostly young African men chained to a temporary deck built below the main deck. Each person had little room to move or even breath. Two and a half months after leaving Charleston, the ship landed off the coast of Georgia on Jekyll Island. Unsanitary conditions caused many of the people on board to die. Some African-Americans living on the island today can trace their ancestors back to those taken on this cruel passage.

That is not the end of the story. The federal authorities heard of the illegal actions. The owner gave up control of *The Wanderer* and fled to avoid prosecution. The ship was sold several times before the outbreak of the Civil War. Then, the Union Army seized *The Wanderer* and refitted the ship to fight for the Union side. The former racing yacht and slave ship captured Confederate blockade runners and destroyed targets on the southern coast. It sank in 1871 off the coast of Cuba carrying a cargo of fruit.

The worst part of the actual trade in terms of physical torment was undoubtedly the trip across the ocean. The experience of the enslaved passengers on *The Wanderer* was multiplied by millions. Estimates are that as many as ten million Africans were forcibly shipped across the Atlantic. About half a million went to the British colonies in North America. Of those, about forty percent came through Charleston. Somewhere in the range of 75,000 remained in South Carolina. If this is true, then nearly half the African-Americans in the nation have some connection to South Carolina.

Those who survived the journey sometimes told

or wrote their stories. Such was the case with an enslaved African named Omar Ibn Seid. He was of the Fula society in West Africa. His merchant uncle had trained him in Arabic and mathematics. His religious faith was Islamic. Captured and sold, he ended up in Charleston in the 1800s. He ran away from his owner but was recaptured. While in jail awaiting return, he wrote on the walls in Arabic. This so amazed some of the observers that they arranged for Omar's purchase from his previous owner. Though still enslaved, he was able to record his own "autobiography" in 1831. He told about his life in Africa, his capture, and his enslavement. His work provides a story of Islamic background, faith, and literary ability too long lost in the early history of those who lived in Carolina.

Traders brought most of the Africans to South Carolina because of their skill as rice workers. Most whites cared little about the literary skills of those they enslaved. By the 1700s, South Carolina made the rice plantation the center of economic life. What whites cared about was growing rice and building the state. This is what enslaved Africans did. But in doing so, they changed the state in ways most whites did not understand. Many South Carolinians, white and black, still do not understand what happened. That is the topic of the next chapter.

▼ ▼ ▼ Chapter 2

The Creation of Early South Carolina

As we have seen, whites allowed blacks to be enslaved in South Carolina from the beginning. In fact, some of the Lord Proprietors who ruled the state were partners in the business of importing and selling enslaved Africans. The ruling lords certainly did not stand in the way of an English settler who wanted to buy enslaved Africans. Thousands of Africans were enslaved and brought into the state. Whites assumed that African labor could be used to create an English society in Carolina. What whites did not know was that the Africans would create a new society that blended English and African culture. This is the story of that creation.

The Rice Culture

How important would Africans be to the new colony? That would depend on the ways the colonists chose to make a living. The colonists found no gold, as the Spanish had in Mexico. Land, and what it could produce, was to be the key to the colonists' wealth. They tried many crops. Eventually they chose two that could be sold to the rest of the world—rice and indigo. Without the labor of thousands of people, they could not grow enough of these crops to get rich. Enslaved Africans provided that labor. So we might conclude that Africans, although not by their own choice, helped make colonial South Carolina an economic success. Africans also had a great impact on day-to-day life in the colony. To put it another way, Africans helped create its culture.

Today, when we think of products that are important in our state, we do not think of rice. Very little rice is grown here now. However, in the 1700s rice was the most important crop in South Carolina. The swampy areas near the coast were one of the world's best rice-growing regions. The colony grew huge amounts of rice. Estimates vary, but from the 1700s to the 1860s the region produced around 70 million pounds each year. In 1860 alone, the colony harvested 119 million pounds. How much is 119 million pounds of rice? One pound of rice produces about ten cups of cooked rice. If you calculate the volume of a cup and do a bit of multiplication, you can compute the volume in cubic feet of cooked rice. If you stacked these one foot cubes of cooked rice up in the air, it would create a stack 1,935 miles high. If you covered the surface of a football field, it would be over 210 feet deep in rice. That is like a 21 story building the size of a football field. That is a lot of rice!

Africans knew how to cook rice, and they liked it. At first the English settlers had little use for rice themselves. They saw its value as a product to sell to others. In far away ports "Carolina gold" rice became famous and brought a good price. In a sense it was gold, because it made the white planters rich. When you see one of the old mansions in the Low Country, or in Charleston, Georgetown, or Beaufort, you are probably seeing the results of the great profits they made. Cotton would later become "king" in the state, but rice remained economically important until about 1900. Rice began its decline with the Civil War. The war removed the cheap, yet skilled, labor that grew rice for the white planters. After the war, workers demanded cash payments. Planters could not afford to repair all the damage that was done to the rice fields during the war. Hurricanes later did further damage to the fields.

The enslaved Africans contributed more than their hard work. Rice was a common crop in western Africa. Many enslaved Africans brought with them the



Methods of threshing rice were brought from Africa. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide D-43 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of the Charleston Museum, Charleston, S.C.*

secrets of growing rice as it was done in their homeland. First, they cleared the forests. They cut down trees. They burned or removed logs and stumps. Next, they broke the soil with a hoe, sowed the seeds, and pulled up any weeds that threatened to choke the tender rice shoots. When the rice was ripe, they cut the stalks with a sickle. They bundled the stalks together and then removed the rice in one of two ways. One way was to beat the bundles against a board so that the rice fell off. The other way was to lay the stalks on the ground and beat them with a "flail." A flail was a pole with a short piece of rope on the end. Attached to the other end of the rope was a short piece of heavy wood. Swinging the pole allowed the worker to beat the rice out of the stalks with the short piece of wood.

The job was not yet done. Husks still encased the rice grains. Workers removed the husks with a mortar and pestle. They make the mortar by hollowing out a log on one end. Sitting the hollowed-out log on the other end, they placed the rice inside. Then the worker would use a stick with a rounded end to smash the husks off the rice grains. This process also polished the grains.

Finally, the smashed husks had to be removed from the grains. They placed the contents from the mortar in a large flat basket, called a "fanner" basket. The worker would then gently toss the mixture of rice grains and smashed husks in the air. The breeze would blow the lighter smashed husks away from the basket and the heavier grains would fall back down into the basket. In effect, this fanned the husks away. What was left after all this work was the final product, Carolina gold.

Not only were the skills African, the working style was also African. The workers labored in unison, usually singing to keep the pace of the work together. White landowners soon learned the value of an African who knew these things. Advertisements for enslaved Africans often stressed that they were from the rice growing region of Africa.

Another reason why Africans were important in the growing of rice was that they were less vulnerable to the deadly diseases carried by mosquitoes that bred in the low-lying rice fields. Without resistance to malaria and yellow fever, Africans could not have survived at all in the rice fields. Economic prosperity for the white Carolina rice planters would have been impossible. No one understood why at that time, but white workers grew sick and often died working in

the rice fields. Africans generally did not. The reason, we now know, was that malaria and yellow fever were common in the tropical regions of Africa. People living there had become partly immune to the effects of these diseases.

Equally important, white planters had no source of labor they could pay to do this hot and hard work. English settlers did not want to toil in rice fields for someone else. They wanted their own farms. So once planters learned that Africans had more tolerance of the heat than did the Europeans, the planters began to see enslavement as the answer. Now they could get rich selling rice without having to suffer or perhaps even die in the process. The suffering was forced on the enslaved Africans. The owners of the best rice plantations were among the richest men in the English colonies.

It seems clear that although there could have been a South Carolina without the contributions of the enslaved Africans, it would not have been the South Carolina that our history books show us. This is also true in other ways.





(Above) Dykes like this one, which has been restored near Georgetown, were used to control the flow of water into the rice fields. Photo by Aimee Smith. (Left) Enslaved Africans use mortar and pestle method to remove husks from grains of rice. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide D-46 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of Georgetown County Library.*

Gullah

You are no doubt aware that Americans often think those from the South "talk funny." Because of the way Southerners speak, sometimes people who are not from the South think that Southerners are "slow" or not very clever. Of course they are wrong. They are also wrong in thinking that we all sound alike. All southern speech is not the same. Within South Carolina there are differences in speech. For example, people from Charleston can be hard to understand if you are from the western part of the state, called the "up country." Black and white Carolinians sometimes speak a little differently from each other. However, blacks and whites share even more in their speech than they differ. "Sandlappers," as people from South Carolina are sometimes called, of both races use certain words and pronunciations that set them apart from others who claim to speak English. Why is this so?

History affects the way we speak. Even though our ancestors came from different countries and spoke different languages, black and white Carolinians share a lot of history. We have blended all our languages into one, even though that one has different variations. Most of us speak English, although it is not "the king's English."

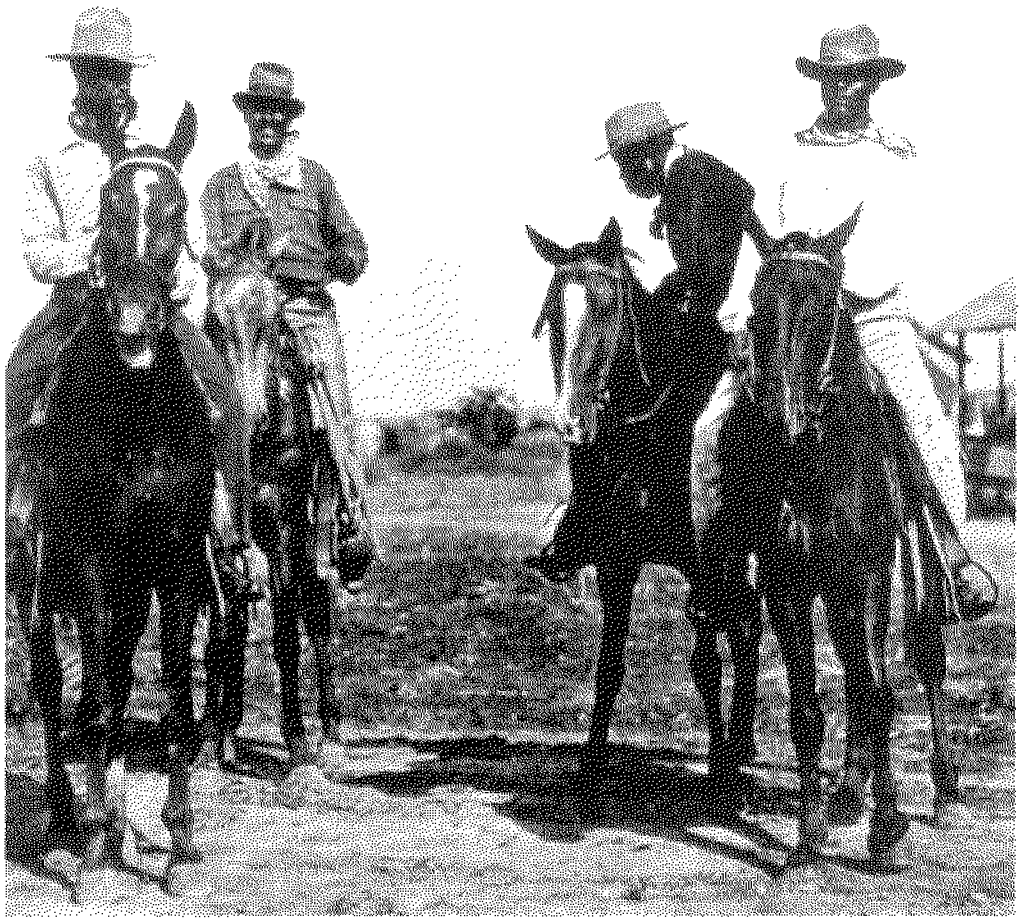
Here is what happened. The Africans who were brought here were members of different societies from different areas of Africa. Although their language often had a common Bantu base, they spoke different dialects that had developed over thousands of years. They could not easily understand each other. We can imagine the verbal chaos that must have filled the air on Sullivan's Island, where most were put ashore on Carolina soil for the first time. English was known only to the Africans who had spent some time on one of the Caribbean Islands. So most had a difficult time trying to communicate with whites as well as with each other.

In struggling to bridge this gap, Africans began to borrow words from each other. They blended words with the English they learned. The resulting language was more than just the words. Africans also blended voice tones, the rhythms of speaking, pronunciation, and ways of expressing ideas. The result was what is called a "Creole" language. This particular Creole language is called "Gullah." Although it is not as widely spoken as in earlier years, Gullah can still be heard. You are most likely to find it on the "sea islands" along the coast south of Charleston.

Although they may not realize it, many white South Carolinians have also woven African influences into their speech. Sometimes the words themselves are African. One example is "tote," which means carry. Tote is sometimes used to refer to a sack or container, a tote bag. Among the other common terms that can be traced back to African origins are such words as "ok," "phone," "yam," "guy," "honkie," "fuzz," "dig," and "jam." Sometimes the words may be English, but the way they are put together may be African. "Sweet talk" is a common phrase meaning to flatter. Another is "poor mouth," which means to belittle or put down.

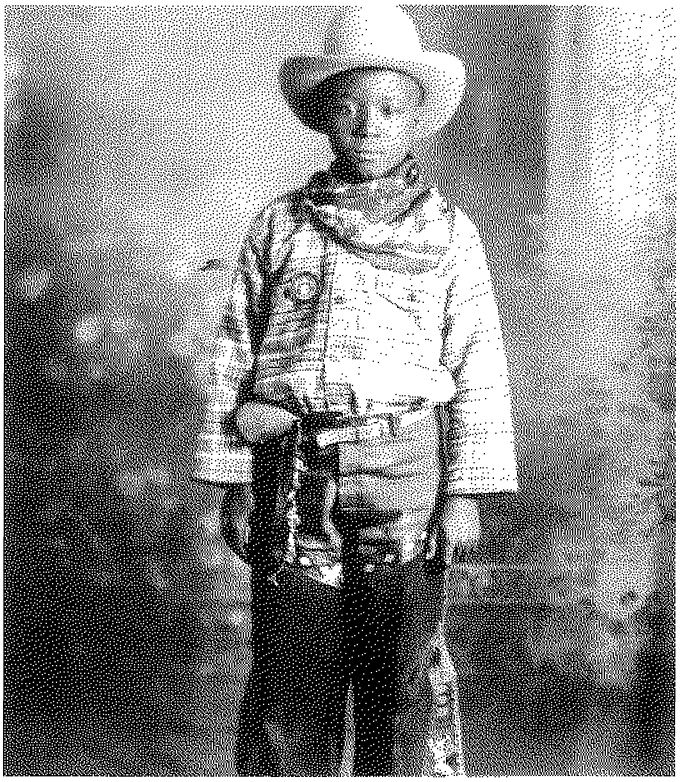
People often connect Gullah speech with stories enslaved Africans used to tell. Perhaps you have read some of the "Uncle Remus" stories. Brer Rabbit, Brer Bear, and Brer Fox are among the best known characters in our folklore. Children and adults of all races love them. Generations of gifted storytellers gave us these tales. The stories are part of the Gullah tradition. We will look at these stories more closely in the chapter on literature.

African-Americans from South Carolina are rediscovering their own roots in language and culture. In 1988 the President of Sierra Leone visited the Penn Center on St. Helena Island. He told the people there that his native language was almost the same as the Gullah that some of them still spoke. He invited the people to visit Sierra Leone and see and hear for themselves. The next year they did. The people of Sierra Leone welcomed them like long lost relatives. Of course, that is what they were. The people of Sierra Leone did not know what had happened to those who had been enslaved. Perhaps Europeans had taken their ancestors to Europe, they thought. Perhaps all of them had died, or the maybe the Europeans fattened them up and ate them. (You can see this wonderful and emotional story of homecoming on a 1990 S.C. Educational Television production called "Family Across the Sea.")



(Left) African-American "cowboys" may have brought the idea of open land grazing and cattle drives from Africa. These cowboys in a photo taken around 1900 found more freedom in the American West than they did in the South. Courtesy of William Loren Katz Collection, care of Ethrac Publications, 231 W. 13th St. N.Y., N.Y. 10011, Library of Congress.

(Below) A young African-American child in a 1920s Richard Roberts photo had real heroes to look up to in the American West. Courtesy of Roberts family.



The First Cowboys

We have seen how important African skills and labor were in growing rice. Now we will look at some of the many other areas where African skill and labor helped build the state. As you will see, these skills went far beyond South Carolina. Some of the skills Africans brought helped create the nation. In fact, some of the things that we think of as uniquely American may have started in Africa. Let us begin with cowboys.

Europeans customarily raised small numbers of cattle in a relatively confined area, a pasture. In Africa however, among the Fulani societies, open grazing was common. There were no fences. The Fulani were skilled at raising cattle. When Fulani were enslaved and brought to America, they brought their expertise with them. They introduced the practice of open grazing to South Carolina. Open grazing was the perfect approach for an area with a virtually unlimited supply of land.



A Sketch of African-American jockeys exercising their mounts. Courtesy of William Loren Katz collection, care of Ethrac Publications, 231 W. 13th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011.

Settlers carried the practice of open grazing to the American West where it combined with Spanish horseback traditions. Western cattle herders traveled from north to south each year, migrating just as the Fulani did. One scholar has even suggested that the origin of the word "cowboy" comes from the custom of having enslaved Africans raise cattle. The term "cowboy" is comparable to the term "houseboy." One worked with cows. The other worked inside the house.

Jockeys

Some enslaved African-Americans worked as stable hands. They had to feed and clean the livestock, care for the carts, wagons, and harnesses, and clean the stables on a regular basis. Others tended different types of livestock, like poultry, sheep, and cows. A yard watchman was responsible for ensuring the safety of the rice and other crops stored on the grounds.

Enslaved African-Americans trained horses on the plantations. The first jockeys in South Carolina were enslaved African-Americans. Their masters gave them classical names like Cato or Pompey. Plantation owners liked to hold competitions against one another. Thus we find the roots of South Carolina's horse-racing tradition. After the Civil War, the horse industry provided good jobs for African-Americans with these skills. The custom of using African-American jockeys continued into the early 1900s. Famous African-American jockeys like Charles Peter Green began their careers in South Carolina. After the early 1900s when lots of money began to be made in racing horses, racing became a virtually all white sport.

Skills and Crafts

Many African-Americans were skilled craftsmen. The earliest arrivals brought from Africa such skills as woodworking, leatherworking, pottery, brickmaking, and metalworking. These skills were invaluable to the South. They were essential for economic growth. Scholar Leonard Stavisky estimated that by the end of the Civil War, 100,000 of the 120,000 artisans in the South were African-American. That is, five of every six people skilled in crafts were African-Americans.

African-American artisans were responsible for much of the construction and building in the South. Most of the magnificent houses constructed in the South were built by enslaved African-Americans.

These highly skilled people crafted many of the iron gates and balconies in Charleston.

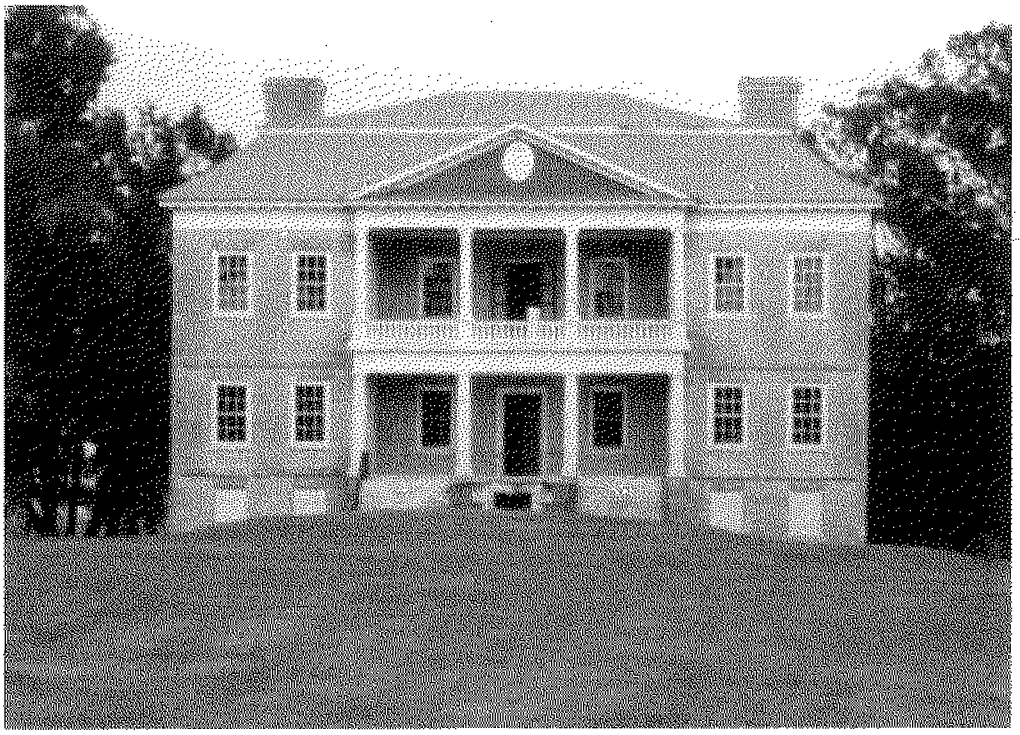
By the late 1600s, there was an enormous demand for labor of all kinds. Those enslaved African-Americans who lived on plantations learned skills that would help make the plantations self-sufficient. Many of these enslaved people were shoemakers, gardeners, weavers, or blacksmiths. They made the kettles, bowls, and other implements used on the plantations. Woodworking skills were valuable in a country covered with woodlands. Records in the early 1700s showed more than seven types of woodworkers alone.

Enslaved carpenters built the homes of the planters and most of the other buildings on the plantations. Their work was highly prized. They earned the respect of both whites and other enslaved Africans. Renty Tucker was one such man. Tucker lived on a plantation in the South Carolina low country in the mid-1800s. He was a skilled carpenter who may have been trained in England. One of his most famous creations was a chapel, St. Mary's Weehawka. First he built a scale model, and then he began on the foundation. He installed stained glass windows and a clock and chimes for the tower, which were bought in England. Within a year and a half, he completed the entire project. He also built a beautiful summer home on Pawleys Island that was much fancier than those of most other planters. Tucker was only one of the many highly skilled enslaved carpenters.

Enslaved African-Americans also were responsible for much of the transportation of the day. They handled a variety of boats. Boats were a major means of travel and shipping in the coastal areas. Boats could range from rowboats to schooners. Some African-Americans were trained as coachmen on plantations. The head coachman was an important person with a special status that commanded respect.

Food had to be prepared for workers as well as for the plantation family. Most plantations had more than one cook, sometimes several. To save time, cooking the midday meal was often done close to the work area. Often a separate cook prepared meals for the children of the plantation. Of course, enslaved African-Americans cooked for themselves as well as for the whites. They made their own breakfasts at their cabins before beginning the day's work. They made their own meals at the end of the day. The women, in particular, had to work at this "double-cooking."

House servants had a wide range of



Skilled African-Americans built nearly all the beautiful plantations and their buildings across the South. This is the main building at Drayton Hall Plantation, near Charleston. Reproduced from Constance B. Shulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide J-20 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989. Courtesy of the S.C. Dept. of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism.*

responsibilities. They had to do the cooking, cleaning, and childcare. Some served the owners as butlers, valets, waiters, or waitresses. Occasionally they were given some responsibility over other house servants if the master and mistress were away. People regarded house servants as superior to field hands because they were more highly trained. When sold, house servants fetched a higher price. In some ways, their lives were better than those of the field hands. Generally their work was not as physically hard. Their food, clothing, and housing were usually better.

However, household skills did not always bring house servants a better life. If masters or mistresses were cruel, close daily contact could lead to abuse. House servants ran away more often than did the field hands. Perhaps this was because house servants had more chances. In general, men ran away far more often than did women. Women could not travel easily with their children and were usually unwilling to leave them behind. Women also had fewer opportunities to travel off the plantation than did men. As a result women were less familiar with the countryside.

Women usually learned typical "female" occupations: cooking, sewing, weaving, washing, and ironing. On the plantations women were responsible for making all the clothing that people wore. Women did the spinning, weaving, sewing, and dyeing of the material. Midwives handled the births, or "birthings." Older women cared for the children and for the sick. A mother often had to go back to work in the fields a short time after giving birth to a child. Without the help of these older women, a baby would have to be carried along or left alone.

Women worked just as hard as men. Many women had to plow and hoe in the fields, cut down trees, pick cotton, and build roads. Women frequently worked in groups with other women, whether they were laboring in the fields or sewing and laundering clothes. Working together, they were able to cooperate and help one another. Women often had to work a double shift, as do many employed women today. After a hard day's work, they still had to come home to sew and weave. The few "store" clothes that were available were for the whites and for the unmarried enslaved males. Women had to make their own clothes and those for their husbands and children. Child care also tied down women in the evenings.

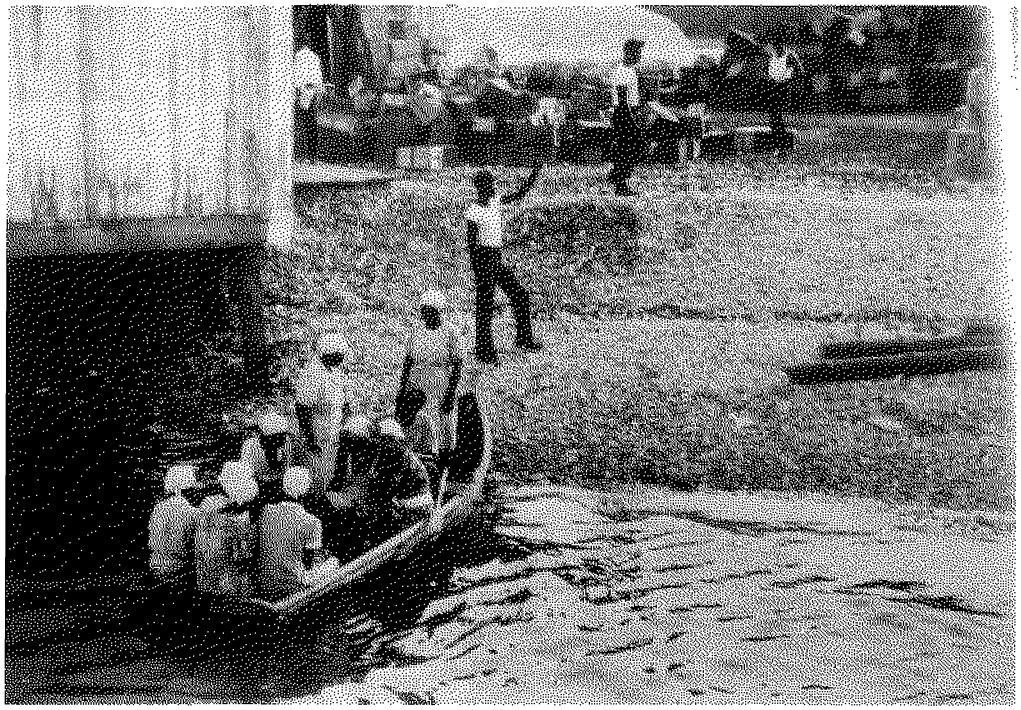
Enslaved African-Americans could not look forward to an early retirement. They generally had to work into their 60s, although owners gave them easier work as they aged. Some of the older men became gardeners or looked after the animals on plantations. At about seventy an enslaved African-American could expect to retire, although some continued to work a reduced load.

On the plantations, children were expected to work from an early age on. Children herded animals, fetched and carried, and did many other small jobs. Children about your age entering their teens took on adult responsibilities.

Enslaved African-Americans worked in many of the early manufacturing plants. In the Saluda area, they worked in one of the early textile mills, doing spinning and weaving. Many of the early mills also needed mechanics, and enslaved African-Americans often did the repair work.

In the cities African-Americans learned a wider variety of skills. Most of the artisans in Charleston were African-Americans. For all intents and purposes, these people built the city and were responsible for the flow of commerce. Masters often hired them out for extra income. Many businesses had busy and slack times during the year. For example, cotton warehouses had the most work when the crop came in. Because these seasonal businesses did not need a large number of workers year-round, hiring out became quite common in the cities. A researcher examining old records found ads from the 1700s showing enslaved African-Americans hired out in several occupations, such as bricklayers and carpenters. A carpenter named Dick, for example, was hired out in Charleston for three months at eighteen pounds per month. In today's money, that would be a great deal, hundreds of dollars. Dick was a very valuable worker.

African-Americans were often apprenticed out at a young age to learn a trade. Some learned skills from masters who were in a particular line of business. In Charleston, which was a seaport, many enslaved African-Americans learned the various trades associated with ships and boating. Some became ship carpenters. Others worked as caulkers, who made sure that boats did not leak by filling in the seams of



During enslavement, African-Americans were hired out in a variety of jobs on the coast and elsewhere. Many continued to work at this kind of labor well after the Civil War. This 1939 photo shows cannery workers arriving at work on St. Helena Island. Library of Congress LC-USF33 30430Ml.

the wood hulls. Many even became sailors or boat pilots, who guided boats through narrow channels in bays and rivers.

In the cities the owners of skilled enslaved African-Americans sometimes allowed them to hire themselves out and keep a portion of their earnings. From the early 1700s on, some whites opposed this practice. The state legislature passed a law making hiring out illegal in 1845. Nevertheless, it continued because it benefited all the parties: the master, the enslaved African-American, and the person who hired the labor. Hiring out was most common in the high demand occupations, such as carpenters.

Some African-Americans worked in occupations which put them in competition with white workers. White workers felt that they were losing the chance to earn a living. Some masters had even bought shops for their enslaved African-American workers. Masters required workers to pay them only part of what they earned. In 1742, a group of white ship's carpenters asked the legislature to take some kind of action against their enslaved competitors. In 1756, the legislature passed a law that imposed a fine of five pounds a day on any enslaved African-American working by himself. The law did not work very well. Enslaved labor could still stay in business if the master hired one white for every two African-Americans he used.

In the early 1800s, some whites called for a tax on free black workers as well. The difficulties faced by white working people in getting good jobs led some well-known white Southerners to argue that enslavement should be abolished. They felt this would create more skilled jobs for whites. Some employers, such as William Gregg in Graniteville, opened factories which would employ only white workers. As more white immigrants came to America, free blacks faced even more difficulties. Some left the country altogether to go to Africa. White artisans even gave money to the colonization societies which helped African-Americans leave.

Records show that in the years before the Civil War, 1,000 different occupations employed African-American artisans and craftspersons. We have not mentioned other crafts, like wheelwrights, who made wheels for wagons and carriages, or coopers, who made the barrels in which nearly everything was shipped in those days. As you can see, the role of African-Americans in building South Carolina and the United States was enormous.

The Value of Enslaved Labor

Highly skilled enslaved African-Americans were worth a great deal of money. According to newspaper ads of the time, a skilled worker sold for twice as much as someone with no skills. Tragically, sales often separated these artisans from their families. Owners sometimes sold them because of debts, retirement, death, or a change in residence. If a large number of enslaved people were to be sold, generally a newspaper ad would simply state how many and what ages. The assumption was that they would be already trained. In time, the trade of enslaved people became a less respectable occupation. Traders began to call themselves commission agents, brokers, or auctioneers.

Estimating the prices for which these enslaved African-Americans were sold in today's dollars is difficult. We can see what some of the relative sale prices were for people with different skills. Some were sold privately, and some were sold at auctions. A Charleston shoemaker's value was listed at $350 in 1806. Sales prices in a Charleston newspaper in 1811 included the following: a cook for $420, a tailor for $350, a fisherman for $500, a young field hand for $450, and an elderly coachman for $250. Prices rose after the War of 1812, with skilled workers going for an average of $400 to $650. Artisans, such as carpenters, millers, and tailors, were sold for about $800 to $900. By the 1840s, skilled workers were selling for even more. The prices for carpenters were higher than most other occupations. Prices listed during this period range from about $700 to $1,000. A bricklayer sold for about $800.

There is a story of a blacksmith who was bought by friends to keep him from being sold away from his family. He worked off the cost of his freedom. The price he and his friends had to pay was high for that time. It came to $1,630. His friends must have loved him very much. He must have loved his family very much.

After 1850, with expansion into western lands, demand for enslaved Africans rose. Prices went up. One carpenter was sold for $1,750, a very high price. A newspaper ad in the 1850s offered a young woman who could cook, sew, wash, and iron, for $1,000. The price included her infant child. By 1860 prices climbed even higher. Few artisans could be bought for less than $1,200. Masters claimed a similar price as compensation for enslaved Africans who died or were injured serving in the Civil War or who escaped to the Union side. People who were healthy, had good morals, and were hard workers were highly valued.

Material and Cultural Heritage

Whether we think about the importance of work, the dollar value of work, the skills, or just the vast amount of labor needed, Africans were vital in the building of South Carolina. Not only did they bring skills and provide most of the labor, they brought with them a culture of work. That culture had a great impact on the culture of South Carolina and the culture of the nation. African styles of work influenced American styles of work. In later chapters we will look at other kinds of cultural contributions.

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 3

Resistance to Enslavement

In this chapter we will look at how Africans reacted to enslavement. At this point, however, we must start talking exclusively about African-Americans rather than Africans. The trade of enslaved Africans continued well into the 1800s, even affer it was illegal, but most of those who were enslaved were born in America. So most were then American by birth as well as African by ethnic background.

From the early 1700s until around 1790, African-Americans made up a majority of the state's population. However, between about 1790 and 1820 whites held a slight majority. By 1820 whites were once again a minority because of an invention. Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793. The gin allowed seeds to be easily removed from the green seed type of cotton that grew inland. This made cotton profitable there, so cotton growing moved inland. Growers used more and more African-Americans to work the new inland fields and run the plantations. Numbers increased. African-Americans were a majority of the state's population from 1820 until 1930. By the Civil War, about 400,000 African-Americans were enslaved in the state. They were almost 60 percent of the state's population. However, most whites were not owners of those who were enslaved. Out of roughly 300,000 white residents, about 37,000, or a little more than one in ten, were owners.

Conditions

Before we look at resistance, we must know something about what it was like to be enslaved. It was not the same everywhere. Those who were enslaved in South America, in the Caribbean Islands, and in North America faced different situations. Enslaved people grew different crops in each of these areas. Each area had different laws. Even within the American South many differences existed. Enslavement in South Carolina was somewhat different from Virginia. Even within our state, conditions varied from plantation to plantation. There were also differences between life on the plantations and life in urban areas like Charleston. In a very real sense, each enslaved person's situation was unique.

In spite of these differences, all enslaved African-Americans shared a common situation. Legally, they were property. They belonged to the owner, or "master" or "mistress," to use the terms of the day. Those who were enslaved had no civil rights, except the right not to be killed without good reason. Even this was no guarantee. A master or any white person who killed an enslaved person could tell the court that he was only protecting himself. The law was always on the other side if you were enslaved. Your family could be separated anytime your owner chose to sell any of you. Even marriages were not legally binding. If you got "out of line," you could be whipped with a lash. "Out of line" included almost anything. "Impudence" or "insolence" were typical offenses. This meant that you did not show proper respect. That could be something as simple as saying the wrong word or giving the wrong look at the wrong time. In other words, you were always in danger of physical punishment. Sometimes enslaved African-Americans were even made to punish each other.

Owners sometimes put some African-Americans in charge of other African-Americans. More often lower class whites worked as supervisors. They were all called "drivers" or "overseers" because they saw over the work that was to be done. These overseers also had the power to punish those under them.

In addition, as enslaved people resisted the masters' efforts to control them, the legislature passed

more restrictive laws. The laws gave the masters more control. This made life even more difficult.

Even under the best of conditions, the lives of those who were enslaved were hard. Enslaved people had little control over what they did each day. Because the purpose of plantations was to make money, even "kind" masters would try to get as much work as possible out of those they enslaved.

Enduring Enslavement

When you think about this, you might wonder why all enslaved African-Americans did not revolt. Masters liked to think that those they enslaved were and content. Masters liked to think that only a few enslaved people were really unhappy. You will even hear some people say this kind of thing today.

The evidence shows that this was not true. No human readily accepts being deprived of freedom. As Americans we believe that "liberty" is an inalienable human right. Even if the person who "owns" another human tries to be kind, the human spirit demands freedom. No one wants to live in a cage, no matter how "nice" it is. As you will see, although you may hear stories about kind and gentle masters and mistresses, many were extremely cruel. Those who lived under their harsh rule had much to endure. They endured both physical and mental pain.

In a sense we could argue that this endurance was one kind of contribution. Most enslaved African-Americans did not rebel openly. By enduring and doing the hard work every day of their lives, they contributed to the wealth of the state. Of course, they also created the wealth of the white masters and mistresses. The price of that wealth was ever so high.

Resisting Enslavement

This does not mean that those who endured were always "docile," or timid. Certainly the masters had most of the power on their side. They had "slave patrols," militia troops, weapons, laws, and courts. But those who were enslaved, like "Brer Rabbit," had ways of improving their chances a little. In fact life on the plantation always involved a kind of "cat and mouse" game. Masters were searching for the best way to get what they wanted. Enslaved African-Americans often tested the limits of their master's control. Enslaved people found ways to resist the master's will. In this way enslaved people showed their humanity, the desire of the human spirit to be free. They were unwilling to let the masters define who they were.

This kind of resistance is another kind of contribution. It helped set the stage for eventual legal freedom. Resistance showed that enslavement was neither natural nor desirable. If those enslaved had complied totally with their masters' rules, the job of the antislavery movement would have been much harder. Emancipation might have come much later.

Different Forms of Resistance

How did enslaved African-Americans resist masters' efforts to control them? There were many ways, ranging from small, quiet gestures to large, complicated, and terrifying revolts.

First, African-Americans did things that reminded them of Africa. By holding on to their African customs, they were saying several things to themselves and perhaps to their masters. "We may be enslaved, but we are not just slaves. We have some control over our lives. Our roots are worth preserving." One example of this was the use of drums. Drums were an important part of African life. They were used in many ways, ranging from the funeral ceremony to the joyous dancing that so amazed their white owners. Enslaved Africans in early South Carolina made and beat drums as they had done in Africa. The powerful rhythmic beating reminded them of "home." However, it did more. It caused many whites to worry. Were the drums sending messages? Were the drums inspiring the drummers with a sense of power? Whites could not be sure. After the uprising called the Stono Rebellion, the colonial government banned the use of drums by those who were enslaved. We will look at drums again in a later chapter.

We know from the records of masters and mistresses in South Carolina that those they enslaved often frustrated them. Masters complained that their enslaved African-Americans were "lazy" or slow to learn. They complained about broken farm tools. They complained of irresponsibility and forgotten instructions. In short, those who were enslaved seemed to be hindering the operation of the farm or plantation or household in every way possible. Masters sometimes wondered whether enslaved people really were this way or were just "acting." Usually the masters de-

cided it was not acting. If masters admitted it was acting, they would be saying that those they enslaved were extremely intelligent. Admitting that would make it harder to keep these people enslaved. In addition nobody likes to admit they are being conned.

Some masters understood that those they enslaved were skilled at resisting their will. If a person is enslaved, why should she or he work hard or help the master make money unless she or he gained some benefit? The smart thing was to do just enough to stay out of real trouble. So the master might try to reward "good" behaviors. The master might give the enslaved person more time off. The enslaved person might get a "hand-me-down" item of clothing. She or he then had to decide if more effort was worth the reward. Since African-Americans were individuals, some did work harder for these small rewards. Others only pretended. In either case the relationship was almost always filled with tension.

Other forms of resistance were more open and aggressive. Taking things that belonged to the master or other whites was one way of striking back. Masters complained of this so much that the state passed a law in 1722 to deal with the "robbing of hen-roosts" and the theft of corn and rice. No doubt hunger was the main cause. What was stealing in the eyes of the master was not stealing in the eyes of those who were enslaved. From their point of view, they worked hard for very little. Anything they could add to this was just a way of easing the unfairness of their situation.

In the early years, enslaved Africans were allowed to keep horses and other animals. The authorities stopped this practice when they realized that some enslaved people were taking horses and changing the brands so their owners could not identify them. Enslaved people sometimes sold or traded horses and other goods for profit. Some even sold stolen goods to whites so they would not have to risk being caught with the goods.

African-Americans were also forbidden to have boats or canoes. The authorities feared that access to boats as well as horses might make it easier for African-Americans to plan revolts. By traveling longer distances than they could on foot, they could meet and plot with other enslaved people.

Running away was a way of "stealing" oneself. "Fugitives," "runaways," or those who escaped from their plantations were a serious problem for South Carolina masters. As long as the enslaved person was gone, the master was deprived of labor. The runaway was also experiencing the sensation of being free. One South Carolina master complained in his diary about someone who had run away for the third time. As a result the master had "lost" almost a year's worth of work. He added that losing work at this rate was causing him to lose money.

As we have noted, most runaways were men. But one Palmetto state master had a fifty-year-old female who was "on the run" for over a year. One group of runaways built a camp in the middle of some thick bushes and underbrush deep in the woods. They used this hideaway as their base camp as they took livestock and food from farms in the area.

Runaways who stayed away for months or years were rare. There were at least two reasons. First, whites assumed that any African-American roaming the countryside was a runaway. "Slave patrols," as they were called, were on the roads all the time and used dogs to track their quarry. Whites in these patrols received rewards for catching runaways. Eventually hunger might force runaways to approach a house or barn. If seen, they were sure to be pursued. Second, life on the run was lonesome as well as hard. Separation from loved ones was hard to endure forever. So most runaways came back on their own. They then faced whatever punishment the master chose to inflict.

Most runaways fled to the cities, hoping to avoid notice. On the other hand, some fairly large groups of fugitives, usually called "Maroons," lived in freedom in the swamps and mountains. Some remained free for long periods. In 1861, authorities found one such group near Marion in a swamp. They had apparently been there for many months.

The most extreme form of resistance was open violent rebellion. Rebellions were a part of the South Carolina scene from the very beginning. Rebellion dates back to the Spanish explorers who came to what is now South Carolina in 1525, nearly a century and a half before the English arrived.

Sometimes violence was self-directed. Some of those facing enslavement preferred to kill themselves rather than lose freedom. By their deeds they were saying "give me liberty or give me death" long



Sketch of an enslaved African attempting to flee in the New World and being caught by white soldiers. Courtesy of William Loren Katz collection, care of Ethrac Publications, 231 W. 13th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011.

before Patrick Henry was saying those words. Suicide was relatively rare, but it did happen. Suicide was most likely to happen early in enslavement. One such case occurred in 1807 when two boatloads of Africans newly arrived in Charleston starved themselves to death. One reason those enslaved were chained to the decks of ships was to keep them from jumping overboard. Many would rather drown than be enslaved.

Whites were especially afraid that enslaved Africans would poison them. Africans were often familiar with the powers of certain plants, for good or ill. A little experimenting could show them which American plants had harmful effects. A cook had many chances to poison the master or his family. South Carolina law made this a capital crime. Conviction meant the death sentence. Even teaching secrets of poisonous plants was a crime.

Fire was another available and effective weapon. Arson, the deliberate setting of a fire to destroy property, was hard to prove. Whites feared it. Sometimes enslaved people destroyed crops. They could target any property belonging to a master. This included homes and other buildings in the city of Charleston. Over the years Charleston suffered several major fires. As long as enslaved people lived there, whites suspected them to be the cause. Charlestonians convicted enslaved African-Americans, whether guilty or not, of arson in several Charleston fires. The punishment was either death or being deported. In 1754 for example, a woman named Sacharisa was burned at the stake for setting fire to her owner's house in Charleston. In the mid-1820s, a series of fires led to a virtual panic in the city. Several enslaved African-Americans were convicted and executed for setting them.

The most dramatic form of resistance and most frightening to whites was mass rebellion. You may

have read about two such events in South Carolina, the Stono Rebellion of 1739 and the Denmark Vesey revolt of 1822. These are the most famous. But there were others. None of them were on the scale of Nat Turner's rebellion in Virginia in 1831, much less the massive revolt on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola in the 1790s. In fact, when we look at the long history of enslavement in South Carolina, we may wonder at how few revolts and attempted revolts there were.

There may well have been revolts about which we have no record. But if only a few took place, it would not be surprising. This is because the chances of success were very slim. Those in rebellion might gain the upper hand at first. In the long run, however, the power and organization of the whites, with the government on their side, were too great. So when a revolt was attempted, things became worse, not better. The best example of this is the most serious revolt in the 1700s, the Stono Rebellion. When it was over, the colony's Assembly passed the Slave Code of 1740. It tightened controls and put harsher penalties in place. Let us take a closer look at this event.

Sketch of an escaped African-American who is hiding in the swamps and ready to defend himself from whites who would recapture him. Courtesy of William Loren Katz collection, care of Ethrac Publications, 231 W. 13th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011.



The Stono Rebellion

A careful study of the Stono Rebellion of 1739 suggests some answers to questions we might ask about rebellions in general. For instance, why did revolts happen when they did? Was 1739 a good time for enslaved African-Americans in the state to think about an uprising?

Those who were enslaved probably often thought about revolt. Some never went beyond thought. They must have made their plans over a long period. They waited for the best time to act. We will never know how many such plans were made but not carried out because those making the plans decided that "discretion was the better part of valor." They knew failure would cost them their lives. They knew it would make things worse for those still living. Picking the right time was important.

The late 1730s seemed to be a "good" time. Why? First, in the decade of the 1730s, some 20,000 Africans were brought into South Carolina. This doubled their number in the state. The result was a two to one ratio of blacks to whites. As we might expect, many whites were worried about this. They had good reason. At this time one extra "contribution" African-Americans were making to South Carolina was to make whites very nervous.

Second, England and Spain were at war. This meant that the English colony of South Carolina and the Spanish colony of Florida were in a hostile mood toward each other. From their base at St. Augustine, the Spanish were planning ways to threaten their English neighbors to the north. One of these ways, which the Spanish king had authorized, was to encourage enslaved African-Americans in Carolina to escape to Florida. In the months before the Stono Rebellion, several small groups of African-Americans escaped and headed toward Florida. They were obviously aware of the Spanish invitation. Some made it to St. Augustine. Some were caught and released. At least one was executed.

Finally, a new law was to go into effect on September 29, 1739. It required all white men to carry firearms to church on Sundays. The Assembly had taken this action because of the fear that enslaved people might use their time off from work on the Sabbath to start a revolt. Those who were enslaved had heard about this new law. They realized it would reduce future chances.

Early on Sunday morning, September 9, 1739, about twenty enslaved men gathered near the Stono River, about 20 miles from Charleston. Many of them were from the Angola region of Africa, which meant that they probably spoke the same native language. Their leader was named Jemmy. They took guns and ammunition from a store nearby, killing the two storekeepers. Then they headed south, urging others to join them. As their numbers grew, they looted and burned several houses. They killed some of the white residents. As their confidence and enthusiasm grew, some began to beat drums and chant about gaining liberty. This drew more enslaved people to join them from nearby plantations. For the moment they were no longer enslaved. They were rebels engaged in revolution.

By coincidence, William Bull, the colony's Lt. Governor, was returning to Charleston from Beaufort that day. Around eleven o'clock he and his aides suddenly came upon the procession. By now the rebels must have numbered between fifty and 100. They charged the Lt. Governor's party. Being mounted on horses, Bull and his aides escaped. If the rebels had killed Bull, the rest of the story might have been very different. Bull alerted whites in the area. Then he went on to Charleston and raised a larger force. Meanwhile the rebels stopped near the Jacksonboro ferry and waited for others, hearing their drums, to join them.

Around four o'clock that afternoon an armed and mounted troop of whites rode into the rebel camp. Those rebels who had guns fired and began reloading. Unarmed rebels tried to escape. The whites dismounted and fired a volley into the main group of rebels, killing fourteen. Several more were surrounded and captured. They were briefly questioned as to their intentions. Some were able to convince the whites that they had been forced to join the rebels. They were released. The rest were shot.

More than twenty whites and about the same number of blacks died in the rebellion. At least thirty rebels had escaped in a group and were still at large. Some who had fled the battle were hiding out alone. Still others were trying to get back to the plantation. The group that remained at large posed a danger to whites. So in the next several days, a massive manhunt was conducted. Even with all of the militia units on duty, cornering the main body of rebels some thirty miles farther south took a week. In the battle that followed, most of the rebels fought to their deaths. However, some escaped. Whites in the area could not rest easily for several more months. Rebels were still being captured the next spring. One remained at large for three years.

The Stono Rebellion failed. What if it had succeeded? Had Bull not been on the road, it might have been successful. With more time, hundreds, even thousands, of South Carolina African-Americans might have rallied around this small band of rebels. What if they had marched all the way to St. Augustine? We do not know what the Spanish authorities would have done with them. With this many arriving all at once, could the Spanish have reenslaved them all? This might have been the beginning of a long lasting, even permanent, African-American community in Florida. White Carolinians might have rethought their notion of building a colony with enslaved labor. Whites might have turned instead to the slower, but safer, method of luring other European immigrants to the colony. There was one such plan, called the "township plan." It was rejected in favor of continuing to use enslaved labor. Enslavement would probably have survived. However, with much smaller numbers of enslaved people, the idea of setting them free might not have seemed so drastic. The Civil War, the bloodiest war in the nation's history, might not have been necessary. In short, perhaps South Carolina history and the nation's history might have been very different.

Resistance in the Era of the American Revolution

Ideas about justice and freedom inspired white Carolinians to rebel against their English rulers. These ideas could be just as inspiring to African-Americans. What would happen if the enslaved people decided to join the Revolution? What if African-Americans decided to have a revolution of their own?

The British saw possible advantages in this situation. They tried to recruit enslaved African-Americans to join them in putting down the rebellion in America. In exchange for the promise of freedom, some enslaved South Carolinians fought on the British side during the American War for Independence. We will discuss this more in the chapter on military service later in the book. Other African-Americans saw the rallies held by white Carolinians to denounce the Stamp Act and other British laws and tried to join in. One group paraded through the streets of Charleston. Enslaved blacks shouting about liberty shocked whites! At least one African-American was executed for such behavior. At that time, liberty was for whites only. Another casualty may have also resulted from the unrest, but it is not certain. In 1769, an enslaved woman was burned at the stake in Charleston for poisoning her master.

By the spring of 1775, fighting had begun in Massachusetts between British soldiers and colonial rebels. This caused much excitement and talk among whites in South Carolina. What would become the War for Independence was beginning. It would soon spread across the nation.

In the midst of this excitement a free African-American named Thomas Jeremiah may have carried his enthusiasm for freedom too far. It cost him his life. "Jerry," as he was known, was a fisherman and a harbor pilot. He was perhaps the richest member of his race in the colony. He was well known in Charleston for his heroic service fighting fires. In June of 1775, he was arrested for plotting rebellion. Although others who were accused of this crime confessed, Jerry did not. He was convicted and hanged. Some whites thought he was innocent. The court evidently felt it could not take the chance of letting Jerry go free. His skill as a pilot could have been used to help the British navigate into Charleston harbor and attack the city. In fact, the British tried to do this one year later. In June of 1776, a British invasion was turned back by General Moultrie's men. The outcome might have been different with the help of someone who knew the waters in the area.

Resistance in the 1800s

African-Americans continued to resist enslavement in the ways we have described until the Civil War ended. Despite continued efforts, whites never solved the problem of how to gain total control. From time to time, whites faced that most drastic type of resistance—rebellion. Two such times were July 1816 in Camden and June 1822 in Charleston.

Evidence on the Camden revolt is scarce. However, it is clear that several African-Americans planned to launch a violent attack on their masters and other whites. According to a white woman who had knowledge of the plot and from the testimony of those who were arrested, the rebels intended to take their revenge without mercy. The plot was detected, but for some time afterwards whites in the area were uneasy.

Six years later, a much larger revolt nearly took place. For several months, a group in Charleston carefully laid an elaborate plan. A free African-American named Denmark Vesey led them. The plan called for hundreds of enslaved people to escape to the Caribbean island of Santo Domingo. Africans there had been free since the successful revolt in the 1790s. This was the most ambitious and detailed revolt ever attempted in South Carolina. Native Africans and South Carolina-born African-Americans were involved. Both plantation workers and city dwellers were included. The total number was somewhere around 9,000. The plotters collected weapons. The date of the revolt was carefully chosen. It was to be Sunday, July 14, when the moon would cast almost no light. Vesey's skill in navigation, which he learned when he belonged to a ship's captain as a young man, would make the escape possible.

We will never know whether the plan would have succeeded. Two house servants who had been recruited by Vesey's men told their masters. Arrests and interrogations followed. Whites were able to identify only 100 as suspects, because Vesey refused to reveal any names. Of these, thirty-four, including Vesey, were hanged. More were sold out of the state.

In the aftermath, fear led the government of South Carolina to take several steps to prevent future revolts. First, the authorities closed the church of the Reverend Morris Brown. Several of the leaders of the plot, including Denmark Vesey, were members of the African Methodist Church. Whites assumed that rebels used the church as a meeting place. The authorities thought this was enough reason to close it.

The government took other steps as well. These included generous rewards for the informants and amendments to the state's slave code. One new law required all sailors of African descent whose ships docked at Charleston harbor to be kept isolated from the local African-American population. Whites hoped this would keep ideas about revolution away from local African-Americans. However, this shows how whites misunderstood those they had enslaved. The desire for freedom was in them already. Some, like the informants, were either loyal to masters or too afraid to revolt. Most African-Americans considered the odds against escape and rebellion and chose patience and hope over boldness. They were realists. But there were always those who dreamed great dreams and had the courage to act on those dreams.

Sometimes it was just a matter of losing your temper. One example of this took place in 1824, two years after the Vesey plot. The African-Americans enslaved on the Charles Pinckney plantation reached the limit of their endurance with the white overseer, Mr. Dawsey. When Dawsey insisted that they fence in their hogs, they refused. When he had a fence built, they burned it. Then Dawsey shot two of the hogs. One man became so angry that he threatened to send Dawsey "to hell." Dawsey ordered an African-American overseer to restrain the angry man. The overseer refused. When Dawsey shot the man, other angry people chased Dawsey. Dawsey was lucky to escape with his life.

In the mid-1820s, a different kind of revolt took place in Charleston. Over several months arsonists set a series of fires in various places in the city. Investigators found flammable materials at some of the fires. This was a sure sign of arson. Arrests were made. Testimony led to several convictions and executions. But the whites could not be sure they had caught all the arsonists.

Georgetown was the site of the next threatened revolt. In 1829, a group of would-be rebels devised a plan and set a date. One of those who had been recruited betrayed the rebels. About twenty African-Americans were arrested. Many more were questioned. The investigation became so widespread that the Attorney General, James Petigru, became worried. He wrote to the Georgetown officials warning them not to hang so many people that too few workers would be left to harvest the rice crop. The next year, the legislature sent $5,000 to help pay the cost of the investigation and the security measures.

There were other rumors about revolts. Over the years many arrests were made. Whether these were actual plots or just the imaginations of fearful whites is hard to tell. One such case occurred in Columbia in 1805. Of course, none of the plots succeeded. However, when we consider them all, we can see it is a mistake to think that African-Americans willingly accepted enslavement.

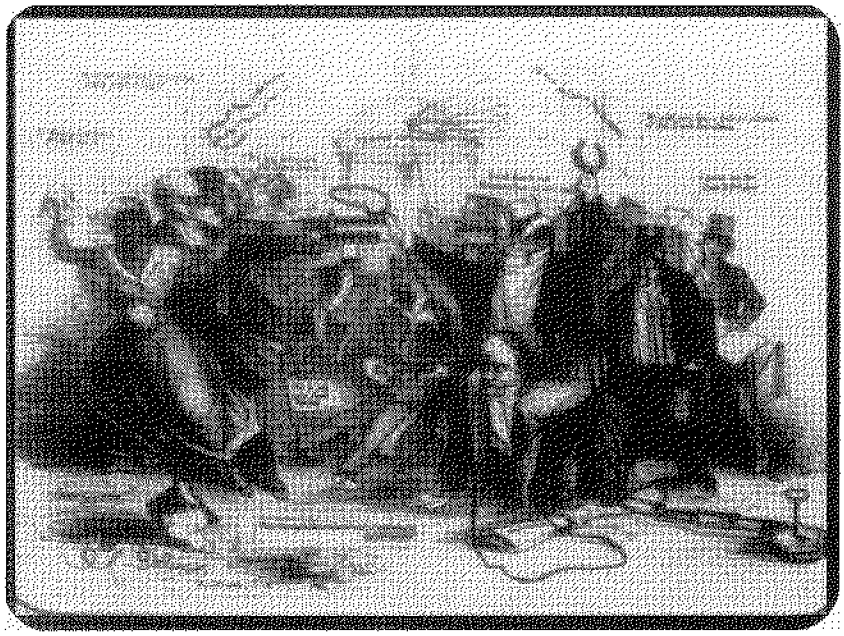
Escape to the North

If you could not rebel and were unwilling to endure the injustice of a life of enslavement, you might try to escape. While most runaways were caught, some did make it to safer places. However, even if you made it to a non-slave state in the North, you were not totally safe. Congress had passed a fugitive slave law in 1850 to help Southern masters get their "property" back. The law was passed in an effort to compromise with white Southerners and keep the nation together. Since 1793, masters had the right to cross state lines to capture runaways. But many Northern states passed "liberty laws" that made recapture impossible. So Congress tried to help the white South by promising national help in recapturing runaways. It did not work. Many Northerners refused to enforce the law. Some runaways made it to Canada. Many changed their names and started new lives.

The Abolitionist Movement

Others who escaped joined in another form of resistance. This was the "abolitionist" movement. An abolitionist was a person who hated enslavement and worked to destroy it. Whites in this movement welcomed blacks, especially if they had escaped enslavement. They could testify from personal experience about the South's "peculiar institution," as slavery was sometimes called.

One such South Carolinian was Robert Purvis. Purvis was born in Charleston to an enslaved mother and a white father. However, he was unusual because his escape was easy. His father, who was wealthy, provided for him generously. He even attended



This political cartoon, entitled "A Practical Illustration of the Fugitive Slave shows how reluctant Northerners were to enforce laws that would force them to help return African-Americans who fled the South in the 1850s. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide B-69 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION OF THE FUGITVE STATE LAW

Amherst College in Massachusetts. Purvis settled in Philadelphia, and became an active abolitionist. He was the president of the first "vigilance committee," a group that raised money to help the "underground railroad." This was not a real railroad, of course. Nor was it under the ground. Rather, it was a secret organization to help enslaved people escape to the North. It tried to protect them from being reenslaved as a result of the Fugitive Slave Law. Purvis also was one of the leading organizers of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Other South Carolina African-Americans who escaped from enslavement owed a debt to Robert Purvis and others like him who helped pave the way.

Ways to Survive Daily Life

African-Americans who lived during nearly 200 years of enslavement (1670-1865) were faced with challenges that we can barely imagine. Most did not escape. Their lives were physically much harder than those of almost anyone living today. Also, their minds and souls were burdened. Many whites who tried to control them did not treat them as human. Those who sang "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" were expressing their true feelings.

How did they survive? The short answer seems to be that most of them followed a middle path between giving in and rebelling. That is, they did not do everything the masters wanted. However, they did not risk too much by open rebellion. Each enslaved person must have found his or her own way of balancing between these extremes. In this sense, they were like most of us. They compromised between what they really wanted and what was possible. They were practical. Even so, they needed support and encouragement. They needed relief from the burdens of life. They found support and relief in their families, their religion, and in their songs and stories.

If we think of families in the traditional American sense, we may think that enslaved African-Americans hardly had families at all. Marriages among them were not legal contracts. The master might hold a ceremony when a man and woman on the plantation wanted to marry. However, this did not legally unite them. Either partner could be sold far away, breaking up the family unit. The same was true for children. Africans were not usually accustomed to the European or Christian idea of monogamy (one husband-one wife). Many masters were more interested in how many babies were produced than in who the fathers were. Finally,

the hard work kept both parents very busy. It left them so tired that sometimes they could not give their children much attention. Could strong families exist under such conditions?

Amazingly, the answer was often, though not always, yes. We can see this in the newspaper advertisements taken out by owners of runaways. Many of these ads told the reader that the runaway was thought to be headed to where his kin were living. In other words, the sale of one or two members had split the family. One member had escaped to try and put the family back together. Such strong family ties were not limited to parents and children. The ties included other relatives, like grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Ties even included non-kin who lived nearby. We call this an "extended family." This tradition has survived. We will see it in the rest of the book. African-Americans (and others) still have extended families who help share the duties and the joys of family life.

There are many benefits from this kind of family. Thinking about resistance to enslavement, one important benefit is that the grandparents and other older folks can teach the young ones about who they are. Elders can pass on the family stories and traditions, and keep the ties between the present and the past alive. This was very important for African-Americans. They were living in a world that had no respect for them or their way of life. If they did not preserve their ways, who would?

Within the family, children learned the secrets of getting along in a world in which they had no legal power. The family showed them that even though most whites showed disrespect, family members were precious to and worthy of respect from each other. The family taught them how to "put on the mask." This meant pretending to be someone different when they were with white people. Family taught them that this was not who they really were. Families took care of children's emotional and physical needs. Mothers grew vegetables in small gardens. Fathers hunted and fished to add to the little food that masters provided. Private time in the cabin with the family allowed a kind of escape from the hated roles of "slaves." Anything that could show family pride was important to them. For example, choosing a name for a new baby was a way of saying "we are a family." Some masters chose names for the black children as well as their own white children on their plantations. Masters did this to show just how much control they had. Enslaved families stubbornly resisted. They had their own secret names they used with each other.

Family was not the only source of support. Religion, music, and stories helped enslaved people survive from day to day. Each of these offered a kind of mental escape. We will look more closely at religion, music, and literature later in the book. For now, let us end this chapter with a story that African-American families frequently told as they gathered together after a long day of hard labor. After you read it, you may want to think about why this was such a favorite story.

When All Africans Could Fly

> This story was remembered by a man on John's Island in the 1940s. It had been passed down for generations. The story began with the notion that long ago in Africa the people could fly. After being enslaved and brought to America, they had forgotten how. On one of the plantations where they were taken, the overseers were very cruel. The people had to work so long and hard that many died. New enslaved Africans were brought from Africa. Among them was an old man. One day he shouted something the white overseers could not understand. His words helped the people remember the power they once had. Upon hearing the words everyone got up. The old man raised his hands. The people all jumped in the air. However, they did not fall back down. Rather, they soared into the air. They soared higher and higher, until the whites could not see them anymore.

[There are a number of longer versions of this story. One of the best of these is an updated and attractively illustrated version entitled "The People Could Fly," told by Virginia Hamilton in *The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985). Others include "All God's Chillen Had Wings," told by Langston Hughes and A. Arna Bontemps in *The Book of Negro Folklore* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1958), "People Who Could Fly," told by Julius Lester in *Black Folktales* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1969) and "Flying People" in *American Negro Folklore* by J. Mason Brewer (New York: Quadrangle/New York Times Book Co., 1968).

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 4

Free African-Americans in Early South Carolina

African-Americans who were not enslaved were called "free persons of color." Who they were not more readily defined them than who they were. Obviously, they were not white and not enslaved, but they were not truly free. Nor were they really citizens. On the other hand, they were not aliens either. They were people in limbo. They lived in a kind of no man's land between the two main groups in South Carolina, whites and enslaved African-Americans. Economically, the free persons of color were not all poor. Some were wealthy. A few were even "masters" themselves, who held legal title to enslaved African-Americans. Socially, fitting into any part of the society in which they lived was hard for them. Some of them identified with their African-American neighbors. Others thought of themselves as being more like whites. Finally, unlike other "free" Americans, their opportunities were reduced, rather than increased, as time passed. Shortly before the Civil War, the South Carolina legislature seriously considered enslaving them. Yet they, like their enslaved brothers and sisters, endured and survived. This chapter tells their story and their contributions.

How They Became Free

The Federal Census of 1790 was the first official counting of the American population. It listed the population of South Carolina as just under 250,000. African-Americans accounted for about 109,000. Of this number, 1,801 were listed as "free persons of color." That is only one in every sixty African-Americans in the state. So we are talking about a very small part of the population. Over half of this small group lived in the Charleston area. But their number was growing. We can tell this from earlier colonial tax records. The number of free persons of color had about doubled in the past twenty years.

These figures tell us two things. First, most African-Americans who were free had once been enslaved. Somehow they had gained freedom on their own, or their owners had set them free. Second, the war to free America from the British had enabled some to gain freedom. We will talk about the impact of the Revolutionary War in a later chapter.

But what about those that were free before the Revolution? In the early 1700s, it was not unusual for a master to free his human property in his will. That is, after his death, as his property was divided among his family, some or all of those he had enslaved would be set free. Sometimes the owner provided for those he had enslaved. In 1797, John Oxendine's will stated that young Bill was to be apprenticed out to learn a trade and freed at age twenty-five. Hannibal Dearington was set free in his owner's will. He also inherited part of the plantation. Another African-American, freed in 1783, was able to save enough from his inheritance to buy and free a woman and child.

At that time people did not oppose the mixing of whites and blacks as much as they did later. There were even some interracial marriages. Mulatto children—those with one white and one black parent—were the most likely to be set free. By 1850, nearly half of the free African-Americans in South Carolina were of mixed blood. Many of the leading families in Charleston had a mixed heritage. The Noisettes, a wealthy family, were of mixed French and African ancestry. Francis L. Cardozo, a politician in the post-Civil War period whom you will meet later, had an African and Jewish heritage. Richmond Kinloch, a rich millwright, had ancestors from Scotland as well as from Africa. Two rich real-estate speculators, the Dereef brothers, claimed a Native American woman as an ancestor.



Mann-Simons cottage. Celia Mann bought her freedom from enslavement in Charleston and walked all the way to Columbia. There she worked as a midwife and bought this house, which still stands at 1403 Richland St. and serves as a museum. Reportedly, when General Sherman's army took Columbia near the end of the Civil *War, Ms. Mann allowed her wealthy white neighbors to hide in her basement. Photo by Aimee Smith.*

A few African-Americans came to South Carolina during the Colonial period as indentured servants rather than as enslaved. Indenturing servants was a common practice among whites. It required individuals to work for a certain number of years to pay for the cost of their transportation and living expenses. At the end of a set period of time, they were free. A number of the free Africans settled in the coastal areas of South Carolina. In the post-colonial period, some free African-Americans indentured themselves for a period of time in order to buy the freedom of their families. In Edgefield County records show that Frank, who was free, was indentured for sixteen years. He was probably buying the freedom of his wife and children. Love was certainly not free. It required hard work and long years of endurance. Another man indentured himself for seven years to earn freedom for his wife. Sadly, she died one month after she obtained her freedom.

A very few African-Americans became free because they had done something that deserved a special reward. Saving a master's life or protecting his children from harm might earn such a reward. One had to be lucky to have that opportunity. One also had to be lucky to survive the risks that it might involve.

A few of those who were enslaved were permitted to earn their freedom. Some masters allowed their enslaved African-Americans to earn money by selling things they had made. Others were allowed to hire themselves out during their free time. Because there was not much free time, this took many years. If enough money could be saved, the enslaved person could even buy his or her own freedom. Then, if the ex-master was willing, the newly freed person could save more money and buy freedom for his wife and children. There was no guarantee. The master could change his mind or raise the price.

Occasionally, the state purchased the freedom of an enslaved person who had performed an act of public service. A man named "Ariel" risked his life to put out a fire that would have destroyed St. Philip's Church in Charleston. He received his freedom and a cash payment from the legislature. Two men who testified in court in the Denmark Vesey Revolt trial were rewarded with their freedom and a cash gift. One became wealthy enough to purchase two houses and four lots.

Some free Africans were immigrants who came to the United States for the same reasons that immigrants have always come. As the result of a revolution in San Dominique, a number of whites and blacks arrived in the United States. After the revolution there, making a living was difficult and many people feared for their safety. So many free Africans arrived that white authorities became alarmed. They feared that so many free persons of color might lead enslaved persons of color to think they should be free as well. In 1794, the state legislature passed a law forbidding the entry of free Africans from the West Indies.

Tom Molyneux: Boxing to Freedom

We often talk about "fighting" for freedom. Here is a case of a man who boxed his way to freedom—and to fame! Many early African-Americans, both free and enslaved, were boxers. For sport and entertainment, masters held matches between boxers from different plantations. Sometimes masters bet a great deal of money on who would win. One enslaved boxer, Tom Molyneux, was freed by his Georgetown owners after he won a match against a bully from a Virginia plantation. Molyneux left South Carolina and headed for New York. There he was a great success. He won all his matches.

Boxing was quite popular in England. So Molyneux decided to try his luck there. He won eight straight fights against British boxers. All the losers tried to hide their names because losing to a nonwhite meant a loss of prestige. Molyneux's next fight was against the world heavyweight champion. It was December of 1810. More than 20,000 people watched the match for nearly an hour. Unfortunately, Molyneux fell against the ring post and fractured his skull. As a result, he lost the match. In 1811, the two men had a rematch. Molyneux's health had suffered from his earlier accident, and he lost this match after only nineteen minutes. He never again experienced great success in the ring, and he died in 1818. There was not another major boxing match between a black and a white man until 1891. However, boxing did become a very popular sport during the 1800s. Many other African-Americans went on to achieve great success in the sport.

Restrictions on Freedom

During the 1700s, free persons of color were left alone to live as best they could. Of course they had to endure racial prejudice. During that period, the government did not make their lives more difficult. The government even gave grants of land in the up country to a few free persons of color. For example, a free African-American named Matthew Chavous received 300 acres in 1752.

By the 1800s, life became more difficult for African-Americans in South Carolina. The state first stepped in to control the freeing of African-Americans in 1800. From then on a court would have to approve all acts of "manumission," the legal term for granting freedom. There was actually a good reason for this at the time. A number of masters used manumission to rid themselves of old, sick, or even dangerous persons. Once freed, masters had no further legal responsibility. This allowed masters to benefit from the enslaved persons' labor as long as they were strong and useful.

Although the original intentions of the law may have been good, the state soon took total control. South Carolina made freeing anyone difficult no matter what the reason. In 1820, a new law added restrictions. An owner who wished to free someone either had to send him out of the state or have him live under a "trustee." A trustee was someone, often a close friend, who owned the enslaved person and held the enslaved person's property in trust for him. While the person was still technically enslaved, he would live as though free. Of course, there was always the risk that the trustee would violate the trust or die.

Laws restricted travel. Without special permission, African-Americans could not leave the state and then return. Once out, they had to stay out. Nor would the state allow free African-Americans, living outside South Carolina, to enter the state. Of course, this made it hard for them to carry on business or see relatives and friends.

Whites thought there were good reasons for these changes. As you learned in an earlier chapter, rumors of revolts were common. Many free African-Americans could read. Keeping track of what they were reading was hard. Whites were afraid that free

African-Americans were giving their enslaved neighbors ideas about freedom. The more free African-Americans traveled and read, the more ideas they might get and spread. Whites were afraid free African-Americans might even help plan revolts. The fact that Denmark Vesey was a free man seemed to prove this point.

So, free African-Americans became less and less free. They could own property but they could not vote. They were not citizens but they did pay taxes. They could testify in court but not against a white person. If a white person claimed that an African-American belonged to him, the law assumed the white was correct unless the African-American could prove him wrong. If free African-Americans committed certain crimes, they could be sold into enslavement by the state. They were not really free. What freedom they had was always in danger.

The law required all free African-Americans to have white guardians. Guardians were in some ways like masters. But guardians had no legal obligations to look after free African-Americans. The purpose was to assure whites that African-Americans would pay their debts and not cause trouble. Some business people even insisted that all contracts be in the guardians' names.

There was more. In 1792 the state passed a law that required all free African-Americans between ages 16 and 50 to pay a $2.00 "head tax" each year. This might not sound like much today, but it was a lot of money then. It might be several weeks' wages, if you earned wages at all. Some people traded their labor for food and a roof over their heads. They traded for the things they needed and rarely saw any money. They had a very hard time paying taxes. In addition to this special tax, free African-Americans also had

Most free African-Americans were farmers and had to work very hard to buy and maintain their freedom. This sketch, however, may have shown life somewhat later and was published in 1878. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of SAC. Slide Collection, *slide D-37 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Harpers, Courtesy of S.C. Archives.*





Farmer using an ox driven cart. Farmers used whatever kind of animals they could to get goods to the market or bring the things they needed from the country store. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide E-8 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of the Darlington County Historical Commission.*

to pay all the taxes required of white citizens. Sometimes their earnings barely covered all the taxes.

If free African-Americans could not pay their taxes, they could be sold into servitude for a period of time to earn the money. If the tax collectors chose to cheat, free African-Americans had no recourse. In one case the tax collector and sheriff in Charleston stole tax funds. Some of this money was the taxes paid by some free African-Americans. Thirty-one free African-Americans almost were enslaved as a result. Fortunately, the theft was discovered in time.

Authorities could impose special taxes on a whim. After the Denmark Vesey Revolt in 1822, Charleston created a municipal guard. The purpose of the guard was to protect whites. But whites did not pay for it. Taxes on free African-Americans paid for the guard.

Ways of Making a Living

With restrictions like these, life was not easy for free African-Americans. They had to work very hard just to rise above the living standards of those who were enslaved. Most African-Americans lacked the skills to do more than physical labor, which paid very little. Even so, the fact that free persons of color survived at all in a state where whites enslaved fifty-nine of every sixty blacks was important. They proved that African-Americans could "make it" in America. If given half a chance, they could even make it in South Carolina.

Many free African-Americans in pre-Civil War South Carolina were farmers. Most of these owned small farms between ten and thirty acres. These small farms did not produce enough to make a decent living. Free African-American farmers often had to do other work as well. They had a lot of competition. They had to compete with enslaved African-Americans who were hired out for labor. They also had to compete with white workers who did not face as many restrictions. Surviving was a real accomplishment.

Some free African-Americans went way beyond mere survival. They found real prosperity, as difficult as that was. Some contributed much more. Let us look at a few of these.



Many of the midwives who had been using only traditional folk medicine were also trained in western medical practices. This is a 1 930s picture of a group of "granny midwives." Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide I-61 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of Waring Historical Library, Medical University of S.C., Charleston.*

Because education and training were so limited, there were few professionals. For the few who did achieve professional careers, education was the key. Thomas Bonneau of Charleston operated a school for free African-American children from 1803 to 1829. William McKinley also operated a school in Charleston. Two enslaved Africans taught classes at the Charleston Negro School from 1743 to 1765. Free African-Americans operated at least fifteen schools in Charleston during the period from 1800 to 1860. These African-Americans performed heroic tasks. The state provided no support. Without some government support, most schools for African-Americans did not last very long.

Folk medicine was one field that was open to African-Americans in early South Carolina. Those in medicine did not have the kind of formal training that physicians have today. There were very few formally educated doctors in South Carolina of either race until the 1900s, especially in the rural areas. But many people knew enough about the treatment of diseases to make their living in this way. Among these were the "root doctors" we talked about in the first chapter. Midwives, whom we will talk about later in this chapter, are another such group. Many of these people would seem much like modern day medics or physician's assistants.

In at least one case, a man earned his freedom through medicine. Cesar was an enslaved African-American who was freed by the state legislature in the mid-1700s. He had discovered a cure for a rattlesnake bite. It must have worked, for in addition to his freedom, he was granted an annual payment by the legislature. The cure was published by newspapers both inside and outside of South Carolina during the late 1700s.

Free African-Americans found opportunities in other areas. Many became skilled artisans, such as carpenters, tailors, hairdressers, bricklayers, and butchers. In Charleston, three quarters of the free African-Americans were artisans. Only fifteen percent of the city's overall work force was composed of free African-Americans. However, twenty-five percent of the city's carpenters, forty percent of the city's tailors, and seventy-five percent of the city's millwrights were free African-Americans. They were known for their good work. Even when large numbers of white immigrants arrived, most white customers continued to buy from African-American artisans. Thomas Day was a cabinetmaker in Charleston in the 1800s. The quality of his work was so high that wealthy clients from both South Carolina and Virginia ordered his custom-made furniture.

An 1823 directory of Charleston, which had the largest population of free African-Americans, listed thirty-five different occupations. Almost half of the skilled free African-Americans were carpenters or tailors. In some cases a skill was handed down in a family from generation to generation. Robert Ingliss, the last of seven generations of barbers in one Charleston family, died in 1957.

Some free African-Americans were successful in business. Others became wealthy through purchases of real estate. Among these were Thomas Bonneau, who owned six houses and a plantation when he died. Richard Holloway owned twenty-two houses. Starting as carpenters, Holloway and his family became known for their quality work. Soon they were buying land and becoming "well-to-do." The Kinlochs, also of Charleston, were another such family. They were millwrights who eventually owned several plantations.

John Primas owned a 100-acre farm in the Beaufort area. He bought it in 1731 for 100 pounds sterling. Today, that would be somewhere in the range of $36,000. (You can make a rough calculation of this as follows. At about the same time in history, Ben Franklin bought three loaves of bread for two pence. Each loaf would cost about a dollar today. It takes twelve pence to make a shilling and twenty shillings to make a pound sterling.) We do not know how Primas came to have all this money, but clearly he was a wealthy man. Thomas Jeremiah, a fisherman and boat pilot in Charleston, was said to be worth more than 1,000 pounds. William Ellison of Sumter County patented a cotton gin and owned a thriving plantation. Born into enslavement, Ellison had over 100 of his fellow African-Americans working for him in 1860. He purchased two notable pieces of property. One was the home of former Governor Steven D. Miller. The other was a house that had belonged to Revolutionary War General Thomas Sumter. Both of his daughters married white men. All these were clearly exceptions. Most successful free African-Americans used a trade or skill to earn a living.

Free African-American women had even less opportunity than the men. One occupation open to women was that of midwife. Midwives helped pregnant women through their labor and childbirth. Then they took care of the mother and baby. In a time when there were no African-American doctors and too few white ones, this was a vitally important service. Both white and black women used the services of African-American midwives. This was especially so in rural areas where doctors were scarce. Payment was usually whatever the "customer" could afford and not always money. Often midwives were paid in farm produce or small livestock.

In general, fewer women were skilled artisans. Most of the skilled crafts were considered "men's work." However, a number of the women were cooks, seamstresses, or dressmakers. A few women made and sold handicrafts.

Eliza Lee was a cook whose contributions extend far beyond the state. Americans should remember her whenever they enjoy a pickle. A Charlestonian whose "Mansion House" was located near the hotel of the famous Jehu Jones, she was skilled at pickling and preserving. The story is that her two sons left the state to seek a better life. When they had trouble making a living, they began to pickle foods using her recipes. A man by the name of Heinz heard about them. He bought their recipes and the right to mass produce them. Heinz pickles are now history!

Jehu Jones, another free African-American, began his career as a tailor. Later he bought a boarding house in Charleston. His wife, Abby, was an excellent pastry cook. They soon owned one of the most popular hotels in Charleston. The success of this

business made it possible for Jones to buy many lots on Broad Street. This was the center of business in Charleston.

Jones' Hotel even had an international reputation. According to one customer, the most important people who visited Charleston stayed at Jones' hotel. There they found the comforts of home and the best food in the country. An English traveler recommended that "Every Englishman who visits Charleston, will, if he be wise, direct his baggage to be conveyed to Jones' Hotel." Successful as he was, Jones later gave up his business. He left Charleston for New York. A newspaper in Liberia, Africa, offered him the job of editor. When this did not work out, he found he could not return to South Carolina. The state law we mentioned earlier barred him from doing so. He had to sell all of his Charleston property. The fact that a man as prominent as Jones would choose to leave the state in the first place tells us a great deal about the life of free African-Americans in South Carolina. The state lost a very good businessperson.

While most African-Americans were not wealthy, many of those who were used their wealth to help others. Maria Creighton, for example, left her estate to the Baptist Church in Charleston to help poor African-Americans. George Creighton, who may or may not have been related to Maria, migrated to Liberia in 1821. He paid the way for the enslaved people who were legally under his control to migrate as well. Morris Brown bought and freed a number of enslaved African-Americans.

Some African-Americans helped the state as well. In 1779, Joe Farquarson lent money to South Carolina to help pay the cost of the Revolutionary War.

Organizations

Because they were so few and so isolated, free African-Americans needed each other. The needs were both financial and social. White society was not open to them. Their enslaved neighbors occupied a separate class. So free persons of color formed groups of their own in which to socialize and help each other. One type of organization was the fraternal society.

Many of these organizations were exclusive, just like white organizations. The best known of these was the Brown Fellowship Society. The Brown Fellowship Society was founded in 1790 to help African-Americans. Membership was open only to lighter skinned "free brown men" and their descendants. This is why the name was "brown" rather than "black." Of course this kind of exclusiveness was based on prejudice its members learned from white society. This would be unacceptable today. The Brown Fellowship Society's membership was limited to fifty people. They met once a month. The society had its own school and its own burial ground. Both of these were limited to members. If a member died, the society saw that his children received an education. Widows and orphans would be cared for. The Brown Fellowship Society lasted into the 1900s.

Other free African-Americans who were well-off established similar groups. Among these were the Humane Brotherhood and the Unity and Friendship Society. Many of these groups were like the white Masons. They had their own secret rituals and customs. Membership gave prestige to the invited few because they had to pass tests to join. The groups provided members with a sense of respect for each other, respect they did not get from the white community. By pooling their resources, members could also provide a kind of "insurance policy" for each other and their families. For example, the Humane Brotherhood helped to support their members and their families when there was illness or death. It provided money on a weekly basis to the families of imprisoned members.

Some groups were mainly charitable. The Minors Moralist Society, organized in 1803, helped to care for free African-American orphans. The Christian Benevolent Society, organized in 1839, provided for the poor. These groups filled a real need that would otherwise have been ignored.

(Facing Page) Copy of hand written 6 December 1823 Petition of John L. Wilson on behalf of free African-American merchant Jehu Jones to allow him to travel to see his family in New York and to return Records of the S.C. General Assembly Petitions 1823 #18. Courtesy of S.C. Department of Archives and History.

DOCUMENT V: PETITION TO SENATE

S.C. Department of Archives & History • Jehu Jones: Free Black Entrepreneur

To the Honorable the President & Members of the Senate of South Carolina:

The humble Petition of John L. Wilson, Sheweth: That he is Guardian to a Coloured man named Jehu Jones; that the said Jehu Jones has always borne an irreproachable character; that as a member of society and the father of a family, he is respected by all who know him; and that his wife and family being now abroad and prevented from returning to this State, under the penalty of the late act, the said John L. Wilson, for and in behalf of his ward, the said Jehu Jones, humbly prays your honorable body to permit the said Jehu Jones to visit his family in New York, and to return to this State, by and with the consent of your honorable body. And the said John L. Wilson, as Guardian to the said Jehu Jones, assures your honorable body, that his ward is a fit and proper subject for the exercise of your clemency, and is a worthy and respectable member of Society.

And your Petitioner will ever pray.

John L. Wilson

Columbia Decem. 6th 1823

Future Leaders

The story of the free African-Americans of South Carolina before the Civil War is not a happy one. Free persons of color were few in number. They had to overcome tremendous odds to have any success at all. They were socially insecure as well. Because they lived in a society that valued white skin, many of them were prejudiced against their darker sisters and brothers. The idea of unity among all African people was not strong among them. Yet, they too inherited the African idea of an extended family and helped each other in many ways. Some of the wealthier free African-Americans even supported the Confederate cause during the Civil War. But after that war when enslavement was abolished, the men and women who had been free became leaders of a new movement for African-American rights. They began to feel a greater sense of unity. Those they helped get an education and find success provided the basis for future fights for freedom for all. After the Civil War, they became the leaders of African-American society in the state.

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 5

Early African-American Arts

Africans were forcibly brought to the New World and made to practice customs that were new and strange to them. Because of this, for a long time people thought African heritage had been lost. In recent years, we have learned that this was not true. Many traditions survived the rough passage across the ocean. In some cases, traditions and customs have been transformed. In some cases, they were borrowed by whites. Other customs are virtually unchanged even after hundreds of years. Customs were temporarily misplaced, not lost.

Every ethnic group has something special to offer. In this chapter, we will look at the cultural heritage that Africans brought to America. The part of the culture we will look at is the arts. This includes literature, music, handicrafts, food preparation, and architecture.

Literature

After their arrival in the New World, few Africans had the chance to learn to read and write. The telling of stories had always been an important part of their culture. Before long, laws were passed which made it illegal to teach enslaved Africans to read and write. Then the telling of stories became an important way to keep their African culture alive. Sometimes enslaved Africans told the stories through music. As stories were passed on from one person to another, the stories often changed. Sometimes they were improved, but the basic ideas remained important. The folklore of a number of West African societies, including the Mandinka, the Hausa, and the Fulani, became part of American culture. Tales of hares and of tricksters were common. These evolved into stories about "Brer Rabbit." You will read more about those later in the book. The "Anansi the Spider" stories of the Akan are familiar to many young people even today. If you look, you can find many of these stories in libraries or in bookstores.

We have only a few records of the thoughts and feelings of African-Americans during the early days. However, those who could take pen to paper preserved a few of the stories of early African-Americans for us. The story of Louisa Picquet, an enslaved African-American, helps us understand how much people suffered when separated from their families. She was born in Columbia and sold four times during her childhood. Sold away from her mother in New Orleans, Picquet was freed after her master's death. She moved to Ohio. There she married a free African-American. Perhaps she could have been happy with her freedom. But she longed to find her mother. She searched for many years. Just before the Civil War, she found her. Sadly, Louisa Picquet did not have enough money to purchase her mother's freedom. With the help of her husband, she campaigned to raise money. Finally, mother and daughter were reunited. Her story was published as a series of interviews between Louisa and an AME minister. People who read the interviews felt great sadness and horror at what she had suffered. They helped persuade the AME Church to take a stronger public stand against enslavement.

Music

Africans brought their distinctive musical traditions with them. Rhythm was important in African music. People would either clap their hands or play drums and other instruments. They used different combinations of beats. Many African songs have harmony,

where one person sings and other people repeat the phrases or add a chorus. These patterns and this repetition became part of American music.

Most of the music of enslaved African-Americans probably was vocal. The style of singing that Africans liked best was the "call and response" or "leader/chorus" style. A leader would sing or call out a line, and the group would repeat it or respond to it. Back and forth the song would go.

Enslaved African-Americans sang while they worked. Songs expressed both happiness and sadness. The tradition of singing while working was African. Work songs dealt with all kinds of topics, from chopping wood to pulling barges. The tempo of the various songs matched the speed at which work was done. It helped keep the work at a proper pace. It also helped pass the time at work that was often quite dull and hard. Singing and laughter often went together, for music was a way to lighten the load and forget troubles for awhile. The custom of singing while working continued even after the Civil War anywhere people worked together. Most African-Americans in the South still worked on farms where group labor was often used.

Play songs were used for games and for lighter activities. These songs also influenced the later development of spirituals, blues, and gospel music. One scholar, Charles Joyner, believes that through the later revival meetings, white religious music picked up the most popular characteristics of African music. These included the "leader/chorus" style we have already mentioned. In the American South, African music blended with European forms. The blending created a unique African-American Southern music.

The early dances and music had African features. So did children's "ring games," where children stood in a circle and played different games. People who study African culture have noticed that the "religious shout" had African origins. The religious shout was very similar to the frenzied circle dances used in Africa for both religious and nonreligious purposes. The term "saut," or "shout," meant to "walk or run around." A "shout" was a dance that overflowed with energy and joy. The shout was full of cries of happiness. This dance was an almost frantic religious response to the receiving of the word of God. Sometimes religious conversion ceremonies used the shout. Even after converting to Christianity, enslaved African-Americans would worship as they had in Africa, singing and dancing. They clapped their hands or stomped their feet when they had no drums.

A "call," which was like a loud yell or scream, had several purposes. It could be used to get someone's attention or to let off steam. While no one is quite sure of the origin of spirituals, some scholars think that the first ones developed out of the "calls and hollers." As Africans learned English, they added English words. The words may have been English, but the way the words were pronounced and the repetition in singing phrases of words over and over again were African.

Some scholars think that spirituals developed from the hymns and psalms sung by African-Americans. You may remember that few efforts were made to convert the first arrivals. By the mid-1700s, this had changed. Enslaved African-Americans were being converted to Christianity. They began to sing the white hymns. Singing was one way to express their sadness without upsetting the whites. The hymns were English, but they added African elements, such as humming and singing in falsetto.

Spirituals were very popular among the enslaved African-Americans. They told of the better world that awaited the believer "by and by." They also reminded the singers and listeners of the behavior that was needed to get them to that world. Finally, the songs spoke of God's justice and the fate of those lost in sin. Some have said that these songs were a way of forgetting troubles. Others say they were used to build up the self-esteem of the enslaved by reminding them of Jesus' love and the equality of all in God's eyes. Both are correct. African-Americans found both relief from their burdens and hope for a better day in these songs. They also expressed the idea that those who had treated them in unchristian ways would feel God's wrath some day. The songs promised that they would not always be enslaved.

The masters heard these songs too. So the words could not be too clear. Consider the words in this song.

"Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land.
Tell old Pharaoh, let my people go."

God is talking to Moses, as in the book of Exodus in the *Bible.* Pharaoh is the king of Egypt, who holds God's people in slavery. But for the African-Americans who sang this song, Pharaoh referred to their masters or white people in general. God wanted them to be let go from slavery! One day—soon they hoped—He would make it happen. Many saw the Civil War as God's answer to their prayers for freedom.

Spirituals came to the attention of the white American public during and after the Civil War. Some music collectors first heard the songs sung by African-Americans rowing them from Beaufort to St. Helena across Port Royal Sound. The custom of singing while rowing originated in Africa. One person would sing the melody. Then each of the other rowers would sing a different part of the song. No doubt singing while working made the rowing easier. "Michael Row the Boat Ashore" is said to have been a popular rowing song, especially when the rowing was hard. You might imagine yourself rowing as you sing this song.

Charlotte Forten, a free African-American from the North, came to St. Helena Island to teach. Due to health problems, she stayed only eighteen months. During that time she collected many spirituals. *The Atlantic Monthly* published them in May of 1864. A number of white Northerners who were in the South also collected spirituals. In June of 1867, *The Atlantic Monthly* published the spirituals collected by Thomas W. Higginson. He had commanded African-American troops in South Carolina. You will learn about him and his troops in the next chapter.

The words and meanings of the songs were often misunderstood because they were in Gullah. The whites who collected the spirituals did not understand Gullah. They thought it was merely improperly spoken English. Actually, Gullah has many African words. The collectors also lost much of the way the music sounded. Because tape recorders did not exist, we may never know for sure what the music sounded like.

After the Civil War, African-Americans formed their own churches. Now they could include their own traditions in their religious music. They did foot-stomping and hand-clapping while they sang. Many songs were quite dramatic. Many were sad. Some songs were much like the old work songs, but others were more like European music. This second kind of song became quite popular during Reconstruction. Groups like the Fisk Jubilee Singers from Tennessee popularized these songs. One popular spiritual was "No More Auction Block for Me (Many Thousand Gone)." Some think this song was the basis for the world famous civil rights song "We Shall Overcome."

During their enslavement, many African-Americans learned to play musical instruments. When they had a little free time, enslaved African-Americans enjoyed dancing and playing homemade fiddles. At Christmas and Easter, many African-Americans were given more time off. They celebrated this festive time with the music of fiddles and sometimes banjos.

Enslaved African-Americans with a musical bent sometimes were taught to play so they could entertain the planters and their friends. Most of the fiddlers were probably taught to play by other enslaved African-Americans. Sometimes enslaved musicians were hired out. At casual social events in the towns and on the plantations, they played a variety of instruments, including fiddles, flutes, and French horns. Planter families enjoyed dancing to the "jigs." These jigs were very much like traditional African music. Musicians played several notes repetitively in a monotone. They held the bow or stick, in the right hand, and knocked or bounced it softly against the strings. The effect was much like that of a drum.

Sometimes planters and their friends asked enslaved African-Americans to sing for them. The term "juba" had a long tradition going back to the Bantu language. It came from the African word "giouba." This referred to an African dance often performed in South Carolina and the West Indies. The term also had several other meanings, including to beat time or to pat. Among enslaved African-Americans, juba came to refer to leftovers which were all mixed together at the end of the week for a meal. Eating mixed together leftovers that may have been partially spoiled was bad enough. But in addition, enslaved African-Americans had to sing songs and play African games for the entertainment of the planters. Enslaved people often made up a song with a double meaning to help them get through this event. The song

expressed their feelings without letting the whites know what they meant. They sang variations on this song with such excitement and cheer that sometimes the owners had them perform it for guests. Older people tapped on their legs with a drum-like rhythm while younger people danced.

Enslaved African-Americans were sometimes exposed to classical music while traveling with their masters or attending the young men away at school. As skilled musicians, African-Americans learned to play classical music quickly. Sometimes they played it for whites at more formal occasions. Sometimes African-American fiddlers played classical pieces before the start of theater productions.

Musical Instruments

A number of musical instruments were popular. Some scholars think that African instruments were actually brought over on the ships with the first captives. Of all the African instruments, drums were the most important. As we have already noted, drums were used for communication as well as for music. In Africa, a wide variety of drums were used in music-making. In America the materials used to make the drums were different, but the traditions remained. We have learned a little about how drums were made from an old drum found in Virginia. This drum was probably made before the year 1700 and was placed in the British Museum in London in 1753. The drum was made of American materials, cedar and deerskin. But it is distinctly African in style.

Masters banned drums because they feared drums would be used to carry messages of revolt. In the early 1700s, English planters banned drums in the West Indies. French and Spanish speaking colonies, however, rarely banned drums. As we mentioned in an earlier chapter, South Carolina banned drums, horns, and other "loud instruments" in 1740 after the Stono Rebellion. Before that time, enslaved Africans were often military drummers. After 1740, records rarely mention drummers until the American Revolution. However, Europeans welcomed Africans as drummers in military bands. During the Revolutionary War in America, a number of enslaved African-Americans escaped enslavement in Charleston and became drummers in the Hessian regiments who fought on the British side.

Even when drums were banned among the enslaved African-Americans, people found other ways to create a drum sound. They either clapped their hands or used common everyday items. Scholars think that mortars and pestles, instruments designed for rice cultivation, were used as drums. Mortars were often made out of a hollow log, a fine "instrument" for a drum. Drums also were usually made out of hollow logs in America, a custom that survived into the 1900s along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

Cane fifes were first used in Africa, where they were an important part of the music. Brought to the New World, Africans continued to use the same method to make fifes. First, they hollowed out the cane. Then they made holes for fingers and for the mouth. Today fifes and drums are played together for the enjoyment of the listeners. People often think of a fife and drum corps as one of the most American types of musical groups. Perhaps so, but it has African roots.

Most people would be surprised to learn that the ancestor of the hillbilly banjo is African. Records from the time before the American Revolution show enslaved African-Americans playing homemade instruments similar to guitars. The instruments described were made from gourds and had strings. A century later, former enslaved African-Americans recalled using a kind of banjo made from a wood frame. It had strings made of animal gut and animal skins for the head.

The ancestor of the banjo is the one-strand or one-string, which was made of a string stretched out over a board. One-string instruments were common in Africa. This particular instrument makes the "drone" sound which is also found in the banjo. It is also plucked like a banjo. West Africans commonly use several similar instruments. While the modern banjo has evolved and changed, its roots are found across the ocean in Africa.

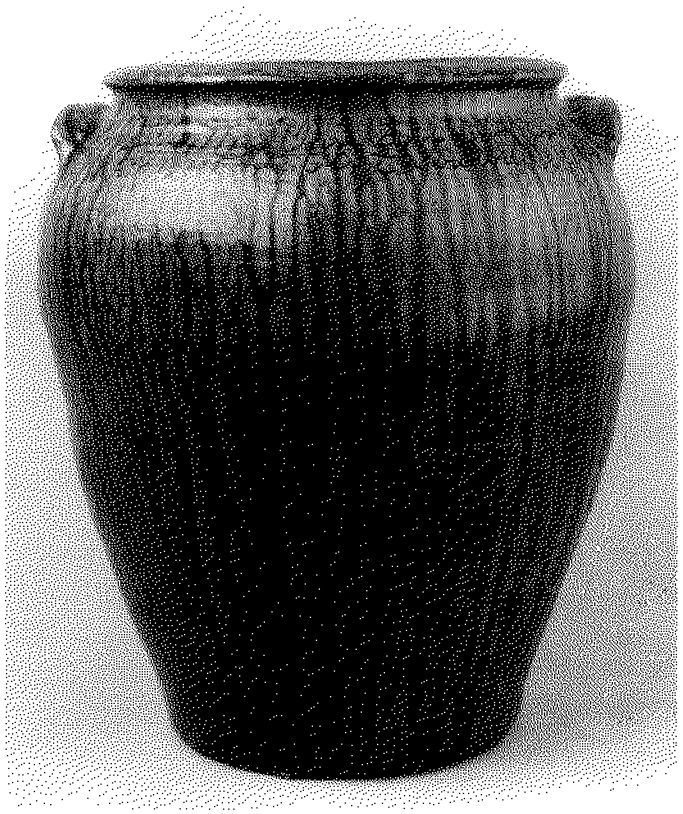
How did the banjo get from the coast to the mountains, where there were few African-Americans? Perhaps African-Americans who took part in building the early railroads in the mountains brought it. Or perhaps it came from the minstrel shows in the

mid-1800s. Minstrels brought the music of enslaved African-Americans to the entire country. Or perhaps the Civil War played a role. People who had no contact with each other before shared traditions. Soldiers may have returned home with a new musical instrument. In any case, over the years white society adopted the banjo as its own. Ironically, this most African instrument is today played by very few African-Americans.

Handicrafts

Because the African-Americans who came to the New World were enslaved, their handicrafts had to be useful rather than decorative. They did not have the luxury of making things that were merely pretty. Many crafts were similar to those in Africa. Showing that a craft or technique was handed down directly from parents to children is not always possible. But we can clearly see that African influences survived enslavement. Today we can appreciate the beauty and usefulness of what is left of these ancient crafts.

African pottery making traditions were quite different than those of Europeans. In Africa, mainly women practiced the art. However, men also were potters in some areas. White owners taught the earliest African-American potters. In the early 1800s, pottery making began in Edgefield and Aiken Counties. The first such pots were made at a place known as Pottersville in Edgefield County. The most famous of the enslaved potters was a man known as Dave the Potter. He learned to read and write through his early work. His owner, Abner Landrum, worked Dave as a typesetter on his newspaper until it went out of business. After that, Landrum put Dave to work in the pottery business. Dave made hundreds of jars, and many of them still exist. We know Dave's work because he signed it with his name, the date, and his owner's initials. Sometimes Dave included a brief poem. The poem told the purpose of the jar. His jars were quite large and unusually wide at the shoulder. One can hold more than forty gallons. It is the largest piece found in the South. Dave must have been a very strong man to handle the amount of clay needed. Dave died at the age of eighty-three. While Dave was the best known, many other enslaved African-Americans worked in the pottery industry of



Dave the Potter Storage Jar, 1862. Alkaline glazed stoneware. Reproduced with permission of Tony and Marie Shank. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art. Another example of Dave the Potter's work can be seen in slide H-1 The History of the S.C. Slide Collection.

that time. Scholars think that as many as 140 potters were working in the Edgefield area between 1820 and the Civil War. You can see some of their work on display in the McKissick Museum in Columbia and the Edgefield County Museum.

Face vessels are another type of pottery made by many of the Edgefield potters. Face vessels came in a number of sizes. Some were intended as water jugs, some as cups or pitchers. In some cases we do not know how they were intended to be used.

Face vessels have been found all over the United States. Europeans made them for centuries. However, the face vessels found in the Edgefield area have African features. They look a great deal like African art. The style is very much like Bakongo wooden sculptures found in Zaire and Angola. Records confirm that enslaved African-Americans did



(Above) Monkey Jug, made about 1862, maker unknown. Alkaline glazed stoneware, made of kaolin. Reproduced with permission of Tony and Marie Shank. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art. (Right) Sorting the materials for a sweetgrass basket. Skills that came from Africa in making sweetgrass baskets can still be seen today. Photo by Aimee Smith.

this type of work. In the 1800s, enslaved people from that area of Africa were brought to the United States. A group that arrived in the 1850s ended up living in the Edgefield area. They may have influenced the style of pottery.

Another African connection comes from one group of face vessels called "monkey jugs." This term, which had been used since the late 1700s, came from a slang expression for quenching thirst. Monkey jugs were vessels used to hold water. Some think that the enslaved people working in the fields drank water from these vessels. We know that enslaved Africans in the Caribbean made monkey jugs around 1800 or earlier. Many enslaved Africans were brought from the Caribbean to South Carolina. So they may have brought the monkey jug tradition with them. That tradition stretches back to their African ancestors.

Another type of pottery made in the Edgefield area is the figural vessel. Rather than just showing a face, these show a whole body. The true roots of this style are unknown. Europeans had long made pottery that depicted a human being. However, the pottery again bears some resemblance to African art. Enslaved potters may well have taken a European style and adapted it to the art forms with which they were most familiar.

After the Civil War, pottery making became less important in the Edgefield area. African-Americans continued to work in some of the potteries that survived. At least one potter became the owner of his own business in the Greenville area.

The tradition of basketmaking is an old one that survives today. If you take a trip to Charleston, you will see ladies making baskets even now. Today's baskets are mainly decorative. In the early days, they were strictly work-related. Africans brought basketmaking to America when they first arrived. The





People making sweetgrass baskets at the Penn School, St. Helena Island in the early 1900s. The school helped preserve ancient crafts. Courtesy of Howard Woody, the S.C. Postcard Archive, South Caroliniana Library, USC.

coiled-grass baskets made today in South Carolina are very much like the ones made across the ocean in Africa. However, the bread trays, flower baskets, and other items sold now are a modern spinoff of an old craft.

Basket design has changed down through time. The first baskets made by African-Americans were probably "fanners," which are round and wide. As we explained in an earlier chapter, these were used to separate rice grains from the smashed husks. African-Americans made taller baskets for storage purposes. Both of these types of baskets had to last. So they were probably made with stronger materials than you would find in the baskets you could buy today. By the 1700s, people were making both work baskets out of tough materials and "show" baskets from flimsier grasses. Carrying a basket on one's head was customary. Handles were probably not part of the design until the early 1900s.

Men made most of the heavier baskets. Women and children usually made the show baskets. Basketmaking was usually done just before it was time for the harvest. Demand was high. Many enslaved African-Americans made baskets that their masters sold to other plantations. Some of the enslaved African-Americans also made baskets in their free time. These they sold for themselves.

As in Africa, people made baskets for a variety of uses. Baskets were made from different materials and different weaves for storing grain, trapping fish, and storing sewing materials. People "made do" with what they had. Fanners were sometimes even used as cradles for babies. During the Civil War, Jack Frowers, an enslaved African-American on a South Carolina plantation, wove himself a basket boat. He used it to escape to the Union lines. He nailed a piece of wood to the bottom and used pieces of wood to help keep its shape.

After enslavement ended the basketmaking tradition continued. As African-Americans strove to make a living, they used woven baskets to hold fish and produce sold in Charleston. Small farmers needed baskets to carry and store their household goods. Some people made baskets for use on those plantations that survived. Sea Islands residents may have used some baskets in the limited rice production that continued even into the 1900s. Basketmaking became a craft taught at the Penn School near Beaufort



A finished sweetgrass basket shown off by its creator. Today these beautiful baskets are works of art more intended for display rather than every day use. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide H-10 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of S.C. State Museum.*

in 1904. The Penn School's support helped preserve this most African of crafts. We and future generations can appreciate it for a long time to come.

In the late 1800s, when times were hard, basketmaking became a tourist-related activity. People in Mt. Pleasant, near Charleston, began to make sweetgrass baskets and sell them by the road. Eventually entire families became involved in the business. Small children made the bottoms as they learned the skills needed. Few "show baskets" made of the fragile materials survive from old days. Even so, we are fortunate that we can still enjoy these beautiful baskets made by modern basketmakers.

Walking sticks are probably the best known type of African-American woodcarving. African-American walking sticks cannot be directly linked to any African roots because decorated canes are found among the peoples of Europe as well as those of Africa. Carved walking sticks were also common in the West Indies. The canes, usually decorated with snakes, show the woodcarving talents of African-Americans. "Conjure sticks" was the name given to walking canes in South Carolina that had snakes wrapped around them. They may have been used in some way to try to banish illness. Perhaps the designs have their origin in the ancestral homeland, where decorated staffs were sometimes a sign of authority. The sticks did not retain this function in the Americas. But they sometimes were tied to religion and superstition.

Many African-Americans made quilts, both during and after enslavement. Even though quilting is a European technique, African-Americans often decorated the quilts using an African design. Sometimes they used what we might think of as a "crazy quilt" pattern. Many, however, used distinctly American or European patterns. One type of quilt that became very popular among African-Americans on the coast of South Carolina and elsewhere is the strip or string quilt. The quilter sews the pieces into strips. Then the quilter pieces them together into a quilt. African textile workers wove cloth into narrow strips. We do not know whether this technique had a direct influence on the American quilters. But American strip quilts are similar in appearance to these African textiles. Africans commonly improvised and used boldly contrasting designs and colors. We see some of this influence in African-American quilts, especially those made in the Sea Islands.

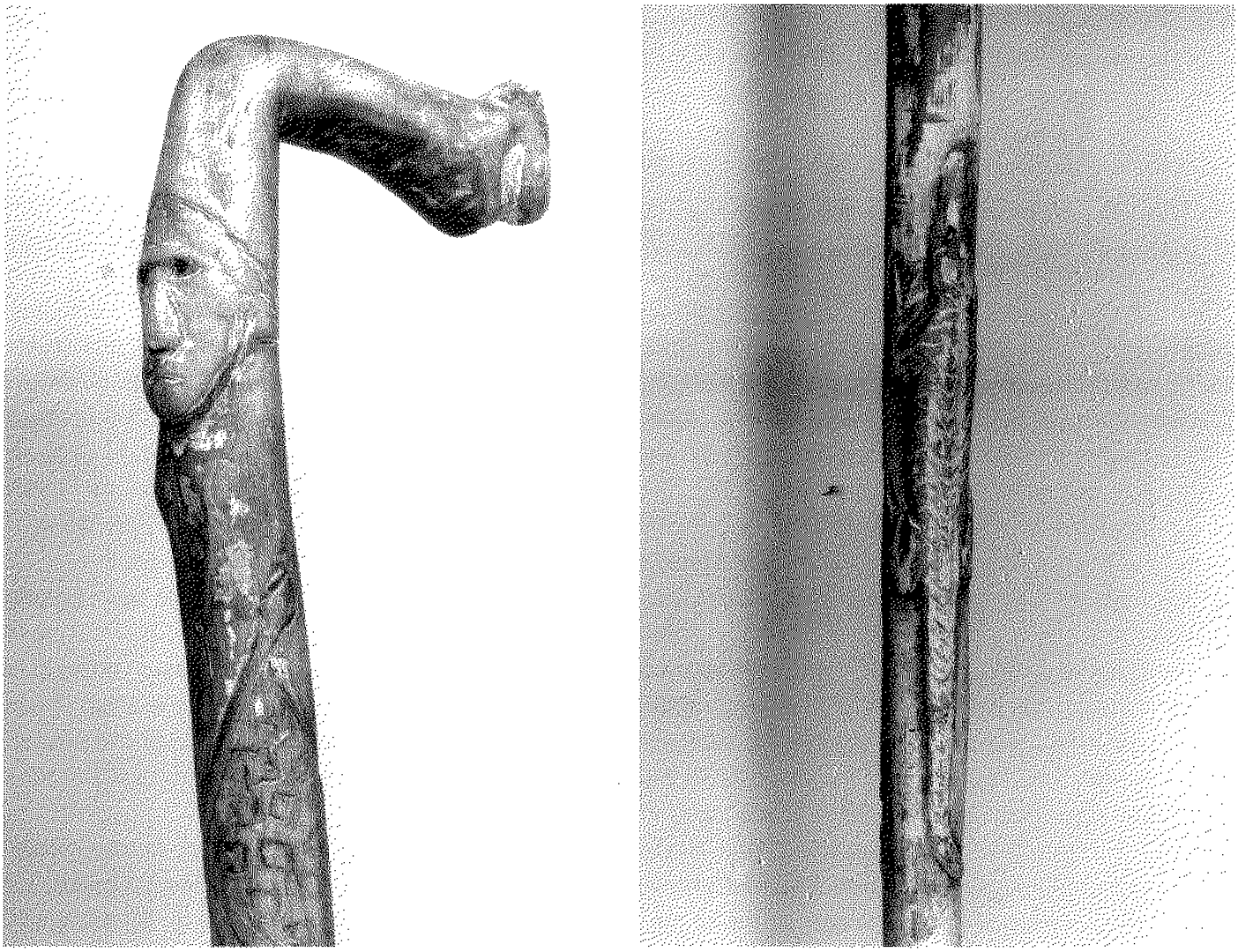
Records of enslaved ironworkers go back as far as the 1700s. In a rural society, someone had to make the shoes for the horses, the hoes for agriculture, and the axes for chopping down trees and chopping wood. Enslaved African-Americans also made guns. Some of the guns found their way into the hands of other enslaved African-Americans during the various rebellions. Two enslaved blacksmiths made many weapons used in Denmark Vesey's rebellion in 1822, including swords, pikes, and bayonets. Scholar John Michael Vlatch points out that the whites gave the craftsmen lots of practice making spears. Ornamental spearheads adorn the tops of many fences.

Enslaved African-Americans created much of the ornamental ironwork for which Charleston and New Orleans are famous. They probably did the actual work even when the white owners did the design. The Sword Gate in Charleston was designed by Christopher Werner. He owned five black artisans and employed five whites. One of the enslaved artisans, Toby Richardson, was known for his high quality work. Because of his skill, he probably played a role in creating this beautiful gate.

Many African-Americans worked under white supervision and used European designs. But by the mid-1800s, about twenty-five percent of Charleston's black ironworkers were free. African-American ironworkers still dominated the profession in the years after the Civil War. They shod horses and fixed wagon wheels in addition to crafting decorative ironwork. The tradition has been carried on to the present day in Charleston with the work of the renowned Philip Simmons. We will look at Simmons' work in a later chapter.

Many Africans were skilled boaters. Enslaved Africans who could man the boats were valued highly. Many enslaved Africans came from communities

Two pictures of a cane, made sometime in the late 1800s, anonymous. Note the detail of the work. Walking sticks with unique carved designs were a part of everyday life, yet art at the same time. Reproduced with permission of Louanne LaRouche. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.





Africans brought to America brought with them skills in boating and fishing. Many enslaved Africans were called upon to use these skills. After freedom came, they continued the tradition. These fishermen are working on their gear in a 1939 photo at St. Helena Island. Library of Congress LC-USF33 30432-M2.

where fishing was a way of life. They brought valuable boatmaking skills with them. While we tend to think of Native Americans building canoes, African-Americans also built them. Both Indians and Europeans knew how to make a boat from a single log. However, double log canoes have been a common sight along the African coast for hundreds of years. Africans use them for fishing. Double log canoes consist of several logs joined together. The double log boats built in Africa were larger and more stable than the single log boats built by the Indians. Enslaved African-Americans carried on the tradition, building boats on the plantations and often painting them bright colors.

Africans picked up additional boatmaking skills along the way to South Carolina. Africans in the West Indies quickly became fishermen, a respected occupation. Indians there made raft like boats of several logs attached together, called "pirogues." The pirogues were similar to the canoes found in West Africa. Once again, it is impossible to be sure of the origins of a tradition. Similar techniques existed in different parts of the world. Some scholars believe that Africans living in the West Indies adopted the pirogue's design. Since not many Indians survived the arrival of the Europeans in the West Indies, enslaved Africans became the boat builders. The use of these boats spread to the east coast of the United States. In the 1700s and 1800s, enslaved African-Americans in South Carolina were building boats of a similar style out of cypress.

Few roads existed in some of the coastal areas. African-American oarsmen provided transportation by guiding boats from one place to another. Some used dugout boats as a means of escape from enslavement. In the early 1700s, some fled by boat through the swamps of South Carolina and Georgia to Florida. There, in 1738, the Spanish governor gave them land near St. Augustine. A fort and a town were built. Although its real name was "Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose," most people called it Fort Mose.

The dugouts may be the ancestors of the racing canoes built after the Civil War and the oyster boats still used today. The dugouts of pre-Civil War days may also be the ancestors of the "bateaux" being built today by African-Americans in the Sea Islands. These modern-day boats are built of boards or planks. But they have many similarities to those built several hundred years ago.

As this book was being written, an archaeologist was building a replica of one of the flat-bed boats at Middleton Plantation in Charleston. By doing this

he hoped to learn more about how these boats were originally made. Unfortunately, the builders did not expect to try it out in the river. However, a television documentary was to be made on the project. Perhaps this effort will shed some light on the work of the African-Americans who built such boats long ago.

Food and Its Preparation

Everyone likes to eat. One of the joys of living in America is experiencing the variety of foods and the different ways to cook it. Food preparation is an art we all can enjoy. American food and cooking styles are a blend of cultures. Each ethnic group has brought certain foods and styles of cooking to America's shores. Okra, sesame seeds, black-eyed peas or cowpeas, and watermelon are among the foods which originated in Africa. Nut soups and fish stews were first enjoyed in Africa. Gumbo, both the word and the dish, is African. The yam is an African plant and an African word, from the Wolof language.

Food from other cultures also influenced Africans. Chili peppers and tomatoes, for example, became a part of African cooking. Explorers and traders from America brought them to Africa. The African diet included a number of different types of grains, which were cooked into breads, cereals, pancakes, and puddings. Africans ate a wide variety of vegetables. African influence may have led the Europeans to include more vegetables in their diet after enslavement began. After all, Africans and their descendants were doing a great deal of the cooking.

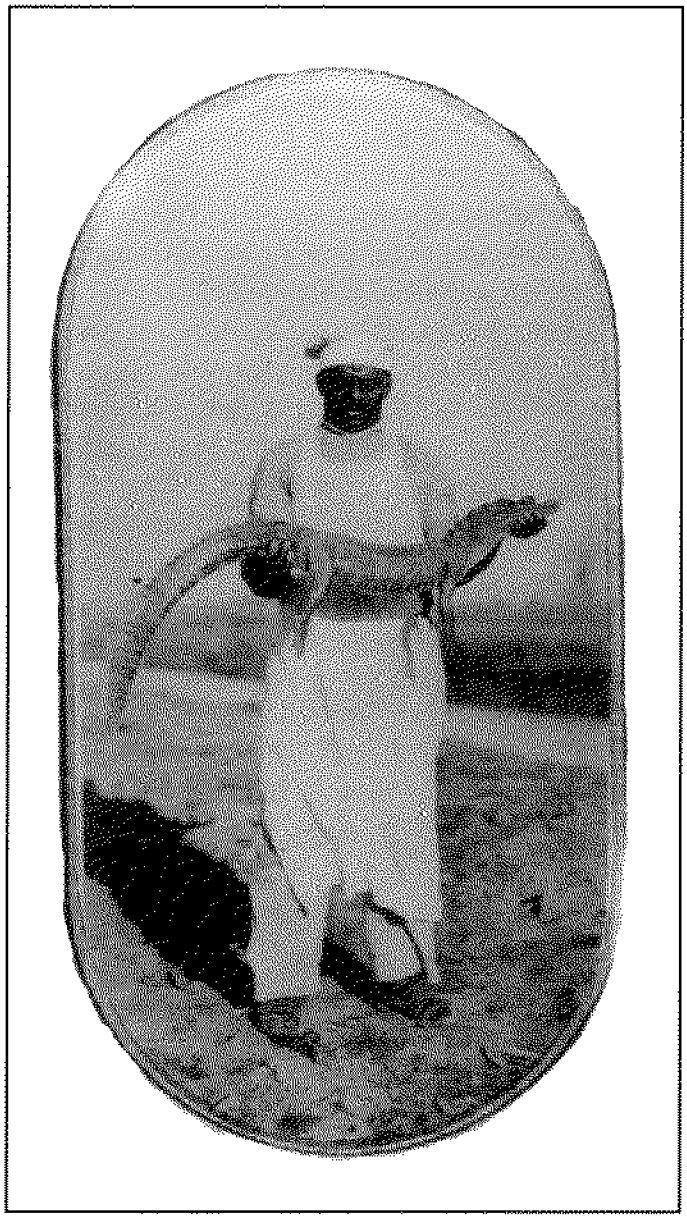
There was little meat in the West African diet. People usually ate some kind of a grain, such as rice or maniac, with a sauce made from boiled vegetables, such as eggplant, baobab, or beans. Some of these became part of the African-American diet in the New World. They also became part of the white Southern diet. Another grain, sorghum, which may be African, was boiled and made into bread by Africans.

The main dish would be cooked in a large iron or earthenware pot. It was placed on the floor. People would sit around it and eat, picking up food and dipping it into a spicy vegetable relish. They would drink from a gourd or bowl. These same eating patterns were later found among the African-American people on the Carolina coast. They were more isolated from European influences. Europeans, on the other hand, usually used utensils and cooked their food in metal pots. They served their food in wooden trays called trenchers. However, Europeans had begun to use ceramic dishes by the early 1700s. Enslaved African-Americans used both gourds and iron pots, depending on what was available.

Despite the wealth of foods to which their ancestors had been accustomed, enslaved African-Americans did not eat a very balanced diet. On the slave ships, beans and rice were staples. Occasionally the enslaved people were given fruits and vegetables. Meat was not a regular part of their diet.

Nutcake vendor. This street vendor proudly shows her wares of homemade nutcakes, a very popular item for those passing by in the early 1900s. Courtesy of Col. Robert I. Karrer, the S.C. Postcard Archive, South Caroliniana Library, USC.





Dinner anyone? African-American cooks learned to cook with whatever foods were available—perhaps even an occasional alligator! The spices and cooking techniques they brought from Africa and passed down through generations created a distinctive style of cooking. Courtesy of Dorothy M. Hucks, the S.C. Postcard Archive, South Caroliniana Library, USC.

The diet would usually improve somewhat after the Africans were brought to the New World and readied for sale.

The diet on the plantation would have varied depending on the owner's whim and resources. However, even in the best situations, there is no reason to think the enslaved Africans feasted. They often added to their limited diet by hunting, fishing, gardening, and gathering in their limited free time. Former enslaved African-American Jacob Stoyer related that when he was a child on a plantation, enslaved children were fed corn flour, which they called mush, and sour milk called hard crabber. Even though the mush was sweetened with molasses, the children disliked it. The crabber was far more popular. By comparison, a Sunday meal was a treat. Rice, bacon, and cowpeas were all cooked together. This simple and nutritious dish was called "hoppin' John." It is popular today throughout South Carolina.

The foods and cooking that developed were a combination of those of Africans and of Native Americans. Rice and corn became staples of the diet. In some areas rice alone was the staple. In other communities, white settlers may have considered rice too expensive for the enslaved. In these places whites sold rice for income. Corn, a Native American contribution to the diet, was cheap. The enslaved Africans adopted many of the Indian ways of cooking it. The idea of cornmeal mush, or boiling corn, probably was African. Corn is not a complete protein by itself, so the enslaved people needed beans or meat if they were to have adequate nutrition. Beans and meat were often lacking. What meat they had was usually fatty, tough, and often not well preserved.

The tradition of cooking food for a long time and adding a little meat for flavor is certainly African. This became a tradition among later generations of all Southerners. Some vegetables that became popular among African-Americans and white Southerners, such as turnips, cabbage, and collards, came from Europe. In some cases, African styles of cooking were adapted to the American environment with its different plants. In Africa, food was sometimes wrapped in banana leaves and cooked in the ashes of the fire. In America, cabbage leaves were substituted. Highly spiced food was popular in Africa. Plantation cooks continued this tradition. Today this kind of cooking is popular among both blacks and whites.

Until recently, little was known about the lifestyle of the enslaved African-Americans. Archaeologists have begun to excavate in the areas where they had their homes. They have discovered that enslaved

African-Americans usually cooked outside and ate on the floor like their African ancestors. Of course, outdoor cooking made sense for people who lived in warm climates.

Food was often cooked in a kind of earthenware pot. Today we call these pots "colonoware." Most of the colonoware that archaeologists have found was made before the mid-1800s. Commercial pottery became widely available after then. If you take a pottery making class, your pots will probably be fired in a closed oven, or kiln. Colonoware was different. It was fired on an open hearth. Colonoware was not usually decorated with designs or patterns, but offen there was a symbol, a cross or an "X," sometimes placed on a circle, found on the bottoms of the bowls. This symbol is like the "cosmograms," or religious symbols, found among the Bakongo culture in what is now Zaire. Many of the people brought to South Carolina came from this region of Africa.

Food was cooked slowly in the colonoware pots. The pots added a unique flavor to the food. For a long time, researchers thought that Native Americans made these hand-built pots and sold them to the enslaved Africans. The style is quite similar to those used by Native Americans. Some scholars began to be suspicious when they discovered that many of these flat-bottomed pieces were similar to those made in Africa today! For example, a jug found in an American river looked like the jugs people are still making in Nigeria. People may have brought some pieces found in American on ships from Africa. Pots would have been needed to hold water and for storage purposes on the ships.

Some traditions from the West Indies were probably mixed with those of the Africans. In the early 1700s, nearly one-third of those enslaved were Indians. Pottery making was common in the West Indies. Free Native Americans may have provided information to the African-Americans about where to find good clay. Enslaved Africans also may have used some of the Indians' pots. Archaeologists think that the large colonoware pots they have found were used mainly for cooking, not storage. Some of the small pots were probably used to fix sauces and relishes similar to those enjoyed in Africa. Enslaved African-Americans probably used iron pots to boil their grain. Unlike pottery, iron pots heat up and cool down quickly. Earthenware pots are good for cooking food that is meant to simmer, to cook slowly for a long time.

Archaeologists excavating the remains of enslaved Africans' homes have now found many examples of colonoware pots. There is also evidence of children imitating their parents and making toys, small pots, and figures, as well as real pots which could be



Colonoware Bowl, maker unknown, made sometime between 1790 and 1830 of low-fired clay. Reproduced with permission of the S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina" organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.

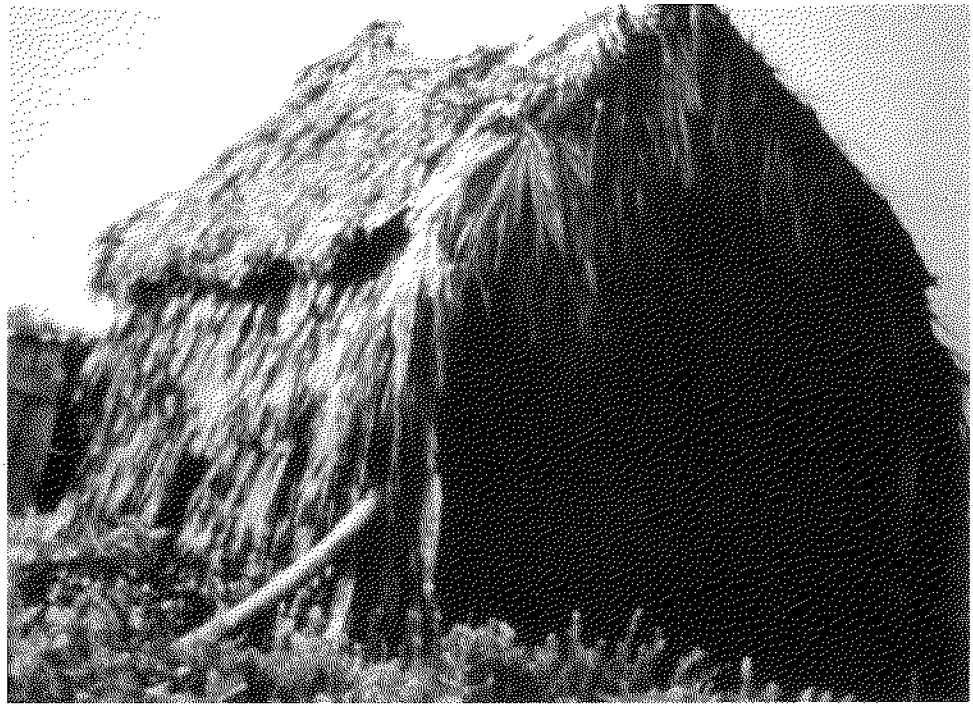
used for cooking and storing food. Our understanding of these aspects of their life and culture is still quite limited. We have just begun to study it seriously.

Architecture

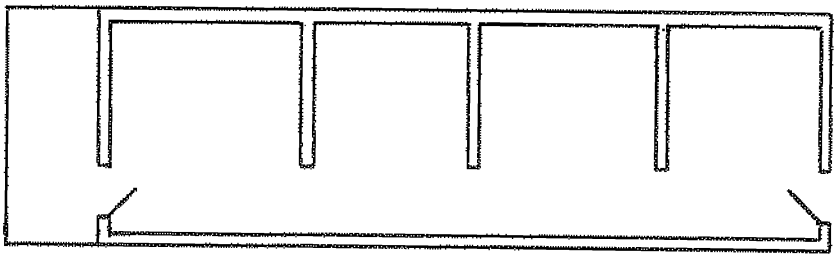
Many African influences are found in American architecture. Africans brought familiar styles of building to the New World, both to the Caribbean and the mainland of North America. Carrying over familiar traditions of building seems logical. Enslaved Africans were often left to themselves to build their own homes. Among the housing features which are African in origin or African-influenced are the type of roofs (thatched with gables), type of walls (a clay mixture), dirt floors, small room size, rectangular shape of houses, and the front porch. Their housing styles were ideal for their climate and life style because they were not difficult to build or to rebuild when they moved. A central fire or hearth was good for keeping insects out before the invention of screens.

The enslaved Africans who were brought to South Carolina found themselves living in a familiar climate. Building houses similar to those that worked well in a warm, humid climate across the sea made sense. In a time when there was no such thing as air-conditioning, you would not spend much time indoors. Therefore you would not need a very large house. Scholars studying African culture today have found many similarities between houses built in Africa and those built in America by Africans. Some masters knew and objected to enslaved Africans building "African" houses on their plantations. But many whites were doubtless unaware that both enslaved and free blacks may have merely been following African traditions when they built their houses. There are records of enslaved Africans building one-room homes, often with thatched roofs. They claimed these were like their African homes. In the South Carolina Sea Islands, people often built homes with thatched roofs well into the early 1900s.

The tradition of thatched roofs was familiar to Africans who taught the technique to their children. The "mud walls," actually a clay plaster, were found in many homes even when wood was available. The "wattle-and-daub" walls, as the technique is called, are found in the same area of Africa as the other architectural techniques we are discussing. These wattle-and-daub walls and thatched roofs with gables were common among enslaved Africans in Haiti as well. They were also found in rural Europe and among Native Americans. So we cannot say for sure which tradition influenced African-Americans home-building styles. Several rural peoples had a similar tradition. However, African-Americans handed down from par-



Many types of building displayed African influence, including this small "critter barn" photographed in the 1930s. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The *History* of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide H-16 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.*



Sketch of typical floor plan of a "shotgun" style house with a small porch on the front. They can still be seen around the state today. One of the most frequent places they can be found are in what used to be mill villages built around textile mills.

ent to child the knowledge of how to build this kind of house. Enslaved Africans who crossed the ocean in chains must have carried such knowledge with them.

Many enslaved African-Americans chose to use dirt floors even when floorboards were an option. Both rural Europeans and Africans had developed techniques of making a hard floor by mixing clay with other substances. This is another example of how people living thousands of miles apart can find similar solutions to similar problems! Again, the origins of the approach used by African-Americans is unclear.

We have already described the tradition of building small houses like those in West Africa. Like the West African homes, African-American houses had small rooms without windows. African rooms were usually square, with sides of 10 feet on the average. African houses often had two rooms. Enslaved African-Americans, of course, did not always have the option of building two rooms. The rooms they did have were usually about the same size and style as those found among the Yoruba people in West Africa.

The Yoruba people often lived in compounds. Compounds are groups of houses located close to each other. The Yoruba were one of the earliest and largest groups of Africans to arrive in the New World. So they may have influenced the building methods adopted by those arriving later. Indeed, enslaved African-Americans often lived in groups of houses on plantations that seem very similar to the compounds of the Yoruba. We can still find compounds in relatively remote places like St. Helena Island.

Houses were typically rectangular in shape. Again, these are very similar to those found all along the coast of West Africa. These long, narrow houses were found among African-Americans for generations after the Civil War as well. This style, often referred to as the "shotgun house," seems to be at least partially African in origin. It may have come to the mainland by way of Haiti. Shotgun houses are long houses with several rooms in a row. These houses lack the hallway that many people are accustomed to. To get from one end of this rectangular house to the other, you would have to walk through all the rooms of the house. This design forces people into fairly close contact with each other. If they do not like that contact, they have to go outside. Perhaps this style developed among people who were comfortable living close to their relatives in a compound. The house received its name because it was said that you could stand at one end of the house and shoot a shotgun through to the other end.

Most people would be surprised to learn as they sit on their front porch, sipping a cool drink on a warm night, that they have African-Americans to thank for this wonderful innovation. Homes in Europe simply did not have porches like those found in the United States. The early homes built in the American South lacked this innovation. The front porch may have arrived by way of the Caribbean. The style did not become popular until Haitian refugees came to Charleston in the late 1700s. Large side porches were adopted there. A version of the porch, the veranda, was popular in both the Caribbean and in Africa, where there were many long, hot days. Enslaved African-Americans may have added porches to their houses long before their masters did so. The large front porches were uncommon in white society until the 1800s.

Survival of Cultural Traditions

In this chapter, we have introduced you to many of the crafts and cultural traditions that Africans brought with them when they came to the New World. In many cases, the origins have long since been forgotten. However, some of the traditions survive. In some cases, African traditions have joined with European and Native American traditions to form a unique Southern American culture with multiple origins.

▼▼▼ CHAPTER 6

The Civil War

Americans still argue about the cause of the Civil War. Some say the main cause was the question of enslavement. Others disagree. They argue that the North and South differed over many other issues, like protective tariffs and states' rights. However, all these issues in one way or another involved enslavement. In addition, after January 1, 1863, ending enslavement became an official Union goal. On that date, President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. As you should know, this proclamation freed all the enslaved people in the rebellious areas of the South. Clearly, from that point on, a Union or Northern, victory would end enslavement in the South. This gave African-Americans a strong and deep interest in the outcome of the war.

The Civil War was the bloodiest and most bitter war in American history. Though not the first war fought on American soil, it did more damage to American civilian homes, farms, and businesses than any other war in our history. The war deeply divided states and even families. Which side would win was not at all certain, even though the North had more manpower and industry. The Confederates were fighting on their home turf. This gave them some advantages. They knew the land better. They were nearer to their supplies. The whites who lived near where the fighting took place willingly gave the Confederates help and information. The Confederates also had the easier task. To win, all they had to do was not lose. A tie was as good as a win. As long as the Confederates held off the Union, they were winning. If they could hold on long enough, the Union might tire and leave them alone. On the other hand, the Union could not win with a tie. To win, the Union had to conquer the Confederates.

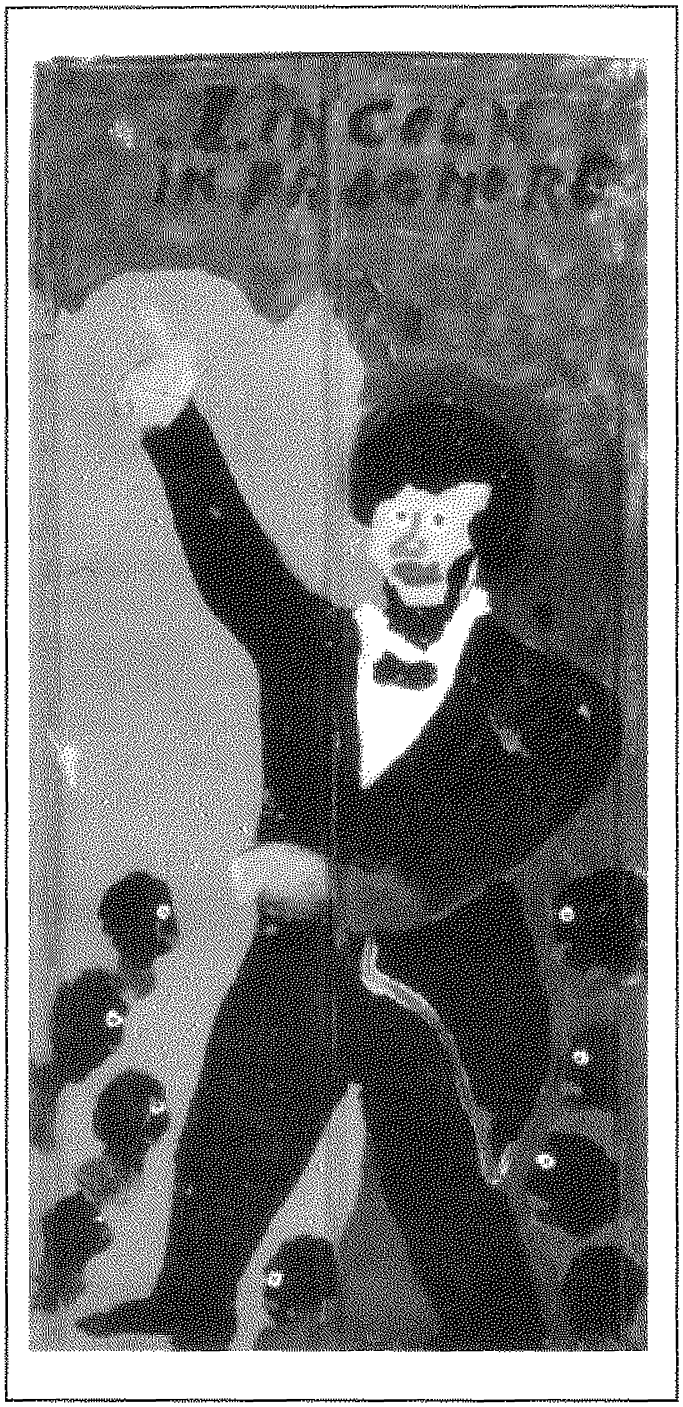
African-Americans played a very large role in determining the outcome of this terrible war. Although the Union certainly had the most important advantages in their favor, actions of African-Americans offset some of the few advantages the Confederates had. In addition, African-Americans now had a chance to show how much they really wanted freedom. Unlike the revolts of the past, they finally had a decent chance to fight and win. This is the story of their contributions during the Civil War.

Learning about the War

In order to influence events, one needs to know what is taking place. How much did the enslaved African-Americans know about what was happening at that time? Most could not read. Many owners were careful not to talk too freely in their presence.

Despite these barriers, African-Americans found ways of keeping up with the war news. One Beaufort man remembered his father crawling under the house to listen to the master reading the paper aloud to the mistress of the plantation. A woman who worked as a maid remembered having an uncle who could read. When the master did not want her to know what he was talking about, he would spell out the words to his wife. You may remember your parents doing this when you were too young to read. Well, this young woman may not have been able to read, but she certainly could memorize! She pretended not to listen, but memorized the letters. Then she went to her uncle and told him the letters. He explained their meaning.

As the war progressed, enslaved African-Americans heard of battles being won and lost. They saw Confederate soldiers returning home to recover from wounds. White South Carolinians could



Lincoln in Frogmore. A modern painting using housepaint on roofing tin by Thomas Samuel "Sam" Doyle (1906-1985) captures the sense that Lincoln dramatically changed the lives of the people of Frogmore. It shows Lincoln coming to recruit African-Americans for the Union Army. Although Lincoln did not actually come, those who lived there felt he came in spirit. Reproduced with permission of Louanne LaRouche. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.

not conceal their excitement or distress when they received war news. After all, the war was the most important event in their lives. Enslaved African-Americans learned by watching and listening.

Even though enslaved South Carolinians had strong feelings too, most were careful to keep their feelings secret. To do otherwise could have been dangerous. Showing too much feeling cost eighteen-year-old Amy Spain of Darlington her life. Late in the war, as General Sherman's troops were marching across the state, Spain and others heard Union troops were coming. They stopped work. They told the masters in no uncertain terms that they were now free. Amy was accused of using foul language and of theft. A Confederate military patrol arrested her and a number of others. The soldiers whipped the men and sent them back to their homes. Amy was particularly stubborn. After her whipping she cursed the soldiers. The Confederate military tried her and sentenced her to death. Only two hours later, Amy Spain was hanged in Darlington's town square.

Work Slowdowns and Stoppages

What contributions did South Carolina African-Americans make to the war? The first kind of contribution involved labor—lost labor. Even more than before the war, the South needed their labor. African-Americans were needed to grow the crops and keep the economy going. White men could offer little help because most were fighting. As time passed more and more whites went off to war. They were not around to see that the work on the plantations was done. Now the conduct of the enslaved African-Americans depended on their loyalty to the masters and their obedience to the masters' wives. Enslavement had always been a contest of wills between the owners and those enslaved. Now power was shifting in favor of the enslaved. Some of them continued in the old ways. They worked out of habit, fear, or respect. Others saw that this was a new day.

Enslaved African-Americans took advantage in several ways. Some refused to follow orders. The older men and the women who were trying to run the plantations gradually lost more and more control. Enslaved people worked at their own pace, or they refused to

work at all. Like many masters, James Hammond of Beech Island found controlling the enslaved African-Americans on his plantation more difficult. When they heard the sounds of war, their attitude changed. Although they did not flee, they no longer feared him. They let him know that they would now decide for themselves many of the things he had decided for them in the past.

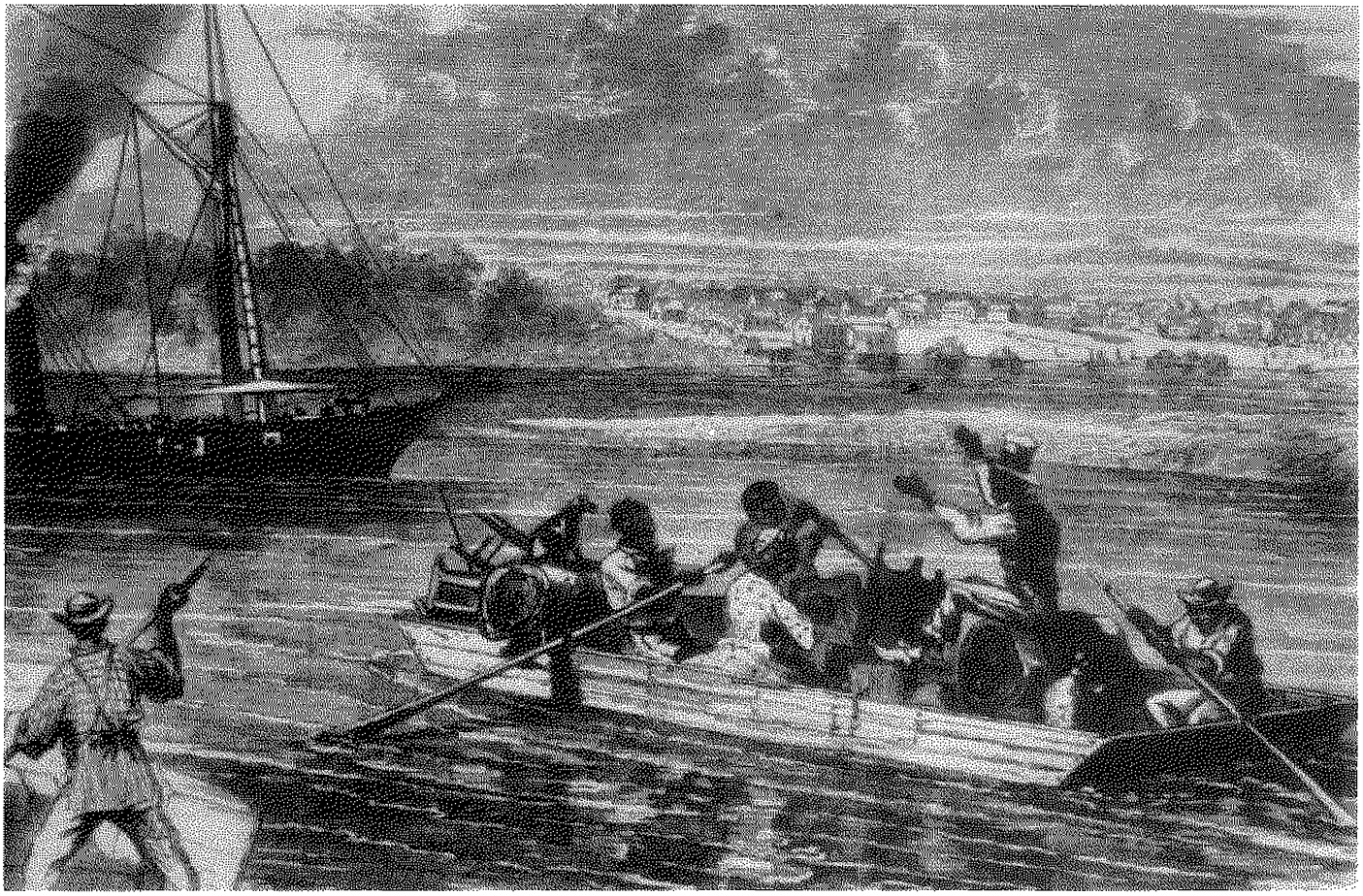
Fleeing Enslavement

The second way enslaved people reacted to the "new day" brought on by the war was leaving the plantation. Now, after many long years of enduring insult and injury, thousands found the courage to do what they had long dreamed of doing. They struck a blow for their own freedom by walking toward the Yankee Army.

Early in the war in South Carolina, this meant going to the coast near Beaufort. There, in November 1861, the Union forces took control of the Sea Islands. The whites fled inland. Ironically, at first the North also treated African-Americans as property. However, this time African-Americans had a self-interest to be treated as property. The Fugitive Slave Law was still in effect. If these people were still legally the property of American citizens, they had to be returned. However, as the property of the enemy, they did not have to be sent back. Northern troops allowed them to remain as the "contraband of war."

The phrase "contraband of war" dated back to an incident when a particularly arrogant Confederate officer called a temporary truce. He then rode to the Union side and demanded that the Union troops return enslaved African-Americans who had run away.

Whenever they had the opportunity, many enslaved African-Americans fled to the Union side taking with them as much as they could carry from their former masters. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide B-89 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library-USC.*





Volunteers form the First S.C. Regiment just after receiving the flag they would be fighting under, the "Stars and Stripes" of the United States of America. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide B-100 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of S.C. Historical Society.*

The Union officer refused, saying that it was not customary practice to return to one's enemy the "contraband of war." This meant that, in effect, those African-Americans who had fled were free. Actual legal freedom came more than a year later through the Emancipation Proclamation.

Word spread from plantation to plantation. Soon enslaved African-Americans all over the state knew that the Yankees were bringing freedom with them. All they had to do was get to the Union side. So they flocked to the Beaufort area early in the war. No other major Union attacks on the state took place until late in the war. When General William T. Sherman's huge army entered South Carolina from Savannah in early 1865, African-Americans flocked to his side.

Providing Information to Union Troops

A third contribution that African-Americans made to the Northern side was providing information. Union troops did not know the terrain. They did not have sympathetic civilians to help them as did the Confederates, but Union troops did get a lot of help. Enslaved African-Americans knew the land. They knew about Confederate troop movements. They knew where supplies were stored. When they provided this kind of information, it hurt the Confederates and helped the North. As they went to the Union lines for freedom, they took with them a great deal of information that would help the Union Army win their freedom.

Fighting for the Union

The fourth and most dramatic way of responding to the "new day" was volunteering to serve in the Union Army. In November 1862, Sea Islanders became the first enslaved African-Americans to enlist as soldiers in the Union Army. What better way to thank an army than to volunteer to fight for it?

Northern whites were not sure how men who had been enslaved would respond to the demands of military service. Almost all whites in those days felt prejudice toward blacks. So the Union Army conducted an experiment. They formed the First Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers. White officers led this unit, with Colonel Thomas W. Higginson as its commander.

The volunteer African-Americans proved to be excellent soldiers. They fought with great courage under some very dangerous conditions. Colonel Higginson led them in their first action in January 1863. Following the war he wrote a book about the exploits of his unit entitled *Army Life in a Black Regiment*. He had high praise for what his men accomplished. He wrote that they fought their way down into Georgia and Florida, had many battles with Confederate troops, and always won. He and his officers felt that using African-American troops would be a key to winning the war because they had more personal reasons to fight. They were fighting for their own people. He found them to be braver and to fight harder than the best white troops. He said he would not even try to do with white soldiers what he had successfully done with the African-American soldiers of the First Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers.

Prince Rivers, who was once enslaved, became a sergeant in the First Regiment. He was asked if most enslaved African-Americans would fight for their freedom. His answer reflects centuries of distrust between whites and blacks. "Yes sir," he replied. But he added that African-American soldiers had to be absolutely certain that whites were asking them to fight for their own freedom. Rivers fought hard and well. After the war he helped his former fellow soldiers organize a group to buy land. He later became a state legislator and a judge in the small town of Hamburg, which once stood near where North Augusta is today.

The First Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers was just the beginning. A total of 5,462 South Carolina African-Americans served in the Union Army during the Civil War. Other Southern states had more volunteer soldiers, however, because the Union Army saw so little action in South Carolina until near the end of the war.

Nearly 200,000 African-Americans in all served in the Union. This was about ten percent of all the Union's troops. Many of those also certainly had a South Carolina connection. Most African-Americans who became enslaved were transported through the state and many Northern African-Americans had fled from enslavement in South Carolina. African-Americans fought in around 400 different engagements with Confederate forces. They suffered very high casualties and showed great bravery. Any African-American wearing a Union uniform had to be brave. The South had announced that captured African-American soldiers would be treated not as prisoners of war, but rather as traitors. They would be killed immediately. Although the South did not always follow through on

Photo of Civil War veteran Smart Chisholm by Elise Harleston. In his old age he said he was ready to go again. Courtesy of Edwina Harleston Whitlock. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.



this promise, many were killed immediately after capture. If anything, this caused African-American Union soldiers to fight even harder. By the end of the war, twenty-one African-American soldiers won the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The African-Americans who enlisted in the Union Army were experiencing something new. For the first time they knew the full meaning of freedom. Now they had the job of winning freedom for others. Those others included their own families and friends. They responded by fighting with a fury that their own officers found shocking. They were also winning new respect from whites. After hearing about their performance, the editor of *The New York Times* was impressed. He wrote that their deeds were reducing prejudice. He went on to say that anyone who did not think African-Americans had courage was being proven wrong by their actions as soldiers.

The most famous unit of African-American soldiers in the Union Army probably had only indirect ties to South Carolina—the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. This unit was commanded by the young white Colonel Robert Shaw of Massachusetts, but its soldiers were all African-Americans. Their action on the evening of July 18, 1863, removed any doubts about their courage. Shaw had asked his superiors for an assignment that would put his regiment to the test. He got it.

They were ordered to lead an assault on Battery (Fort) Wagner, which protected the city of Charleston. The only approach was over a narrow stretch of sand, guarded by a heavily armed Confederate force. After a march of several hours, the men of the 54th charged into the guns of Fort Wagner. Crossfire from Fort Sumter hit them as well. Despite this furious hail of fire, which cut their ranks to shreds, most of the men charged on until they swarmed into the fort itself. Colonel Shaw was killed. Without him the men fought on until the failure of other units to reinforce them made retreat necessary.

Although Shaw and his men did not take the fort, they won a more important victory. They defeated the prejudice of many Northern whites who doubted their ability and courage. Angelina Grimke Weld, a South Carolina-born white abolitionist, noted the effect this battle had on public opinion. She said it forced "all men to see the sin and shame of enslaving such men." General Ulysses S. Grant wrote, "by arming the Negro we have gained a powerful ally."

The popular motion picture *Glory* tells the story of the 54th in a most dramatic way. African-Americans who live in Charleston today were deeply moved by this story that took place in their own backyard. Their excitement led them to form a reenactment unit, complete with uniforms and equipment, to help celebrate and remember the sacrifices of the 54th.

Despite all these heroics, prejudice was still alive. The Union Army paid African-American soldiers less than white soldiers. There were other battles yet to be won. Some of these battles would continue for more than a century.

Robert Smalls

Individuals also found dramatic ways of contributing to freedom. One such person was Robert Smalls. Born into an enslaved family in Beaufort, Smalls and his family had been taken to Charleston at the time of the war. Their master hired out Robert and his brother John to work as assistant pilot and assistant engineer on a steamboat named the *Planter*. The brothers learned the waters of Charleston harbor well. Robert devised a plan to deliver the *Planter* and its valuable cargo into the hands of the Yankee fleet that was blockading the harbor. He planned very long and carefully. The night of May 12, 1862, was to be the night of action. The white Confederate officers were all off the ship for the night. Because the boat made supply deliveries to Fort Sumter at all hours, starting the engine late at night aroused no suspicion. The wives and children of Robert and John boarded the boat. This also aroused no suspicion because the women often brought supper to their men. Soon the *Planter* slowly moved into the harbor and headed toward Fort Sumter.

Around four o'clock in the morning Smalls sounded his signal whistle as he neared the Confederate held fort. The drowsy guard must have nodded at the familiar sight. By the time he realized what was happening, nothing could be done. Smalls revved the *Planter's* engine and raised a white flag on her mast. The flag signaled surrender to the waiting Union ships. Luckily for Smalls, the Union Navy held their fire.



Civil War hero, state legislator, U.S. Congressperson, public servant, and delegate to the 1895 Constitutional Convention, Robert Smalls, who was once enslaved, saw a full cycle of rising hopes and failed promises during his life. A Gilbert Stuart painting. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide C-135 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston, S.C.*

Smalls turned the *Planter* and her cargo of military supplies over to the United States Navy.

Congress rewarded Smalls, and he voluntarily served in the U.S. Navy for the rest of the war. He guided ships through the dangerous coastal South Carolina waters. After the war Smalls turned to politics. We will learn more about that later in the book. Although his story was quite dramatic, Robert Smalls was just one of thousands who helped the Union win the war.

Susie King Taylor

We know little about the activities of individual African-American women in the Civil War. One woman we do know about is Susie King Taylor. Few women played as great a role as Susie King Taylor. Her account, written in 1902, gives us the story of the war from a woman's point of view.

Unlike most African-Americans of her time, Susie learned to read and write during her childhood in Savannah. Along with her brother and sister, she lived with her grandmother. A friend of her grandmother taught her to read even though this was illegal. So she and her brother learned to hide their books when they walked to their lessons. Later on, this skill served her well when she traveled with African-American Union soldiers. Many of the soldiers wanted to learn to read and write. She gave them lessons when they were not working or fighting.

Susie King Taylor was one of the 500,000 enslaved African-Americans who escaped to the Union forces during the war. In April 1862, she escaped with her uncle and his family from Savannah, Georgia. She married Edward King, who became a soldier with the First S.C. Volunteers. Although the regiment hired her as a laundress, Susie King spent most of her time nursing the wounded and the sick. For more than four years, she served without pay. Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, may have inspired her. Barton met King when both were in Beaufort. Susie King had little fear of illnesses such as smallpox, which killed many soldiers. Writing her recollections nearly forty years later, she related that she regularly drank sassafras tea to stay healthy.

King experienced all the horrors of war firsthand. She felt the cold. She saw the disease and the horrible wounds of the troops. She saw the discrimination faced by African-American troops fighting for the Union. At first the Army issued the men red clothing, which the enemy could easily see from a distance. The men received no pay at all for the first year and a half. In order to support their families, their wives had to do washing and baking for the white officers. In 1863, the Union Army offered the men half-pay. They turned it down. Despite the support of their officers, the Union Army did not give the men full pay, including what they were owed in back pay, until 1864.

At times, badly wounded men had too little food to eat. Often King had to be creative to help them. Some of the men asked for soup, but there was none. So she made a custard from condensed milk and turtle eggs. She had no idea how it would turn out, but it was a great success with the soldiers!

King traveled with the troops on some of the long marches through South Carolina, Georgia, and even into Florida. Filling in wherever she was needed, she learned to clean and reload weapons. She learned to shoot a musket. Sometimes she cooked for the soldiers. When the troops were stationed near Beaufort, she often visited the soldiers who were hospitalized.

Under wartime conditions, you needed ingenuity. Staying warm was difficult during the long winter nights. The military did not allow fires at night because this could alert the enemy. Susie King found a way. She took an iron mess-pan full of hot coals from the daytime fire, vcovered it with another pan, and brought it back to her tent. No one could see any light, and she was not cold.

After the war, King and her husband moved to Savannah, where she taught school and where her son was born. When her husband died, she worked as a laundress to support her child. Later she moved to Boston, where she remarried and helped organize a chapter of the Women's Relief Corps. Susie King Taylor was a remarkable woman.

African-Americans in the Confederacy

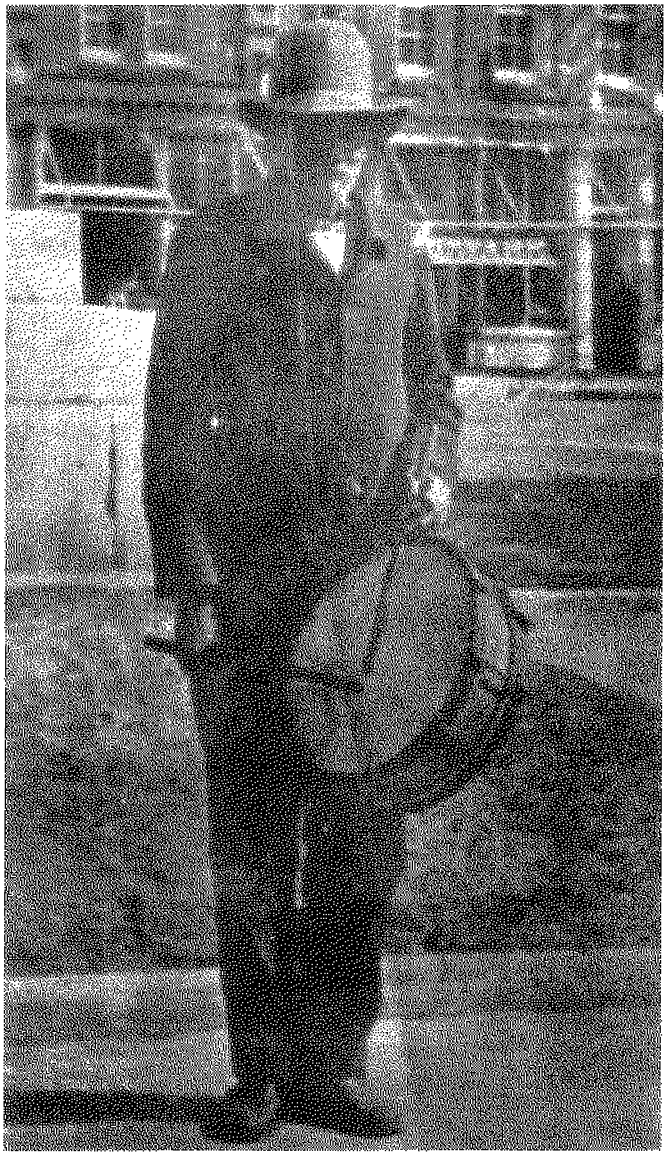
At the time of the Civil War, about 400,000 African-Americans were enslaved in South Carolina. As you learned earlier, 5,000 South Carolina African-Americans served in the Union forces during the war. As you have read, they fought hard and fought with courage. Tens of thousands of others helped the Union cause in other ways, short of actually fighting. Others stayed where they were, at least until the Union troops came near their homes. But some helped the Confederacy. Most had no choice in the matter, although a very few did volunteer to fight on the Confederate side. The Confederacy used most African-Americans as forced labor, building and maintaining defenses.

White South Carolinians worried about the loyalty of their enslaved work force. They had reason to worry. Enslaved people had revolted in the past. When the Confederate Congress considered drafting white men into the Army, some objected. They worried that the draft would take too many whites away from their task of supervising the enslaved African-Americans. This would make revolt easier. To answer this fear, the government said that it would not draft anyone who owned twenty or more enslaved people. The government also permitted anyone drafted to avoid service by providing someone else as a substitute. This law obviously favored wealthy white citizens over poor whites.

The value of 400,000 enslaved people could be great if they could be put to work in the war effort. The Confederate state government wanted to make the best use of all this labor. So it forced owners to give some of their enslaved labor to the war effort. The legal term for this is "impressment." The enslaved men who were impressed did many tasks. They built and repaired roads, bridges, railroads, and forts. They built Fort Sumter, where the war started. Others who were impressed worked in factories. Many also served in the Confederate Army, although almost none in traditional military roles. Most of the cooks for the Confederate Army were enslaved African-Americans. So were many of the those who handled the horses and mules for the supply trains.

Some whites wanted to make better use of this vast Army of enslaved labor. They wanted to arm them as soldiers. The idea caused a great controversy in the Confederacy. It raised many questions. Would enslaved soldiers fight? Would they turn on their fellow soldiers in gray? What would be done with them after the war? How could enslavement be continued if enslaved men were armed and fighting for the cause? The debate lasted a long time. The Confederates often liked to claim that their enslaved African-Americans were loyal. However, the Confederates must have had some real doubts because they were so reluctant to trust them with guns!

Near the end of the war, the Confederates became so desperate that they did try to use enslaved soldiers. Although the South did form a few small companies, the effort was too late. The war ended before any had a chance to fight. Would it have worked? Probably not. That any large number of African-Americans would willingly serve the cause of



While the overwhelming majority of African-Americans chose to side with the Union forces if they had a choice, Henry "Daddy" Brown, a free African-American brick mason, chose the Confederates. He served with them as a drummer. This photo was taken a few years before his death in 1907 as he posed with his old drum in front of the Confederate memorial in Darlington. Courtesy of the Darlington County Historical Commission.

the Confederacy is hard to imagine, especially after the Union promised to end enslavement.

Revenge

As the "bluecoats" of the Union Army pushed further into the state late in the war, many enslaved African-Americans now had the chance for revenge. Many of them struck back at the masters, the overseers, and at the system of enslavement itself. On some plantations, angry African-Americans took the whites' possessions. They destroyed anything they could not take. However, the Union soldiers did much more looting and burning than the "freedmen," as African-Americans who were no longer enslaved were called. Surprisingly, with few exceptions, freedmen rarely physically attacked whites. Some freedmen showed pity on their former owners. For example, Joe was an enslaved African-American on the Darlington plantation of A. C. Spain. This was the same A. C. Spain who had enslaved Amy Spain, whose hanging you read about earlier in this chapter. When Sherman's troops passed through Darlington, Joe hid all of Spain's livestock, including mules, horses, cattle, and even hogs, in Swift Creek Swamp. Joe passed up a good chance to ruin his former master.

Looking toward Rebuilding

Most African-Americans were not thinking about revenge. They wanted to rebuild their lives and families in freedom. Their labor had created the wealth of the state in the first place. However, the war had destroyed much of that wealth. Perhaps now, with a little help, they could rebuild the state and their own lives as a free people. As they looked to the future, they wondered whether their dreams would finally come true.

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 7

Reconstruction

For a brief period following the Civil War, African-Americans exercised their political rights as American citizens. This period, from 1868 until 1877, is called Reconstruction. Because African-Americans were a majority in the state and because they were politically organized through the Republican Party, they controlled state government. In 1877, the Republicans lost political power. After that state government no longer protected African-Americans. State officials began to take away more and more rights. This period of slow loss came to a climax in 1895. Led by Governor Ben Tillman, whites rewrote the state constitution. The major purpose of that rewriting was to make sure that African-Americans would never again have political power.

Reconstruction and what came after were remarkable periods in the state's history, filled with historical controversy. Some people distorted what happened to serve their own purposes. The major distortion was that African-Americans ruled very badly. Believing that distortion allowed whites to justify taking blacks' rights away. Even if misrule did take place, white actions were illogical. To say that some corruption among African-American political leaders justified taking away political rights from all African-Americans makes as much sense as eliminating all men from politics because a few men take political bribes.

This chapter is the story of what happened. It centers on three major themes. First, African-American political leaders made many contributions. Much came out of Reconstruction that is still with us today. Second, they lost political power for several reasons. White prejudice and mistakes by Republican leaders were both important. Third, even though they lost power and rights, they built a foundation for later change. The economic, educational, and social institutions African-American political leaders created would some day support a new civil rights movement.

The 1868 Constitution

Although it was widely condemned by white political leaders, the 1868 Constitution was probably the best constitution ever written in South Carolina. A majority of the men who wrote it were African-Americans. Many of the ideas in it were so good that when Governor Ben Tillman rewrote it in 1895, his white supporters demanded that some of the things added in 1868 be left in.

Following the Civil War, whites in South Carolina attempted to return the state to the Union without giving African-Americans any political rights. They ratified the 13th Amendment that ended enslavement. But they refused to budge an inch in granting any political rights beyond ending legal enslavement. Instead, whites wrote a new constitution that denied the right to vote to all except white males. When the white dominated legislature met, it passed laws, called "Black Codes," that greatly restricted rights. Non-whites could not travel freely. They had to pay a $1,000 bond just to leave the state. Non-whites were forced to work from sunrise to sunset, except Sundays. They could not have visitors or leave their place of work without permission. They had to obtain a special license to have a business. They even had to use the term "master" when speaking to their employers. In other words, whites tried to recreate enslavement all over again in a different form.

This clearly was not what the Civil War was all about. Having won the war, the Union expected the South to end enslavement, not recreate it. Congress took action. It passed the 14th Amendment, which granted all citizens equal rights and equal protection under state law. When South Carolina's white gov-



Immediately after the Civil War, the white South tried to reinstitute a modified form of enslavement by legal contracts and codes that regulated the behavior of freedmen. Here a plantation owner reads a contract that will bind those he formerly enslaved to work for him for a year. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide B-113 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of S.C. Historical Society.*

ernment refused to ratify the amendment, Congress demanded that it be accepted. Congress abolished these unfair new governments, returned the state to military rule, and forced South Carolina, along with other southern states, to write new constitutions. This time African-Americans played a central role.

In early 1868, a new convention met for that purpose. Its members included forty-eight whites and seventy-six blacks. The ideas they placed in the new document were very progressive.

The authors of the new constitution extended the right to vote to every male over twenty-one who was a resident of the state. In addition, the new constitution allowed the people to elect a number of state officeholders. Under the 1865 Constitution, offices like the Secretary of State and the Attorney General were not elected. Rather, they were chosen by the legislature. For the first time, the number of members each county would have in the House of Representatives was based on population alone. Wealth would not be a factor. This meant that rich coastal areas like Charleston would no longer have an unfair advantage over other counties that had more people but less money. It included a complete bill of rights for the first time. Speech, assembly, and other rights we take for granted today were protected. The government could no longer jail people for debt. The Constitution protected the property of married women by preventing its sale to pay their husbands' debts. It protected some of everyone's property. The courts could not take the first $1,000 in property and $500 in personal possessions to repay debts. Poor people of all races especially benefited from these measures.

The 1868 Constitution went beyond political and property rights. It gave government the job of improving life for all citizens. To do this, it directed the state

to create and maintain a free public school system. All races and all classes were to have equal access to all public schools and colleges. It allowed the state to borrow money for public projects, like roads, canals, and bridges.

Many of these ideas can still be found in the state's constitution today. Rights, protections, and obligations of state government are central principles of good government. We owe Reconstruction leaders, including African-Americans, a great debt.

Leaders

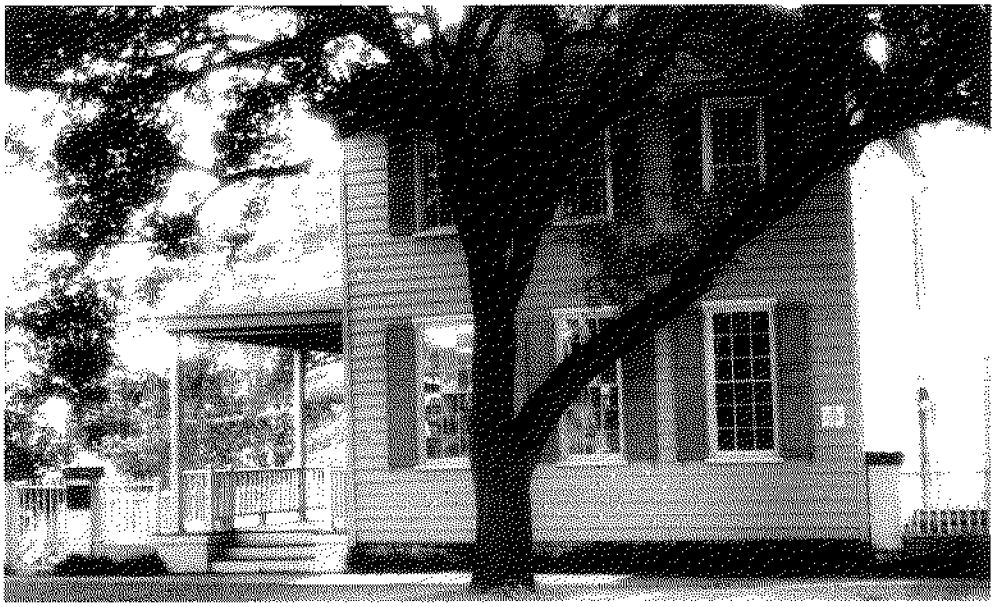
Who were the leaders who helped create this new constitution? Who were the leaders who would govern the state under it? Over 250 African-Americans held state or local office during Reconstruction. They were Northerners who came to South Carolina as Union soldiers during the Civil War and remained in South Carolina after the war. They were teachers sent south by the American Missionary Association. Some were sent by the African Methodist Episcopal Church and other denominations to revive old congregations or build new ones. Some were agents sent by the Freedman's Bureau to help the freedmen. A few were born free in South Carolina but left the state before or during the war and returned after the war. Many were enslaved before the war and became leaders after being freed. These new leaders held a wide range of state offices. Alonzo J. Ransier in 1870 and Richard H. Gleaves in 1872 held the of oftice of Lt. Governor, Jasper J. Wright held a seat on the Supreme Court. Francis Cardozo and Henry Hayne held the office of Secretary of State. Eight different African-Americans served as members of the United States Congress from 1868 until 1867.

African-Americans were a majority in the S.C. House for the entire period from 1868 to 1877. Just under half of the members of the S.C. Senate were African-Americans (for most of the same period). Whites mocked them and charged that they were ignorant and unfit to govern. The facts do not support this charge. They were much better educated than most whites in the state. Nine in ten were literate and one in ten had a college education.

We should note that many whites held oftice in this period. Even though a majority of the voters were black, they were willing to elect whites to office. Blacks chose to elect white governors to head the state, though they did elect two African-Americans as Lieutenant Governor. White voters were not nearly as opened-minded.

Joseph Rainey

Let us look at some of the unique individuals who held these positions. Joseph Rainey was the first African-American to ever hold a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was born in Georgetown in 1832. After his father was able to buy freedom for the fam-



Jospeh Rainey House. This house, still standing in Georgetown, is where Joseph Rainey, S.C.'s first African-American member of Congress, was born in 1832 and where he died in 1887. Rainey served in Congress longer than any other African-American from the state. Photo by Aimee Smith.

ily, they moved to Charleston, where his father became a successful barber. After getting as much education as possible, Joseph, too, became a barber. At the outbreak of the Civil War, the Confederate Army forced him to work building defenses for the city. He and his wife escaped to Bermuda, where he once again became a successful barber. While working he did all that he could to increase his education. He asked customers for books to read and had them help him with reading and writing exercises. After the war he returned to South Carolina and helped write the new constitution. Republicans were so impressed with his work that they elected him to the state Senate. When a vacancy occurred in the U.S. House, he was nominated and elected. Listening quietly helped him learn about how Congress worked. He also helped a number of ex-Confederates regain their political rights. In 1871, he made his first big speech, supporting a law that would stop the Ku Klux Klan and other groups from attacking people. He continued in the House until the election of 1878, when he was defeated. No other African-American served longer in Congress than Rainey. In 1993, the residents of Georgetown named a park in his honor.

Robert Smalls

You have already learned about Robert Smalls as a Civil War hero. He was born into enslavement in Beaufort in 1839. After being moved to Charleston, he was hired out. He worked at a variety of jobs around the docks, and eventually learned sailmaking. He married Hannah Jones, a beautiful hotel maid. After their child was born, he bought his family's freedom for $800. When the war started, the Confederates forced him to work on a supply ship as its pilot. While working on the supply ship, he performed his daring exploit of stealing the ship and taking it to the Union forces. He went to Washington and helped convince Lincoln and his advisors that African-Americans should be allowed to join the fight. After the war, he helped write the new constitution and was elected to Congress. He took office just a few months after Rainey and served until defeated in 1878.

Smalls did get back into Congress, however. So many African-Americans lived in the eastern part of the state that the white Democrats could not always win elections there, even through the use of guns and fraud. Democrats redrew congressional district lines so that most of the African-American voters would be in a single district. This meant that, at best, African-Americans could elect only one member of Congress from the state. In 1884, Smalls won that seat. While in Congress, Smalls showed that he cared about all the people in his district. He did not care if they were white or black. He tried to keep the taxes low. He tried to help those who had lost property during the war. In 1886, a white Democrat defeated him. He had evidence that fraud cost him the election, but officials rejected his appeal. His last days in politics were at the 1895 convention. There he argued eloquently for equal voting rights for African-Americans. It was to no avail. The convention ignored him and the other four African-American delegates. Smalls spent his last years in a federally-appointed position as customs collector in Charleston.

Small's final act was typical of his life of daring adventure. In 1911, he heard that a white lynch mob was about to kill two African-Americans jailed in Beaufort. He sent people to key points in the city and spread a rumor that the city would be burned if the men were harmed. The ploy worked. The white sheriff posted extra guards and turned away the mob. In 1913, he died in his sleep in the same home where he and his mother had lived when they were enslaved.

Robert Brown Elliott

There is some historical doubt about the background of Robert Brown Elliott. He claimed Boston as his birthplace. He also claimed that he was a sailor in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War. However, some evidence exists that he may have been a British subject who decided to stay in the United States. He may never have been a U.S. Citizen. All this is uncertain. What is certain are his abilities. Many people considered him an intellectual giant. He was a powerful speaker, having served in the S.C. House and as head of the Republican Party. He served several terms in the U.S. Congress. While in Congress, he won praise from national newspapers for his eloquent speeches. He resigned twice from the U.S. House. The first time was in a unsuccessful attempt to win a seat in the U.S. Senate. The second was when he came home to try to reunite that state's Republican Party, which was falling into disarray. He was forced

out of politics after thinking he had been elected attorney general in 1876. He probably did have the most votes. Once whites took over state government, no one with power would back his claims. His last political actions were as a lawyer. He successfully defended a number of fellow Republicans who were taken to trial by the new Democrat-controlled state government. In his final years of life, he worked as a lawyer in New Orleans.

Richard H. Cain

Richard Cain was Southern by birth, but he spent most of his life before the Civil War in the North. He became a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church and served as a minister in Brooklyn, New York during the war. After the war, his church sent him to South Carolina where he entered politics. He spent a great deal of energy helping farmers obtain land. He helped write the 1868 Constitution. That same year, Charleston voters elected him to the S.C. Senate. All the while he edited and published the *Missionary Record*, a weekly newspaper that supported Republican causes. In the U.S. Congress, he strongly supported laws that would protect the civil rights of African-American citizens. He denounced calls for African-Americans to return to Africa. He said whites should be ashamed to have used his people's forced labor to build wealth but then want them to go away after freedom came. Even after the Democrats took over the state government in 1877, he managed to retain his seat in Congress. Then he changed his mind. He felt that too much had been lost. He sponsored a bill to pay boat passage for African-Americans back to Africa. With great foresight, he spoke out for women's right to vote forty years before women finally won that right. The Republicans failed to renominate him in 1878. He spent his final years as an AME Bishop out of the state.

Robert C. DeLarge

Robert C. DeLarge, born in 1842 in Aiken, S.C., was enslaved at birth. As a young man he attended Wood High School. Upon completion of his education, he became an agent in the Freedmen's Bureau. He helped organize the Republican Party in South Carolina. He became chairman of the platform committee of the state Republican convention in May of 1867. DeLarge signed the Republican platform that called for tax reform, court reorganization, and popular election for all offices. The Republican platform included welfare assistance, liberal immigration laws, and funds for railroads and canals. A new land policy designed to break down the large land monopolies and to foster the divisions and sale of unoccupied land was also a part of the platform. Under the new state constitution, courts were restructured, and a new tax system was designed. Funds were authorized to rebuild the railroads and canals and finance the sale of some small plots of land to small framers. After the constitutional convention, DeLarge moved from one important position to another. He went from the South Carolina House of Representatives to the office of Land Commissioner and then to the U.S. Congress. He won the election to Congress by less than a thousand votes. The election was contested by his opponent Christopher Bowen, an independent Republican. DeLarge participated in the first session of Congress but did not function as a member of Congress during the second session because he was occupied with defending the right to keep his congressional seat. During the lame duck third session, Congress and the election committee took up Bowen's challenge to DeLarge. There were charges and countercharges from both individuals. Bowen was accused of bribing DeLarge's lawyer to withhold vital evidence. Bowen could have been disqualified for having already been sworn in as a South Carolina legislator and as the sheriff of Charleston. There was also a charge of bigamy against him. DeLarge was accused of having illegal election managers, improperly tallied polls, and of stuffing ballot boxes. The election committee said that fraud and election irregularities had occurred on both sides. It was impossible to determine who had been elected, and the committee asked that the House declare the seat vacant for the rest of the term. DeLarge was unseated by a voice vote of the House and his seat was left vacant. After DeLarge left the Congress, he was named magistrate in Charleston. He occupied that post until his death of consumption in 1874, at the age of thirty-one.

Alonzo J. Raniser

Alonzo Raniser from Charleston was free before the war. He was self-educated and had worked as a ship-

ping clerk. He was a rather modest and straight forward person, but was extremely effective as a parliamentarian in the meeting to select representatives from Charleston to the 1868 constitutional convention. He was a reliable member of the Republican party, serving as chairman of the state Republican Executive Committee. In 1870, he was elected and served as Lt. Governor. He succeeded DeLarge as Congressmen from South Carolina's Second District.

Richard H. Gleaves

Richard H. Gleaves was a Northerner from Pennsylvania. He moved to Beaufort after the Civil War to enter business with Robert Smalls. In the State Republican Convention of 1867, Gleaves was elected convention president. He later served as trial justice, commissioner of elections, and probate judge. From 1872 to 1877, he was Lieutenant Governor. He resigned as Lieutenant Governor when Wade Hampton became Governor in the disputed election of 1876. In 1880, he was appointed a U.S. Customs Inspector at the port of Charleston.

Justice Jonathan Jasper Wright

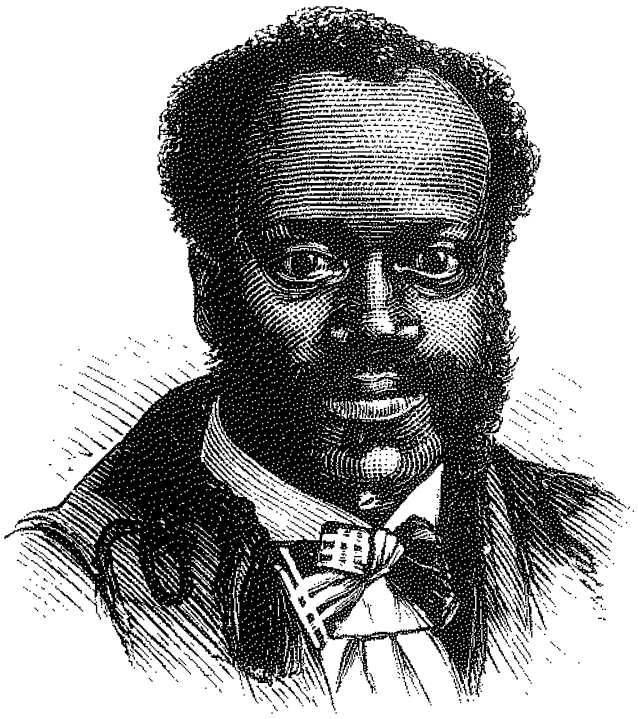
Justice Jonathan Jasper Wright was elected to the South Carolina Senate in 1868 and as an Associate Justice to the State Supreme Court in 1870. Wright was born in Pennsylvania to a family of farmers. After attending Lancasterian University in Ithaca, New York, he began teaching school. As was the custom of the day for aspiring lawyers, he read law in a lawyer's office. After completing his law studies, Justice Wright was not permitted to stand for the Pennsylvania bar. He joined the American Missionary Association and moved to Beaufort to teach the freedmen. While in Beaufort, he taught and dispensed legal advice. Justice Wright was permitted to stand for the Pennsylvania bar and became the first African-American to pass the bar in Pennsylvania. On September 23, 1868, he was admitted to the South Carolina bar. He was elected to the South Carolina Senate in 1868 and served until February of 1870 when he was elected Associate Supreme Court Justice of South Carolina. He was reelected to the Supreme Court in 1874 and served until December of 1877. After Justice Wright left the South Carolina Supreme Court, he established a law school at Claflin University and served as a law professor from 1881-85. He suffered for several years from tuberculosis and died at his home in Charleston on February 18, 1885.

Francis L. Cardozo

Francis Cardozo was Secretary of State from 1868 to 1872 and State Treasurer from 1872 to 1877. He was born free in Charleston in 1837, the son of a Jewish father who was an economist and editor of a Charleston newspaper and of a mother who was half Indian and half African. Because he was born free, he was able to attend a school in Charleston. As a young man he was sent to Scotland to continue his education. He was ordained a Presbyterian minister and became the pastor of Temple Street Congregational Church in New Haven, Connecticut. In 1865, after the end of the Civil War, he was sent by the American Missionary Association to Charleston to work among the freedmen. He established a school in Charleston that later became known as Avery Institute. He was a representative to the 1868 constitutional convention. As chairman of the educational committee, he played an important part in laying the foundation of the public school system of the state. In the debate over public education at the constitutional convention, a lengthy discussion was held over the question of whether there should be compulsory education and over whether the integration of schools should be required. Cardozo recommended that the schools be open and available to all children and that the parents should determine which school their children would attend. The schools could be separate, but if a child of one race was desirous of attending a school of the other race that child should have the privilege of doing so. The constitutional convention stated, "All public schools, colleges and universities in this state supported in whole or in part by public funds shall be free and open to all the children and youth of the state, without regard to race or color." After Cardozo was elected State Treasurer in 1872, many state officials were charged with corruption, but Cardozo maintained a record of integrity and helped carry out financial reforms. Under the Redemption government in 1877, he was convicted of conspiracy to defraud, a charge that later historians agreed was politically motivated. He was pardoned by Governor Wade Hampton and moved to Washington, D.C. In 1884, he became principal of black schools in Washington, D.C. until his death.



HON. ROBERT SMALLS OF BEAUFORT



HON. J. J. WRIGHT, ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT



HON. FRANCIS L. CARDOZO, STATE TREASURER



HON. BEVERLY NASH OF COLUMBIA, BRIGADIER GENERAL OF MILITA

Henry E. Hayne

Henry E. Hayne, a member of the Senate from 1868 to 1872 and Secretary of State from 1872 to 1876, was born in Charleston in 1840. Unlike many of the African-American legislators who were veterans of the Union Army, Hayne was a Confederate veteran. Hayne was also the first African-American to attend the University of South Carolina (USC). He attended USC Medical School while Secretary of State.

Thomas E. Miller

The last two African-Americans in Congress from South Carolina were Thomas E. Miller and George Washington Murray. Thomas Miller was born in Ferrebee, South Carolina on June 17, 1849. His parents were a free black couple, Richard Miller and Mary Ferrebee. Miller went to school in Charleston and in Hudson, New York. He attended Lincoln University in Chester County, Pennsylvania, graduating in 1872. He studied law with at least two prominent lawyers, and in 1875 he was admitted to the bar and began the practice of law in Beaufort, South Carolina. His first political office was that of County School Commissioner. He was later elected to the S.C. House of Representatives from where he advanced to the state Senate. Miller became the Republican State Party Chairman in 1884. His hard work for the Republican Party helped him capture the Republican nomination for the congressional seat that had been formerly held by Robert Smalls. When the votes were counted, the white Democratic candidate, William Elliott, had won by thirteen hundred votes. Miller appealed the decision to the U.S. House of Representatives because the district was predominately black and Republican, and he felt there had been voting fraud. A vote was taken by the U.S. House of Representatives to unseat Elliott and give the seat to Thomas Miller. Miller won the vote 157 to one. By the time Miller was seated, there was only a week left before Congress recessed, so he had very little time to enjoy his victory and returned to Beaufort to campaign for the next election. In this election Miller won, but Elliott, who again was running against him, challenged the count. Late in the year, the South Carolina Supreme Court declared Elliott the winner. Miller returned to his law practice and was reelected to the South Carolina House of Representatives. He and Robert Smalls represented the Beaufort district in the constitutional convention of 1895. They opposed a provision of the constitution that added a new criterion for voting. The provision required a voter to read and write any section of the state constitution on demand unless he could prove that he had paid taxes on a minimum of $300 worth of property. This could make it difficult for poor people to vote, both black and white. The following year, he helped to establish the State Negro College that is now called South Carolina State University and became the first president of the school. In 1910, he opposed the election of Governor Coleman Blease, and the governor requested that he resign from the presidency of South Carolina State College. He later moved to Philadelphia and died there in 1938.

George Washington Murray

George Washington Murray was the last of South Carolina's black legislators. Because of the election dispute between Miller and Elliott, there was no representative from the Beaufort district for two years. Murray was elected to the seat in 1892. He was born in 1853 near Rembert, South Carolina, in Sumter County to enslaved parents. At the end of the Civil War he was a free but friendless orphan. He somehow acquired enough education to teach school, but he had never been in a schoolroom until he went there as a teacher. At twenty-one years of age, he qualified through a competitive examination and enrolled in University of South Carolina where he studied for two years before the university closed, forcing him to leave. He resumed teaching for the next fourteen years along with farming. In 1888, he was the Sumter county Republican Chairman. Two years later, he became the customs inspector for the port of Charleston. In 1892, he ran for the U.S. Congress and won. In the fall of 1894, the borders of his district had been realigned to reduce the number of black voters and to increase the number of white voters. Murray lost to William Elliott by more than seventeen hundred votes. Murray appealed the result. The election committee found widespread flaunting of the election law. Polls in three of four precincts mainly those with large Republican majorities had not been



HON. HENRY E. HAYNE, SECRETARY OF STATE



HON. SAMUEL J. LEE, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE AND GENERAL OF MILITIA



STEPHEN SWAILS

opened. Blacks were denied registration certificates. On June 4, 1889, the house voted to unseat Elliott and give the district to Murray. In 1896, the Republicans held two nominating conventions. When a white man was nominated, Murray decided to run again. The two Republicans running for the seat divided the party and the Democrat, William Elliott, was again sent back to the House. Murray set up a real estate firm in Sumter. He failed to win election in 1898. He was later charged with fraud and moved to Chicago in 1905, while his case was pending. In April of 1926, South Carolina's last black Reconstruction member of Congress died in Chicago, Illinois.

Stephen A. Swails

A number of the legislators were veterans of the Civil War, having fought in the Union Army with the 54th Massachusetts and with other units that fought in South Carolina. Stephen A. Swails was a first sergeant in Company F of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. The 54th Massachusetts was famous for the battle of Fort Wagner, where they lost many men in an unsuccessful attempt to take the fort.

In the battle of Olustee, Swails received a citation for his "coolness, bravery, and efficiency." He was also the first African-American soldier to become a non-commissioned officer in a Massachusetts regiment. At the end of the Civil War, instead of returning to the North, Swails remained in South Carolina and began working for the Freedman's Bureau as a school teacher. Later, he served as a S.C. Senator from Williamsburg County and as President Pro-Temporary of the Senate from 1872 to 1877. He also served as a delegate to the constitutional convention of 1868. As a state delegate of the Republican Party, he represented South Carolina at the National Republican Convention. He became a trustee of the University of South Carolina and attended law school.

Samuel J. Lee

Samuel J. Lee was the first African-American to become Speaker of the House of Representatives. Lee was born into enslavement in 1844 in Abbeville District on the plantation of Samuel McGowan. He accompanied his owner in the Confederate Army and was wounded in the second battle of Bull Run. He returned to South Carolina after the war and was admitted to the practice of law in 1870. He was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives. While Lee was Speaker of the House, he also became Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the University of South Carolina. As Chairman of the Board of Trustees, he was instrumental in the admission of African-Americans to the University of South Carolina in 1870. The Board of Trustees of the University made many changes to the University. The school was opened to all races, and scholarships were made available to students. A Normal School was established to which women were admitted. Lee was a general in the National Guard in charge of the unit in Charleston. After he left the House of Representatives, he moved to Charleston and practiced law until his death in 1895.

William Beverly Nash

William Beverly Nash fits the description early historians had of black legislators. He was enslaved from birth. He was tall, very dark, and did not appear to have any mixture of white blood. He worked at the Hunt Hotel in Columbia as a waiter and bootblack. He had no formal education. Despite what many people considered shortcomings, Nash became one of the most powerful politicians in Richland County and in the Republican Party. He was a state senator representing Richland County. As senator, he was the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. This committee determined the order of legislation to be voted upon. In the 1868 constitutional convention, Nash spoke to the convention saying "We are not prepared for this suffrage. But we can learn. Give a man tools and let him commence to use them and in time he will learn a trade. So, it is with voting. We may not understand at the start, but in time we shall learn to do our duty." As these new voters gained in experience, they soon learned that many white public officials were no better qualified than they.

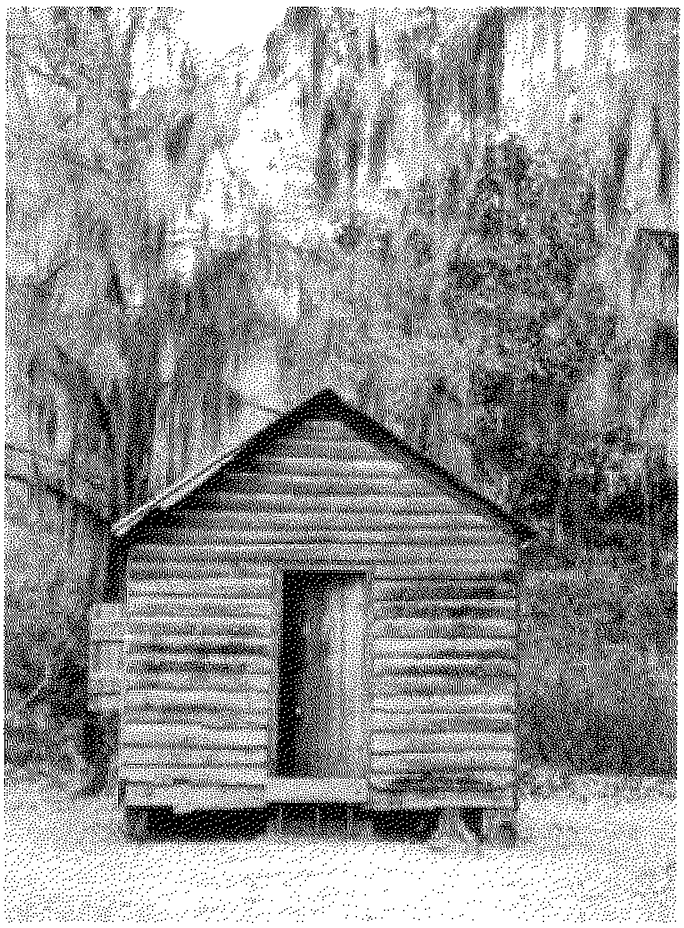
Policies of the Reconstructionist State Government

The new government elected in 1868 tried to keep many of the promises of the new constitution. It faced two major problems. First, the state had little money available for anything. Second, whites who had fought against the Union opposed the new government every step of the way. Nevertheless, many African-American political leaders of this period had great vision. The policies they attempted and the institutions they began are essential for South Carolina today.

Public Education

In 1870, the legislature passed a law that attempted to create a real statewide public school system. It set up school districts with elected trustees for schools. Funding was the major problem. The state provided a little money, but left most of the responsibility to local areas. As a result some areas had pretty good schools while others had poor ones. Yet despite all the problems, by the time Reconstruction ended, South Carolina had a system that included nearly 2,800 schools with just over 3,000 teachers. More than 123,000 students attended, over 50,000 of whom were whites.

African-American leaders were very moderate in their demands. They even allowed separation of the races in schools. Their moderation stands in stark



One-room school house. Many of the schools built to provide public education were only one room schools. They were crude at best and allowed to be segregated by race. Unfortunately, for the greater part of the next 100 years, white authorities did nothing to improve schools for African-American children. This example of a one-room school house for African-American children was photographed near Summerville in 1938. Library of Congress LC-USF34 50522.

contrast to the radical racism of many whites who would drive them from power a few years later.

The principle of public education proved to be a popular idea. In 1876 both parties, the Republicans, who were mainly African-Americans, and the Democrats, who were almost all whites, endorsed the idea of public schools. Both wanted a statewide property tax to support the schools. Although public schools had a very rough and shaky beginning in South Carolina, African-Americans were in charge when the state first created schools on a statewide basis. This was a great contribution.

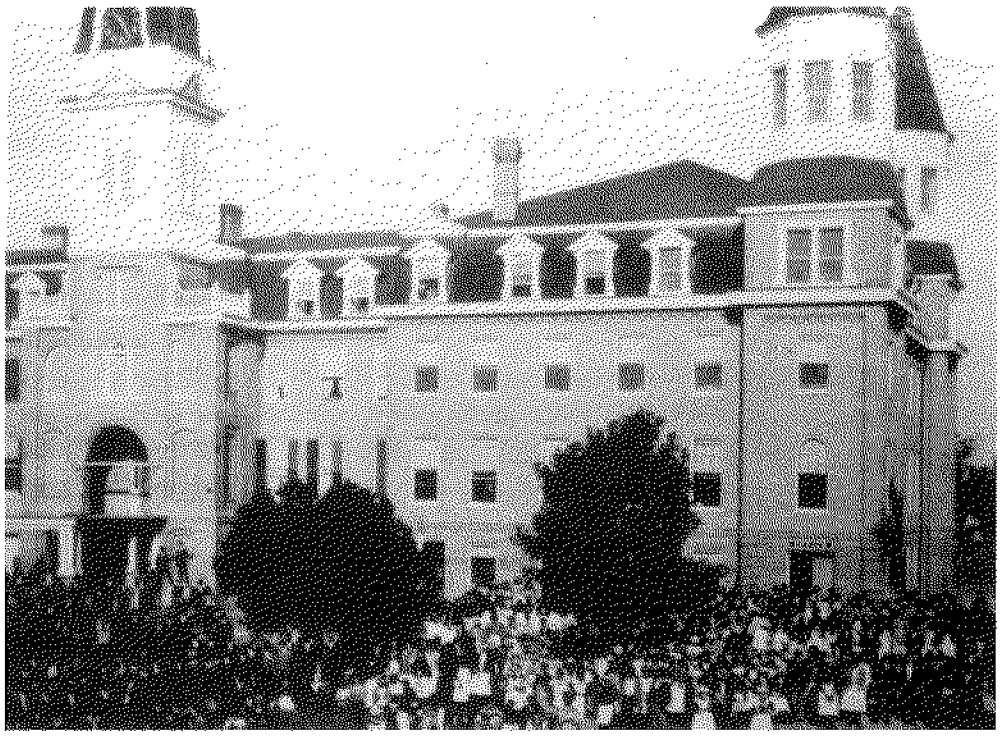
Higher Education

In 1869, the legislature granted a charter that created Claflin College in Orangeburg. It was a private school begun by Methodist Episcopal ministers. The charter stated that no one would be refused admission because of "race, complexion, or religious opinion." The reference to "complexion" was necessary because over the years of enslavement, African-Americans had begun to distinguish among themselves on the basis of darkness of skin color. They had been taught that lighter, or "brighter," was better. A lighter skin meant that more of one's ancestors were white. This was not necessarily so. Genetic chance can create great differences in the skin color of people with identical ancestors. Of course, skin color has nothing to do with intelligence or character. Claflin's charter recognized and confronted this widely held, yet mistaken, idea.

In addition to other courses of study, Claflin provided some legal training. It had one of the most able jurists of the time as the chair of its legal program. Judge Jonathan Jasper Wright had been a justice on the S.C. Supreme Court for seven years. White political leaders forced him off the bench after the 1876 election. In 1881, he joined Claflin, where he remained until his death five years later. We might say that South Carolina's loss was Claflin's gain.

Claflin College played a role in the creation of S.C. State College. In 1872, the state legislature created the S.C. Agricultural College and Mechanics Institute in Orangeburg. Federal money from the land grant college program funded it. Its 116-acre campus and experimental farm was located next to Claflin. For a time its board met jointly with Claflin's. Teachers taught at both schools at the same time. When the state reorganized the higher education system in 1878, both were simply called Claflin College. For many years they shared the same president.

The schools were not separated again until 1895. At the 1895 constitutional convention, the few African-American delegates were able to use whites' own fears to create a separate state-funded school. Claflin was a church-run school. Whites saw Northern Methodists as too radical on racial matters. Playing on this fear, black delegates were able to con-



Claflin College's Main Building in 1899. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide I-24 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Library of Congress.*

vince the white majority to separate the schools. Separation ended any possible Northern Methodist control. It also gave African-Americans their own state-funded institution. State leaders gave the school the awkward name of the Colored Normal, Industrial, Agricultural, and Mechanical College of South Carolina. Professors had to be "Southern men and women of the Negro race." From these beginnings, S.C. State University evolved.

Churches established two private schools in Columbia during Reconstruction. In 1871, the American Baptist Home Mission Society created Benedict Institute. It is named for its original benefactor, Mrs. Bethesda Benedict, who lived in Rhode Island. Much of the funding for the school, however, came from African-American Baptists all over South Carolina. The driving force in raising these funds was its second president, the Reverend Lewis Colby. Recognizing its growth, the legislature chartered the school in 1894 under its present name, Benedict College.

Next to Benedict is another church created school, Allen University. This school began entirely within the state. It started as Payne Institute in 1871, founded by the AME Church in Abbeville. In 1880, the state church moved it to Columbia as Allen University. By the turn of the century, it consisted of two large brick buildings and thirteen African-American faculty. It had given degrees to over 500 students. Like Claflin College in Orangeburg, Allen also had a law program. Daniel Augustus Straker ran the law classes. Straker had attended law school at Howard University in Washington, D.C. In 1882, he came to Allen, where he earned the reputation as one of the best lawyers in the state, even though he practiced in courts that openly discriminated against his race.

For a few years during Reconstruction, what is now the University of South Carolina in Columbia was integrated. In 1873, an African-American student entered the school. A number of white students and faculty immediately left the school. More African-American students and faculty came to the school. Except for some white Northern professors, all the whites left. When the Southern whites regained control of state government in 1877, they closed the school down. Later they reopened it as an all-white school.

To be sure, traditionally black colleges and universities did not have the resources of the white institutions. Yet they performed wonders with what they did have. Many of the people you will read about who made great contributions to both the state and the nation received their education at one of these schools.

Land Distribution

One of the first actions of the new legislature elected in 1868 was creating the S.C. Land Commission. This new agency was created to keep one of the most

important promises of the 1868 constitution. The commission was to sell bonds and use the money to buy land. Then the Commission was to divide the land into small farms and sell them to freedmen.

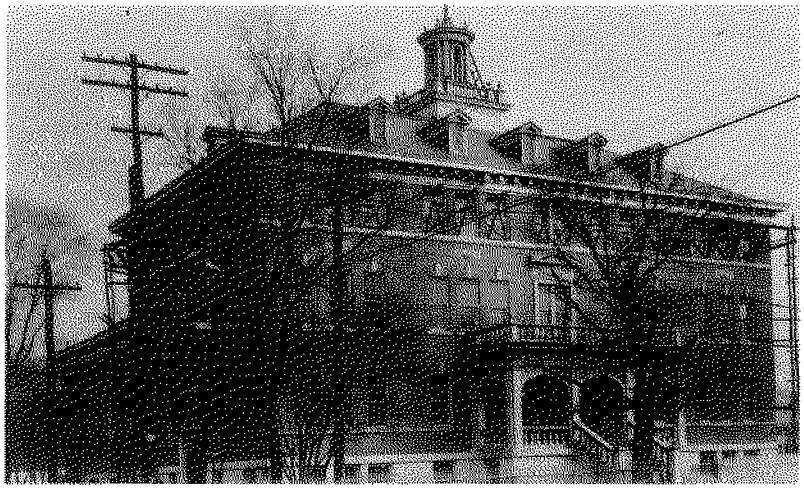
The Commission served its purpose. While in business from 1868 to 1879, it sold small farms to about 14,000 African-Americans. They were poor and began with almost nothing, but they helped lay the economic and social foundation for the civil rights revolution that would come nearly 100 years later.

Whites charged that the commission was hopelessly corrupt. Many history books say little else. That a great deal of money was wasted and lost is true. What white critics ignore is that a significant part of the losses benefited white landowners. Corrupt white and black "carpetbaggers" from the North did not just steal the money. The commission bought most of the land from white plantation owners who were unable to make profits from it anymore. Given the general poverty that existed, they would not have been able to sell their land to anyone in a private sale. In addition, the land was often overpriced. For example, the Land Commission bought land in what is now Abbeville County for $10 an acre when the going price was only $2 an acre. The white family that sold it made five times what it was worth. The African-Americans who bought it also received a benefit as the commission never insisted that the buyers pay the full $10 an acre. Of course, paying the difference was left to the government. Regardless, the state did benefit in the long run. Unproductive land was transferred to people who made it productive. Those who bought it became taxpaying citizens.

Life on the Land—Enduring Against the Odds

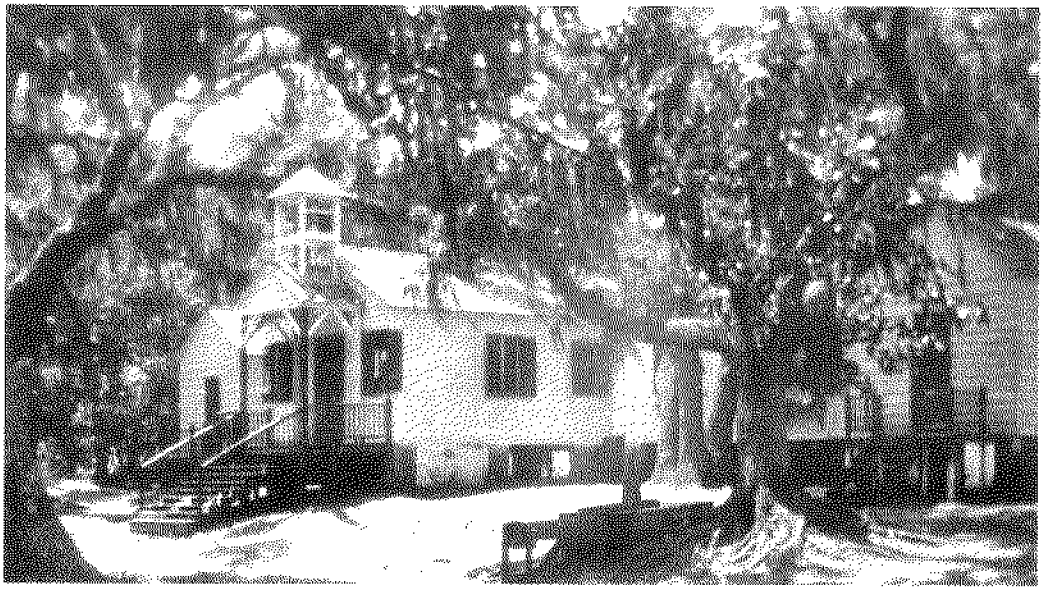
What did all of these changes mean for average African-Americans in South Carolina? For some it





(Top) Benedict College. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide I-20 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy Howard Woody, from the Howard Woody Postcard Research Collection. (Bottom) Allen University's Chappelle Administration building in a 1922 photo by Richard Roberts. The building was designed by a well-known African-American architect and named after former school president Bishop W.D. Chappelle. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed.,* The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide I-18 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of Roberts family.*





(Top) A Fourth of July celebration on St. Helena Island. Those African-Americans who were able to obtain land on St. Helena Island kept it and passed it down from one generation to the next. They built a strong sense of community by helping each other. Here they celebrate Independence Day together as a community. Library of Congress LC-USF33 30417-M1. (Bottom) The first building of the Penn School in an 1890 photograph. From the Penn School Collection. Permission granted by Penn Center, Inc., St. Helena Island, S.C. In the Southern Historical Collection of the Manuscripts Department, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. This picture can also be seen in The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *(Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989) as slide 1-3.*

meant little. White landowners gave them contracts that turned them into "peons." A peon is a person tied to the land by debt. They were free in the sense that they were no longer the property of whites. But they still worked land that was not theirs. They still had to endure miserable working conditions. They could not escape. Under law, leaving was an attempt to avoid paying a debt. If caught, authorities could place them in prison.

Sometimes landowners could lease such prisoners to work as convict labor. For many there was no escape other than death. This, of course, was true of many poor whites as well as blacks. This situation continued for nearly 100 years until World War II.

History books often ignore what these changes meant for those who were able to buy land. While some of these people did fail and lose their land, many others did not. Thousands of families endured, survived, and even thrived in some instances. What they did against terrible odds is an often untold story, but at the same time an important story. Let us look at a few of the hundreds of places where the ignored story can be found.

The Penn Center and St. Helena Island

African-Americans first began obtaining land in the Beaufort area during the Civil War. When Northern troops captured the area in 1865, the Army took the



Promised Land was established in 1870 with land bought from white landowners and sold to African-Americans. The community remains today. Photo by Aimee Smith.

land. General William T. Sherman led the Northern troops. The plantation owners, numbering just over 1,000, had fled. After a couple of years of confusion, the government decided to seize the land and sell it to cover unpaid taxes. The government sold it to Northerners and to some of the more than 32,000 African-Americans who had been enslaved there.

Missionaries and teachers soon began arriving to help the new owners. This became known as the Port Royal experiment. It was an experiment in the sense that white Northerners wanted to see if African-Americans were capable of supporting themselves in freedom. In a sense, Port Royal was a rehearsal for the Reconstruction policies the North followed after the war.

Following the war, some of the former plantation owners were able to get their land back. African-Americans held on to some of it. The S.C. Land Commission sold some other land in the area to freedmen. Freedmen bought additional land in private sales. By 1890 African-Americans owned three out of every four acres on St. Helena Island.

One of the schools created by Northern Quaker missionaries that lasted the longest was the Penn School on St. Helena Island. In 1862, Ellen Murray and Laura Towne came to begin the school. Ms. Towne so fell in love with the area that she stayed the rest of her life. The school gave a basic education to the people of the island. It also served as a center of community life. It helped create a sense of community and cooperation. Although farms were small, the people worked hard and survived. Residents built new homes, added second floors, and replaced wooden shutters with glass windows. They even had venetian blinds, small musical organs, and sewing machines. Northern visitors gave much of the credit to the Penn School, but a great deal of credit should also go to those who lived there.

Later on, the Penn School became the Penn Center. It continued to help the people of the Sea Islands. The Penn Center also serves as a conference center. Dr. Martin Luther King and other civil rights leaders met there to plan strategy in the 1960s.

In the 1950s new problems began to arise for the people of the Sea Islands. First, pollution damaged the oyster beds that provided a living for the residents. Many people left the area. Then in the 1980s, developers began to build golf courses and luxury resorts. Property taxes rose. Many people could not pay and lost their homes. The Penn Center has responded to these problems by setting up the Penn School for Preservation on St. Helena Island. This new school will teach leadership skills to area residents. People will also learn how to work with government to protect the environment. Finally, the school will train Sea Islanders for better jobs in the resort industry.

Promised Land

Promised Land lies in what is now Greenwood County, just over the line from Abbeville County. This small farming community came into being in 1870 when the S.C. Land Commission offered for sale 700 acres in small farms ranging from fifty to one hundred acres. By the end of 1872, just under fifty families had bought farms there. They called it Promised Land because they had bought it for only $10 down with the promise to repay the rest.

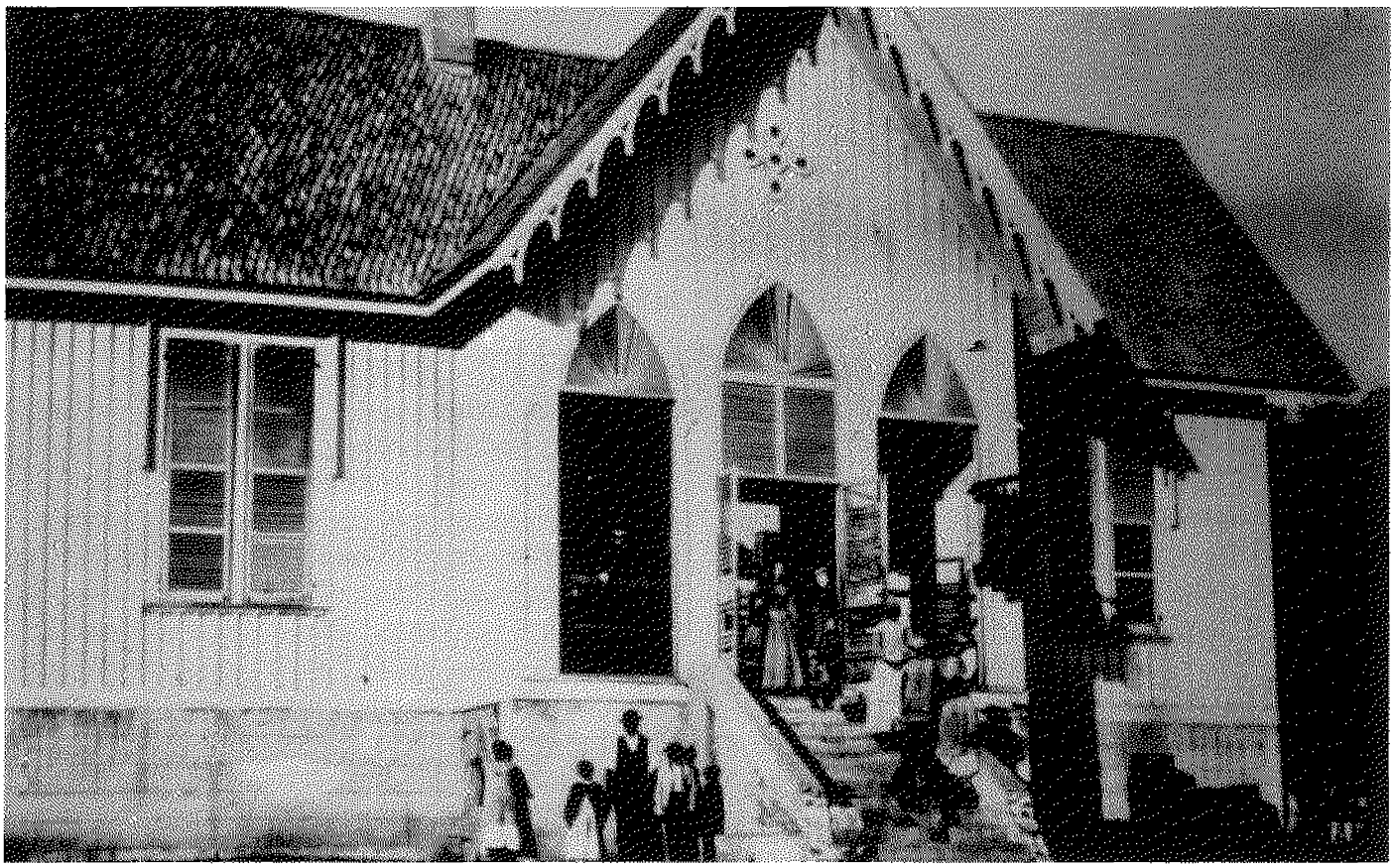
Promised Land was different from St. Helena Island in several ways. First, the African-Americans

in Promised Land had virtually no help from outsiders. Once they obtained their land, they were on their own. The close-knit community they created and maintained was evidence of their own skill and ingenuity. Second, it was in the central part of the state where there were relatively fewer people of their race. Safety and security was a greater problem for them. Finally, Promised Land was much less well-known and much less studied by outsiders. This is partially because of how they solved their security problem. They lived quiet lives that minimized contact with white society. As a result they were less likely to suffer any attack. Isolation was their best defense.

Allen Goode was one of the first settlers in Promised Land. He was active in the Republican Party in the 1868 election, the first one in which African-Americans were allowed to vote. Whites were already trying to use force to prevent blacks from exercising their rights. Goode was a target of this violence. On the day of the election, Goode was working as a precinct manager. When he tried to stop some white men from threatening voters, they shot him. Though he survived, no one was ever arrested for the crime. Two years later he brought two oxen, four cows, six hogs, and a horse to Promised Land. He was one of the wealthier new residents. Like Goode, most of the other residents had lived in the area all of their lives. They chose to stay in order to be close to family and friends.

The very first year Promised Land was settled, the residents built a school. All the trustees of the school lived in the community. Every child who was not absolutely needed for work in the fields went to school. About ninety children crowded into the school's only room. Thus began a tradition that still

A store around 1865 that supplied freedmen with a few of the essentials they needed to survive in a rural economy. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide B-114 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of Beaufort County Library.*



exists. A sociology professor at Lander College noticed in the 1970s that students from Promised Land seemed to work harder than other students in her classes. The children of Promised Land were expected and still are expected to get a good education.

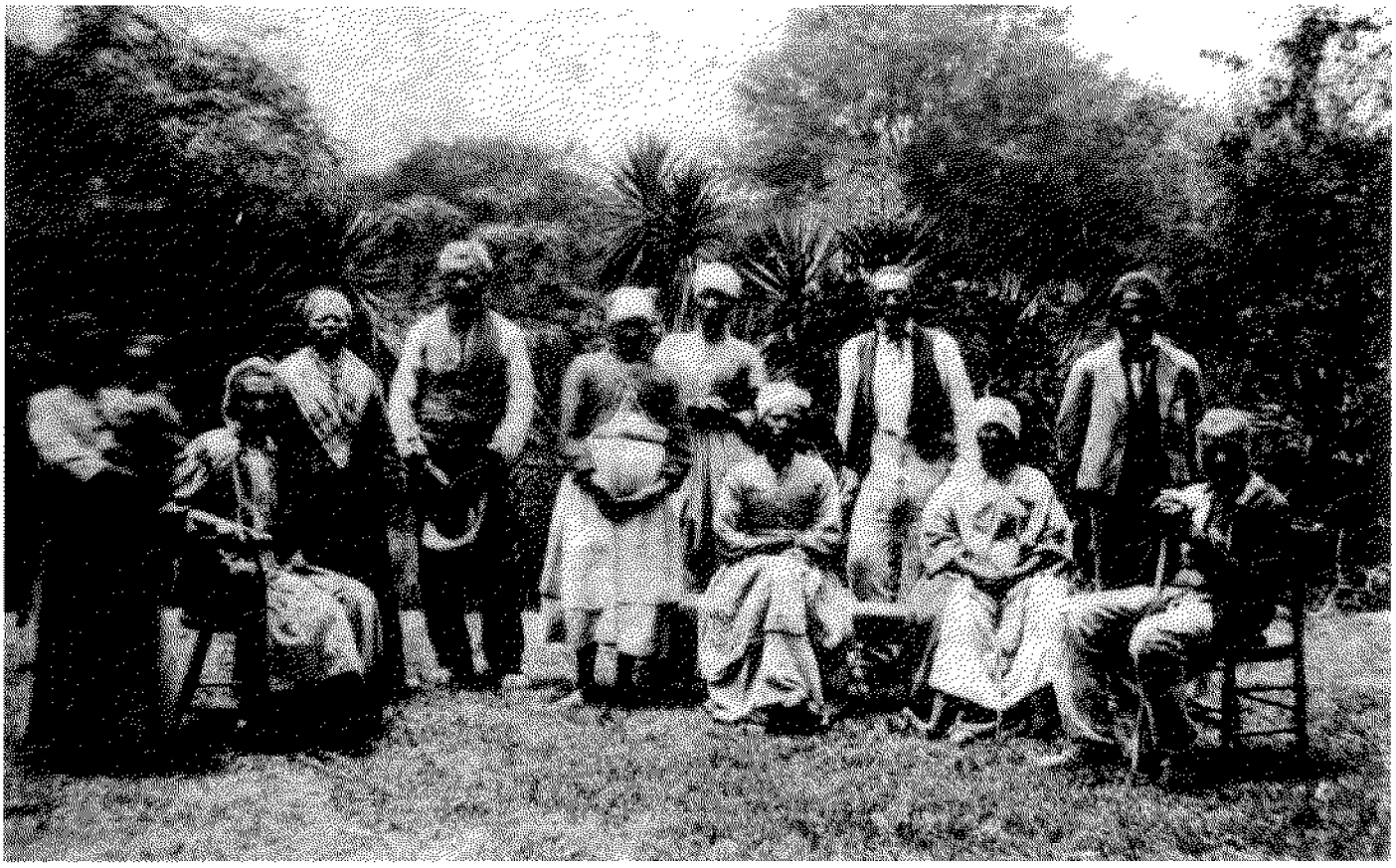
The farmers of Promised Land were wise in planning their crops. Rather than borrow money to buy fertilizer for cash crops like cotton, they grew only a little cotton. Instead, they grew most of what they needed to survive. They grew vegetables like beans, peas, sweet potatoes, and corn. They used some of the corn to feed the livestock. This way they did not have to buy very much from the store. They avoided debt. This also helped keep them isolated from whites.

The genius of this kind of farming was that it kept them from getting trapped in the "crop lien" system that destroyed so many other farmers, both black and white. Once in debt, farmers were forced to grow more cash crops to pay that debt. Unfortunately, the worn-out soil rarely produced enough cotton to offset the cost of fertilizer and food for the family. The more cotton farmers grew, the more fertilizer they needed, because cotton was particularly hard on the soil. People caught in that trap often lost their land. The farmers of Promised Land and their peers in other places were smart enough to avoid that trap. They did not get rich, but they endured. They kept their land for their children. They made it possible for the next generation to be a little better off.

Rebuilding Families

One of the most cruel aspects of enslavement was what it did to families. Being "sold down the river," separated mothers from children and fathers from

A photo taken about 1866 of elderly African-Americans who had just escaped enslavement. Many of them, no doubt, never learned what happened to their families. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide G-73 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). From the Penn School Collection, permission granted by Penn Center, Inc., St. Helena Island, S.C.*



mothers. It tore people away from those who loved them. Following emancipation and for years after, African-Americans tried to locate family members. While some did find their lost relatives, many never did. A whole generation of people searched until the end of their lives. All we have left today of those desperate efforts are old newspaper advertisements. In African-American newspapers until the early 1900s, one can find ads placed by those who were "sold away" when young. They wanted to locate a long-lost father, sister, mother, or brother. They typically ended the ads saying that any information would be kindly received. Indeed it would.

Some husbands and wives who were forcibly separated found each other again after the Civil War. Even this good fortune was bittersweet, because they often were not free to return to each other. Thinking they would never see their first spouse again, they had remarried. What remains of those thousands of stories of heartache are letters. The words in those letters speak of undying love. Obligations to new families forced that love to remain distant. Is it possible for us to remember such great sadness after all those years?

Many freed from the chains of enslavement were now free to have a real marriage. Mass weddings took place. Hundreds of couples said their marriage vows all together at the same time with a real minister. Others registered with justices of the peace so that their marriages would be legal. African-Americans wanted nothing more than to become a part of society. They were eager to follow the rules of this new free society.

The 1876 Election

Most histories mark the 1876 election as the end of Reconstruction. The Democrats won after rallying around Wade Hampton as their candidate for governor. The Democrats did indeed win, but they may have won without having the most votes. The "win" was mainly the result of fraud, violence, physical threats, disorganization among the Republicans, and the Union pulling out troops who offered some protection to African-American Republicans.

Each election from 1868 till 1876 was marked by a great deal of violence. Even before the first election took place in which African-Americans could vote, whites used violence. Benjamin F. Randolph was a college-educated African-American minister who fought in the Union Army. After the war, he came to South Carolina. The Republican Party elected him as their chair and as a presidential elector for the 1868 election. He supported integration in the new public school system. He understood the future, saying that "we are laying the foundation for a new structure here. We must decide whether we shall live together or not." The answer of radical whites was "not!" They ambushed him and shot him to death while he was campaigning in Abbeville County.



Monument to B.F. Randolph, who was murdered for exercising his constitutional rights. He was but one of thousands who gave their lives for the political rights we all have today. The caption reads "In memoriam B. F. Randolph late state senator for Orangeburg County and Chairman Republican State Central Committee who died at Hodges Station, Abbeville County at the hands of assassins on Friday, October 16, 1868. Photo by Aimee Smith.

This was far from the only such incident. White radical Democrats formed groups called "rifle clubs." The purpose of the so-called "clubs" was officially supposed to be social. Their leaders openly admitted that they were actually political. They existed to intimidate and, if necessary, to kill Republican voters and supporters. This was called the "Edgefield Policy" because it was planned by ex-Confederate General M. W. Gary of Edgefield County. The Ku Klux Klan was a secret group that also used violence. Political activity was a most risky business for Republicans or African-Americans. Despite these efforts, African-Americans organized and voted. With the support of the state government, they formed militias to protect themselves. The Union Army troops that were still in the state gave them a little additional protection.

In the years before the 1876 election, the Republican Party began to fall apart. The problem centered around Governor Chamberlain, a white Republican who had come South after the war in hopes of becoming a planter but entered politics instead. He lost the trust of many African-Americans because of his efforts to appease white Democrats.

The 1876 election was marked by even more violence than previous elections. One of the worst incidents took place near Aiken in the little town of Hamburg a few months before the election. It is called the Hamburg Massacre. Two whites had a disagreement with an African-American militia unit that was drilling in the road. The disagreement concerned the simple matter of allowing the whites to pass by. The militia allowed the white men to pass.

Afterwards, the white men complained to a local judge and alarmed other whites. About 200 whites from a number of rifle clubs showed up armed with rifles and a cannon. The whites demanded that the African-American militia turn over their weapons. The militia refused and stayed in their barracks. The whites attacked. One attacker was killed. Then the whites opened fire with the cannon and drove the militia out. The attackers captured a number of the militia members. They chose five of their prisoners, lined them up, and shot them.

After this battle, African-American leaders pleaded with President Grant to send additional federal troops to stop this kind of violence. Grant sent troops three weeks before the election. Then President Grant ordered that the "rifle clubs" disband. They did, but after a short time they reformed with new names like the Mounted Baseball Club or the Mother's Little Helpers.

The 1876 election was one of the most corrupt elections in American history. Some of the worst fraud took place in South Carolina. Both sides were guilty of breaking the rules. Available evidence suggests that the white Democrats probably were better at it. Edgefield and Laurens Counties both counted more votes for the Democrats than the number of whites who lived there.

At the beginning of 1877, both Democrat Wade Hampton and Republican Governor Chamberlain claimed victory. The difference was that Hampton had more firepower behind him, and the Republicans were not as well-organized. This was mainly Chamberlain's fault. In an effort to appease whites, he had disarmed many African-American militia units and had turned over weapons to white rifle clubs. By the time the election took place, the official militia was outgunned. The only thing that saved the Republicans was the presence of the U.S. Army.

After the election, two sets of legislators also claimed victory. They formed two separate General Assemblies. When both managed to gain entry into the capitol building, they met at the same time. Neither was willing to leave. They feared that leaving would turn control over to the other. Both governors issued orders. Court fights took place over which orders were legal. This went on for several months.

Then a political deal at the national level destroyed the only chance the Republicans had. The presidential election had also been in dispute. Several states, including South Carolina, had two sets of results. The Southern Democrats made a deal with Northern Republicans. They would allow Republican Rutherford B. Hayes to become president and Hayes would withdraw federal troops. This was done on April 10, 1877. Chamberlain resigned, and the Democrats took over the legislature. Reconstruction was over.

Losing Political Rights

With control of the state government and no military force to oppose them, white Democrats could do as they pleased. They used threats and fraud to easily win the 1878 and 1880 elections. Then they began to find legal ways to take away constitutional rights. In 1882 they used the Eight Box Law. This created a separate ballot box for each office. Voters who could not read the labels, or who were misdirected, and put their votes in the wrong box would not have their votes count. Whites passed restrictive registration laws that allowed local registrars to cross names off the records.

This was done despite Wade Hampton's promises that he would protect the political rights of African-Americans. He could not control the radical whites who took over state government. Ben Tillman was their leader. Tillman and his followers were not satisfied to just reduce the number of African-American votes. They wanted to completely eliminate all African-American votes.

The Convention of 1895—Six Lonely Voices

At the 1895 constitutional convention, Tillman and his followers did eliminate almost all African-American votes. They created barriers that would take half a century to break down. The idea was to create several ways to exclude voters who were likely to be African-Americans. If one way did not work, perhaps another would.

How did these barriers work? If you wanted to vote, you had to be a resident of the state for two years and of the county for one year. You also had to pay poll taxes six months in advance. This eliminated many migrant workers and sharecroppers who moved around a lot. You had to pass a literacy test. Local officials ran the test so they could choose who passed and who did not. Because poor whites feared that this might eliminate their votes, the convention added provisions that could be used to protect them. You could bypass the literacy test in one of two ways. First, you were exempt if you had property worth at least $300. Second, you would be exempt if you could satisfy local officials that you understood the Constitution when a local official read it to you. If you were African-American, you would most certainly have a hard time satisfying a white local official that you understood what he was reading. You might obtain a copy of the South Carolina Constitution and try this. In addition, the local election official could eliminate you if you did not supply proof that you had paid all your taxes for the past year. For good measure, you could lose your right to vote for conviction of any of a long list of minor crimes.

Present at the convention were six rather lonely African-Americans. Five of them were from the Beaufort area: Robert Smalls, Thomas Miller, William Whipper, James Wigg, and Isaiah Reed. The sixth, Robert Anderson, was from Georgetown. They all spoke bravely against what the convention was doing. They pointed with pride to what African-Americans had accomplished. They challenged the notion of white supremacy. They even challenged the whites to pass a fair literacy test, arguing that doing so would give whites only a slim majority. Although they were outnumbered and lost, they did convince a few whites to vote against the restrictions.

Most delegates agreed with a white from Berkeley County. According to the official journal of the convention, he bluntly said that "we don't propose to have any fair elections. . .the black man is learning to read faster than the white. . .make it fair and you'll see what'll happen." It was not to be fair for a long time.

Reconsidering History

Generations of white and black South Carolina school children have read history books that told them how terrible Reconstruction was. Reconstruction was said to be the cause of the slow recovery of the state from the Civil War. The books blamed Yankee carpetbaggers and African-Americans who were described as too ignorant for the political power they had. This version of history increased white prejudice. It also encouraged African-Americans to think poorly of themselves.

The truth is quite different. To be sure, there was corruption. Much of it can be blamed on white Republicans who came South to exploit the situation. However, a number of modern historians, white and

black, have shown that many African-American political leaders during Reconstruction acted with wisdom, vision, and great restraint. One can compare the actions of white immigrants who had gained power in cities of the North with freed blacks in the South during Reconstruction. The African-Americans acted at least as responsibly as white Northern immigrants. In fact, one historian argues that if there is fault, it is that African-Americans gave in too easily. They should have fought back harder.

Yet, despite the failure of African-Americans to keep political power, they left us important political institutions. Things like public schools, property rights, and the right to elect leaders help all of us.

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 8

Life After Reconstruction

The period between the end of Reconstruction in 1877 and the middle 1900s was not a happy time for South Carolina. While some economic growth took place, the state lagged behind the rest of the nation. Political and economic leaders failed to provide many opportunities for people to better themselves. Politics centered around racial hatred. Politicians did not campaign on any realistic economic programs that might improve life in the state. Rather, they used the tactics of demagogues. That is, they won votes mostly by appealing to white prejudice and fear. This made the period especially hard for African-Americans.

At the same time, this was an important period for African-Americans in the state. It paved the way for positive changes that would begin to surface in the 1940s. A minimal amount of wealth and prosperity were needed before any civil rights movement could start. Generations of people struggled to build that little bit of wealth in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The struggle was generally very quiet. It took place every day in fields and modest schools and small businesses all over the state. This chapter tells the story of that struggle.

Coping with Discrimination

What were African-Americans to do after losing the political rights for which so many people died in the Civil War? Many decided to stay, ignore politics, and do the best they could through hard work and self-help. Others decided to leave. They sought opportunity wherever they could find it. That pioneering spirit took African-Americans from South Carolina to states all over the nation and to nations all over the world.

The Reverend Richard Carroll was one of the strongest voices for hard work and self-help. A native of Barnwell County, he was born just before the Civil War. He was one of the many African-American leaders in the state who attended Benedict College. While at Benedict he developed his speaking skills. During the Spanish-American War, he served in the military as a chaplain. Historians regard Carroll as South Carolina's version of Booker T. Washington because both had similar messages. Whites were willing to listen to Carroll because he never asked for social or even legal equality. All he asked was for his people to be given a chance to work hard and increase the wealth of the state.

Other African-American leaders found fault with Carroll. They felt he asked for too little. The Reverend John Adams of Columbia argued in speeches that problems such as poor living conditions resulted from white attitudes and treatment. He felt that Carroll placed too much blame on African-Americans. Despite these criticisms, Carroll was a powerful voice for African-Americans in the period around the turn of the century.

Carroll's message to African-American audiences had two main parts. First, he spoke of self-improvement through strong self-discipline and education. He felt that African-Americans had to prove their worth to whites. Second, he urged his audiences to "go to the farm." Whites could have the cities and factories. On the farm, African-Americans could be productive. Farm life also had the advantage of minimizing contact with whites.

We will look at each of these two ideas. First, let us look at self-help through education.

Educational Self-Help

After Reconstruction, African-Americans had a difficult time finding any public education. For fifty years after the Civil War, only one public school in Colum-

bia accepted African-Americans. This was Howard School opened in 1867. It served children of all grades until 1916.

Columbia's second public school for African-Americans, Booker T. Washington High School, was opened in 1916. This school was one of the few in South Carolina to be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. It was the only public high school for Columbia's African-Americans until 1948. Because African-Americans had so few opportunities to get an education anywhere in the state, some families even moved to Columbia. Others boarded their children with Columbia families. Graduates include many famous people, such as National Teacher of the Year Fannie Phelps Adams, J. C. Caroline, who broke Red Grange's football records, heart specialist Dr. Edwin Cooper, Gilroy Griffith, one of the first executives hired by NBC, and Judge Matthew Perry. Civil rights activist Modjestka Simkins taught there for awhile, as did two children of photographer Richard Roberts, whose work you see throughout this book.

Booker T. Washington High School provided more than just an education to African-Americans. It became a "cultural center" for the African-American community, in the words of one of its graduates. Operettas and concerts were performed there. The John Work Chorus, named for the director of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, provided a musical outlet for the students. The school required every tenth, eleventh and twelfth grader to sing in this chorus. People came from miles around to hear the 400 to 500 students sing spirituals at the yearly concert. Teachers took attendance for this important event. Girls were required to dress in white, and boys wore blue pants, white shirts, and dark ties.

Booker T. Washington High School closed in 1974. As a result of integration, African-American children were now able to attend schools throughout Columbia. The University of South Carolina bought the campus and turned it into the Booker T. Washington Center. Today it is a center for medical research, drama, and early childhood education.

Many of the graduates of Booker T. Washington were determined that the school should not be forgotten. With the help of the Columbia Panhellenic Council, they formed the Booker T. Washington Foundation in 1974. It may have been the first organization of its kind. The Foundation helps to keep the memory of the school alive in the community for young people, many of whose families attended for several generations. Every year, the alumni hold a banquet to honor former faculty and students. At least ten scholarships are awarded each year. Many classes also hold their reunions at this time. In addition, over one hundred former students come together annually and sing at the Koger Center in Columbia. The Foundation has also attempted to preserve the trophies and other memorabilia from the school. Eventually they hope to display these in a museum.

Although educational opportunities were limited, Columbia was better than most other places in the state. Before World War I, most African-Americans in the state had no access to any high school.

As a result, self-help was the only answer. Hard working people founded a number of private schools to educate African-Americans. These schools educated many of the individuals mentioned throughout this book. African-American colleges ran elementary and secondary schools that educated others. Although we will describe only a few of the private schools, there were a number of others scattered around the state. These include Laing High School in Mt. Pleasant, Brainerd Institute in Chester, Friendship Normal and Industrial Institute in Rock Hill, Mather School in Beaufort, Lancaster Normal and Industrial School in Lancaster, Avery Institute in Charleston, and Coulter Academy in Cheraw. Church sponsorship helped most of the schools open.

At its peak in the 1930s and 1940s, Mather Academy served 200 students. The United Methodist Church founded it in 1887. Sarah Babcock, a white teacher from the North, had taught African-American children in Camden after her arrival in 1867. She bought property on which to locate the growing school. After she returned North to be married to the Rev. James Mather, she continued her interest in the school. Because she knew many important people through her church, she was able to help. At first, only whites taught at Mather Academy, but over the years, both blacks and whites became teachers at the school. They worked for very little pay. Former students have said that attending a school with an integrated staff helped. It prepared them for a world where they would

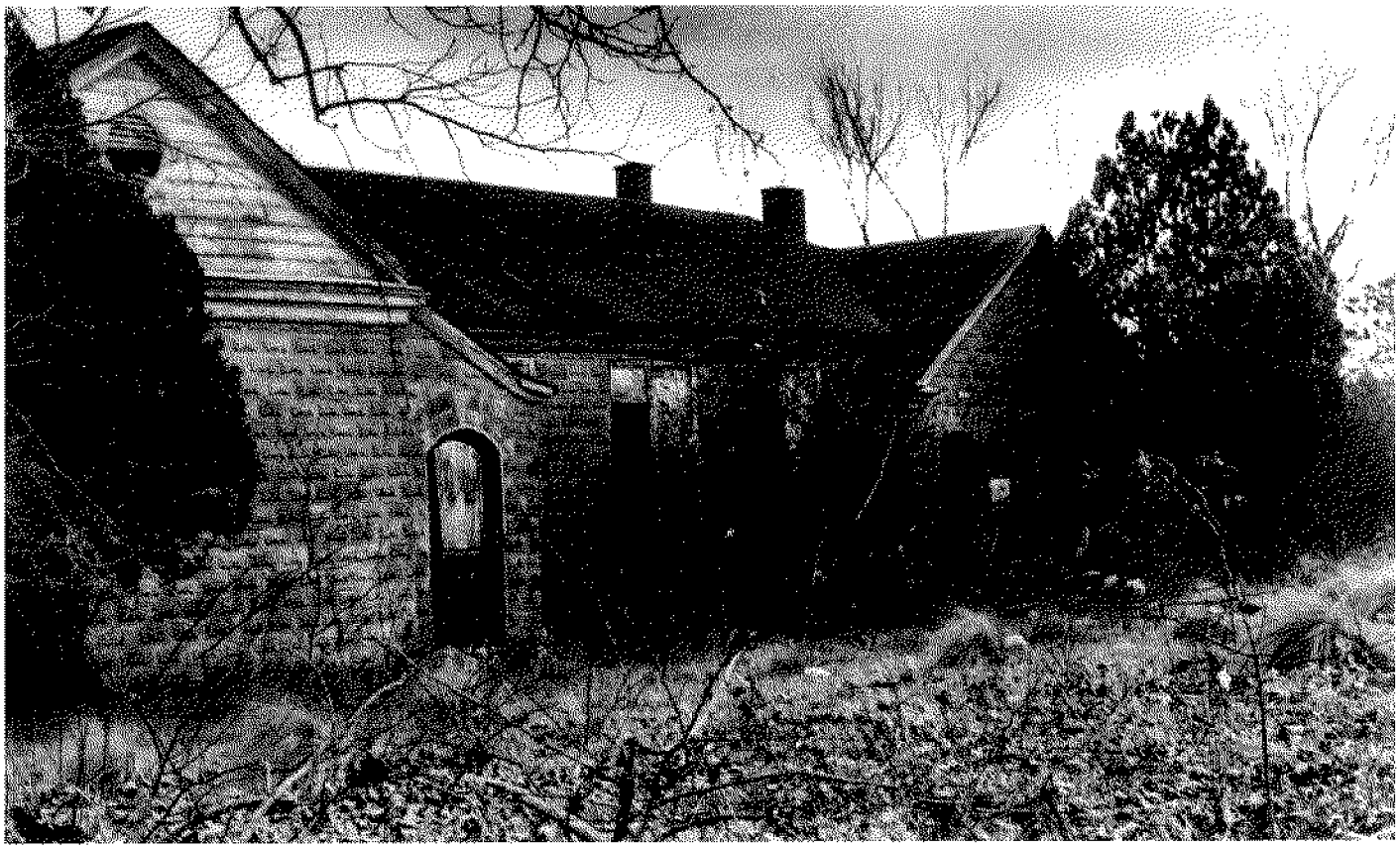
have to live and work with all kinds of people. Located in Camden, Mather was the only African-American secondary school in South Carolina to be accredited at that time. Many of its graduates, such as Congressman Jim Clyburn, went on to become successful professionals.

As public schools began to improve, enrollment dropped in private schools. Many closed or became part of the public education system in the 1950s. Mather outlasted most others. In 1983, the Methodist Church decided that the school had accomplished its purpose. They closed Mather Academy and put the property up for sale. However, the property was not sold, and the buildings began to deteriorate. In 1993 the buildings were torn down. The cost of renovations was too great. Mather Academy is now just a memory in the hearts of its many graduates. Several weeks after Mather Academy was torn down, the state government formed the South Carolina African-American Heritage Council. The purpose of the Council is to preserve properties that are of historical importance to African-Americans.

In a time when few professions were open to African-Americans, Bettis Academy, located in the small town of Trenton in Edgefield County, trained teachers. About three-fourths of its graduates became teachers. In turn, they educated other young African-Americans. The Rev. Alexander Bettis founded Bettis Academy in 1881. Formerly enslaved, Bettis could not read or write. Bettis organized a group of people to raise money to educate themselves. Once they had collected $300, Bettis convinced the group to look beyond themselves. So they built a school.

Bettis Academy began as an industrial school. What this means is that beyond basic reading and writing, it taught trades and crafts, such as carpentry or bricklaying. Gradually, the school added other

Many private schools were built and run with the help of African-Americans in South Carolina because public schools were so poor. Bettis Academy in rural Edgefield County was one such school. This is one of the buildings on its campus that remains today. Courtesy, Aiken Standard. 1993 photo by Ginny Southworth.



courses. These included cooking, home health care, typing, and cosmetology.

Eventually, Bettis Academy served children from first grade through the first two years of college. Graduates speak warmly of the "nurturing" environment they found at an all-black school in those days. Bettis grew until it had nearly 1,000 students. Its well-known graduates include AME Bishop Fred James.

Bettis Academy closed in 1952 when South Carolina began to provide a public education for African-Americans. The county government turned the land where it stood into a park. The facilities include softball, soccer, and football fields, as well as a picnic area, jogging track, tennis, and basketball courts.

Francis L. Cardozo, an African-American who had taught school in the North, founded Avery Normal Institute. After several name changes, the school was named for a Philadelphia minister, Reverend Avery. He left the school enough money to make a permanent location possible. Opened in 1867 at this site in Charleston, the school became well-known across the country. It provided an education from kindergarten through high school. It was also a "normal" school. This means it trained teachers. The school offered an impressive range of courses. They included politics, economics, literature, foreign language, math, accounting, history, philosophy, and physiology, as well as basic education and teacher-training courses. It taught teachers, who in turn taught generations of African-Americans in Charleston.

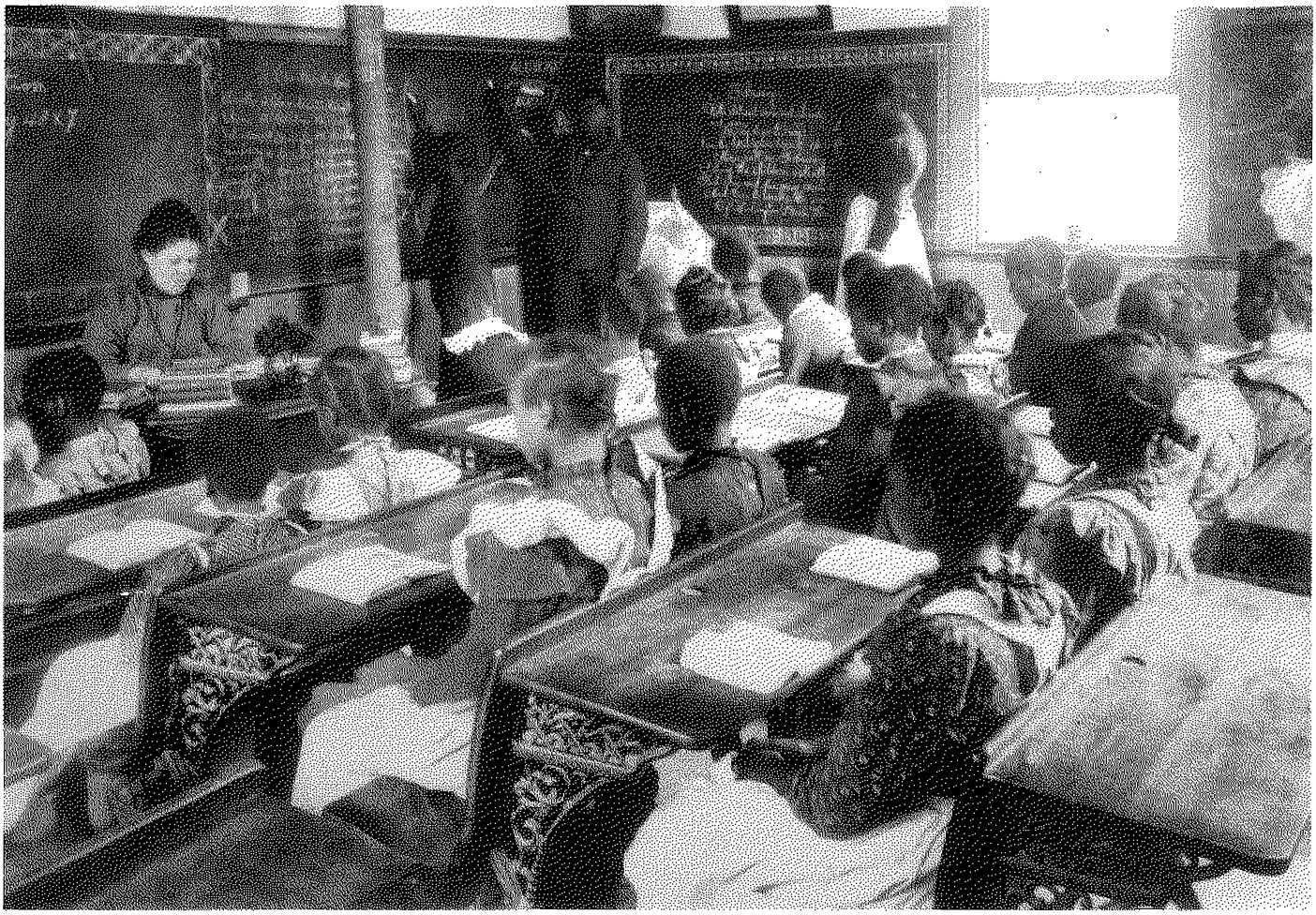
The Congregational American Missionary Association ran the school. In 1947, it became part of the public school system. The school closed in 1954. The Avery Research Center for African-American History and Culture is located on its site today.

When Martha Schofield, a white teacher on St. Helena Island, became sick in 1868, she decided to move to Aiken. There she founded the Schofield Normal and Industrial School. Its industrial courses included blacksmithing and shoemaking. In addition Schofield trained professionals. One of its most famous graduates was Dr. Matilda Evans, who became South Carolina's first native-born African-American woman doctor. In 1938, Schofield became a high school. Because of its "semi-public" status, it charged no tuition. It officially became a public school in 1950. After school desegregation, Scholfield became one of Aiken County's middle schools.

A number of individuals made important contributions in the field of education in the years after Reconstruction. The number of African-American teachers in the state tripled between 1876 and 1900. These people, taught by the Reconstruction generation and white missionaries from the North, went on to educate the children who grew up in a new century. In some cases being an educator was a stepping stone to further accomplishments. There were thousands, but we only have space for a few of their stories.

Born in Georgia in 1876, Elizabeth Evelyn Wright was the seventh of twenty-one children. As a child she attended a school which met only three months a year. School terms were often quite short in those days. She went to college at Tuskegee despite her poor health. She left college in 1892 to teach in Hampton County, South Carolina. She returned to complete her college degree and graduated in 1894. She came back to Hampton County to build a school. She faced much opposition from both blacks and whites. African-Americans had no hope that she could do it, despite the help offered her by a Maryland judge. Whites burned down the building where school was to be held. They destroyed lumber bought to build a new school. She raised money to buy new building materials by speaking at churches in Hampton and Colleton Counties. Often she had to walk twenty miles a day. When the owner of the property she had selected for a school decided not to sell, she had to start over again. Another teacher, Jessie Dorsey, helped her search for a new school site. Eventually she chose a site in Denmark. With the help of some whites there, she bought the land. In 1897, the Denmark Industrial School was organized. The name was changed to Voorhees Industrial School in 1902, in honor of a contributor. Today Voorhees is a college.

As African-Americans gained an education, they needed access to books. Susan Dart Butler, who was born in 1889, helped make that possible. She opened a free library for African-Americans in Charleston. She started the library in her own home in 1927 and paid all expenses involved. As a result of her work, the Charleston Committee of the Southern Commission on Interracial Cooperation became interested. It



A View of Room #2, 1900, by Arthur L. MacBeth. A silver gelatin print reproduced with permission of South Caroliniana Library. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.

helped to establish the Dart Hall Branch of the Charleston County Free Library for African-Americans in 1931. Butler died in 1959.

William A. Sinclair wore many hats. His personal experience taught him about injustice. He was born in enslavement in 1858 in Georgetown. Along with his mother, he was sold away from his father. After Emancipation, he returned to Georgetown to live with his father. He attended public schools and studied at Claflin and the University of South Carolina. With the end of Reconstruction, his studies at the University of South Carolina ended. A lynch mob murdered his father. So he left the state to study at Howard University in Washington, D.C. He earned a bachelor's degree and a theological degree. After briefly attending Andover Theological Seminary, he worked for the American Missionary Association. He decided to attend medical school and earned a degree from Meharry Medical College. A man of many talents, he served as financial secretary of Howard University from 1888 to 1903. During this time he entered the struggle for racial justice. He helped create the NAACP in 1909. Returning to Georgetown, he became principal of the public school. There he helped educate another generation. He was one of the few men of his time who emphasized the contributions of African-Americans in helping the North win the Civil War. He was also one of the few who saw Reconstruction as a kind of golden age in which people tried to achieve equality. All his life he spoke out against racial segregation. Sadly, he did not live to see much change. He died in 1926.

Janie Glymph Goree became both an educator and a politician. She was born to a sharecropper fam-

ily in 1921 in Newberry County. Because the family had nine children, life was difficult. She had to pick cotton to pay for transportation costs to attend school. Her teachers recognized her ability but she could not afford college even after winning a scholarship. By working as a maid, she earned enough money to go to college at Benedict. She graduated at the top of her class in 1948.

For the next thirty-three years, Goree taught high school math in Union. Along the way she earned a master's degree. She was always generous with her time. Adults learned reading from her. Her church could always count on her help. She also played an active and historic role in local politics. She held office as a municipal judge. In 1978, she ran for mayor of Carlisle and was elected. This made her the first female African-American mayor in South Carolina. As mayor, she traveled to the White House and all over the world. Many groups gave her awards. She has been active in many professional groups like the National Conference of Black Mayors and the World Conference of Mayors. Both as a teacher and as mayor, she opened doors for two generations of African-Americans.

Although African-American schools received little help from the state, sometimes private individuals helped schools flourish. In 1908, Anna T. Jeanes donated $200,000 to add industrial education to African-American schools. The Jeanes Foundation began in Virginia as an experimental program that eventually spread to sixteen other states. The first Jeanes Supervisor was Virginia Randolph, an African-American teacher in Henrico County, Virginia. By the 1950s, over 500 Jeanes Supervisors worked in counties all over the South helping and supervising teachers.

Painting of a tenant farm near Summerville. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide D-1 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of S.C. State Museum.*



Julia Berry became South Carolina's first Jeanes Supervisor in 1912. We know little about her work. In 1913, U.S. Gallman became a supervising industrial teacher in Newberry County. He focused on industrial and agricultural education and on sanitation. Jeanes Supervisors worked with the State Agents for Negro schools. By 1947, there were thirty-seven Jeanes Supervisors in South Carolina.

Jeanes Supervisors took a highly individualistic approach to their work. They tried to help the schools in every way possible. At first they worked to develop a relationship with the community. The Supervisors helped build and repair schools, handled health problems, and did anything else that was needed. Although they seemed more like social workers at times, they helped teachers improve their teaching. Gradually, the focus changed from community to educational services. They sponsored many programs, including reading workshops, children's art exhibits, and in-service programs for teachers.

Agricultural Self-Help

Making a living on the farm was hard in South Carolina. One of the greatest barriers to prosperity for both black and white farmers was the country store. These stores almost always charged very high prices for goods of very low quality. They frequently cheated farmers. Cheating was hard to fight, especially when black farmers had to deal with white store owners. If there was a dispute, white judges, juries, and white sheriffs always backed up white merchants.

The only way to win was to avoid buying from white merchants. Many African-Americans were subsistence farmers who bought little. The more things you made and grew for yourself, the less you had to buy.

Other farmers were able to deal with African-American store owners. However, African-Americans ran only a few stores. In 1880, African-Americans owned only about fifty of the more than 4,500 stores in the state. Doing business was difficult when you had to depend on whites for your supplies. If you complained about a bill or the quality of goods delivered, you could be cut off from any more supplies. If you took your complaint to court, you had to depend on white judges and juries to treat you fairly. Either way you were likely to lose. Even so, the number of African-Americans in business grew during the late 1800s. By 1900, the number grew tenfold to nearly 500. In the little farming community of Promised Land, two families opened stores to serve their neighbors. The Baptists in the community patronized one store. Methodist families gave their business to the other.

African-Americans made several attempts to bypass the small country store entirely. Even stores run by fellow African-Americans had the problem of having to buy their supplies in small amounts. Buy-

Grinding corn around 1910 as had been done back on the plantation. New technology came slowly. From the Penn School Collection. Permission granted by Penn Center, Inc., St. Helena Island, S.C. In the Southern Historical Collection of the Manuscripts Department, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. This picture can also be seen in The History of S.C. Slide Collection *(Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989) as slide D-13.*



ing in small volume meant higher prices for the merchant and the customer. Sadly, few of these efforts had much success because of white fear and opposition. In the late 1880s, the Cooperative Workers of America tried to organize in secret. They tried to set up cooperative stores. They saved money by joining forces and buying supplies in large volume. Threats by whites soon ended that effort.

About a year later, the Colored Farmers' Alliance began organizing in the state. This was a parallel organization to the white Farmers' Alliance that was growing across the rest of the South. This time meetings were open and did not arouse as much white fear. John D. Norris was a school teacher who worked as an organizer for the group. In an 1889 speech he listed the purposes of the group. They were to teach patriotism, respect for the law, and love of home, to help the poor, to promote education, to improve farming methods, and to encourage members to be better husbands and wives. Norris carefully noted that political power was not a goal. By 1890 the group had 30,000 members in South Carolina and printed a newspaper. However, the group began to dissolve a year later. It tried to organize a strike by cotton pickers. The strike failed. Members began to lose faith and dropped out. Within a few years the white Farmers' Alliance met the same fate.

Robert Shaw Wilkinson, second S.C. State College president, 1911-1932. Wilkinson promoted farm and home agents working in local communities across the state. Courtesy S.C. State Museum, the S.C. Postcard Archive, South Caroliniana Library, USC.



Despite these failures, self-help efforts continued. The professor of agriculture at the state college in Orangeburg went around the state creating Colored Farmers' Institutes. His idea was to improve methods used by farmers. For example, the institutes taught farmers how to make their own fertilizers. This made them less dependent on country stores.

About the same time, A. E. Hampton began the Colored Agricultural and Mechanical Association in Columbia. This group spread the idea of holding agricultural fairs for African-Americans. The main purpose was educational. Displays and exhibits taught those attending about better practices in many areas. They learned more about raising poultry, how to plant and cultivate crops, and how to make what they grew into products to sell and use in the home. They promoted self-sufficiency. This was important. The more self-sufficient they were, the less they went into debt.

Soon African-American farmers were holding fairs in counties all over the state. Although education was the major long term benefit, those who came did have fun. Fairs held all kinds of races, from bicycles to sack races. Local bands competed in musical contests that included both marching and playing. Despite lives that were very hard, people could smile and have fun.

By 1900, African-Americans owned or operated more than half the farms in South Carolina. However, they were mostly smaller than farms owned or operated by whites. Even though African-Americans only controlled twenty-seven percent of all the farmland, they used the land well. With only twenty-seven percent of the land, they produced thirty-nine percent of all farm goods. These were hard working people.

COUNTY FAIR AMONG NEGROES

THE NEGROES OF DARLINGTON COUNTY WILL HOLD A FAIR

At Darlington, November 16, 17 and 18.

Its object is to stimulate agricultural and industrial efforts among the masses of their people and thus advance the interest of landlords, tenants and wage earners.

Prizes will be given to Negroes for their best live stock and their best agricultural and industrial products. Full details will be publishedvery soon.

The management is in the hands of sober Negroes of standing and sense. They will conduct matters in a way to gain and hold confidence, and they hereby ask white and black to aid.

Get yourselves and your exhibits ready for November 16, 17, and 18.

For more information write or see

W. M. KING, President
J. L. CAIN, Secretary
DARLINGTON, SOUTH CAROLINA.



(Above) Advertisement from an African-American newspaper, The Society Hill News *on April 15, 1910 for a county fair. The emphasis on self-improvement is clear. Courtesy of the Darlington County Historical Commission. (Left) A scene from the Richland County Colored Fair sometime in the 1920s in a photo by Richard Roberts. Courtesy Roberts family. This can also be seen in slide D-27* The History of the S.C. Slide Collection.



The hoe culture method of agriculture required a great deal of human labor. This method survived well into the 1900s on the small farms of South Carolina. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide D-38 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of S.C. Historical Society.*

Most of the African-Americans who had bought land after the Civil War were able to keep it. By 1900, African-Americans owned more than 15,500 farms. Another 3,300 at least partially owned their farms. This still was less than twenty percent of all African-American farmers. Despite terrible discrimination and despite a legal system that offered nonwhites little protection, the percentage of African-American farmers owning their farms had been increasing since the end of Reconstruction.

While most African-American farmers did well to endure and hang on to their land, a few really prospered. One example was Ben Garrett in Colleton County. He started with nothing after the Civil War. Sixteen years later he owed no debts and owned a farm of over 100 acres. He was even able to lend money to neighbors. Lewis Duckett had a farm of nearly 800 acres near Newberry. Some of it he rented to tenants. On the part he worked himself, he produced 800 bushels of oats, over 1,000 bushels of corn, and 61 bales of cotton in 1881. Joseph Alexander Owens of Barnwell County also started with nothing. By 1881, he was a member of the legislature. He owned a prosperous plantation, ran some stores, and had a large bank account. John Thorne had a 250-acre farm on Edisto Island. All of these men had a great deal more land than the average 143 acre-farm in South Carolina at the time.

Daily Lives Away from the Farm

The great majority of African-Americans followed Richard Carroll's advice to stay on the land and leave the towns and cities of the state to the whites. In 1900, only about one in five African-Americans in South Carolina worked off the farm. That ratio did not change greatly until the middle of the century. Most of those away from the farm made a living as maids, cooks, housekeepers, child care providers, or gardeners for wealthier white families. Thousands of others made their way in business, industry, or in professional careers. They faced terrible odds. They helped pave the way for others who came later. They also created a small but significant middle class. The wealth they accumulated provided a support base for later civil rights movements.

Business, Skilled Crafts, and Labor

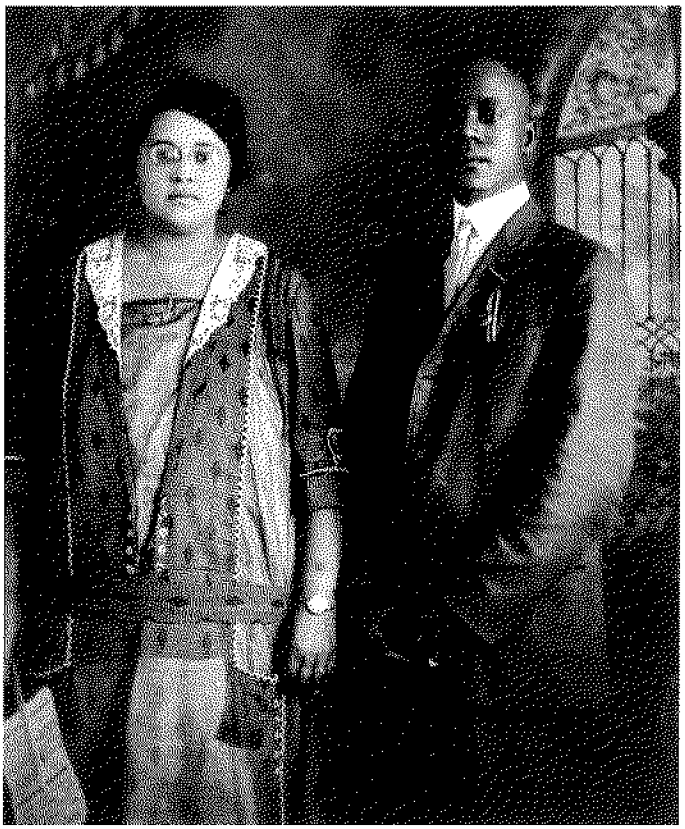
After Reconstruction, Randall D. George made a for-

tune in business. His workers made a variety of products from the sap of pine trees, things like turpentine and rosins. He not only made these things, he also shipped them from ports on the coast. When he died in 1891, he owned more land than anyone else in Colleton County. His total worth was well over $100,000, a great deal of money in that day.

Many others followed George's path in smaller ways. At the turn of the century, about 125 African-Americans in South Carolina had businesses worth more than $500. The largest group of successful businesses were in Charleston. Included were fish dealers, stables, wagon makers, printers, retail stores, tailors, stone cutters, barbers, druggists, photographers, and upholsterers. A truck farm worth $100,000 was among the most valuable businesses in Charleston. In Columbia, African-Americans owned and operated about twenty-five different retail stores, in addition to about sixty-five other businesses. Included in these other businesses were three newspapers and two mattress factories.

African-Americans published a variety of newspapers across the state. Most did not last long because of problems in attracting white advertising. For every one that failed, another seemed to take its place. Persistence could have been the motto for these efforts. For example, in 1879 P. B. Morris founded the *Sea Island News*. He kept the paper going till he died in 1891. It was replaced by the *New South,* a joint effort by two other African-Americans in Beaufort County. Almost all of these papers were modest and dealt with noncontroversial topics. However, they led

(Left) Mr. William Manigault (1883-1940) and Mrs. Annie Rivers Manigault (1892-1954). The Manigaults were a hard working family that beat the odds and did well in business. Their home at 1703 Wayne St. in Columbia was said to be the first belonging to an African-American family to have its own swimming pool in its backyard. They lived near Richard Roberts, who took this photo of them in the 1920s. Courtesy of Roberts family. (Right) Richard Roberts 1920s photo of the home of the Jackson family, who moved to Columbia to make a living from a store behind the home. The family raised prize winning flowers in the front yard, turkeys in the back, and was among the first local African-American families to own a car. The house still stands near Five Points. Courtesy of Roberts family.





the way for papers in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s that helped begin and strengthen the civil rights movement. *The Palmetto Leader,* published in Columbia, took a moderate stand on civil rights. The *Lighthouse and Informer,* published by John H. McCray, was a little more outspoken.

Banking and finance was one of the most difficult areas for African-Americans to enter. One of the earliest efforts took place in Florence. In 1891, the S.C. Banking Association was created with the sale of 500 shares of stock. Later, in 1899 African-Americans formed a building and loan association in Anderson. Only twelve other such associations existed in the entire nation. In 1921, the state chartered the Mutual Savings Bank of Charleston. It lasted twenty years. In 1921, Dr. H. D. Monteith created in Columbia the most enduring bank, the Victory Savings Bank. Monteith was the brother of Modjeska Monteith Simkins, the state's legendary civil rights leader. Victory Savings Bank survived the massive bank mergers of the 1990s that swallowed many other much larger South Carolina banks.

Having a business of ones own has long been a dream of many Americans, black and white. Over his lifetime, Isaac Samuel Leevy developed not just one, but many businesses. Born in Antioch in Kershaw County in 1877, he attended public schools there. He completed his education by studying at Mather Academy in Camden and Hampton Institute in Virginia. Like many others he began his career as a teacher. He was a friend of Richard Carroll, who helped him come to Columbia after college. In 1906, Leevy rejected a well-paying job to return to South Carolina and teach for $35 a month. However, the young man soon went into business for himself as a tailor. Within three years, he had thirty people working for him in a $30,000 a year business. He remained a merchant tailor until 1917. A gifted businessman, he owned and managed many businesses over the years. These included a department store, a service station, a retail furniture store, a barber shop, a beauty shop, a real estate company, a funeral home, and a commercial hog-raising business. Through his businesses he created many jobs for African-Americans in South Carolina. His service station, built during the Depression, had modern restroom facilities that were available to African-American travelers. This was no small thing in a time when African-Americans often had to travel miles out of their way to find such amenities.

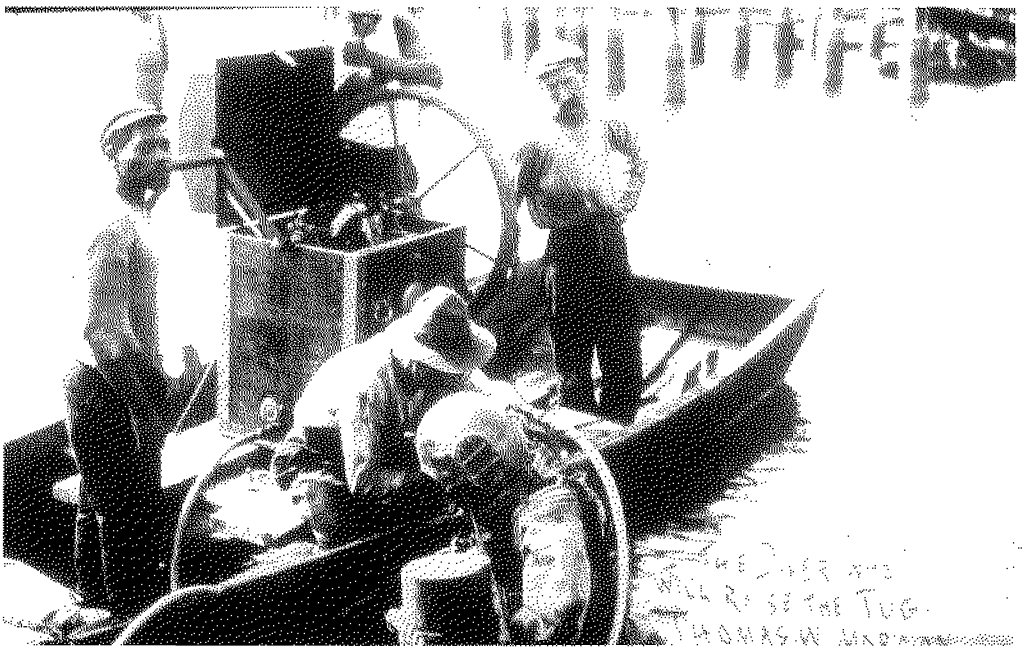
Leevy was active in community life. He helped organize the Palmetto State Fair Association so that African-Americans would be able to enjoy a state fair every year. Leevy felt that having educational opportunities was important for African-Americans. He was one of the founders of Booker T. Washington High School and several other public schools. He urged South Carolina State College to make graduate education available for African-Americans. Leevy served as a trustee at Claflin College. He helped to organize the Richland County Tuberculosis Hospital for Negroes at Ridgewood. He was a co-organizer, vice-president, and president of Victory Savings Bank. He served on the Interracial Board of Associated Charities of Richland County, the Interracial Board for Delinquent Negro Girls, as Chairman of the Board for the Colored Soldiers Service Club in World War I, and in many other voluntary positions. In 1936, he headed a committee of college presidents and school leaders who introduced the Social Security program in South Carolina.

I. S. Leevy believed that in order to bring about change, African-Americans must become politically active. A Sunday school superintendent at his own church, he went from church to church urging people to register and vote. He helped organize the Columbia branch of the NAACP. Leevy went beyond these courageous steps to serve as the Richland County Chairman of the S.C. Republican Party and state Vice Chairman. The national party, which did not want to antagonize whites, provided little support. Leevy ran three times for the Columbia City Council and twice for the state legislature, although he never won. Years later, his grandson, I. S. Leevy Johnson, served in the S.C. House of Representatives.

Later in his life, Leevy was recognized for his accomplishments. S.C. State College, Morris College, and Allen University gave him honorary degrees. Benedict College gave him a plaque in 1962 for distinguished service, recognizing his more than sixty years as a business and civic leader. He died in 1968.

Many of the African-American businesses in South Carolina were based on skills African-Ameri-





(Top) Tobacco workers in a room where the quality of the leaves were graded. The photo was taken in Darlington in 1890. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide D-68 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy South Caroliniana Library.*
(Bottom) Divers preparing to raise sunken tug boat after a storm in 1911. Courtesy of William Davie Beard, the S.C. Postcard Archive, South Caroliniana Library, USC.

cans had been practicing for generations. While some used their skills to create their own businesses, others sold their time as skilled labor. They also found strength in numbers. Carpenters and brick masons created labor unions. The unions were quite effective in raising wages. Some of these unions were even integrated. For example, in 1886, the Bricklayers Union staged a parade of its white and black members in Charleston in support of raising daily wages from $3 to $5. The 1900 Labor Day Parade in Charleston included about 1,000 marchers. Members of all unions and both races marched. Most were African-Americans.

One of the most successful and longest lasting unions was the Longshoremen's Protective Union Association. Workers organized the union in 1869. The union included both races until 1890 when whites broke away and formed their own group. After the split, the union gradually lost power.

Professionals Beat the Odds

During the brief period of Reconstruction when the state extended civil rights to African-Americans, many were able to enter new professions. For example, Macon B. Allen, the first African-American lawyer in the U.S., joined a law firm in Charleston in 1868. Initially trained as a teacher, he passed the bar exams in Maine and Massachusetts. In 1873, he became a judge in Charleston responsible for hearing criminal cases.

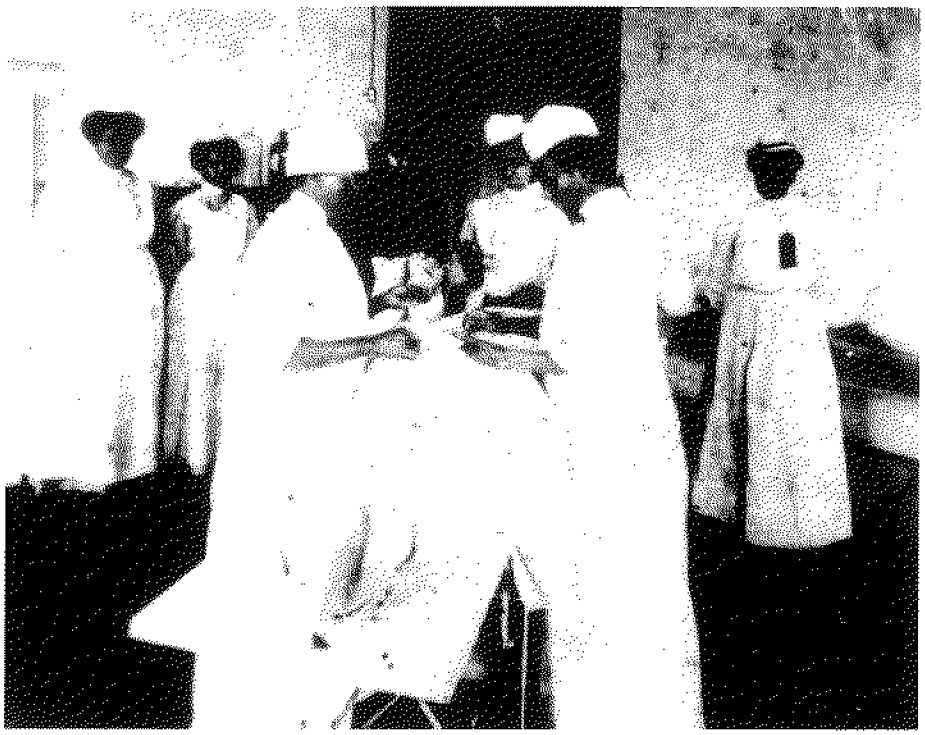
Claflin College, Allen University, and the University of South Carolina trained other African-Americans as lawyers. T. McCants Stewart was a successful lawyer and mathematician. He graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1875 during the brief period in which the university admitted non-whites.

After 1876, the whites who again were running the state raised social, physical, and legal barriers. Only a handful of African-Americans were practicing law in South Carolina by the turn of the century. Stewart left the state to take a position teaching law in Liberia in 1882. Later, he became a lawyer in New York City.

In the post-Civil War years, only a very few professionally trained African-American doctors practiced in South Carolina. Many chose not to return to the state after they completed their training. The first African-American physician to practice in South Carolina was Dr. Lucy Hughes Brown. Born in 1863 in North Carolina, she trained at the Women's Medical College in Philadelphia. She moved to Charleston where she opened the Cannon Hospital and Training School. She died in 1911.

According to the 1890 census, thirty African-American physicians practiced in South Carolina. Only three worked in Charleston and three in Columbia. One of these was Matilda Evans.

Matilda A. Evans was a physician at a time when medicine was virtually closed to both women and African-Americans. She conquered both barriers. South Carolina's first native-born female African-American doctor originally dreamed of becoming a medical missionary. Like so many, her family had little. She was born in Aiken around 1872. She worked her way through Schofield Industrial School in Aiken and Oberlin College in Ohio. During her high school years, she labored in the fields to pay for her education. She covered her college expenses by waitressing. Evans returned to South Carolina to teach at Schofield. During this period she wrote a biography of educator Martha Schofield. However, this was not what she wanted to do with her life. She

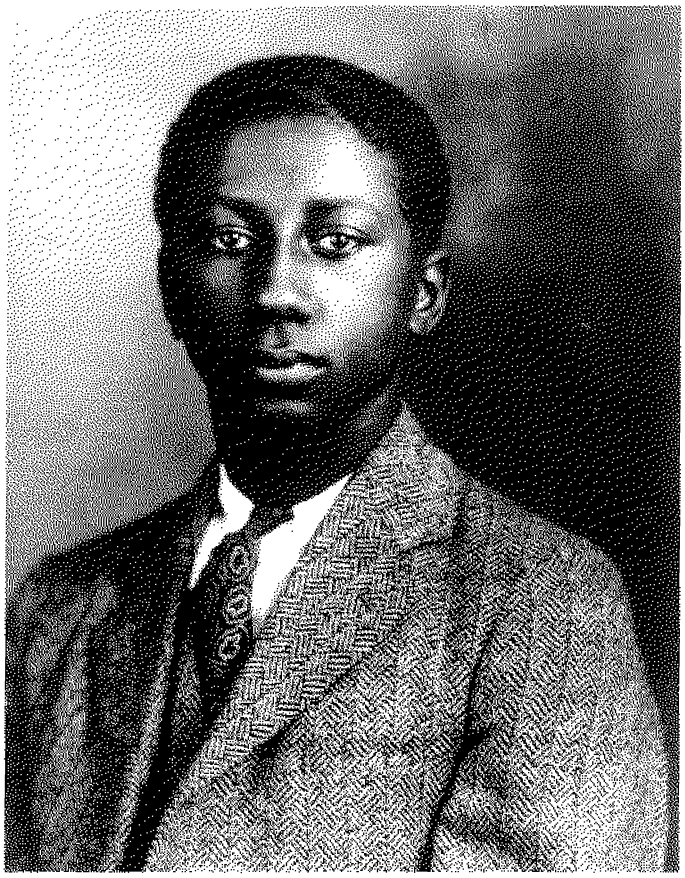


Dr. Matilda Evans shown in her operating room around 1900. Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.

decided to attend medical school. After studying at the Women's Medical College in Philadelphia, she received her M.D. in 1897. No other African-American was in the class. She returned to South Carolina and opened a practice in Columbia. Not one hospital existed for African-Americans there. So she took sick people into her home. Eventually she was able to rent a building where she could house 30 patients. In 1932 she founded the Evans Clinic. She was also one of the founders of the Zion Church Clinic which served poor children.

Dr. Evans rarely allowed anything to stop her from doing something she really wanted to do. She taught herself to swim by reading a book. Then she taught underprivileged boys to swim. She founded a weekly newspaper, was active in her church, and even turned her hand to farming. *The Palmetto Leader* reported in 1932 that she had worked for twenty-five years without even taking a vacation. After a long and productive life, she died in 1935 and was buried in Columbia. Dr. Evans was a pioneer for both women and African-Americans.

For most people, education is the key to success in life. As you have seen, African-Americans faced many closed doors in the years after the Civil War. Dr. Stephen J. Wright was one of the people who found a way to open them. Born in Dillon in 1911, he grew up in North Carolina. His father died when he was five years old. Following family tradition, he went to Virginia's Hampton Institute at the age of fifteen. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1934. Wright went on to study for a master's degree at Howard University and a Ph.D. at New York University. A man who believed in hard work all his life, he made a career in the field of higher education. He committed himself to excellence at traditionally African-American universities. His first position was at Hampton University. He served as president of Bluefield State College from 1953-1957 and of Fisk University from 1957-1966. Fisk's reputation soared after he came. Dr. Wright became one of the nation's foremost educators. He published numerous articles on education and foreign affairs. He became president of the United Negro College Fund and Vice President of the College Entrance Examination Board. Several universities appointed him to their boards of trustees. The President of the United States appointed him to two separate special commissions. Because of his expertise, lawyers asked him to testify in several major court cases about the effect of segregation on education. Dr. Wright was one of those who made it possible for others to beat the odds.



Thomas S. Martin, another African-American educator who made a difference. Martin taught at Booker T. Washington High School from 1938 until 1968. In addition to teaching, he coached tennis, football, and basketball, and helped build support for the first public swimming pool for African-Americans in Columbia. He was also uncle to S.C. Astronaut Charles Bolden. Martin died in 1993. This Richard Roberts photo was taken about 1925. Courtesy of Roberts family.

Emigration

While many stayed, many also left the state. Their leaving deprived the state of much talent, but it also had several positive aspects. When those who left found success elsewhere, they sent money back to relatives in the state. They paved the way for others

who could not find success in South Carolina. Finally, they were the nation's gain. Many made positive contributions to America and even to the world. We cannot talk about what African-Americans gave to South Carolina without talking about what they gave in many other places as well.

Exodus to Liberia

Right after the 1876 elections, large numbers of African-Americans became interested in moving to Africa. Most were poor farmers who had no land of their own. With whites back in control, they knew they would have little chance of ever owning land. A number of leaders encouraged the exodus. While Richard Carroll urged them to the farms of South Carolina, another politically active ministers urged them to leave the state. The Reverend Richard H. Cain was a member of Congress who also published his own newspaper. Over and over again, he ran an editorial entitled "Ho for Africa! One-million men wanted for Africa." Some ministers opposed the movement fearing they would lose some good members. Later most leaders decided that those with the greatest discontent should leave and take their discontent with them.

Whites became alarmed. They feared they would lose cheap hard working labor. They tried to discourage would-be emigrants by spreading rumors that the whole idea was a fraud. While it was not a fraud, it was not as easy as many thought. Few had the money to pay their way. About 200 did make it to Liberia in 1878. It was not as wonderful as they had thought. Word got back that life could be as hard in Liberia as in South Carolina. Few others went. Despite this, many of those who did go worked hard and found success.

Westward Ho! Pioneers and Cowboys

Moving to the American West was much easier than moving to Africa. It did not require the great expense of a ship passage. Nor did it require as much organi-

Settlers in Oklahoma, part of the exodus of African-Americans from South Carolina and other southern states. Courtesy of Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library.



zation. Best estimates are that about 20,000 South Carolina African-Americans left the state for the West between 1880 and 1900. The movement began about the same time interest arose in African emigration. In early 1878, around forty African-Americans left the Chester area and moved to Kansas. In the early 1880s, about 5,000 residents of Edgefield County left for Arkansas. They left complaining that no matter how hard they worked, they could not make a decent living.

Emigration societies began forming. In 1881, a former school commissioner in Aiken County organized such a society near Trenton. William H. Lawson, with the help of the Reverend John Hammond, headed the group. They held revival-like meetings to stir up interest. The day after Christmas in 1882, several hundred left on a train bound for the West. Wagons filled with other people followed. Some headed for Texas and some for other states in the West.

White landowners soon began to feel the pinch. They could not get the labor they needed. Again they resorted to rumors and warnings to prevent them from leaving. Some African-American political leaders like Robert Smalls, who had not lost all his power, tried to convince people to stay. But continued hard times on the farm and continued discrimination only increased the urge to leave. Most who left would have agreed with AME Bishop Benjamin Arnett. In 1889 he spoke to the graduating class at Claflin College. He outlined two reasons to go. First, like other pioneers, they could find prosperity. Second, leaving would help those who stayed. With less competition, they could demand better wages.

Those who left the state for the West did not always take their families. Although few books tell about this, some became cowboys. Historians estimate that about 5,000 African-Americans worked as cowboys on cattle drives on the Chisholm Trail. The trail ran from the cattle ranges of Texas to Kansas, where the cattle were loaded on trains. No doubt there were many among these cow punchers who could trace their roots through South Carolina.

The Great Migration to Cities

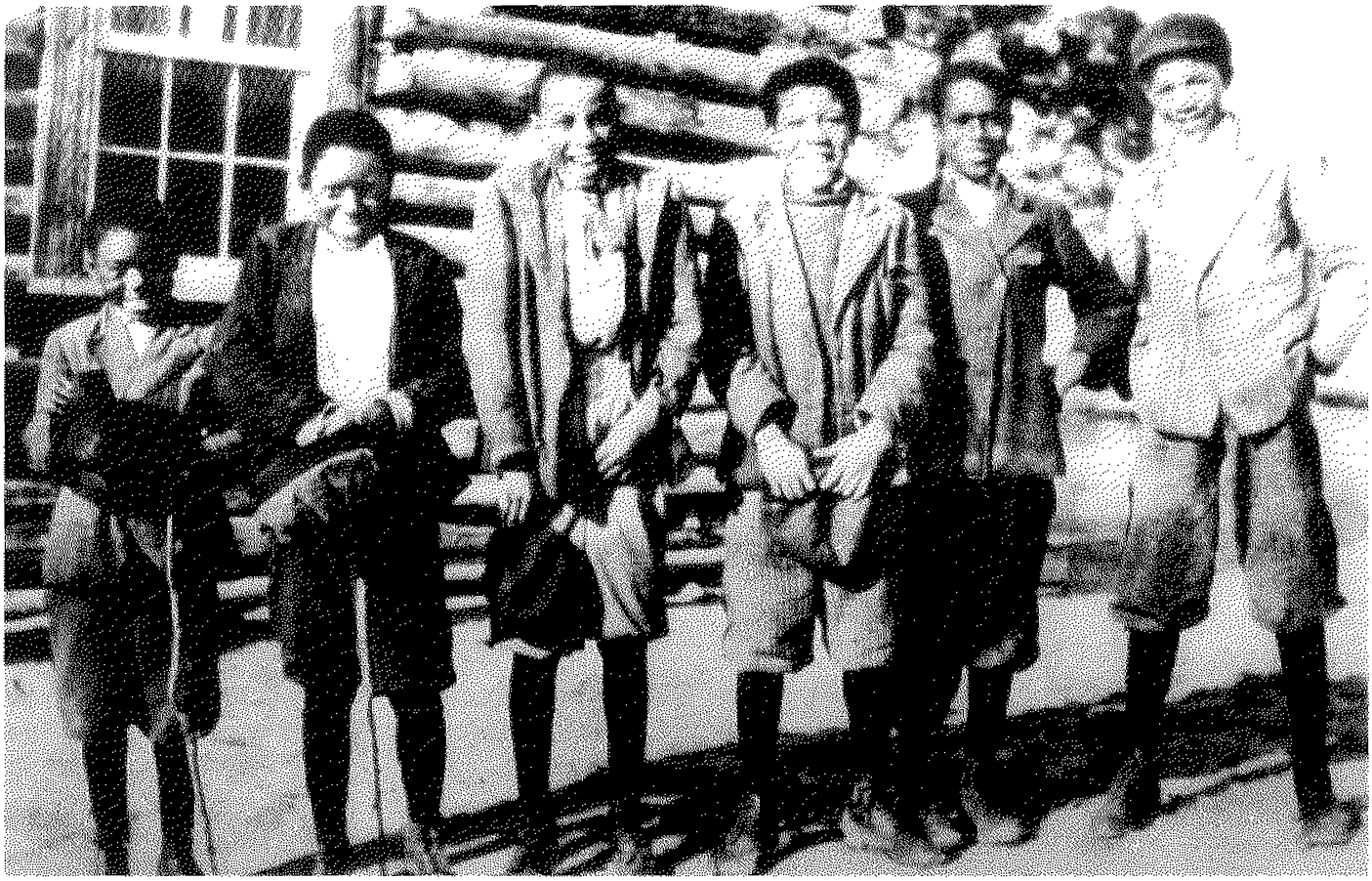
Many more of those who fled the harsh conditions of South Carolina went to Northern cities. While some of this movement took place before 1900, most of it took place after the turn of the century. Migration out of the South was greatest in the years around World War I. It continued until the 1930s, when the Great Depression reduced job opportunities in Northern cities. Migration increased again during World War II. Historians estimate that in the first half of the 1900s the state had a net loss of well over a half million African-Americans. The exodus from South Carolina was so great during the period around World War I that it is remembered as the "Great Migration." We can also see the impact of migration on Northern cities. More than one in every ten African-Americans living in New York City, Washington, and Philadelphia in 1930 had been born in South Carolina.

People left for a number of reasons. Of course, discrimination was one important reason. That became worse after South Carolina rewrote its constitution in 1895 and passed laws that required racial separation. The main reasons were economic. The soil was worn out from growing crop after crop of cotton. The price of cotton was often quite low. This ruined many of those who depended on it as their main cash crop. Then there was the boll weevil, a new arrival in the South. This one-fourth inch long insect nearly destroyed cotton farms all over the South. It lays its eggs in the bud of the cotton plant. When the eggs hatch, the larvae eat the inside so that it never grows into a boll filled with cotton.

Finally, for those families who were smart enough not to depend on cotton, like the families in Promised Land, there was the problem of subdivision. If a family had more than one child, the farm had to be divided for the next generation in order for each to have land. Because the farms were small to start with, this was impractical. Many children knew that they would have to go elsewhere to make a living. Their movement created a pattern that was repeated thousands of times. One family or family member would make the move and find work. Then others would follow.

The Story of the Reynolds Family

Martha Letman and Charlie Reynolds lived near each other in Promised Land. They fell in love and married. Neither set of parents was able to give them enough land or financial support to have their own farm. They



Caddies. Young men hustled to make any money they could. This photograph was taken of a group of enterprising youth in Camden in the early 1900s. Courtesy of William Davie Beard, the S.C. Postcard Archive, South Caroliniana Library, USC.

tried to survive as sharecroppers. Finally, seeing that things would get no better, they left. At first they tried to farm with relatives in Mississippi. That did not work out any better. Next they moved to Chicago with half-grown children and their hopes and dreams of a better life. The family all pitched in. They all worked at jobs and shared their earnings. Eventually they were able to move to a middle-class neighborhood. Then they sent for Martha's brother Tim, who was blind and could find little to do in Promised Land. Next came another of Martha's brothers, Allen. He lived with the Reynolds until he could afford his own place. On visits home he spoke of his success. Soon other families followed. Sometimes the husband came first. He would live with friends or relatives and save until the rest of the family could afford to come.

The pattern continued in other cities. Friends and family helped friends and family. Those were the values these people learned from their roots on the farms of South Carolina. They carried those values with them.

Lost Brain Power

Achieving full potential was difficult for African-Americans through most of the century after the Civil War. Many left South Carolina.

An early emigre who played an important role in the formation and early history of the NAACP was Archibald Grimke. Born into enslavement in South Carolina in 1849, Grimke was a nephew of Sarah and Angelina Grimke. The Grimke sisters were socially prominent white Charlestonians who spoke out

against enslavement and eventually left the South. This family connection provided Archibald Grimke the chance to escape enslavement and South Carolina. One of the first African-Americans to attend Harvard Law School, he went on to serve as American Consul to the Dominican Republic in the 1890s. Later he helped W. E. B. DuBois found the NAACP and served in important positions in the organization. Historians regard Grimke as almost as important an intellectual leader as W. E. B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington.

One of the people who did the most to provide education to African-Americans in the South was Mary McLeod Bethune. Mary McLeod was born in 1875 near Mayesville. Both her parents had been enslaved. Her mother was the descendant of African royalty. Mary remembered helping her mother take laundry to white families who hired her to clean their clothes. At one home a white child about her own age insulted her. Because Mary could not read, the child screamed at her to put down a book she had picked up. That made her determined to read and to teach others to read. That is just what she did.

Mary McLeod met and married Albertus L. Bethune when she was a teacher in Sumter. In 1904 she moved to Daytona, Florida. There, with only a few dollars and a lot of prayer, she started a school for African-American girls. She also had a lot of courage. One winter night in 1920, about eighty hooded Klan members came to her school and threatened to burn it down. She stood in front of the school and sang a hymn. She told them that if they burned it down, she would build it right back up again. With a lot of work, the school eventually became a four-year college. In 1923, it merged with a boys' school and today is known as Bethune-Cookman College. Bethune was president of the school until 1942.

Mary McLeod Bethune's accomplishments extend well beyond the field of education. Four presidents appointed her to national government positions. With a 1935 appointment as head of the Division of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration, she became the first African-American woman to run a federal agency. In 1935 she also founded the National Council of Negro Women and received the Spingarn Medal. She died in 1955.

Others left not only South Carolina, but the United States. Dr. Ernest Everett Just was born in 1883 in Charleston to a poor family with little money for such "luxuries" as medical care. He miraculously survived an epidemic of cholera and diphtheria that killed the two older children in his family one winter. At the age of thirteen, he left for Orangeburg to study at the Colored Normal Industrial Agricultural and Mechanics College. Later he went to Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, where he was an excellent student. After completing college, Just taught English at Howard University. However, he was more interested in science. He began to teach zoology and became a leader in the field of biology. In 1913 he was the first person to receive the NAACP's Spingarn Award. The award is given annually to an African-American for outstanding achievement. Just had continued his education as well. In 1916 he received a Ph.D. in marine biology from the University of Chicago. He also did research in marine biology every summer until 1930 at the Marine Biological Laboratory at Wood's Hole, Massachusetts.

However, Dr. Just found that he could not live with the racial discrimination he faced in his work. In 1931 he moved to Europe. He spent most of the next ten years there, where he died in 1941. During his long career, he published two books and over sixty articles. His work in cell biology greatly contributed to scientific understanding of how a cell works.

Once Reconstruction was over, talented African-Americans had few chances to obtain higher education in South Carolina. One of those who left the state and made his career elsewhere was the Honorable Harold A. Stevens. Born on Johns Island in 1907, he moved with his mother to Columbia at the age of three after his father died. There they lived with his mother's parents until she remarried. He attended high school at Claflin College. After receiving a bachelor's degree from Benedict College in 1930, Stevens wanted to attend law school. African-Americans could not attend USC Law School. So Stevens left the state. He attended Boston College, receiving a law degree in 1936. He was the first African-American to receive a degree in Labor Law from that college.

Stevens settled in New York to practice law, where he had a long and productive career as a labor lawyer. He received many awards and honors. He served in the military in World War II, was the Special

Counsel to President Franklin Roosevelt's Commission on Fair Employment Practices, was chief counsel to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and served in the state legislature. Following this, he won an election as a judge. Eventually, he became the presiding judge in the Appellate Division of New York's Supreme Court. This was the highest position held by any African-American in a state court system. He also contributed his time to many organizations as a board member or trustee.

The world of fashion has been slow to acknowledge that African-Americans have the same needs as other Americans for developing a positive self-image. A South Carolina born businesswoman, Ophelia DeVore-Mitchell, has worked hard to overcome those obstacles. DeVore-Mitchell was born in Edgefield in 1922, but her family moved north to New York during the 1930s. A good student, she completed high school there and then attended college at New York University. She received a bachelor's degree in math.

Working as a model, DeVore-Mitchell had to combat many false images of African-Americans. So, in 1946 she decided to open the Grace Del Marco Model Agency with several friends. Two years later she opened the Ophelia DeVore School of Self-Development and Modeling. Among her agency's famous clients were actresses Cicely Tyson and Diahann Carroll.

DeVore-Mitchell has also excelled in another area where few women are at the top. She owns a newspaper in Columbus, Georgia, the *Columbus Times,* which specializes in African-American concerns. She has operated it since 1970, when her husband passed away.

Various companies and agencies have recognized DeVore-Mitchell's achievements by giving her over 200 awards. Other businesspeople acknowledged her capability by hiring her as a consultant. She was also a representative on the President's Advisory Commission on the Arts. Her accomplishments demonstrate that an individual can shatter stereotypes.

Troy Brailey of Lynchburg became a union leader after he left South Carolina. Born in 1916, he rose to one of the top posts in one of the most powerful African-American unions in the nation, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. He later became an active leader in the civil rights movement. He helped organize the 1963 march on Washington, D. C. at which Martin Luther King gave his most famous speech.

Slowly Building for a Better Day

These are just a sample of the people who left the state to make a positive mark on the world. You will meet others, like Benjamin Mays, later in the book. They were certainly a loss to South Carolina. But those who stayed, survived, endured, and found a little prosperity made change possible for the next generation. We should not forget all their years of quiet sacrifice.

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 9

Religion

African-Americans have a rich religious tradition. Religion has played two central roles in the history of African-Americans in South Carolina. First, the church was an oasis for African-Americans. It helped them endure the many hardships of enslavement and prejudice. It helped by providing emotional support and social services. Second, the church was a center of revolt. Church was the one place where blacks could meet as a group without arousing great fears among whites. Ministers were the one group whose education whites were least likely to oppose. Thus, the church was the best group around with which to challenge enslavement or create a civil rights movement. Ministers were the natural leaders of revolt. Yet these two roles played by the church created some conflict as well. Teaching people to endure hardships and look forward to an afterlife is quite different from leading them to revolt or to demand civil rights. That part of the story comes much later.

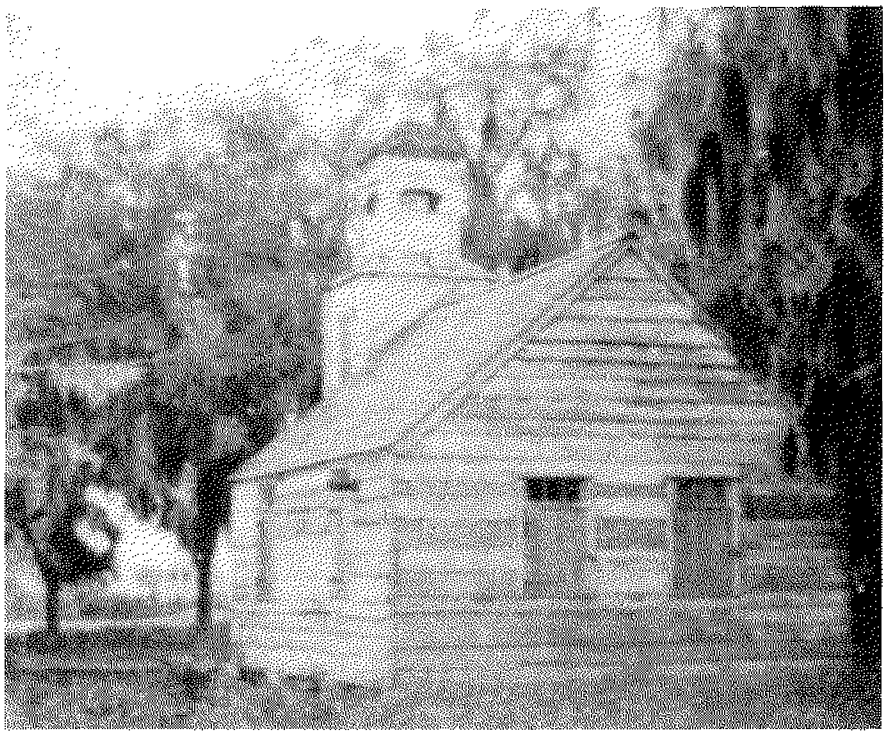
In this chapter we will see how African-American religious groups grew in the state. You will see religion changed from an institution of control to one of freedom. You will learn that although the beliefs sound much like European Christian beliefs, the religious forms and style have a definite African flavor. Some of those practices are dying out. However, some of the African flavor has added spice to the religious life of many people of all races.

Conversions to Christianity

The enslaved Africans who were brought to the New World were not Christians. Some were Moslems. Moslems followed the religious practices of Islam, a religion founded in the 600s in Arabia by the prophet Mohammed. Many had other religious beliefs, such as reverence for ancestors and adoration of the earth and nature. At first, the planters did not try to convert them. They did not want to give the enslaved Africans an opportunity to meet in groups and develop leaders. In the early 1700s, Anglican missionaries began their first efforts to convert the enslaved people. However, not until they began large-scale conversion efforts on the plantations in the 1800s did they meet with much success.

Conversion to Christianity raised questions about the institution of slavery itself. Enslaving non-Christians was one thing. However, enslaving fellow Christians was quite another. Some religious leaders wondered whether these enslaved persons would automatically be entitled to freedom once they had converted. If this was to be the case, planters would certainly oppose any conversions. So the white religious leaders sought justifications for enslavement in the *Bible*. Some argued that because the *Bible* mentioned enslavement, it must be okay in the eyes of God. Others took the position that conversion would free only the soul, not the body. Once they found ways to justify continued enslavement among fellow Christians, the planters withdrew most of their opposition. Large-scale religious conversions then took place.

In truth, this reasoning was weak. However, it allowed both groups of whites to get what they wanted. White ministers could save souls. The planters could keep the people to whom those souls belonged in enslavement. This all goes to show that if people try hard enough, they can justify almost anything. Many whites even argued that enslavement was good for the Africans because it allowed them to be brought to Christ.



This old church was probably used by enslaved Africans. It was photographed on a plantation on Port Royal about 1865. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide 68 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.*

Religion as a Means of Control

Soon the masters realized other benefits in religious conversions. They could use Christian doctrine to encourage the enslaved Africans to accept their fate. Converts had to learn religious catechisms that reinforced the concept of obedience. Catechisms are sets of questions and answers that teach what are supposed to be important religious truths. Saying them over and over again leads to stronger belief. For example, the catechism that follows was written for the enslaved Africans to learn. You decide what it was supposed to teach.

Q. Who keeps the snakes and all bad things from hurting you?
A. God does.
Q. Who gave you a master and a mistress?
A. God gave them to me.
Q. Who says that you must obey them?
A. God says that I must.
Q. What book tells you these things?
A. The Bible.
Q. How does God do all his work?
A. He does it right.
Q. Does God love to work?
A. Yes, God is always at work.
Q. What does God say about your work?
A. He that will not work shall not eat.

[Excerpted from Frederick Douglass' Paper, June 2, 1854, from the Southern Episcopalian, Charleston, S.C., April 1854. Reprinted in The Black American: A Documentary History by Leslie Fischal and Benjamin Quarles, Scott-Foresman Publishers, 1976.]

The Double Meaning of Religious Wards

Christian religion was a two-edged sword. On the one hand, it taught obedience. However, it also taught a sense of humanity, brotherhood, and concern. It showed that God's love extended to the oppressed and against the oppressors. African-Americans had a saying that there was a "*Bible* within the *Bible*." While the catechisms that the enslaved people learned taught obedience, enslaved preachers helped their flocks see that Christian religion could offer what scholars have called a "message of hope."

Some deeply religious mistresses taught enslaved African-Americans to read so that they could read the *Bible*, despite the risk that they might get dangerous ideas. Teaching enslaved African-Americans to read was against the law. Slaveholders not

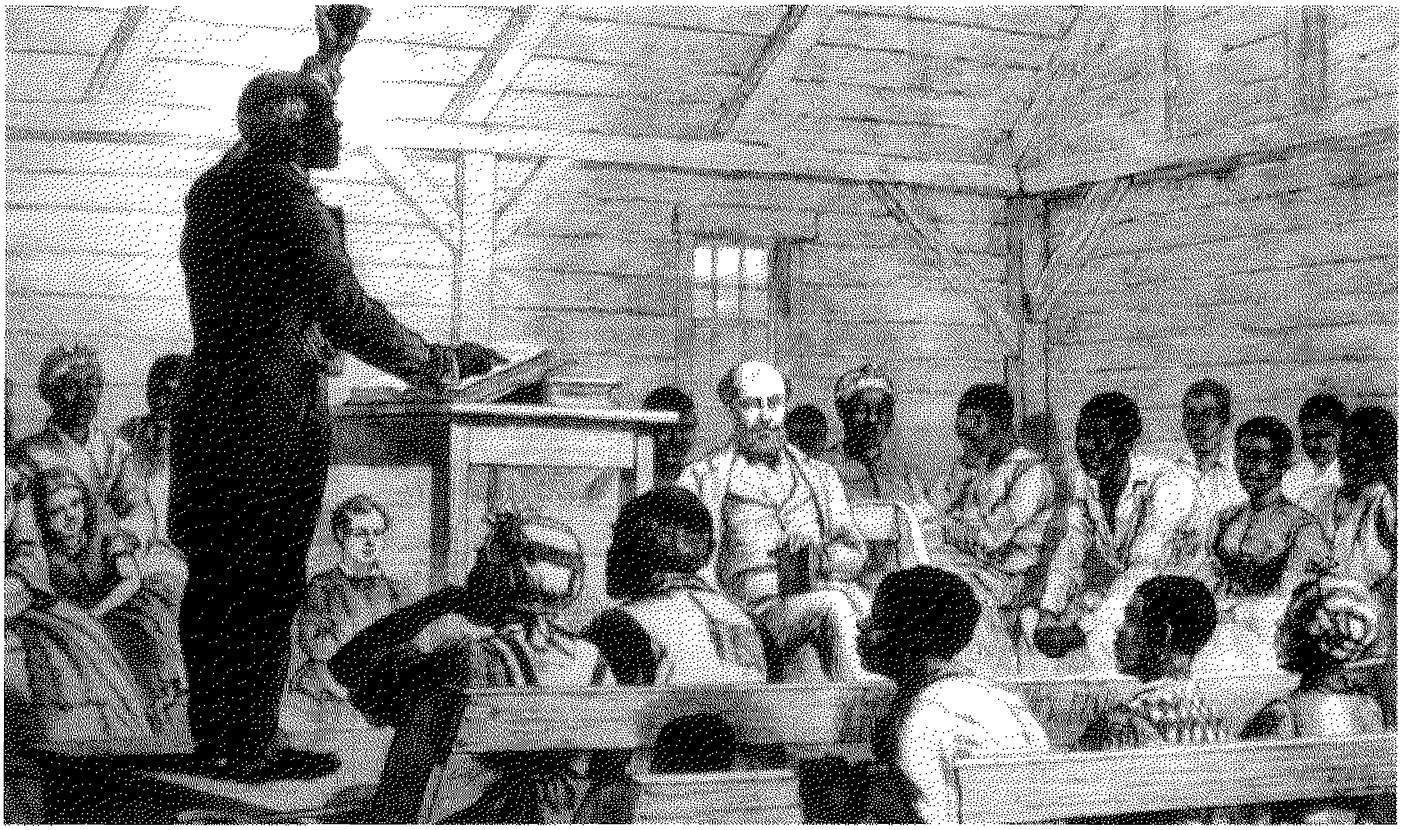
only feared that African-Americans would read those portions of the *Bible* that discussed revolts but also that those who learned to write would write out passes for themselves. This would allow them to escape to freedom. However, many denominations required that their members be literate. Being able to study the *Bible* was important. As African-Americans learned and read about the enslaved Hebrews, they tended to identify with them. If the Jews could survive the cruel bondage of the Pharaoh in Egypt, they could survive enslavement in South Carolina.

Enslaved African-Americans used religion to meet their own needs. It helped them to survive each difficult day. They added their own flavor and style. They composed sacred songs using the rhythm and chant methods that had been common in Africa. They created many spirituals such as "Go Down Moses," "Deep River," and "Swing Low-Sweet Chariot." All of these have moved beyond the African-American religious community. They have left an emotional stamp on Christian people all around the world.

As you learned earlier in the chapter on resistance to enslavement, the songs often had a double meaning. The words spoke of deliverance and a beautiful life of freedom and joy. To the masters they referred to life in heaven. However, the singer might be thinking of freedom in this world. In religious songs, these words and thoughts could be safely expressed. However, speaking those words might suggest ideas that frightened whites. They might refer to revolt in this world instead of life in the next. What the listener thought determined the meaning.

An enslaved preacher known as "David" ran into this problem. His preaching gained him a bit of fame in Savannah. Around the 1760s, his master brought him to Charleston to preach. Unfortunately, his Charleston audience found David's words about wanting freedom threatening. His master removed him from

Enslaved Africans at worship in a plantation church in about 1863. The owner keeps a watchful eye on the proceedings. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide 1-8 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.*



Charleston before he was attacked. Enslaved preachers quickly learned how to phrase their words so they did not alarm whites. At the same time, the words encouraged the enslaved to endure and wait for freedom, for the "coming of the kingdom in the year of Jubilee."

Religion ond Revolution

Religion provided a sense of worth for African-Americans. Even if whites did not respect them, blacks were worthy in the eyes of God. It gave assurance that justice would finally win, even if not in this world. Religion gave hope. Because the words had a double meaning, salvation appeared to be more than just a promised life in another world. These could be words of revolution. Perhaps the whites should have been afraid.

Religion did help inspire uprisings. Although no uprising followed David's preaching, several uprisings did involve religious leaders. These leaders often combined two things. First, they drew upon African religious mysticism. This means experiencing religious truth through feelings and emotion rather than learning by listening to teachings. Second, they added the belief that God would hear the cry of the oppressed. One of these revolutionary preachers was "Gullah Jack." He helped bring about the Vesey uprising which you read about earlier. All of these leaders provided an inspiration to stand against injustice. Without them, the revolts might not have taken place. As a result, by the 1840s South Carolina passed laws that made illegal the gathering of African-Americans in groups even to worship.

As you know, these revolts did not succeed. However, they were not the last revolts. Later ones took new forms as widespread revolutions using tactics of civil disobedience, not violent attack. Once again, religious leaders inspired and led. We shall turn to that story later.

Christian Religion with an Africon Style

While singing and preaching, African-Americans added what is called "group jubilation" to Christian religious rituals. This means audience participation, clapping, and speaking out when the Spirit moves you to do so. This is not just singing together. It is singing, swaying, and dancing at the same time, usually in response to the minister who is leading with chants or words. This had long been a part of African life. Now it became a part of American Christian religious life. When revival movements swept through South Carolina and the nation in the 1700s, African-American audiences were ready. They were already in the spirit of these emotional movements. They were probably more ready than were most whites who held their emotions in check. However, over the years that spirituality and emotion slowly found its way into white churches. This contribution has enriched the religious experiences of many people across the state and nation.

Grove Decorations

From the early days onward, African-Americans decorated graves with a variety of everyday items. African-Americans brought the tradition of decorating graves to the New World from their homelands. In the late 1800s, Europeans traveling in Africa saw graves decorated with items that the dead person had used in everyday life. Scholars think the custom was based on the belief that a dead person might return for her possessions unless she took them along. African societies used a variety of different types of items. In Ghana and the Ivory Coast, the Akan people placed pottery on the graves. People in Angola and the Congo also placed pottery and other items, such as old cooking-pots and bottles, on graves. The Yoruba sometimes buried a dead person in the floor of the house and placed a china plate on a nearby wall to indicate the spot. In many other parts of West Africa, people placed the possessions of the dead on their graves. The Kongo placed the last item used by the dead person on the grave, believing it held some of that person's spirit. They hoped that through dreams some of the abilities of the dead would find their way to the living.

African-Americans followed the Kongo tradition. They placed the last items that the deceased person had used, whether dishes, a medicine bottle, or a toy, on top of the grave. Breaking the item was customary both in Africa and in the United States. However, they put it back together in such a way that it would not



Memory jug, about 1920 to 1940, maker unknown. Tin canister with pieces of crockery and glassware. These creations, often used as part of a grave decoration, used broken pieces of items from the personal possessions of the deceased as decorations. Reproduced with permission of Louanne La Rouche. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.

look broken when it was sitting on the grave. Some believed that if the object was not broken, other family members would die. Others believed that this custom symbolized the end, or breaking, of life. The custom probably had nothing to do with the fear of theft. Stealing from a grave was considered bad luck.

Memory jugs may be an exception to this rule. A memory jug was made when a person died. The jug usually had some objects embedded in it that were important in the person's life, such as broken crockery or broken glass. Several explanations exist as to why memory jugs were made and how they were used. One is that they were used as grave decorations. Another explanation is that they were just pretty objects made in memoriam to the person but not placed on the grave. Because they were considered "pretties," people sometimes stole them. That is why they were generally hard to find even when grave decorating was more common.

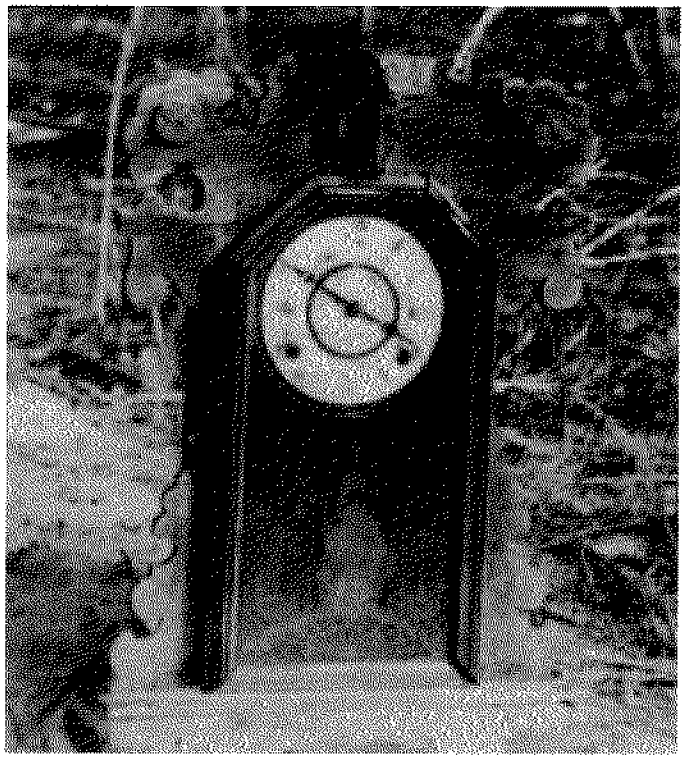
Yet another custom with African roots was ritual animal killing. A small animal, perhaps a white chicken, would be killed when a family member died. For the Kongo people, the white chicken stood for one's ancestors and for the healing power that comes from the dead. African-Americans sometimes used chicken symbols on the grave. In one graveyard in South Carolina, a researcher found glass chickens placed among oyster shells. Another found a giant white rooster on the grave of a South Carolina child buried in the 1960s.

Using some arrangement of shells was also common. Several explanations exist for this. One is that shells were associated with water. One must pass through water to reach the spirit realm underground. A researcher suggested that the shells represented a division between the lands of the living and the dead. Among the Kongo people, shells symbolize immortality. Another scholar suggested that people living on the coasts of both continents used the seashells simply because they were readily available. He noted that while the Gullah used seashells, African-Americans inland were more likely to decorate graves with such items as toys, jars of rice, or medicine bottles.

African practices influenced the use of grave markers. The Bakongo people in Africa used the color white to symbolize death. Today, many of the concrete markers have a piece of broken glass set in them with a piece of white paper behind the glass. African-Americans often place a variety of white colored items on a grave.

A twentieth century variation on the custom of marking a grave was to use clocks. Sometimes the time on them was set to twelve. This applied a bit of Christian theology, indicating the time when the dead would be awakened on Judgment Day. Sometimes, the clocks would be set to indicate the time when the person had died. One scholar believes that this was to indicate when the person became part of the spirit world.

Some African peoples believed that the dead could return to mix among the living. They carved stone figures out of a soft white rock. The figures were to act as guardians on the graves. Perhaps this is the basis for the tradition of carving wooden figures shaped roughly like a human to place on the grave.



An African-American grave in 1947 that illustrates the tradition of grave decorations, this one with a clock. Library of Congress, LC-USF34 43572.

Certainly Africans believed in honoring their dead. They respected their ancestors.

African tradition even determined the direction in which the coffin was laid in the grave. Scholars have reported that in Central Africa the coffin was laid with the head pointing to the east. People carried this custom to South Carolina and the rest of the South. Migrants who left the South carried it North.

The custom of grave decorations seems to be dying out today. The ending of this tradition is a loss. The tradition was a reminder to all that the deceased was an individual and a unique person with hopes, dreams, loves, and fears. Today death has become a big industry. It is not as personalized. We have standard grave markers, standard wreaths, and standard flower arrangements.

Establishment of Churches by Free African-Americans

South Carolina's free African-Americans helped create many institutions. Among them were churches. Enslaved African-Americans usually had to worship with or under the watchful eyes of their masters.

Free African-Americans had their own churches, even though whites checked up on them. Usually church members were free to talk about their hopes and desires in their own churches. Several churches existed in South Carolina before the Civil War. Among them were the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, several Baptist churches, and some Catholic churches.

Richard Allen and Absalom Jones founded the AME Church in Philadelphia in the 1780s. Forced to give up his place to a white worshiper, Richard Allen left the Methodist Episcopal Church. Morris Brown, a wealthy Charlestonian, started an AME church in South Carolina in 1817. Members bought land for their church and for a cemetery. Brown tried to bridge the gap between free and enslaved African-Americans. His dream was a church where both groups could work together to form a true community. Three congregations were formed in the Charleston area with over 1,000 members. By 1822 they had 3,000 members. Most of the members were enslaved, but some were free. The church served as a place of refuge for a people under great stress.

Brown's church did not last long. Denmark Vesey was an AME church leader. Even before Vesey's revolt, local authorities harassed church members and sometimes arrested them on "trumped-up" charges. Whites who resented and feared their presence often accused members of disorderly conduct. After Vesey's revolt the church was suspect. Whites feared it could be used as a place to plan future revolts. They closed the church. Its members had to worship in secret until after the Civil War. Morris Brown had to leave Charleston in 1822. Along with several others, he went to Philadelphia by way of the Underground Railroad. There he became a bishop of the AME Church. With their leaders gone, many of his fellow church members back in South Carolina joined the Scottish Presbyterian Church.

Silver Bluff Primitive Baptist Church

Morris Brown's church was not the first African-American congregation in South Carolina. A Baptist church was organized in 1773 at Beech Island, in what later became Aiken County. This church actually grew out of a camp meeting.

Camp meetings were very popular in the 1700s and 1800s. They were like modern day revival meetings except that those attending would actually camp at the location in tents and makeshift buildings instead of going home between services. The meetings would last for days. Whites welcomed African-Americans and often mixed with them at these meetings rather than banishing them to the rear. Camp meetings were popular among African-Americans even in the 1900s as both social and religious events. The meeting provided a chance to see old friends and to celebrate. People would save for months so they could go. We can easily see how some of these informal meetings could grow into organized churches.

At first, the group in the Silver Bluff Church was racially mixed. George Galphin, a large slaveholder in that region, was a supporter. He joined the Silver Bluff Church himself. He allowed two African-American ministers, David George and George Liele, to preach there. Soon blacks outnumbered whites. Liele was a powerful speaker. Both whites and blacks enjoyed his sermons. He had been enslaved, but his owner was so impressed by Liele's preaching that he freed him.

During the American Revolution the church was abandoned. British forces occupied the area. Liele, David George, and about 50 enslaved members of Silver Bluff Church sided with the British. Many of them left the country after the British surrender. The church was reestablished in 1783 under an enslaved African-American minister, Rev. Jesse Peter. Much smaller now, the church struggled for several years after the war. However, it could not survive and closed in 1793.

Catholic Churches

While Methodists and Baptists organized churches in the late 1700s and early 1800s, Catholics became active in the Charleston area. The Catholic Church sent Bishop John England from Ireland to America. He did more than organize white Catholics in his diocese. He also helped African-Americans organize both Catholic churches and schools. The effort was not without some difficulty and opposition. St. James, the Greater Catholic Church was founded around 1824 in Ritter, near Charleston. At first it served both races. In time, however, all the whites left. Vincent Davis, once enslaved, kept it going. The church is still going strong. Davis's descendants are still active members.

Ladson Presbyterian Church

Before the Civil War, only a few African-Americans were Presbyterians. Ladson United Presbyterian Church is the oldest African-American church in Columbia. It was founded in 1828. The property was given to the church because African-Americans could not own land there. In 1838, members built a chapel. The Rev. George Ladson conducted services there until his death in 1876. The church still stands, but the original chapel burned down in 1896.

African-American Religion after the Civil War

We see that African-Americans in pre-Civil War South Carolina were deeply religious. They took active roles in building churches whenever and wherever they could. Frequently whites helped and supervised. In time the churches often became all African-American. Given the chance, these churches played important roles. They provided resources of comfort and faith. Churches were a center of social life for people who were not welcomed elsewhere in society. They helped develop organizing skills in members. Until the Civil War was over, those skills were kept inside the church.

After the Civil War, the churches gained independence from white supervision. The energy and organizational skills that had been bottled up in a few churches mushroomed. We can see this energy and skill at work in the growth of existing African-American congregations. We can also see it in the creation of many new African-American churches. Church growth created more social and cultural outlets as well.

When the Civil War ended, African-Americans were eager to test their freedom. One way to test free-

dom was to move away from the churches identified with whites. Many white churches wanted to keep black members. However, they did not want to allow black participation in decision-making. In addition, they insisted on keeping segregated seating for services. As a result, African-Americans left these churches. Two church groups with very similar names, the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, sent missionaries to the South. Both attracted large numbers of people in many new churches.

The Growth of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church

After the Civil War, the AME Church was reestablished in South Carolina. Bishop Daniel A. Payne, whom you will meet later in the chapter on literature, reorganized it in South Carolina in 1865. His efforts in Charleston led to the reopening of the Emmanuel AME Church. This had been the congregation of Denmark Vesey. You will recall that it had been closed in the 1820s following the revolt he led. Now it could serve as a focal point for worship by African-Americans in Charleston. The AME Church in South Carolina grew quickly. By the early 1900s, more than 79,000 became members.

African-Americans founded a number of other AME churches after the Civil War. A group of freedmen founded Bethel AME church in Columbia in 1866. White Hall AME church was founded in Jenkinsville in 1866. It was the first African-American church in that area. Liberty Hill AME was founded in Summerton the next year. The Liberty Hill Church is another example of the influence of the church in the lives of African-Americans. Not only did it serve as a place of worship, but it was a place for skills and leadership ability to develop at a time when most other avenues to power were closed.

In the mid-1900s, Liberty Hill's pastor, Joseph A. Delaine, headed the Clarendon County NAACP unit. He helped begin the fight to get school bus transportation for African-American children. As you will see when we discuss civil rights, this case became part of the larger effort that ended segregated public schools. As you will learn, Rev. DeLaine paid a high price for his leadership.

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

A group of African-Americans who left a white church founded the AME Zion Church in New York in 1796. By the early 1820s, the church had begun to grow. It first sent missionaries into South Carolina after the Civil War. In 1866 freedmen started the Metropolitan AME Zion Church in Chester. The AME Zion Church grew and by 1890 had almost 45,000 members in South Carolina.

Many of the early leaders of the AME Zion Church were also leaders in Reconstruction era South Carolina. Frederick Albert Clinton, who had learned to read and write while still enslaved, helped organize the Mount Carmel AME Zion Church in Lancaster County. Clinton was a representative from Lancaster at the constitutional convention in 1868. He was a state senator until 1877. His brother, Isom Caleb Clinton, served as a minister at the same church. Isom opened a school there for African-American children. He helped establish thirty churches and eventually became a bishop. Clinton Junior College in Rock Hill was named for him.

The first minister at Metropolitan AME Zion Church, D. I. Walker, was Chester's Commissioner of Education from 1870 to 1874. He served in the state Senate from 1874 to 1877. In his role as church leader, he helped establish the AME Zion Conference in the state.

The Christian Methodist Episcapal Church

Both the AME and the AME Zion churches grew much larger than the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. It was originally the southern division of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But in 1870 it broke away as the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America. It became the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in 1954. After the Civil War, African-Americans in this church wished to be independent of the white church organization. The Methodists initially wanted to keep their African-American members, but they wanted individual churches segregated by race. The Colored Methodist Episcopal Church grew slowly in South Carolina. African-Americans did not trust it. They

remembered its ties with the old Southern Methodist Churches and called it the "Rebel Church." By 1890, church members in the state numbered only about 3,500. The church did begin to grow as a new generation came of age. However, it remained smaller than the other African-American Methodist churches.

An early leader of this denomination was Richard H. Vanderhorst, who had once been enslaved. He became known for his preaching. African-Americans organized Sidney Park Church in Columbia in 1885. A fire destroyed the original building in 1893. The replacement, built with volunteer labor and the $1,000 they raised, still stands.

The United Methodist Church

Early in American history, the Methodist church stated its opposition to enslavement. They suggested that no members should be slaveholders. To no one's surprise, the Southern churches did not accept the suggestion at that time. The church gained few members in the South until it was willing to suggest that perhaps the benefits of Christianity were greater than the disadvantages of enslavement.

The Methodist church was actually organized in South Carolina before the Civil War. It was mainly African-American. In the Methodist church of the early 1800s, African-Americans were lay leaders treated with a degree of equality rarely found.

In 1865, Northern missionaries founded the conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in South Carolina. After the Civil War, Northern Methodists organized a Freedman's Aid Society to help African-Americans in the South. It was responsible for developing many schools and colleges. Baker Institute in Orangeburg, for example, trained many of those who became ministers of the church. Baker Institute eventually became Claflin College.

Centenary Church in Charleston was among the churches founded. Members bought it from the white congregation of a Baptist church for $20,000 in gold. They sold their valuables in order to make the purchase. A freedman named Lupis founded the Mount Zion United Methodist Church in Kingstree in 1869. Members built a church building in 1904 and replaced it in 1972. Other churches were Wesley United Methodist Church, founded in Columbia in 1869, Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, founded in Orangeburg in 1866, and Friendship United Methodist Church, founded in Nesmith in the 1860s.

In the 1880s, the Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal-South, and Methodist Protestant churches all united. In 1968 after further additions, the church became the United Methodist Church. This racially mixed group has included many active African-American members and leaders.

One of the ironic aspects of the post-Civil War era is the reversal of the segregated areas of life. Before the war, many churches were integrated while most other parts of life were segregated. After the war, blacks and whites began to associate in politics and other aspects of life. However, churches became more and more separated from each other. So they remained. Even today, blacks and whites rarely worship together on Sunday morning. Martin Luther King, Jr., himself a minister, once called Sunday morning the most segregated time in America.

Both groups appear to have preferred this religious separation. Each could have its own leadership, social, and political activities. This separation was probably more important for the blacks after whites shut them out of other leadership areas. However, whites did little to encourage church integration. Once enslavement had ended, whites felt little or no need to control or watch black worship gatherings. Recently, Methodists in South Carolina have made an effort to overcome this separateness with the election of Bishop Joseph B. Bethea, an African-American to head the South Carolina Methodist Conference of the United Methodist Church. Such moves could lead black Methodists in the state back into a unified church. However, as of the early 1990s, the AME and the AME Zion churches tend to attract more African-Americans than the United Methodists.

The Presbyterion Church

The Presbyterian church, much like the Methodists, had also opposed enslavement until about 1820. Despite this, it had few African-American members until around 1870. After the Civil War, the group organized a number of churches in South Carolina that were affiliated with the Northern church. The Second Presbyterian Church was organized at Sumter in 1880.

As with many of the other African-American churches, it worked on self-help projects. Its second minister, J. C. Watkins, started a school. This was the Kendall Institute, which held classes from first grade through high school. The Trinity United Presbyterian Church was organized in Mayesville in 1887. Many community leaders came from this church. McKinley Washington, for example, was both a minister and an important state legislator of the 1980s and 1990s. Although the Presbyterian church was not able to claim a large number of members, it produced a number of religious leaders. It also produced a college president. Daniel Jackson Sanders became president of Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte in 1891.

The Episcopal Church

The Episcopal church had allowed free African-Americans to belong to the church before the Civil War. However, they were segregated from white members. During Reconstruction, African-Americans started St. Mark's Protestant Episcopal Church in Charleston. It did not have an African-American minister until 1887. Although the congregation made large contributions, they were not admitted to the Diocese because of race. St. Barnabas Protestant Episcopal Church was founded in 1889 in Jenkinsville. It ran a school that provided an education for African-Americans for many years before it closed.

In 1875, the Reformed Episcopal Church was founded in South Carolina. Most of the rural African-American churches joined it, although St. Mark's did not. By the early 1900s, it had over 2,250 members. That was more than twice as many members as the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Catholic Churches after the Civil War

After the Civil War, a new Catholic church was founded in Charleston. In 1866 African-American Catholics bought an old synagogue. In 1867 when remodeling was completed, it opened as St. Peter's Catholic Church. Members opened a school at the church later that year. As the result of a merger in 1967, it became St. Patrick's Church.

Pentecostal and Holiness Churches

In the 1900s, African-Americans created a number of new churches in South Carolina. Many of these were responding to the new Pentecostal movement. Pentecostals believe in freely expressing religious feelings that are inspired by the Holy Spirit, such as "speaking in tongues," or speaking in strange languages. These included the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church of God of the Americas, founded in 1922. The St. Mark Holiness Church was organized in Salters in 1880. The Greater St. James Holiness Church was established in Williamsburg County in 1931. The Bible Way Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ World Wide was started near Columbia in 1963. The church began broadcasting services over the radio in 1972. It also built a nursery school for the community of Arthurtown.

The Baptist Church

Baptists formed South Carolina's largest African-American church after the Civil War. The Baptist movement had attracted many poor people, both white and black, even before the Civil War. In general, individual Baptist churches have always tended to be quite independent. This made it much easier for the African-American churches to split away from the Southern Baptist Convention. In many cases, African-American congregations were expelled from the white churches. African-Americans created so many new Baptist churches in the state after the war that forming a separate convention was quite easy for them. By the end of the 1870s, African-Americans had their own state Baptist conventions all over the South. In the 1890s, the state conventions formed the National Baptist Convention of the United States. The convention assisted with church literature, music, and the organizational efforts of sending missionaries abroad. By the beginning of the 1900s, the South Carolina convention, along with other National Baptists, were sending missionaries to Africa. By the middle of the 1970s, African-American Baptists in South Carolina numbered about 365,000.

Many famous Baptist churches date back to the period after the Civil War. These include the First Af-



African-American Baptists practice the ritual of immersion in Darlington County in Cedar Creek in 1904. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide 186 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy Darlington County Historical Commission.*

rican Baptist Church in Beaufort. It stands next to the Robert Smalls house. The Central Baptist Church is located nearby on St. Helena Island. The Central Church also provided a gathering place and school for early Civil War missionaries to the South Carolina Sea Islands. These people, who were mainly Quakers, founded the famous Penn School on St. Helena Island.

Another major church founded during this period was the Morris Street Baptist Church in Charleston. In 1865, Fleming W. Prince, who later became a graduate of Benedict College, and seventy-three other people began the church, meeting at first in a two-room building. In Camden, 104 people formed the Mount Moriah Church. Monroe Boykin, who had once been enslaved, led them for the next thirty-four years. In Greenville, sixty-nine people began holding services in a wooden church in 1867. This became the Springfield Baptist Church. Charles Gandy was their minister for the next fifty years. He also played a major role in the state convention. John Phillips, who later studied religion at the University of South Carolina, started the Friendship Baptist Church in Aiken in 1866. One of their pastors was the famous Richard Carroll, a graduate of Benedict College. As you know, Carroll was a major figure around the turn of the century. He was one of a number of church leaders who advised moderation and yielding to whites on matters of segregation.

While there are other African-American religious groups in South Carolina, such as the Black Muslims, most of them are quite small in number. Because of their small size, they have much less influence on community life. As you can see from this survey of major groups, African-Americans have a rich and varied religious history in South Carolina.

People Helping People: the Reverend Charles Jaggers

Thousands of wonderful and remarkable stories exist of people helping other people during the hard times of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Most of them are now lost. One that has not been lost is the story of the Reverend Charles Jaggers. Born into enslavement in 1831 in Fairfield County, Jaggers underwent a religious conversion when he was fourteen. He began preaching. That part is not so unusual, but the



A Richard Roberts photo of the Rev. Charles Jaggers in the early 1920s before his death in 1924. Although he was born into enslavement, he became a preacher who spent his life ministering to prisoners and built the only home for elderly African-Americans that existed in the period. Courtesy of Roberts family.

rest of the story is. He managed to raise enough money through his preaching to start an old folks home in Columbia. It was the only one in Columbia for African-Americans. He also raised money for a home for African-American orphans. Jaggers did not just preach to those who could afford to give him money. He became a minister to convicts. When he died in 1924, his funeral attracted thousands of people ranging from ex-convicts to bankers and politicians. Today you can see a bronze statue of him in the Columbia Museum of Art.

The Political and Social Role of Churches

Had it not been for churches providing opportunities for schooling, many African-Americans would have had little chance for an education. Church schools offered an elementary education to many African-Americans. Some went beyond that.

Churches also played a support role in other ways. When Martha Schofield first came to South Carolina to teach in the years after the Civil War, the thanks she received from African-American church members helped keep up her spirits. After she founded her school in Aiken in 1869, the local AME church held a special meeting to thank her. Later on, the school was short of money. The school might have to close. The church came to the rescue. They held an exhibition which raised $42. That does not sound like much, but it saved the school!

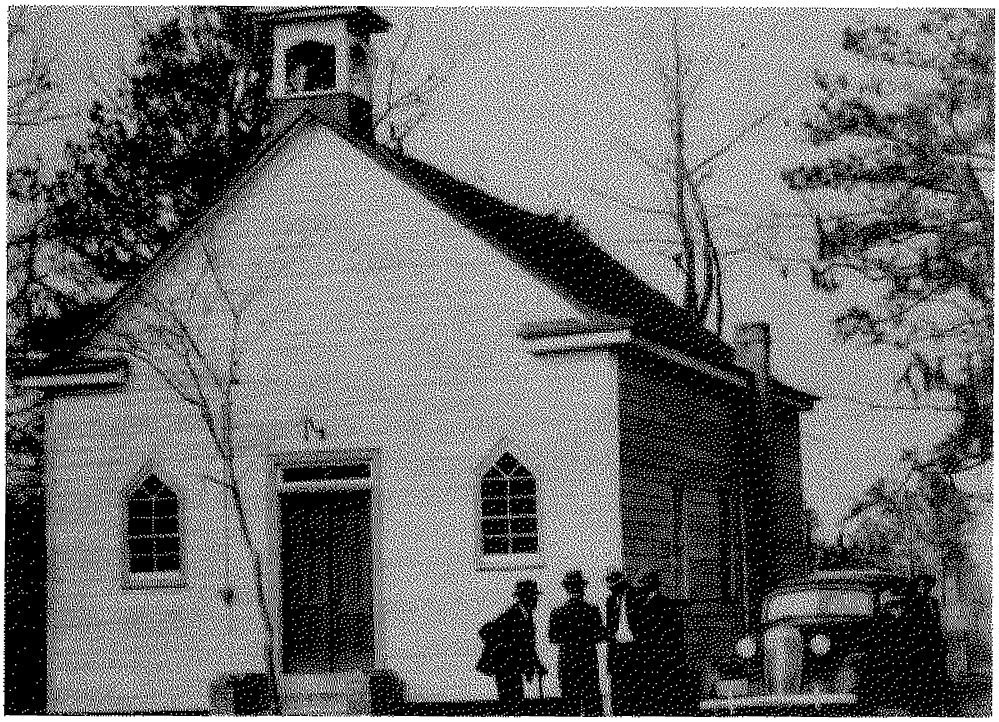
Back then, there were no government services to help the poor. Churches also assumed this role. For example, in 1865 members of a Presbyterian church in Columbia were caring for two elderly people who were unable to care for themselves. In 1876, a drought left many members of a Barnwell Methodist church near starvation. Abram Middleton, the minister, took the lead in appealing for help from well-to-do members of the community.

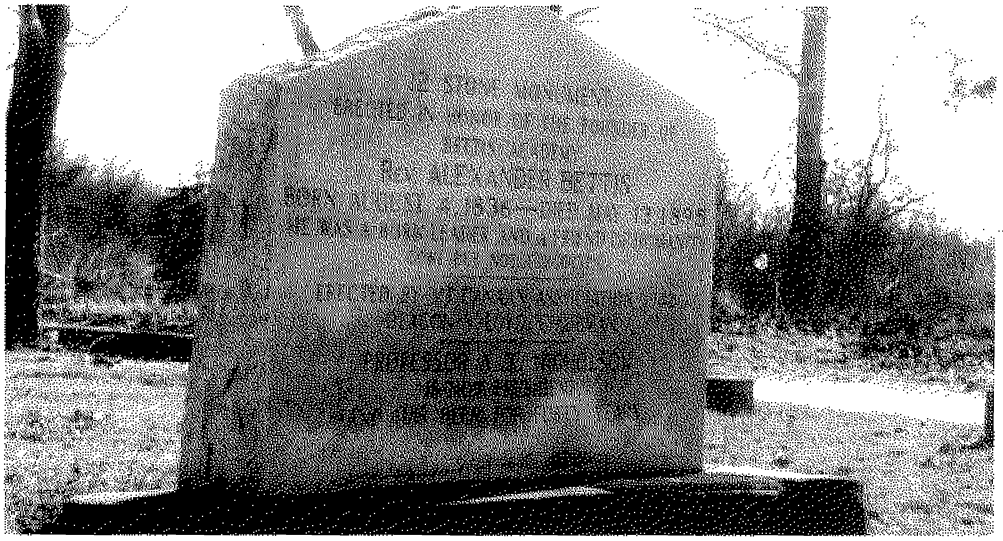
Churches also played at least a limited role in politics. From the time of Reconstruction to the present day, African-American ministers have focused sermons on the evils of society and how to correct them. Most of the African-American churches supported the policies of the Republican government. Members of the Methodist church were among the most politically active. Two Methodist ministers, Benjamin Franklin Randolph and Benjamin Franklin Whittemore, were leaders in the Republican Party. You may remember that Randolph was assassinated in 1868. Whittemore held political office at both the national and the state levels. However, whites forced

him to leave the state in 1877. A number of other Methodist ministers were delegates to the 1868 convention. Many other churches actively encouraged their members to vote during Reconstruction. However, some churches preferred to keep their religion separate from their politics. They believed their job was to focus on the saving of souls.

Ministers became central figures in African-American communities. These active, energetic people served as role models and leaders during the era of segregation. They provided guidance in harsh times. Abraham Robinson built up church membership all across the state before he was called to serve in Philadelphia. When not preaching, he used his energies as a boxer and wrestler. A. J. Stokes, who served at eight churches in South Carolina before he was called to Alabama, was active in the National Baptist Convention as well. Jacob Javan Durham turned down a position as professor at Meharry Medical College after finishing a degree there. Instead, he returned to South Carolina. He wanted to help his people. His efforts helped create Morris College in Sumter.

As you will learn in the chapter on civil rights, African-American ministers played a central role in





(Top) An African-American church in Moncks Corner in 1941. Photo by Jack Delano. Library of Congress LC-USF34 43460. (Bottom) Monument for Rev. Alexander Bettis one of many ministers who helped further education after the state failed to provide decent public education for African-Americans. The monument stands at the site of the Bettis Academy in Edgefield County. It was erected in 1942. Photo by Aimee Smith.

the struggle. As you have learned in this chapter, that was not at all a new role for them to play. The post-Civil War African-American churches were the place for building social, political, and cultural as well as religious leadership in the state. African-American ministers have always played a leadership role. In the early years of the civil rights struggle, ministers were often leaders in the NAACP. They provided a meeting place for the NAACP in their churches, often at great risk. Some churches were bombed as a result. The election of I. DeQuincey Newman to the state Senate in 1984 was not mere chance. He was not only the first African-American state senator in over 100 years. He was also a Methodist minister and a state leader of the NAACP. His education in church-founded schools and his leadership role in the church had prepared him. He and many others were ready when the time was right.

A Religion of Endurance ond Hope

As the 1900s draws to a close, African-American churches are grappling with new problems. As the rest of society, they face the problems of drug use and family break-up. Keeping young people in the church can be difficult. Churches have developed programs to tackle these problems. By acting as Big Brothers and Big Sisters, church members reach out to young people in the community. They offer help with schoolwork and a sympathetic adult figure who is there when young people need someone with whom to talk. Project Spirit, for example, is a program started in 1978 to help elementary school children develop pride in their cultural identity while learning to live in a racially-mixed world. Parents are drawn in and expected to participate. By doing all this, African-American churches are simply continuing a long tradition of combating racism and providing help for those in the community who are in need.

As you have seen, churches have generally remained separated by race. Churches like the United Methodist, which have experimented with sending white ministers to black churches and black ministers to white churches, are still unusual. Cases like Bishop Bethea are an exception. This may be because of the need to build racial pride and strength in the face of so many hardships. From this pride and strength comes courage to work for a gospel of social justice and equality. Certainly many African-American religious leaders during the periods of Reconstruction and segregation understood this need and developed this courage. From a deeply held religious conviction, they worked to advance African-Americans toward full equality. South Carolinians of all races can look with pride at the help and leadership they provided in the face of adversity.

▼ ▼ ▼CHAPTER 10

Literature

Few African-Americans prior to the Civil War were able to record their experiences for us. After all, the vast majority were enslaved, at least in the South. All but a few were unable to read and write. They had little time to reflect on their lives. The first autobiography by an enslaved African was written in 1831. The first book of essays by an African-American was published in 1841. The first novel was published in 1859. Such works were few and far between. After the Civil War, life began to change. Change was not easy because living on farms tied most freedmen to long days of hard labor. However, when they had the chance to get an education, they took advantage of it. Many began to express themselves on paper. As a result we can find a large body of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry from the late 1800s and the 1900s. Freedom enabled many South Carolinians to express themselves through the written word.

How can we categorize South Carolina's African-American writers? In many ways each individual is different. Nevertheless, they share a common experience as an oppressed minority. Most rose out of poverty to succeed in life. All of them are or were spokespersons for other African-Americans. In their work, they describe what life was like for African-Americans in their own time. Some were scholars without whom we would know little about African-American culture before the modern era. Some were civil rights leaders who spoke out against racial injustice. Some wrote stories that provide African-American children with a literature of their own. Many wrote both fiction and non-fiction.

Perhaps their special perspective makes these South Carolina writers unique and gives them all something in common. Look at these lines from a modern-day South Carolina poet, Winthrop College professor Dr. Dorothy Perry Thompson. In her poem "Wheeler Hill," she describes the "boundaries" between the African-American neighborhood in Columbia where she grew up and the surrounding white neighborhoods. She expresses a different set of feelings than would a writer from another ethnic group.

> "Everything's serious now
> Wish I could go back to the time
> When we laughed all over Barnwell Street
> 'Cause Tank tore his pant
> When he tried to climb the fence
> To see what the white folks were doing
> In those big, brick houses on the other side.
> They had a sign on our side.
> KEEP OUT, it read And we did. . ."

[From *Wheeler Hill and Other Poems*, copyright 1987 by Dorothy Perry Thompson. Used with permission of Dorothy Perry Thompson.]

Brer Rabbit Stories: Simon Brown and Dr. William Faulkner

Let us go back and begin with the spoken rather than written word. Ever since humans learned to talk, they have loved to tell stories. Inevitably, many tales are lost or changed as they are told and retold. As we noted in an earlier chapter, many versions of the "trickster" stories exist. We are fortunate that someone cared enough to tell the stories and that someone else cared enough to write them down and have them published. The published stories have allowed us to preserve some of the best of the tales that enslaved African-Americans told in the time before the Civil War.

Generations of children have enjoyed the stories about the trickster Brer Rabbit, who usually

seems to come out a winner in the battle of wits with his animal friends. Simon Brown, a former enslaved African-American from Virginia, recounted many of these stories. He told these stories to his young friend, William Faulkner. As a boy, Faulkner lived on his family's farm in Society Hill. In 1900 when Faulkner was ten years old, Simon Brown came to work there. Over the next seven years, Simon Brown told the child many stories about these animals who could talk, as well as tales about life during enslavement. Brown died while Faulkner was away at college and was buried in a cemetery in Society Hill. Faulkner graduated from college and received a doctoral degree in philosophy. He served as a minister and a secretary for the YMCA. Always interested in folklore, Faulkner became known as a teller of tales from African-American folklore. These were eventually published in a book entitled *The Days When Animals Talked.*

The stories have a universal appeal, but they are more than simple children's tales. Enslaved African-Americans who were able to identify themselves with Brer Rabbit handed them down. They give us some insight into the feelings and sense of humor of these enslaved people. Like the enslaved African-Americans, Brer Rabbit had to rely on his own intelligence and abilities to survive. Many of the stories will tickle your funnybone as well. "Brer Fox Meets Mr. Trouble" is typical.

Brer Rabbit met Brer Fox one morning on the big road.

"How are you, Brer Rabbit?" asked Brer Fox.

"I'm not feeling too good, Brer Fox," answered Brer Rabbit. "Trouble's been visiting me."

"What do you mean, Trouble? Who's he, and what's he like?" asked Brer Fox.

"Brer Fox, you mean to tell me you've never met Mister Trouble, and you wouldn't know him if you saw him?" responded Brer Rabbit in surprise.

"No, sir, I wouldn't know Trouble if I met him in the middle of the big road," said Brer Fox.

"Well, I'll take you to where Mister Trouble lives, and you can meet him," proposed Brer Rabbit.

"Thank you, Brer Rabbit. I'd like to meet him," replied Brer Fox.

"Let's go, then, because I think he's still at home," said Brer Rabbit.

So off they went.

When they got close to a barnyard, Brer Rabbit said, "Right over there in that barn is where Mister Trouble stays. All you have to do is go over there in front of that door, stand up on your hind legs, and holler, 'Wahoo! Mister Trouble!' and he will come out."

Brer Fox crawled under the fence and went over to the barn. He stood up on his hind legs in front of the door and yelled as loud as he could, "Wahoo! Mister Trouble!"

And then Mister Trouble came bursting out of that barn door in the form of a passel of hound dogs such as Brer Fox had never seen in all his born days! When the hounds saw Brer Fox a-standing there, they lit after him with such a barking as you've never heard in your life. The whole kit and caboodle came tumbling over themselves as they tried to grab Brer Fox.

Poor old Brer Fox hardly got two jumps ahead of those hounds before they were on top of him as he scrambled through a hole in the fence. Two hounds grabbed his tail so hard that it broke off in their mouths, and he was a bobtailed fox from that day to this.

Brer Rabbit just stood there a-looking at poor old Brer Fox. And then he said solemnly, "Never go looking for Trouble, Brer Fox. He'll find you soon enough."

[From *The Days When the Animals Talked: Black American Folktales and How They Came to Be,* by William J. Faulkner. Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1977. Reprinted with permission of Marie Faulkner Brown.]

No doubt you figured out the ending long before Brer Fox did. Regardless, Brer Rabbit gave him sound advice!

Fiction and Poetry

In addition to other obstacles, African-American writers had difficulty in finding publishers in the 1800s. As a result, a "flowering" of African-American fiction did not take place until the 1900s.

Much of the early writing prior to 1900 had a religious theme. Many of those who published in the 1800s did so privately or with the help of the AME and the Baptist church presses. In the early 1900s, many African-American writers had to depend on newspapers and magazines with African-American ownership. Some earned their living doing other kinds of work. Among them were several ministers. Many of these people are not well-known today. You may not be able to find their work in your local library.

Nevertheless, we can pick and choose from many talented people when we describe the literary contributions of South Carolina's African-Americans. They include J. Max Barber of Blackstock, a poet and editor of *Voice of the Negro;* Joshua Henry Jones, Jr. of Orangeburg, a poet, journalist, and novelist whose works include *The Heart of the World and Other Poems* (1919); and William Pickens of Anderson County, a civil rights leader, editor, and educator, who was field secretary for the NAACP for twenty years.

Some of the authors from the middle 1900s to the modern day include Vivian Ayers of Chester, a poet, playwright, and teacher who wrote *Spice Dawns* (1953); Julian Mayfield of Greer, a playwright, actor, and novelist whose works include *Fire* (1949) and *The Other Foot* (1952); Mamie Fields, author of *Lemon Swamp and Other Places: A Carolina Memoir* (1983); journalist John McCray; Nikki Finney of Sumter, a contemporary poet and novelist; Dori Sanders of York County, who wrote the award-winning book *Clover* (1990) as well as another book about South Carolina, *Her Own Place* (1993); and Listervelt Middleton of Pineville, a broadcaster and poet, whose work has appeared in a number of anthologies and magazines.

In addition to these, many more African-Americans have been busy writing. In the following pages, you will meet a few of them.

Clarissa M. Thompson of Columbia may have been the first African-American woman from South Carolina to have her work published. She was the author of *Treading the Winepress: or, A Mountain of Misfortune* (1885-86). It was published in a newspaper, *The Boston Advocate,* as a forty-chapter serial. Thompson was the eldest of nine children. Her father had been a delegate to the state's 1868 constitutional convention and served in the legislature for six years during Reconstruction. A number of her relatives were important people, and one of her brothers became a physician in Charleston. Thompson studied at the Howard School in Columbia and then at S.C. Normal School. After completing her education, she became a teacher at Howard School and then at Poplar Grove School in Abbeville. People knew her as a good and capable teacher. Soon Allen University offered her a teaching position. She taught history, Latin, algebra, and geography. In 1886, she left to take a teaching position at a school in Texas.

Like many other authors and scholars, she had always liked to read. Although she is not as well-known today as some of the other people you will meet in this book, her writing was well received at the time. She wrote a number of essays and some poetry. A Texas newspaper published a short novel, *Only a Flirtation.* Her novel, *Treading the Winepress,* describes Columbia, S.C. in thinly-veiled terms as a beautiful "City of Flowers."

Annie Greene Nelson's literary bent probably came from her father, who liked to tell stories about life in the African-American community. Some of the stories were those of her great-grandmother who had come to the U.S. as an enslaved African. Ms. Nelson was born in 1902 in Darlington County. She was one of South Carolina's first African-American women novelists and the first to become well-known in the 1900s. One of thirteen children of sharecroppers who encouraged her to learn to read, she grew up doing typical farm chores and picking cotton. She was able to attend school only during the months when she was not needed on the farm. Although going to school required a seven mile walk, she made the journey whenever possible. She attended Benedict College and then Voorhees College. After graduating she worked as a nurse and as a school teacher. After marrying, she moved to Columbia where she founded a kindergarten for African-American children and taught there. It was the first one in Columbia.

Her love of reading eventually led her to begin to write stories based on her own experiences as an African-American. A poem, "What Do You Think of Mother?" was published in 1925. Her first novel, *After the Storm,* was published in 1942. Over the years, she wrote a number of other books and plays about



A Richard Roberts photo of Annie Greene Nelson holding her three-month old child in 1928. A scholar came across this picture while examining African-American photography. It led to her rediscovery as a novelist and getting national recognition. Courtesy of Roberts family.

African-American life. Most of these show blacks and whites living together peacefully. Her other work includes *The Dawn Appears* (1944) and *Don't Walk on My Dreams* (1961). She remained active even at an age when many people retire. At the age of eighty, she went back to school to study drama because she wanted to perform in a play she had written. Her literary career continued. Annie Greene Nelson died in 1993, a writer to the end.

The first African-American listed in *Who's Who in American Women* was Arthenia J. Bates Millican. She was born in Sumter in 1920. Her degrees include a bachelor's degree from Morris College, a master's degree from Atlanta University, and a Ph.D. from Louisiana State University. She has had a long career in higher education, teaching for eighteen years at Louisiana State University. In 1973, she accepted a position as professor of English at Norfolk State University. Dr. Millican is a writer as well as an educator. *Seeds Beneath the Snow* (1969) is a collection of short stories about life in the modern South. Her novel, *The Deity Nodded* (1970), has an urban setting and is based on the experiences of her sister who became a Muslim. Her writings in the 1970s and 1980s include a number of short stories and other novels.

Alice Childress said that her love of the theater came from her grandmother. Several of her plays have been produced off-Broadway. Born in Charleston in 1920, she has written novels, short stories, and non-fiction as well as plays. She grew up in Harlem and lived in New York as an adult. Her novel, *A Short Walk* (1979), describes the Harlem Renaissance. The Harlem Renaissance was an important movement among African-American artists and writers that we shall describe later in the book. Childress's plays include *Let's Hear It for the Queen* (1976) and *When the Rattlesnake Sounds* (1975). She wrote a number of children's books. *A Hero Ain't Nothin' But a Sandwich* (1973) is a story about the grim side of drug use. *Rainbow Jordan* (1981) is about growing up written from the viewpoint of a fourteen-year-old girl. Her work is quite popular. You can probably find a number of her children's books at local libraries.

Tommy Scott Young of Blair is a poet, a director, and a producer. His publications include *Crazy Wolf Sings a Crazy Wolf Song* (1973), *Black Blues and Swing Songs* (1977), and *Tommy Scott Young Spins Magical Tales* (1985). When Young was a child, his family moved to Philadelphia. However, they returned to South Carolina because the cold weather made his asthma harder to manage. In the South of the 1950s, he attended a one-room segregated schoolhouse and a military school. He entered the Air Force in 1960. After completing his service in 1963, he returned to attend Benedict College when he had trouble finding a good job in Baltimore. Because of his interest in art, his teachers persuaded him to go to California. There he studied at the Watts Writers Workshop in Los Angeles. He graduated from California





(Above Left) Arthenia Bates Millican. Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library. (Above Right) Tommy Scott Young. Courtesy of Tommy Scott Young. (Right) Alice Childress. Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.



State University with a B.A. in painting and sculpture and a minor in theatrical arts. After these educational journeys all over the nation, he decided to come home.

His activity in the arts goes well beyond just writing. He has directed and acted in plays he wrote. Because he thought that school children seeing well-know artists perform was important, he established the Kitani Foundation in 1974. He has also been an artist-in-residence for the Arts Commissions in South and North Carolina and for Georgia's Council for the Arts. He likes to have his poems read aloud while other people dance and play music. This kind of work takes us back to the oral tradition followed by African-Americans since their first arrival in America.

Percival Everett has taught school, played the guitar, and even herded sheep for a living. He is a scholar who tried his hand at a number of things before he became interested in writing. The son of a dentist, he was born in Georgia and raised in Columbia. Graduating from high school in 1974, he left for college at the University of Miami. He always liked to travel and to fish. He became interested in philosophy and was studying for a Ph.D. at the University of Oregon when he decided to enter some of his short stories in a writing contest. His teachers had always encouraged his interest in literature. He won a writing fellowship to Brown University and obtained a master's degree there. His first novel, *Suder*, a story about a baseball player, was published in 1984 when he was twenty-six. By 1989 he had achieved success in the academic world as associate professor of English and Director of the Graduate Creative Writing Program at the University of Kentucky. He published another novel, *For Her Dark Sin*, in 1990. He has also published a book about Vietnam, *Walk Me to the Distance*, and a book of short stories.

Although Eleanora Tate is not a native of South Carolina, she lived in the state for several years. By birth a Midwesterner, Tate graduated from Drake University in Iowa and worked for an African-American newspaper in Iowa before turning to children's literature. Her books include *The Secret of Gumbo Grove*, which is set in South Carolina. It won the Parents' Choice Gold Seal in 1987. Both Nickelodeon and Public Television have dramatized another book, *Just an Overnight Guest*. She is also a poet and a writer of non-fiction.

Autobiographies and Non-Fiction

A number of South Carolina writers have left us a unique kind of literary treasure, the autobiography. Autobiographies tell the story of a person's life in their own words. Most of South Carolina's African-American non-fiction writers are people who are well-known for accomplishments outside the field of literature. These include the civil rights leaders Jesse Jackson and Septima Poinsett Clark. Cleveland Sellers, author of *River of No Return*, was a leader in the student protest movement. While you will meet many writers in this chapter, you will meet many of these more famous civil rights leaders and writers in other chapters.

Jacob Stroyer's autobiography, *My Life in the South*, was published in 1879. It was the first by a former enslaved African-American from South Carolina. Stroyer's father was born in Sierra Leone, Africa, and brought to America as a boy. His mother was born in enslavement. Jacob himself was one of fifteen children. He was born and reared on a South Carolina plantation with 465 other enslaved people. In his autobiography, Stroyer, who later became a minister in the AME Church, describes the evils of enslavement. For example, he tells how his father could not use his surname, Stroyer, in public. Instead, he had to use the master's name. He tells funny stories and stories about day-to-day life on a plantation. He relates his experiences as an enslaved African-American during the Civil War. His master sent him to wait on the officers and work on the fortifications at Sullivan's Island. Reading his book is a sobering experience for anyone who thinks there was anything nice about enslavement. His life story is also uplifting. It is the tale of an individual rising out of enslavement to become a leader in his community.

In his autobiography, *Recollections of Seventy Years* (1888), Daniel A. Payne recalls how as a teacher he had so few resources that he was forced to make his own books. Anxious to teach science to his students, he killed and stuffed various animals, including snakes, alligators, sharks, and insects. These were displayed on the wall of his school in Charleston. Once he even purchased a live alligator, and had one of his students incite the animal to bite. When the alligator's mouth was open, Payne shot him and then cut his throat. He dissected the alligator and hung it up for the students to examine. This is a far cry from the modern day frog which has given grief to so many biology students.

Payne, born in Charleston in 1811, brought this same enthusiasm to everything he did. During his long life he was an educator, an editor, and a poet, as well as the first African-American college president in the United States. Because his parents were free, he had opportunities not available to most African-Americans of his day. The grandson of a Revolutionary War soldier, he was educated privately as well as at school.

He trained as a carpenter, tailor, and shoemaker. He went to a Lutheran Seminary in Pennsylvania and received a Doctor of Divinity degree from Wilberforce University in Ohio. Payne taught school in Charleston and Philadelphia. In 1852, he became a bishop in the AME Church. As you have seen in the chapter on religion, he was an important religious leader in South Carolina. From 1836 to 1876, he served as president of Wilberforce University. In addition to an autobiography, he wrote *The Pleasures and Other Miscellaneous Poems,* a collection of poetry published in 1850. He was editor of *The Repository of Religions* and of *Literature and Science* from 1858 to 1863. After a long and vigorous life, he died in 1893.

The writing of diaries was quite popular in the 1800s. Not many African-American women had the education or the time to keep a record of their daily lives. However, some diaries written by African-American women in the years after the Civil War have survived. Frances Anne Rollins won an early and forgotten civil rights case. Born free in Charleston, she was the child of refugees from the Dominican Republic. During the Civil War, she attended school in Philadelphia. She returned to Charleston in 1865 to teach. One summer she attempted to travel by steamer to Beaufort. She was refused a first-class ticket. She complained to the Freedman's Bureau, and authorities fined the captain of the ship was fined $250.

Frances Rollins wanted to be a writer. When Martin Delaney of the Freedman's Bureau asked her to write his biography, she was thrilled. She left for Boston, where she was to do the work. Unfortunately, Delaney was unable to provide the financial support he had promised. Undeterred, she wrote the book anyway, supporting herself by sewing and doing clerical work. She began writing her diary when she was twenty years old. She described her exciting life in Boston and the opportunity she had to meet famous people like William Lloyd Garrison. Her book about Delaney was published in 1868. Because the publisher thought a book written by an African-American woman would not be accepted by the public, it was published under the name of Frank A. Rollin. She later married and had three children, all of whom graduated from college and became professionals.



Kelly Miller. Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.

Kelly Miller was inducted into the S.C. Academy of Authors in 1993, fifty-four years after his death in 1939. This remarkable man was a scholar and mathematician who spoke out for civil rights. Born in 1863 in Winnsboro, he was one of ten children of sharecroppers. His mother had been enslaved. His father, who was free, was one of the relatively few African-Americans who served in the Confederate Army. After attending one of the schools set up during Reconstruction, Miller was sent to Fairfield Academy because of his talent in math. Howard University gave him a scholarship, and he graduated in 1866. His hard work earning money while he was in college enabled him to buy a farm for his parents. The Pension Office, a U.S. Government agency that helped Union Army veterans, employed him after college. He did post-graduate work at Johns Hopkins University

from 1887 to 1890 and received a master's degree in 1901 and a doctorate in 1903. In 1890, he became a math professor at Howard from which he retired in 1934 as a professor and dean. At Howard, he helped strengthen the science program.

Although Miller wrote some poetry and short stories, most of his work was non-fiction. After becoming concerned about the plight of his fellow African-Americans, he spoke out on civil rights. He lectured extensively on the topic and wrote a number of pamphlets. These pamphlets and his lectures were put together in book form and read widely at universities around the country. His works include *Race Adjustment* (1908), *Out of the House of Bondage* (1914), and *The Everlasting Stain* (1924). He wrote The *Disgrace of Democracy* as an open letter to President Wilson. It concerned the race riots in Memphis and East St. Louis and the refusal of the U.S. Government to help out. He was also a syndicated columnist and had articles that appeared in many major magazines.

Jane Edna Hunter, born a generation later in 1882, was part of the great migration North by African-Americans looking for a better life. She grew up on a plantation near Pendleton. In her autobiography, *A Nickel and A Prayer,* she describes her youth as the child of sharecroppers with little to call their own. Her father insisted that she learn to read and write. Determined to get ahead, she left home and worked as a household servant for a Charleston family. They encouraged her to train as a nurse. In 1905, she left South Carolina. Friends talked her into going to Ohio. She arrived with little money. She had difficulty finding anyone who would hire an African-American nurse. This experience persuaded her to do what she could to help other newly arrived African-American women to avoid similar problems. She began her work "with a nickel and a prayer." The end result was the establishment of the Working Girls Home Association, later the Phyllis Wheatley branch of the YWCA. This helped provide jobs and housing to thousands of penniless young women coming North to seek their fortunes. She also helped establish several other branches of this organization elsewhere in the country. This amazing woman later studied law at Baldwin Wallace College in Ohio and was admitted to the bar. She died in 1971.

George A. Singleton was sent to school at the age of four because he was always getting into trouble. Born in Conway in 1894, he grew up to become a journalist and an AME minister. His father, who was a community leader, had served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention during Reconstruction. He was anxious for his son to have an education. Educated at a two-room schoolhouse, George Singleton had to work hard as a young man to help support his family. After spending the morning at school, he delivered lunches to workmen for twenty-five cents apiece and held a number of other odd jobs. He saw bananas and grapefruits for the first time when he worked at a grocery store. In *The Autobiography of George A. Singleton* (1964), he describes his life and experiences. He decided to join the Army after he finished school and his parents died. In 1912, the Army sent him to the Philippines. After his discharge he returned to Columbia to Allen University. Recalled to the Army during World War I, he served as a chaplain and was sent to France. Later, he attended Boston University. Then he received a scholarship to go to the University of Chicago where he roomed with Benjamin Mays. In addition to his work as a minister, he taught at West Kentucky Industrial College and at Allen University and was president of Paul Quinn College. He became editor of the AME Church Review, wrote articles for many newspapers, and edited a number of books. A noted religious historian, he wrote *The Romance of African Methodism*. Writing as he neared the end of a long and productive life, he described his distress at the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963 and dedicated his book to the civil rights movement.

Benjamin Brawley, born in Columbia in 1882, believed that the American dream should be within the grasp of all children, regardless of race or sex. Best known as a scholar, he also wrote short stories and poems. Unlike many of his contemporaries in the late 1800s, he came from a comfortable home. His parents wanted their four children to be educated. His schoolteacher father, Edward McKnight Brawley, was a role model because of his own achievements. Ed-

ward Brawley's family had been free. Born in Charleston in 1851, Edward attended private schools as a young child and was sent out of the state to study. He graduated from Bucknell University in Pennsylvania in 1875, its first African-American student. Ordained a minister, he later helped found Morris College in Sumter and became its president. He wrote a religious textbook and edited several religious newspapers. Edward Brawley died in 1923.

Young Benjamin had high standards to meet, and meet them he did. Although he attended several different schools as his family moved around the South, he was greatly influenced by his parents. He attended the high school at Morehouse College in Atlanta and graduated from Morehouse with a B.A. degree in 1901. After six years of teaching, he received a second B.A. from the University of Chicago. In 1908, he received a Master of Arts degree from Harvard in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He taught English at the college level for several years. In 1920, he spent a year in Africa doing research. After his return, he was ordained a Baptist minister. Although he was a minister, he spent most of his career as a college professor. Over the years he published many books, articles, and poems. Many of these focused on African-American life and the need for justice. His long list of non-fiction works includes *A Short History of the American Negro* (1913), *The Negro in Literature and Art* (1918), *A Short History of American Drama* (1921), and *A History of the English Hymn* (1932). Magazines that published his articles ranged from the *Harvard Monthly* to the *Southern Workman*. His fiction and poetry includes *A Prayer* (1899), *The Dawn and Other Poems* (1911), and *The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus* (1917). He died in 1939, just a few years before the civil rights movement began to realize the justice about which he wrote. His achievements can best be summed up in the words of Benjamin Mays. In his own autobiography, Mays wrote that Benjamin Brawley helped African-Americans believe they could achieve.

In his autobiography *Born to Rebel* (1971), Benjamin Mays described a scene forever etched in his memory. In 1898 when he was only a child of four, a group of whites humiliated his father. They rode into his yard and repeatedly made his father bow down to them. He remembered the fear he felt that night. He knew that lynchings occurred in his community.

Many obstacles stood in the way of this remarkable man. Born in 1894 in the tiny town of Epworth, South Carolina, Mays was one of eight children from a sharecropper family. His parents had been born enslaved. His father could barely read, and his mother was illiterate. As a child, he was able to attend school only four months a year, because the school was open from just November to February. In March, farm work began. The seven mile round trip walk to school made education even more difficult. He wanted an education and was sent to S.C. State for further schooling. Although the school remained open, his father brought him home after four months to do farm work. This happened more than once. Finally he rebelled. Despite his father's anger, young Benjamin stayed at the school until it closed in May.

Mays did eventually get the education he wanted. Rejected by several colleges on account of race, he attended Bates College in Maine. He graduated with a Phi Beta Kappa Key, the highest academic award one can win in college. He always wanted to be a preacher. So he was on the debate team as well as the football team at Bates. To pay his school expenses, he worked odd jobs and also as a Pullman porter.

After earning his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, Mays began a long and distinguished career. He taught at both Morehouse College in Atlanta and South Carolina State. During a long and productive career, he did a study of African-American churches in the United States. He was dean of the School of Religion at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and for twenty-seven years he served as president of Morehouse College. While there, he built up the school's financial endowment. If all this was not enough, he was also president of the Atlanta Board of Education for twelve years.

Perhaps his early experiences with prejudice made him a civil rights activist. In the 1920s and 1930s, he became involved with the Urban League. In 1942 he co-authored the Durham statement. This was a document produced by a group of African-American Southerners that called for an end to discrimination. However, the group did not speak out against segregation itself. They thought attacking segregation would merely make white Southerners angry. Dr. Mays disagreed with this approach. He wanted to demand an end to segregation.

Mays also served on the board of directors of

the NAACP, and in this role he spoke out against lynchings and segregation. He wrote several books on race relations. His accomplishments were not ignored. President Kennedy appointed him to the Civil Rights Commission. Forty-seven colleges gave him honorary degrees. Atlanta named a street and a high school after him. Martin Luther King called him his "spiritual mentor." Four years before Mays' death in 1984, the Governor of South Carolina, Richard Riley, gave him the Order of the Palmetto. This is the highest award the state can give anyone. Larry Lebby painted his portrait, and it was hung in the statehouse. You can see it there today.

Nick Aaron Ford loved to teach but is best known as a scholar and an author. He wrote poetry and short stories as well as non-fiction. Born in 1904, he grew up near Ridgeway. Benedict College, which then included a high school, provided his education. He received a bachelor's degree at Benedict and a M.A. and Ph.D. at the State University of Iowa. Observers considered him a gifted teacher. He began his career teaching English at Schofield High School in Aiken. He also served as principal there before moving to Florida to accept another position. Schools in Texas and Oklahoma benefited from his teaching and administrative skills. In 1945, he accepted a position at Morgan State College in Baltimore, Maryland, where he stayed until he retired twenty-eight years later. His autobiography, written in retirement, is entitled *Seeking a Newer World: Memoirs of a Black American Teacher.* Dr. Ford also wrote many scholarly articles and nine other books, several of them with co-authors, including *The Contemporary Negro Novel* (1936) and *Black Studies: Threat or Challenge?* (1973). For *Best Short Stories of Afro-American Writers* (1950), he read over 1,000 stories which had been published between 1925 and 1950 in Afro-American newspapers. After he retired, he served as Director of the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities. This group ran programs that allowed minority students to work and earn a Ph.D. at the same time. Before his death in 1982, this scholar and activist received many awards.

Few people of any background can sing in eight different languages like Eartha Kitt. Most people think of her as an actress and singer, but she is also the writer of three autobiographies, including *Thursday's Child* (1956). Born in the South Carolina town of North in 1928 as the child of sharecroppers, she lost her parents at an early age. She had to support her sister by picking cotton. When she was eight years old, her aunt took her to New York City. There she attended school and learned to play the piano. However, she still had to help support herself. She did this by sewing. As a young woman, she won a scholarship to the Katherine Dunham dance school and then toured with them. In Paris she was seen by Orson Wells, the famous producer. He selected her to play Helen of Troy in his 1951 production of *Dr. Faustus.* She later appeared in Broadway shows and received several Tony nominations. In her autobiographies, she described her difficult childhood and the difficult path to fame.

When she was a child, Vertamae Grosvenor wanted to be an actress. As an adult, she realized her ambitions. She performed in *Personal Problems,* an opera that she also authored, and hosted *Horizons,* a highly regarded documentary series. Born in 1938 in Fairfax, South Carolina, she moved with her family to Pennsylvania as a child. Regular trips to the library fed a passion for reading about a life where people of African background could be anything they wanted. Leaving high school for a job, she saved her money. She went to Paris, the place of her dreams, and lived there for five years. Marrying and returning to New York, she began to write while her children were small. It is said that some people will do almost anything to make a living. Grosvenor did many different things, one of which was to sew an apron for an elephant! In 1970, her young son appeared on television and received a contract to have some poems published. The publisher took a look at a cookbook she was writing and decided to publish this too. She continued to write. An article in the Village Voice led to a job on National Public Radio. Her published works include *Vibration Cooking: Travels of a Geechee Girl* (1970) and *Thursday and Every Other Sunday Off: A Domestic Rap* (1972). Through her work, Grosvenor helped popularize African-American cooking for all Americans.

Continuing the Oral Tradition

Our discussion of literature began with the oral tradition and ends with it as well. Perhaps we are completing a circle by coming back to our roots. Despite all the changes of modern life, this tradition has survived.

For modern-day children, storytelling is more than just a way to preserve the past. Storytelling is a way to open doors to all the wonders found in books and to the variety of career choices open to the educated. Catherine Wheeler, a librarian at the Waverly branch library in Columbia, opened those doors. In the pre-Civil Rights era, the Waverly library was the only library for African-Americans in Columbia, a large brick building that had once been a white church. It became a gathering place for young people. Children came there after school to do their homework, often bringing along younger brothers and sisters. As head librarian, Wheeler welcomed and encouraged all the children, teaching them how to use the library's resources. However, she ran a tight ship. Children were not permitted to hang out on the steps. They were not permitted to fool around inside the library either. Children had to have a book in front of them while they were there.

Catherine Wheeler was another of the many people who showed that if you want something badly enough and are willing to work hard, you can succeed. Born in Edgefield in 1909, she moved to New York with her family as a small girl. Married at eighteen, she returned South when her father died and left her a house in Columbia. She began her career in the library as a cleaning lady, cleaning up the books. She wanted an education and she wanted to be a librarian. Wheeler began to attend school while working and raising a family. She received a bachelor's degree from Benedict College, a master's degree from New York University, and a Ph.D. from Atlanta University, all in library science. Her employers helped by giving her leave with pay during the summer so she could go to school.

Those who grew up during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s have many happy memories of the story hours held for all the children. When Catherine Wheeler read a story, an almost magical transformation took place. Her voice and facial expression would change with each character. She read many different kinds of books, "magnificent" stories, in the words of one who remembered her. Hundreds of children passed through her library and learned to like books as a result.

Catherine Wheeler also found a wider audience over the radio. Known as the "Story Lady," she told stories over the radio for a number of years. Another adult remembers her family huddling around the radio and listening to Wheeler's stories, tales which held the same magic as those told at the library. She enthralled her listeners for more than twenty years. Catherine Wheeler died in 1989 at the age of eighty.

Augusta Baker, who always loved to read, is another storyteller. She was born in Maryland in 1911, the only child of parents who were teachers. Baker studied folklore at the University of Pittsburgh. When she moved to New York State after her marriage, she attempted to attend Albany State Teachers' College. At first the school refused to admit her. Pressure from a local chapter of the Urban League and from Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of then Governor Franklin Roosevelt, led to her admittance.

In 1939, Baker became a librarian in New York City and began to work with children. She found that the way to reach them was through storytelling. Much of her work was with African-American children living in Harlem. African-American literature became her expertise. She looked for ways to improve their self-image. At that time, most good quality children's literature was written by and about whites. In 1953, she became the New York Public Library's storytelling specialist. She also edited a number of children's books, published two collections of children's stories, and put together a bibliography of African-American children's literature. She has served as a consultant for Sesame Street and hosted a weekly radio show. After retiring in 1974, she continued to work in the storytelling field as a consultant. She has received many awards during her career.

Moving to South Carolina in 1979 to be near her son, she became the storyteller-in-residence at the University of South Carolina. In her "second career," she has taught adults how to tell stories.

Ron Daise, a native of St. Helena Island, heard stories told by his elders when he was a child on the

island. Since then, he has written about the island in two books. He and his wife, Natalie, give dramatic performances of some of these stories combined with with music and slides to teach about the Sea Islands and their culture.

The storytelling tradition lives on.

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 11

Music, Dance and the Performing Arts

Do you turn on the radio as soon as you come home from school? Do you find it hard to sit still when a really good tune is playing? Music and dance are among the great joys of life. Several types of music that we think of simply as "American" actually owe their existence to African-Americans. We can also thank African-Americans for some favorite dances. In this chapter you will learn how this music and dance developed. You will also meet a number of South Carolinians who became famous musicians, singers, dancers, and performers.

Music

Because of a different cultural background and segregation, African-Americans developed their own distinctive music. This included the blues, ragtime, and gospel music. The blues and ragtime, in turn, helped create jazz. African-American music also influenced white composers. Whites sometimes used black material in their compositions.

Ragtime is associated with entertainment, especially piano music. This was the first African-American music to become popular all across the U.S. It is a style of music that is called "syncopated," where the beat that is usually weak is accented. On the piano the right hand plays the melody while the left hand plays rhythms in a pattern. Drifters traveling from town to town in the late 1800s were the first to play ragtime. Although ragtime's roots are probably European, an African-American, Scott Joplin of Texas, popularized it.

The music called the blues became popular in the early 1900s. It reflected the uncertain life of African-Americans in the years after the Civil War. They were no longer enslaved. However, they were not equal in American society. Blues emerged from spirituals and work songs. Many of the songs included bits and pieces of the white songs that African-Americans heard in their daily lives. As African-Americans began to work oft the farm, the songs began to focus on their new jobs. One very popular song was "John Henry." It was about an African-American railroad worker who was very strong and very proud. He was killed proving the steam hammer could not replace him. Blues generally focused on the sad things in people's lives like racial woes, lost love, sickness, and poverty. People enjoyed this because sharing sorrow often made them feel better.

The blues became popular at any event where people gathered. One person sang and accompanied the music with a guitar or banjo. Singers and workers traveling around to make a living spread the blues all over the South. In the cities, the blues became more sophisticated. Groups that were similar to small jazz bands began to accompany the singers. More women began to perform. Love songs became popular as well. However, no one recorded the blues until 1920.

Many African-American bands formed in the years after the Civil War. Some developed out of the Confederate marching bands. With the soldiers gone home, many cheap instruments were readily available. African-Americans could afford to buy them. Two types of bands were string bands and brass bands. String bands played at dances and brass bands played at parades, celebrations, and funerals. Many of the early musicians could not read, so they "improvised." Improvise means making up the music yourself. They experimented as they played to see what sounded good. By the 1890s, jazz was beginning to develop.



The world famous Jenkins Orphanage Band in a photo taken around 1900. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, slide G-33 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of S.C. State Museum.

The Jenkins Orphanage Band

The story of the Jenkins Orphanage Band, the first black instrumental group organized in South Carolina, almost sounds like a fairy tale. Theirs is a story of triumph over adversity. Out of the need to find a way to feed and clothe hungry children came a one-of-a-kind musical miracle. Many fine musicians who later made musical careers began their training with the Jenkins Orphanage Band. Among them were William "Cat" Anderson, "Peanuts" Holland, and Jabbo Smith. Bands from the Jenkins Orphanage played all over the U.S. and Europe for half a century until the 1950s. The original cast of the musical *Porgy,* by Dubose Heyward, included a cast from the Jenkins Orphanage when it was staged in New York in 1927. The bands made three trips to Europe. They even played before royalty.

How did it all begin? In the late 1800s, no government services existed to help the poor. On a cold winter morning in Charleston, the Reverend Daniel Jenkins found four young African-American children alone and shivering. He decided to adopt them when he learned that they were orphans. He realized that many other children needed help. To raise money, Rev. Jenkins formed the Orphan Aid Society in 1892. Soon he found a building to house the many boys and girls. Located near the city jail, it was less than perfect. However, it provided security for the children. The Jenkins Orphanage was the only one for African-Americans in South Carolina.

Within four years, there were over 500 children living there. The Orphanage depended on public donations to survive, but this was not enough. The Rev. Jenkins came up with an idea to pay for expenses. He asked for contributions of musical instruments. Then he hired musicians to teach some of the boys how to play. The band played in the streets of Charleston. Rev. Jenkins used the attention they got to appeal for money.

The Orphanage never had a lot of money. They

scraped by for the first few years until a storm destroyed the Orphanage building in 1895. Rev. Jenkins decided to take some of the boys on tour in the North as a way to earn money to rebuild. However, they were unable to make enough money to pay the rebuilding costs.

Friends suggested a tour of England. Once the decision to go had been made, everything seemed to go wrong. The trip across the Atlantic was a disaster. The passengers on the ship were seasick. In England, the band's appearance caused such a stir that they were not allowed to perform. Rev. Jenkins was arrested. In court, the judge told him that children under the age of eleven were not allowed to perform in the streets for money. The band had so little money leff that they could not even pay for the trip home.

Rev. Jenkins decided to appeal for money at a church. People responded wholeheartedly. Soon the group was able to return to Charleston. With all the publicity, the band became well-known to local people. Groups of children began to follow the band when it played. Many of them who were not orphans even wanted to enter the Orphanage just so they could play in the band!

Two years after the trip to England, the city of Charleston decided to grant the Orphanage $200 a year. Some wealthy white citizens also made donations. Unfortunately, this was not enough to support the Orphanage.

So once again, Rev. Jenkins took his band on the road. This time they went to Florida. They hoped that the tourists visiting the state would make donations. Because the trip was very successful, they began to travel to other states. They played at several major expositions and fairs. In the early 1900s, they returned to England again. Over the years, they toured widely. By the early 1920s, they had five bands, a vocal group, and two girls' choirs.

Rev. Jenkins had a dream. He wanted to have a farm with plenty of space for the children and where the Orphanage could raise its own food. The youngsters could learn trades that would let them earn a living as adults. Eventually this dream came true. A 100-acre farm in Ladson, S.C. was donated. Industrial teachers taught carpentry, shoemaking, dressmaking, and other trades. Although not everyone could expect to become a professional musician, they could be self sufficient. In addition to the orphans, many youths convicted of minor crimes lived there learning skills so they could make a living.

Over the years, the band had to face and overcome many problems. Traveling at home was often quite risky for the Jenkins Orphanage Band. Once a group of whites threatened them. The band had no weapons, but they were able to fool the hoodlums by pretending. They had wooden model guns that they used in practice. They stuck them out the windows and frightened off the hoodlums.

Sometimes, problems arose that no one could have foreseen. A trip in 1914 barely escaped disaster. The band had just begun a ten-week tour of England when World War I broke out. Everything came to a halt. The band was stranded in England for a month before they were able to get passage on a ship. Rev. Jenkins helped several stranded fellow travelers return home as well. He lent them money for the trip.

In the 1930s, the Depression brought other problems. The Orphanage found itself short of money as audiences and contributions dropped. In 1933, a fire damaged the building. In spite of all these problems, somehow they survived.

Rev. Jenkins died in 1937 after a lifetime of helping children. By the 1940s and 1950s, society was changing. These changes also affected the Jenkins Orphanage. People were better off. The Jenkins Orphanage did not admit as many children. With fewer musicians, the band allowed girls to join. By the 1970s, children of all races were entering the Orphanage. Even so, numbers still declined. As the 1980s began, the Jenkins Orphanage Band was only a memory.

James Reese Europe's 15th Regimental Band in World War I

Not all the South Carolinians who served in World War I were soldiers. Some were musicians. Many of these were part of James Reese Europe's band.

James Reese Europe was a talented musician and band leader. He had toured widely in the years before World War I. In 1916, he joined the 15th Infantry of the National Guard, an African-American regi-



A traveling band of jazz musicians before World War I. Courtesy William Loren Katz, Library of Congress.

ment. They made him an officer. As part of the effort to encourage people to enlist, the commanding officer persuaded Europe to form a brass band. He managed to persuade over forty musicians to join by 1917. Like many other Americans, many of the members of the Jenkins Orphanage Band wanted to serve their country in World War I. The bandmaster and three musicians were "graduates" of the Jenkins Orphanage Band. At their first show, they played the carefully rehearsed orchestral music. Then, as the floor was cleared to get ready for dancing, they began to play dance music. These were jazz pieces that had barely been rehearsed. The atmosphere was electric. Both the audience and the musicians loved it. Europe's blues arrangements were particularly popular.

In 1918, the Army sent the band to France where they entertained the soldiers. They performed in over twenty-five cities in France alone. They played for civilians as well as Allied troops. Assigned to combat as part of the 369th U.S. Infantry, they fought for four months at the front. Their unit was nicknamed the "Hellfighters." Near the end of the war, they went to Paris to perform. They returned home in 1919 as heroes. The band began a worldwide tour. Europe obtained a record contract. His future seemed assured.

Sadly, James Reese Europe's career was brought to an untimely end after his return to the states. He had been having an ongoing quarrel with a drummer in the band, one of the Jenkins Orphanage Band alumni. Europe had objected to the young man's behavior during performances. After a performance, the young man stabbed Europe in the throat. Europe died and the drummer was sent to prison.

Jazz

No one is quite sure just where and how jazz music began, but it became well-known around 1900 in New Orleans and elsewhere. Both European and African music probably influenced it. Not much is known about the young African-Americans of the early 1900s who developed jazz. The jazz musicians generally were not allowed in the concert halls. The audience was mainly African-American in the early years. Many

jazz musicians performed in churches, dance halls, and in minstrel shows. Often their music was not written down. Certainly it was not recorded.

Regardless of its origin, this was something different. In the 1920s, many people looked on this "new" form of music with suspicion because it was so different. It seemed to have much less formal structure than other music of the day. Jazz has always relied greatly on "improvisation." This means that musicians make up parts of the music as they play. A great deal of talent is required to do this. The music is exciting and unpredictable, though today we know that jazz has its own structure. Regardless, jazz adds up to wonderful entertainment.

Many native and adopted South Carolinians became well known in the world of jazz. Perhaps so many became successful because this was one of the few fields open to creative people regardless of race. Space allows us to meet just a few. All we can do in a book is tell you about them. If you really want to meet them, you need to listen to their music. If you have not already, perhaps one day you will.

John Barks "Dizzy" Gillespie is certainly South Carolina's best-known jazz musician. He was not only a composer and a trumpeter, but was an innovator who helped establish jazz in the 1930s and 1940s. Along with Charlie Parker, he developed a kind of jazz called "bebop." This was the beginning of "modern" jazz. He also incorporated Latin music into this jazz form.

Dizzy Gillespie was born in Cheraw in 1917. His father liked to play music. He saw that Dizzy learned to play the piano. However, Dizzy discovered the trumpet after a friend received one. He formed his first band when he was just ten years old. North Carolina's Laurinburg Institute gave him a music scholarship in 1932. He headed North to Philadelphia and then to New York. In 1937, he began to play with Swing Bands, including those of Cab Calloway, Earl Hines, and Duke Ellington. Later he formed his own band. His better known works include "A Night in Tunisia," "My Melancholy Baby," and "Leap Frog." President Jimmy Carter sang along with Gillespie's song "Salt Peanuts" at Carter's inaugural celebration in 1976.

Bebop and Dizzy Gillespie go together like peanut butter and jelly. Bebop was a form of music that broke up the harmony and rhythm structure of the



Born in Cheraw, "Dizzy" Gillespie became one of the world's most famous jazz musicians, even inventing a new style of playing called "bebop." Here he is entertaining the General Assembly just before they honored him in a resolution in 1976. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, slide C63 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Photo by Vic Tutte. Courtesy of The State newspaper.

music. Its emphasis was on improvisation and a fast tempo. Often bebop, or hop, singers used nonsensical language, such as "Hey Bobba, Rebob." Bop musicians had a distinctive appearance. They wore dark glasses and berets. They grew short beards.

In 1942, Dizzy was playing some variations on chords during a break in a performance. Those chords became the basis for bebop. At first, the critics disliked this new music. It was not at all like the kind of music the Big Bands had played in the Swing era. By 1947, when Dizzy and fellow musician Charlie Parker played a bebop concert in Carnegie Hall, critics and the public loved it. Bebop has even influenced the kind of music heard in television commercials today.

Dizzy Gillespie was known for his style as a performer as well. He liked to experiment with chords and change the harmony. He seemed to enjoy performing for an audience, and audiences liked him.

Most trumpet teachers would probably not use Dizzy Gillespie as a model for their students. Once someone stepped on his trumpet, bending the bell. He played it and thought that the bend made it easier to hear himself. So along with his puffed-out cheeks, this odd-shaped instrument became his trademark. Gillespie died in his sleep in 1993 as one of his recordings played in the background.

James Alonzo "Cat" Anderson was known as an extremely versatile musician. He was a good trumpet player who could play all kinds of music. Louis Armstrong was his inspiration. A native of Greenville, Cat was born in 1916 and was orphaned at the age of four. He went to live at the Jenkins Orphanage. There he learned to play a musical instrument and began playing with their band at the age of seven. With several other boys, he formed an orchestra that played at local dances. Leaving the Orphanage, he toured with a group named the Carolina Cotton Pickers from 1932 to 1937. In the 1930s and 1940s, he played with several of the Big Bands. He made a name for himself with Duke Ellington's band, playing with it off and on from the 1940s to the 1960s. From 1947 to 1950, he had his own band. In 1971 he settled in California. For the next ten years, he was involved with the television and movie industry as well as touring. He also toured with the "Ice-Capades" from 1974 to 1975. Of the many songs he recorded, his best known songs are "Swinging the Cat," "El Gato," and "Bluejean Beguine." Above all, he is remembered for his ability to hit the very high notes. He died in 1981.

Freddie Green, born in 1911, started his musical career at age twelve by learning to play the banjo. Today, he is known for giving the rhythm guitar a major role in the jazz orchestra. He liked to hold his guitar at an odd angle. "Tilted flat" is how it was described. He struck the strings in such a way as to produce a deeper, fuller sound. Listeners found it very distinctive. He also composed music including the jazz classic "Corner Pockets (Until I Met You)." Mostly self-taught, he began to play with a group called the Night Hawks. His first experience in traveling outside of the South was with the Jenkins Orphanage Band, although he did not live at the Orphanage. At the age of nineteen, he came to New York. He worked as an upholsterer during the day and played music in the evenings. He started to play the guitar and to find gigs at clubs. In 1937 at the age of twenty-six, he began a career as a guitarist with the Count Basie Orchestra. There he remained until 1987, when he died after a show.

Cladys "Jabbo" Smith was another "graduate" of the Jenkins Orphanage Band. He was born in Georgia in 1900. His mother placed him in the Orphanage at the age of six. He started touring with the band when he was ten. Leaving the Orphanage, he began to play professionally in Pennsylvania when he was sixteen. From the 1920s to the 1940s, he played with a number of groups including his own. He settled in Milwaukee in the 1940s. A talented trumpet player who also played the trombone, critics compared him to Louis Armstrong. However, his style was different. He was a talented and creative player who did things no one else did at the time. He paved the way for later trumpeters. As an old man in his seventies, he came out of retirement to have a comeback. He played the trumpet and sang in the Broadway play "One Mo' Time."

Woodrow Wilson "Buddy" Johnson was a band leader as well as a pianist and arranger in the years before World War II. Born in Darlington, he played in many New York clubs. His sister, Ella, sang with his band. A number of well-known singers got their first "break" with the band.

Etta Jones was an Aiken native who grew up in New York. She began singing with the Buddy Johnson Band when she was sixteen. She was discovered singing at an amateur hour one summer night in 1944. Ironically, she lost the contest when she sang in the wrong key. She toured with the band through the South and Midwest. After leaving Buddy Johnson's band, she began singing in clubs. Then she landed a recording contract. Over the years, she sang with various bands and performed around the country. Her successful 1959 record "Don't Go to Strangers" gave her a Grammy nomination. Around 1973, she met South Carolinian Houston Person when both were playing at a club in Washington. The two played and sang together for the next twenty years.

Houston Person grew up in Florence listening to all kinds of music on the radio. Although his mother played piano, his main interest was sports through most of high school. During his junior year, his father gave him a saxophone as a Christmas present. He began to play and joined a band. After hearing the S.C. State College band play during his senior prom, he decided his goal was to join this band. He played with the band all four years in college. While stationed in Germany with the Air Force, he played on the weekends at a jazz club with other servicemen. Later, he studied at the Hart School of Music in Hartford, Connecticut, under the G.I. Bill. The G.I. Bill was a federal government program that helped veterans pay for their education after they left the military. He met a number of the people who later became prominent in the jazz world including a fellow South Carolinian, Arthur Prysock. Person played with a band in Connecticut for awhile. Next he moved to Boston, and later to Newark. Over the years, he recorded and performed.

Arthur Prysock, who is best known as a singer of romantic songs, was born in Union, South Carolina. He grew up on a North Carolina farm. His goal was always to be a singer. He liked listening to music. At the age of sixteen, he left home. He went to Hartford, Connecticut where he found a job with an aircraft company. However, he was fired when his employers learned he was underage. His father had liked to cook and taught him cooking skills. So he decided to get a job as a cook to support himself. He sang at night. In the beginning, he made $3 a night, but the audiences liked him. In time, he was earning $75 a week.

His big break came in 1945 when a singer with Buddy Johnson's blues orchestra became ill. Johnson gave him a chance to fill in. He paid him $25. Prysock had never made so much money for one night's work. He remained with the orchestra until 1952, singing a number of hits, such as "They All Say I'm the Biggest Fool," "Jet, My Love," and "I Wonder Where Our Love Has Gone." After that he toured widely. He performed with a number of Big Bands and orchestras. He recorded his hit song "I Worry About You" three times. Eventually, he formed a group of his own that included his brother "Red," a saxophonist. In a career of more than forty years, he sang all over the country and recorded nearly sixty albums. Ironically, a commercial made Prysock known to people all over the country. In 1976, the Miller Beer Company asked him to make a commercial. He became associated with Lowenbrau beer. This led to additional work on radio and television. He settled on Long Island, New York, with his family where he cooked and played golf when he was not singing.

Gospel Music and Its Influence on Jazz and Blues

Gospel music developed out of spirituals somewhere in the late 1800s or early 1900s. The songs were based on those originally sung in churches by enslaved African-Americans. Church members and ministers often improvised. In effect, they created new songs. Traditionally, African-Americans had engaged in foot stomping and hand clapping. Now they added musical instruments. The sound was much like that found in the blues and jazz.

In the early 1900s, gospel quartets became quite popular. The Golden Gate Quartet was the first group of its kind from South Carolina to sing and perform on radio and in the movies. The Spiritualaires received wide recognition. Many other groups performed locally and all over the state. Gospel groups were quite popular around the time of World War II.

Even before that, many jazz musicians and blues singers began their careers in gospel music. Among these are Don Covary, Josh White, and Drink

Small. The rhythm and blues singers James Brown and Nappy Brown, whom you will meet later in this chapter, also began in gospel.

Singer and songwriter Don Covary was born in Orangeburg in 1938. He grew up in Washington, D.C., singing first in a family gospel group. In the 1960s, he became a popular soul and blues singer.

Born in 1915 in Greenville, Josh White began his musical career at the age of seven by leading around a blind street singer. His father was a minister which exposed him to a lot of religious music early in life. He became internationally known as a singer of blues, folk songs, and religious music. He began recording music in 1931 in New York. Often referred to as the "Singing Christian," he could count Eleanor Roosevelt among his fans.

Drink Small is a modern musician who has lived and worked in Columbia, South Carolina. So Drink Small's name is more likely to be familiar to young people today than many of the other musicians in this book. This guitarist from Bishopville is known as the "Blues Doctor" to his fans. Even so, he plays all kinds of music and composes as well. He even recorded an album by that name.

Drink Small came from a musical family. His mother sang and his father played several instruments. As a child, he liked to listen to the blues on the radio. He wanted to learn to play the guitar, but had no money to buy one. So he made his own. He took a cigar box and stretched rubber bands around it. Later he said that it sounded more like a buzzing bee than a guitar. Apparently his family agreed. His uncle gave him a real guitar. That is how he began to play the guitar and to sing. Educated in Lee County, he sang in the glee club in high school. As a teenager, he played his guitar at parties on Friday and Saturday nights. He was part of a group called the Golden Five Quintet. On Sundays, he played the guitar and sang in church. In the 1950s, he joined a gospel group called the Spiritualaires, which toured in forty-one states. In 1957, he was voted the number one gospel guitarist by Metro Magazine. After the Spiritualaires broke up, he began to play the blues full-time. On Sundays, he performed gospel music.

Drink Small has continued his career as a musician into the 1990s. With his band, he plays at clubs, schools, and prisons. In 1993, Small performed at a tribute to Dizzy Gillespie at the S.C. State Museum. He has produced several albums. The music goes on.

Rhythm and Blues

Through much of the 1900s, even the music charts were segregated. Whites played pop, and blacks played rhythm and blues. Rhythm and blues is a form of music that became popular in the 1950s and influenced today's rock and roll. It grew out of many other forms of music: work songs, gospel, ragtime, and jazz. It is music that developed out of the experience of post-World War II African-Americans who had moved to the cities. Small bands played this loud, raucous music to which people loved to dance. In the early 1950s, white radio stations gradually began to play this new music. Its popularity led record company executives to come to the South looking for new talent. Ruth Brown, Fats Domino, the Drifters, and the Clovers were among the early successes. The Platters were the first rhythm and blues group to be signed by a major recording company.

By the mid-1950s, some elements of gospel music had been added to rhythm and blues. This led to what later became known as "soul." Soul music became popular in the 1960s. It was popularized by Ray Charles, James Brown, and a number of other singers. Soul has been described as music shaped by the need of African-Americans to find their own identity. A number of South Carolinians became known as rhythm and blues artists.

Blues singer Napoleon "Nappy" Brown was born in Charlotte, N.C. in 1929. He grew up in Pomaria, a small town near Columbia. Through his church, he became involved in music. A baritone singer, he performed with several gospel groups. He toured with a gospel group called the Heavenly Lights. Moving to Newark, New Jersey, a recording company "discovered" him in 1955 when he won first place singing the blues at a talent contest. He recorded over twenty-five singles in the 1950s and continued to record in the 1960s. Although considered a rhythm and blues singer, some of his songs were "crossovers" to pop, such as "Little by Little." A composer as well as a singer, his best known songs were "Night Time is the Right Time" (later popularized by Ray Charles), "Pitter Patter," and "Don't be Angry." This last song was a hit

on the rhythm and blues rating charts. His song "Night Time is the Right Time" is considered an important forerunner of the soul music of the 1960s. The 1959 album, "Thanks for Nothing," was an important soul music album.

Nappy Brown toured all over the U.S. and in Europe. Making a good living was difficult for African-American musicians of his day. They usually received little in royalties. After his marriage, Brown decided to leave the musical tour. He took a job as a maintenance man at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina. However, he did not give up his music. He continued singing gospel music and also sang in the AME Church. Eventually, he settled in Columbia. In the 1980s after a lengthy retirement, he decided to revive his career in Europe, where there was an interest in blues music. Once again, he began to record. In 1993 he played at a tribute to Dizzy Gillespie at the S.C. State Museum.

Certainly one of the best known "soul" and rhythm and blues singers of all times is James Brown. Raised in Georgia, he was born in 1928 in Tennessee to a poor family. He became serious about his music in his twenties. Like many other singers, he began in gospel. He formed a group called the Famous Flames in 1954. Moving over to secular music, his 1956 recording of "Please, Please, Please" led to a record contract. He became a leading rhythm and blues singer and toured all over the world. Although he has seen his share of personal and legal troubles, without a doubt he has been a very influential person in the world of music. An adopted South Carolinian, he makes his home today in Beech Island near Aiken.

Benjamin Franklin "Brook" Benton found himself pushing a cart around New York City to support himself at the age of seventeen. Born in Camden in 1931, he left the South like so many others to seek a better life. He first joined a gospel group, then formed a rhythm and blues group. Success began in 1959. He had twenty-one gold records in the next five years.

From the 1950s on, many African-American musicians became interested in modern-day African music. A number of African-American musicians even went to Africa to study the works of African composers. The rap music which developed in the 1970s emphasizes rhythm more than melody. This is a return to African tradition.

The Charleston

People from all backgrounds have always loved to dance. African-Americans played a key role in creating two dances that are well-loved by Americans of all ethnic groups, the Charleston and the Shag. First we will look at the Charleston.

The dance which took America by storm during the 1920s seems to have originated in Charleston. The Charleston required contortions of the body that doubtless seemed strange to older people. Several versions explain how the Charleston began, but all of them associate it with African-American music and dancing. According to some, its roots are found in the "juba," African-American dancing performed during the time of enslavement.

One version of the origin of the Charleston associates it with the Jenkins Orphanage Band. According to the story, both blacks and whites danced to the music played by the band on Charleston's streets. Some say that even the musicians would put down their instruments and dance. The steps they invented later became the basis for the Charleston. A jazz pianist, Willie Smith, more or less confirmed this when he later wrote that the youngsters from the band had done a dance using "Geechie" steps on their trips to New York. Geechie probably takes its name from the speech of African-Americans living near the Ogeechee River, which is south of Savannah, Georgia. Perhaps this led to its popularity on the New York stage.

Doubtless, the roots of the Charleston were found in African-American dances. Some point to the dance steps in a 1921 musical entitled "Shuffle Along." The rhythm of the Charleston is also said to be the same as that of another African-American dance, the "Black Bottom." Regardless of its precise roots, the Charleston became the rage. It was first seen in a 1922 African-American musical comedy entitled "Liza." The dance turned up in another African-American musical named "Runnin' Wild," as well as two other shows in 1923.

James Johnson, along with Cecil Mack, wrote the song called "The Charleston" in 1923 when he was playing piano at the Jungles, a New York night club. He said that most of the patrons were Southerners, many from Charleston. The couples liked to dance to his music. He composed eight different

Charlestons, one of which was a later hit.

By the 1930s, the dance world had moved on to newer crazes. In the 1950s and 60s, however, the Charleston experienced a revival. People today still like to dance the Charleston.

The Shag: South Carolina's Official State Dance

If you like to Shag, you might be surprised to learn that people have been doing various versions of this dance since the 1930s. No one is quite sure of the origins of South Carolina's state dance, but it probably developed out of the Charleston and the Jitterbug. It seems to have evolved from a popular dance called the Big Apple, which took the country by storm. The Big Apple took its name from a Columbia nightclub that was originally a synagogue. The club was popular with African-American dancers in the 1930s. Dancers improvised on these other dances, adding new steps. The dance became popular at the beach on the Grand Strand. Word spread. In the late 1930s, two groups of dancers from North and South Carolina were selected to go to New York and do this dance at a theater. It was a great success. Many people believe that this is how New York City got its nickname. In any case, the same basic steps used in the Jitterbug and the Big Apple are also found in the Shag.

The Shag is usually danced to a style of music known as "beach music." Beach music itself seems to have developed out of rhythm and blues. While in the 1930s, people were dancing to the sounds of the Big Bands, by the late 1940s people were dancing to beach music. The Shag became a beach dance. It lost some if its popularity in the 1960s, but experienced a revival in the 1970s. Singers such as General Johnson, the lead singer of Chairman of the Board, helped popularize the Shag and beach music with the song "Carolina Girl."

Maurice Williams is another very popular musician in the area of beach music. Williams, a native of Lancaster, grew up singing in the church choir and performing in his high school band. He started composing music when he was twelve. After he finished high school, he formed his own group. Williams and his group, the Zodiacs, won a Gold Record in 1960 for the song "Stay." He has appeared on many television shows.

Today, both the Shag and beach music live on. Shag clubs are popular in South Carolina, and colleges and recreational programs offer Shag classes.

Dance

A number of African-Americans have made their mark in the world of dance. African-Americans in South Carolina organized several dance groups. One of these was the Yoruba Village Dancers in the Beaufort area which had many African features. Another was the Tillman Leagrae Theater Workshop. Joyce Idowa, a professional dancer, organized it in 1974 in Charleston. A number of individuals have also made significant contributions to dance all across the country. We will introduce you to two of these unique individuals.

One of the most unusual stories of someone overcoming adversity is that of Clayton "Peg Leg" Bates of Fountain Inn. As a boy in the early 1900s, he worked in a cotton mill to help support his family. He hurt his leg as a result of a terrible accident. A conveyer belt at the mill caught his leg. Little medical care was available for African-Americans. The leg had to be amputated.

Clayton had always enjoyed dancing. He was determined not to give it up. Even before he received a wooden peg leg made by his uncle, he was dancing by using two broomsticks to support himself. He continued to hone his skills. He began to dance at carnivals and fairs after moving to Greenville. He was a talented tap dancer. Eventually, he was "discovered." Before long he was dancing all over the country. He also danced on television and toured all over the world.

In later years, Peg Leg Bates decided to help other African-Americans. By this time, the early 1950s, he and his wife had settled in New York's Catskill Mountains. As a touring artist, he had often performed in places where he was not allowed to stay. So he turned his farm into a resort for African-Americans to enjoy.

Julius Fields became well-known for his work in the field of modern dance. Born in Hampton, he graduated from Allen University in 1953 and studied dance in New York. He appeared in the Broadway produc-

tion of *West Side Story*. Fields has a long list of credits in the theater and on television. He also appeared as a soloist with the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater and performed in the New York Shakespeare Festival. Dancing apparently runs in the family. His older brother, James, was also a dancer and a dance teacher.

Drama

Success in the field of drama has been more difficult for African-Americans than in the other areas we have already discussed. Many professional actors and actresses even today complain that few good roles exist for them. Prior to the mid-1900s, an African-American who was stagestruck had almost no chance of success.

Traveling minstrels performed from the late 1700s until after Reconstruction. This opportunity to perform was not much of a real chance. Minstrel-style entertainment started on plantations that had bands. In the early 1800s, white musicians imitated blacks on-stage. The imitations used unfair and unflattering stereotypes. When African-Americans began to perform, they were forced to carry on this "tradition." Having to earn a living by making fun of one's own ethnic group was a terrible thing. Sadly, that was what white audiences wanted to see.

However, in the years before the Civil War, some white writers did develop more realistic African-American characters. Plays such as "Uncle Tom's Cabin" showed enslavement for the great wrong that it was. But not until well into the 1900s were large-scale efforts made to show African-Americans as real people with hopes and dreams. Few roles existed for them.

In the 1800s and early 1900s, African-American churches and schools offered virtually the only chance for serious acting. In Charleston in the 1920s, opera directors offered African-Americans. Some minor roles. In the 1930s, a number of African-American elementary and high schools were able to use public auditoriums for performances. African-American colleges also offered theater programs. The Henderson-Davis Players at South Carolina State College began to perform in the 1940s. Sandra Bowie, Catherine Peppers Hill, and Samuel Wright were part of this troupe. The Henderson-Davis Players are still performing today.



African-Americans performed in a wide variety of ways. This Richard Roberts 1920s photo shows African-American magicians displaying some of the tools of their trade. Courtesy of Roberts family.

A few individuals had success at the national level. Virginia Capers was an actress who gained fame by winning a Tony award for her role in *Raisin*. Eartha Kitt, the well known actress and singer, is probably one of South Carolina's most famous natives. Did you know that she once played the role of Catwoman in the television show *Batman?* Horace Ott, composer and arranger, did an all-black production of *Guys and Dolls*. Myrtle Hall Smith was a famous soprano and religious singer who has performed all over the world. You will meet some of these people elsewhere in this text.

Arthur Jackson was both a performer and a musician. Born in 1911 in Jonesville, he was always glad when it rained. Only on rainy days was he able to go to school. The rest of the time he had to work on

the farm along with his five brothers and sisters. Because his life was so hard, Jackson started running away from home at the age of ten. He traveled all across the country doing whatever work was available. Sometimes he got into trouble. As a result, he spent some time in reform school. An accident in 1930 changed his life. He fell off a train and lost his leg. This tragedy inspired him to concentrate on music. As a boy, he had played a harmonica.

After the accident, Jackson began to play in some of the medicine shows that were popular across the South. These shows usually appeared at places where people gathered, like the county fairs. The shows were popular through the 1950s. The job of the musicians was to attract a crowd. The "doctor" needed a crowd to make his sales pitch. As a performer, Jackson played the harmonica, told jokes and stories, and was a straight man for the jokes of other performers. He took on the role of "Peg Leg Sam" in the medicine shows. For a number of years, he traveled with Leo Kahdot, a native American who went by the name Chief Thundercloud. The performances usually lasted about two hours. They sold different products after each of the three shows. If you had been there, you might have had the opportunity to buy "corn medicine" or some equally interesting and probably useless item. Jackson always performed some kind of dance. A favorite was his imitation of a chicken that had just been killed for dinner. Doubtless the audience loved it! Although Jackson continued to perform until 1973, he was virtually the last of the breed.

Jackson had seen "Pink" Anderson, a talented guitarist from Spartanburg perform in the 1920s. By watching him, Jackson learned what to do. Anderson became a close friend. One of Pink Anderson's many songs was entitled "Every Day of the Week."

"I hate to leave you Mama God knows I sure hate to go
I hate to leave you Mama God knows I sure hate to go
Had the blues so long it made my poor heart so'
The blues jumped the devil run the devil a solid mile
The blues jumped the devil run the devil a solid mile
Well the devil set down and he cried like a new-born Chile"

[From Charles Joyner, *Folk Songs in South Carolina.* Columbia: USC Press, 1971, p.101. Courtesy USC Press.]

A different type of entertainment replaced the medicine show and other live performances. Americans have loved to go to the movies since the creation of this form of entertainment in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Producers made little effort to cater to the African-American audience. Nina Mae McKinney, a native of Lancaster, born in 1913, experienced the frustrations common to other African-Americans of her generation despite her beauty and talent. Generally, considered the first

Beryl Dakers, a producer for S.C. Educational Television, has used her own creative skills to teach about the artistic contributions of other South Carolinians. One of her television documentaries looks at the Jenkins Orphanage Band and its influence on jazz. Courtesy of SCETV.



African-American female movie star, she moved to New York with her family. She was on Broadway when she was seventeen. Following this, she appeared in the movie *Hallelujah* as the seductive "Chick." This led to a five-year contract with a major movie studio, but there was little work available for her. She joined the exodus of talented African-Americans who went to Europe, where she became a nightclub singer and worked in motion pictures. Her last important film role was in the 1947 movie *Pinky*. McKinney is said to have been the model of the innocent, beautiful young woman used by many actresses of the next generation. She died in 1967.

Few television roles were available for African-American actors until the 1960s, and indeed they remain limited even today. James Franklin Fields was one of the few South Carolina natives who made a name for himself in television and movies. In time, others will follow.

In 1993, we can see the beginning of change in the entertainment industry. Kimberly Aiken of Columbia was the first African-American Miss South Carolina to win the Miss America title. Beautiful and talented people of all ethnic backgrounds can now win national fame.

While few African-American actors have yet found suitable national roles, local groups continue to flourish. One interesting effort to preserve and popularize African-American history is called Company I. This Charleston group is portraying the soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry which fought in South Carolina during the Civil War. The 1989 movie entitled *Glory* recounted their story. While many other reenactor groups exist around the nation, Company I is the first African-American group of this kind in South Carolina.

African-American Cultural Heritage as Part of Americana

South Carolina's African-Americans have played a significant role in the development of our nation's cultural heritage. Through music, dance, and theater, they have added to the variety from which we can all choose. Popular commercial music was a field that was once closed to African-Americans. While excluded from the mainstream, they created their own forms of music. What would be considered more American today than jazz? Musical experts often say that jazz is the single most important American contribution to the world of music. It is an African-American contribution. Similarly, people everywhere adopted African-American dance steps. African-American music and dance have become part of a wider American heritage. South Carolina, the nation, and the world are all richer for these contributions.

▼▼▼CHAPTER 12

Visual Arts and Crafts

Only in the last twenty years or so has the work of African-American artists begun to get the recognition it deserves. While preparing this book, the authors looked at many books about South Carolina and Southern artists. Almost without exception, books written before 1970 ignored the work of African-American artists. However, even if they were ignored, African-Americans have been painting, photographing, and engaging in many other forms of art for a long time. African-Americans created out of their own experience, showing us the joys and the sorrows of their lives.

In one short chapter, we can only show a few examples of their work. We only have space to mention a few of the many talented artists. If you take the time to look beyond this book, you will find many other paintings and photographs of these and other artists on display at museums around the country.

First, in order to make a comparison, we will briefly look at how white artists painted African-Americans. Then we will see how African-Americans developed as artists in the 1900s. We shall see how their work built pride and challenged white views.

African-American Life through White Eyes

In the 1800s, most white artists ignored African-Americans. The white artists who did paint pictures with African-American subjects usually trivialized African-American culture. They tended to show it in an oversimplified way. For example, William Aiken Walker (1838-1921) was the only South Carolina artist of his day who specialized in pictures of African-Americans. On the positive side, his work does show everyday life. African-Americans had no chance to paint pictures depicting their lives in those days. So Walker's work is a valuable record of everyday life for African-Americans. Walker painted people picking cotton and working in the fields. We can see that life was not easy for African-Americans in the years after the Civil War. On the negative side, Walker used "caricature" in some of his work. A caricature is a picture that exaggerates and distorts. His pictures also leave out anything beyond daily working life. The characters do not show any of the deep feelings that they certainly had. Therefore we cannot conclude that he wanted to show a sympathetic or complete picture of African-American life. Whatever his shortfalls, Walker left us a record of the struggle for daily survival faced by African-Americans in the late 1800s.

Later, African-Americans were able to tell their own story. They told a much more complete story. They showed complex people with much deeper feelings. Good art does that. It allows the viewer to see into the hearts of the subject being shown. It allows us to feel what the artist saw in her subject. We shall now turn to that deeper and more complete story.

The Flowering of Africon-American Art in the 1900s

During the period of segregation, talented African-Americans had to leave the South for their artistic training. While some returned, many did not. More people in the North supported African-American artists. A black middle class had come into being. Whites who had been part of the abolitionist movement lived in the North. Both of these groups helped and supported African-American artists in the years after the Civil War. Some Southern-born artists, like Henry Tanner, found support overseas. They lived and worked outside the United States. At first, African-American artists used limited subject matter

in their work. Many talented artists who had grown up in the South, such as Edward Bannister and Henry Tanner, painted the same kinds of pictures as did whites. We must realize that most African-American artists in the 1800s were trying to make a living in a world controlled by whites. Therefore, they focused on the subjects of most concern to a white audience. Those who were more open to new ideas in their work were mainly the younger artists.

By the 1920s, African-American artists were painting African-Americans. During this period a number of African-American communities began to sponsor African-American art exhibits in their cities. African-American artists had a chance to show their work. Several national programs began to give them awards. As early as 1914, Joel Spingarn, the chairman of the NAACP, sponsored the award of a gold medal to an African-American for achievement in any field. Ten years later, his wife Amy added another award just for literature and art. South Carolina artist Edwin A. Harleston was one of the first winners.

In 1922, William E. Harmon, a white businessman, created the Harmon Foundation. By 1926, the Foundation added separate awards to recognize the achievements of African-Americans. Visual arts (painting, photography, and sculpture) was one of eight fields where they awarded gold medals and prizes. The foundation gave awards through 1933. The first year, nineteen artists submitted their work. The second year, the number was forty. Within ten years, the number of participating artists tripled.

The Harmon Foundation was not the first group to recognize the work of African-Americans. But it was the most influential. Its support helped a number of African-Americans become established in their chosen fields. By the late 1920s, an award from the Harmon Foundation was the greatest recognition an African-American artist could achieve. Later in the 1930s, the Harmon Foundation sponsored a number of exhibits by African-Americans. This was the time of the Great Depression when few people had money for such "luxuries" as art.

The Harlem Renaissance and Its Impact

The African-American community had two conflicting ideas about the best way to improve their lives. On one side was Booker T. Washington. He believed that African-Americans should work on getting better jobs and living conditions. If treated equally by the law and given a chance, African-Americans would show white society what they could do. He viewed racism as something with which African-Americans would just have to live. Many Southerners accepted this approach in the early years of the 1900s. On the other side was W.E.B. DuBois. He believed in confronting racism. DuBois felt that African-Americans should demand both social and economic equality. He believed continual struggle for equality was important. His philosophy became more popular among African-Americans as they served in World War I.

After World War I, this new awareness and pride helped produce a great deal of new literature and art by African-Americans. DuBois had been involved in the founding of the NAACP. He became editor of its journal, *The Crisis,* at the beginning of the 1920s. The magazine and the organization both operated out of New York City. Jobs and a better life had attracted many African-Americans, including many South Carolinians, to the city. By 1930, about ten percent of all the African-Americans in the city were from South Carolina. Harlem alone had over 150,000 African-American residents. Here, African-American culture could be expressed freely and openly. Although bigotry still existed, creative activity could flourish.

This flourishing of creative activity in the 1920s by African-Americans has been called a "Renaissance," which means rebirth. This is somewhat misleading because black creativity had never really died. Rather, it had been covered up. In any case, Harlem became the center of a great deal of literary and artistic creativity. James Weldon Johnson published his book *God's Trombones* in 1927. Other prominent writers were Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and Claude McKay. The support of the Harmon Foundation enabled artists to concentrate on their painting and sculpture.

Interest in the Harlem Renaissance was so great that a well-known magazine, *The Survey Graphic,* decided to devote a whole issue to it. They asked Dr. Alain Locke of Howard University, who had been the first African-American Rhodes Scholar, to do the editing. In 1925, Professor Locke published *The New*

Negro, a collection of stories and poetry focusing on African-American culture. Locke believed that African art had been unjustly ignored. His efforts to gain recognition of its beauty and artistic worth brought a new pride to African-Americans. As a result, many African-American artists created "protest" art. This was often more realistic than mainstream white painting.

The Great Depression slowed the growth of African-American art. However, some progress continued. African-American artists working during this period focused on their culture and pride. Some of them received funding from the Works Progress Administration of the U.S. Government. This help was critical for the folk artists from the South, most of whom had no formal training. Without this help, these people usually could not show their work in museums and galleries.

In the years after World War II, African-American artists continued to focus on their own experiences. They gradually found a place in mainstream America. Some African-American artists portrayed the experiences of African-Americans who had moved from the South, where there was no chance in life, to the harsh urban ghettos. In the 1960s as the civil rights movement gained steam, African-American art showed the strong feelings of the time. AfriCobra, or the African Community of Bad Relevant Artists, was a militant group of black artists. They wanted to build a positive self image for the black community.

Many African-American artists did "abstract" work. Abstract means work that focuses on lines, colors and shapes, instead of just making a photo-like picture of reality. African-American museums were established. African-American art exhibits became more common. By the 1980s, several African-American museums had been established in major cities. Mainstream museums were beginning to recognize the work of African-American artists.

Impact in South Carolina

At the same time that the Harlem Renaissance was taking place in New York, similar cultural explosions were taking place in other cities. This was true for Southern cities as well as Northern ones. Entire streets or districts became African-American cultural centers. Even white writers explored African-American culture in books and plays. For example, DuBose Heyward of Charleston wrote the world famous play "Porgy," with Catfish Row in Charleston as its setting. Later, this became the basis for the musical about African-American life, "Porgy and Bess." A whole new generation of African-Americans were creating art in South Carolina. These included the Harlestons in Charleston and Richard Roberts in Columbia. So much was going on in Charleston that it is sometimes called the "Charleston Renaissance." As DuBois put it, African-Americans were seeing "beauty in black" through their own efforts.

African-American Art through African-American Eyes

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, South Carolina's African-American artists began to come into their own. In the next few pages, we shall introduce you to some of these people and their work. They present a much more complex picture of African-American life than we see through the eyes of white artists.

One of the earliest South Carolina photographers was Arthur MacBeth. MacBeth is not as well-known as the later photographer Richard Roberts. Nevertheless, his work served as a model for the photographers of his day. It showed that photography is art. Born in Charleston in 1864 and educated at the Avery Institute, he was a businessman and an award winning photographer. His early photographs were taken at the Laing School near Charleston. In 1886, he opened his first photography studio in Charleston. Portraits were very popular at that time. He concentrated on portrait work to support himself, first in Charleston and then in Baltimore and Norfolk. Apparently, he operated two studios in different cities at the same time after leaving South Carolina.

MacBeth was more fortunate than many in that he saw his work recognized while he was alive. He received awards from the South Carolina Fair, the Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta, and the Jamestown Tricentennial Exposition. In 1902, he managed the Negro Building at the S.C. Interstate and West Indian Exposition in Charleston, where the work of African-American artists was displayed. MacBeth also invented the "MacBeth Daylight Projecting Machine."



A 1900 Arthur MacBeth photo of children going to school. Silver gelatin print. Reproduced with permission of the South Caroliniana Library. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.

It allowed motion pictures to be shown in the daytime. He showed future generations of African-Americans that it was possible to make a living at ones art. This was no small accomplishment.

Richard Samuel Roberts is typical of many African-Americans whose work was not recognized in his own time. He was a self-taught photographer. In 1920, he moved from Florida to Columbia, where his wife had relatives because the climate was better for his wife's health. Within two years, he had established a photography business. He supported his family by working as a custodian from four in the morning to twelve noon every day. He spent his afternoons engaging in his true vocation. Over the years, he took thousands of pictures of Columbia's African-American citizens, as well as pictures in other parts of the state. Many were published in *The Palmetto Leader,* an African-American newspaper. Amazingly, after he died in 1936, researchers discovered several thousand undeveloped negatives. The negatives had been stored under his house in a crawl space for forty years. The University of South Carolina was interested in preserving the work of talented citizens. This interest led the school's researchers to the Roberts family. The researchers who restored his work could not identify all of the people in the photographs after so many years. Even so, the pictures provide a priceless record of the everyday lives of average people. Many of these have been published in a book about Roberts, *A True Likeness.* A number of examples of his work appear in this and other chapters.

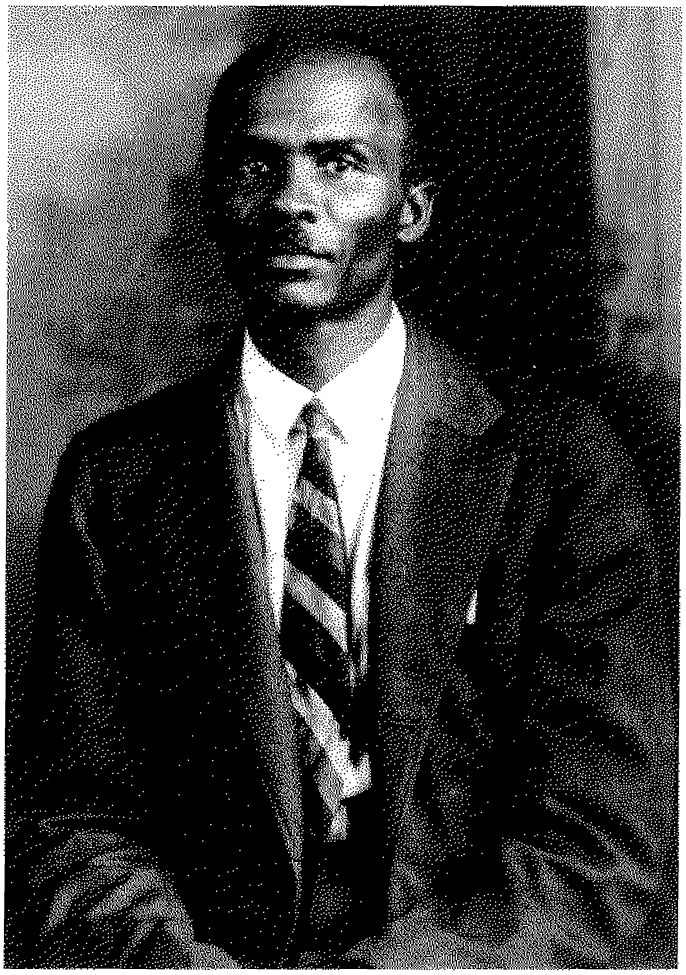
Elise and Edwin Harleston were husband and wife who often worked as a team. Quite frequently,

Edwin would paint portraits from Elise's photographs, as is the case with the picture of the Civil War veteran you saw in the chapter on the Civil War. Edwin did two renderings from her photograph besides his initial sketch, a charcoal drawing and an oil painting. The couple had a studio at their home in Charleston.

Elise Forrest Harleston, born in 1891, studied photography at Tuskegee Institute in 1921. Like most artists, she and her husband had to support themselves by other means. They had a funeral home located next door to their house. Elise minded the office. Because she liked people, she often sat in the driveway and talked to them as they went by. When she met someone who had an interesting face, she asked that person to sit for her and her husband. In this manner she gained many subjects for her pictures. She is known as a portrait photographer, one of the few African-American women artists of a generation when few women were allowed to be creative. She died in 1970.

Edwin Augustus "Teddy" Harleston of Charleston was both an artist and a civil rights leader. He was born in 1882. After attending Avery Institute in Charleston, he went to Atlanta. There he received a degree at Atlanta University. He thought of becoming a doctor and attended Howard University for awhile. Eventually he decided to become an artist. He headed for Boston. Before returning home, he studied art for six years at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts School. While in Boston, he supported himself by working as

(Left) Richard Samuel Roberts. Self-portrait of South Carolina's most famous African-American photographer sometime in the mid-1930s before he died in 1936. Courtesy of Roberts family. (Right) "Mary," a 1921 painting by Edwin Augustus Harleston. Oil on linen. Reproduced with permission of Janet Hopkins and Ted Phillips. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.







"Sowing," a 1920s painting by William H. Johnson. Screenprint. Courtesy of Gibbes Museum of Art.

a seaman. Returning to Charleston, he worked in his family's funeral business and became involved in civil rights. He was one of the founders of the Charleston chapter of the NAACP in 1916. Educational equality was one of his areas of particular concern.

Edwin Harleston pursued his artistic bent at the same time. He became known as a portrait artist. His studio was located on the top floor of his house. In the 1920s he had a number of exhibits in the New York area. Some were through the Harmon Foundation, a group you learned about earlier that promoted African-American art. In 1931, the year that he died, he joined the Harmon Foundation. He is one of the best known African-American artists of his generation.

James V. Herring started out as a painter. He painted in the style of the Impressionists, who were interested in light and color. However, he chose to focus on art history. Born in Clio in 1887, he is one of those who left the state to make a career elsewhere. He went to study at Syracuse University in New York State.

When Herring went to Howard University in 1921 with the intention of starting an art department, everyone was skeptical. He later told an interviewer that both faculty and administrators laughed at him. Herring did not let that stop him. Later, he started what may have been the first real African-American art department at an African-American university. His department was one of the centers that provided the same energy found in New York during the Harlem Renaissance. A number of talented people came to work with him at Howard. In 1930, the University Gallery of Art opened under his direction. In his association with the Harmon Foundation, Herring served as a judge for awards given to distinguished African-Americans. He died in 1969.

William Henry Johnson was an artist who has been rediscovered in recent years. He was born in Florence in 1901. As did so many others, he left the

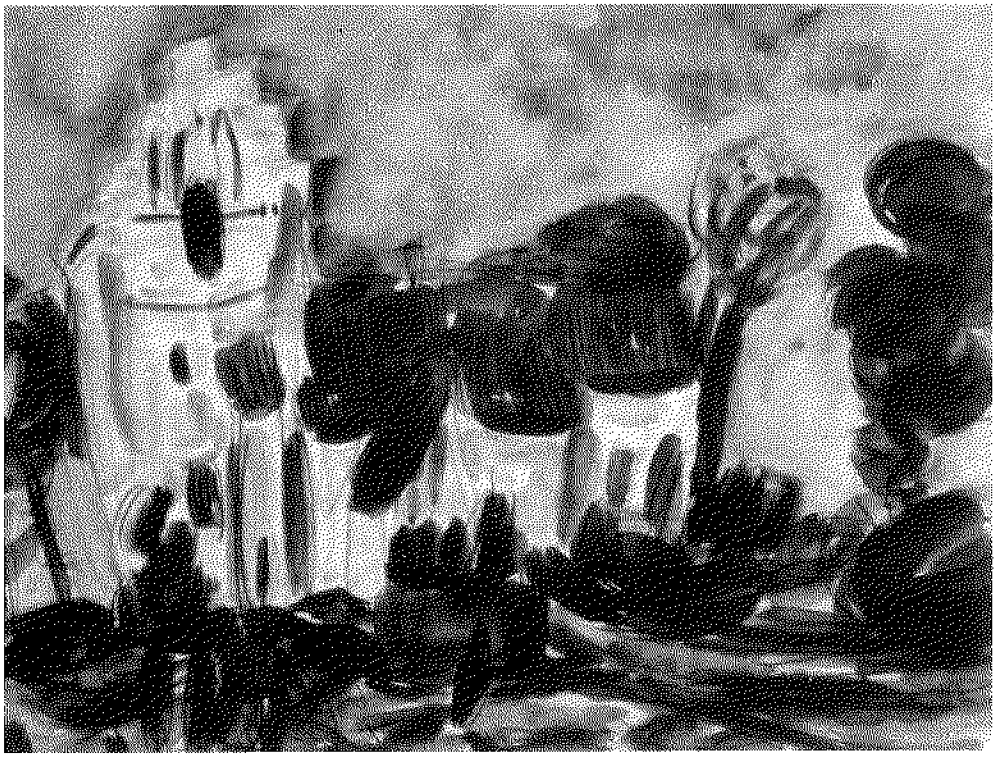
South to further his artistic training. In New York, he attended the Academy of Design while working a variety of unskilled jobs to pay his expenses. In the 1920s, he moved to Europe, first going to Paris on a scholarship. He married a Danish artist sixteen years his senior. For most of the 1920s and 1930s, he remained in Europe. In 1930, he visited the U.S. and finished some paintings for the Harmon Foundation. An arrest for vagrancy while visiting his mother in Florence left him disgusted with discrimination in the United States. He returned to Europe.

Johnson and his wife moved to New York in 1938 to escape from the Nazis. She died of cancer after World War II. He never recovered from the shock of her death. He moved back to the country of Denmark and became mentally ill. Authorities found him wandering on the streets, carrying his paintings around with him. Sent back to New York in 1947, he spent the rest of his life in a mental institution. Sadly, he never was able to paint another picture and died in 1970.

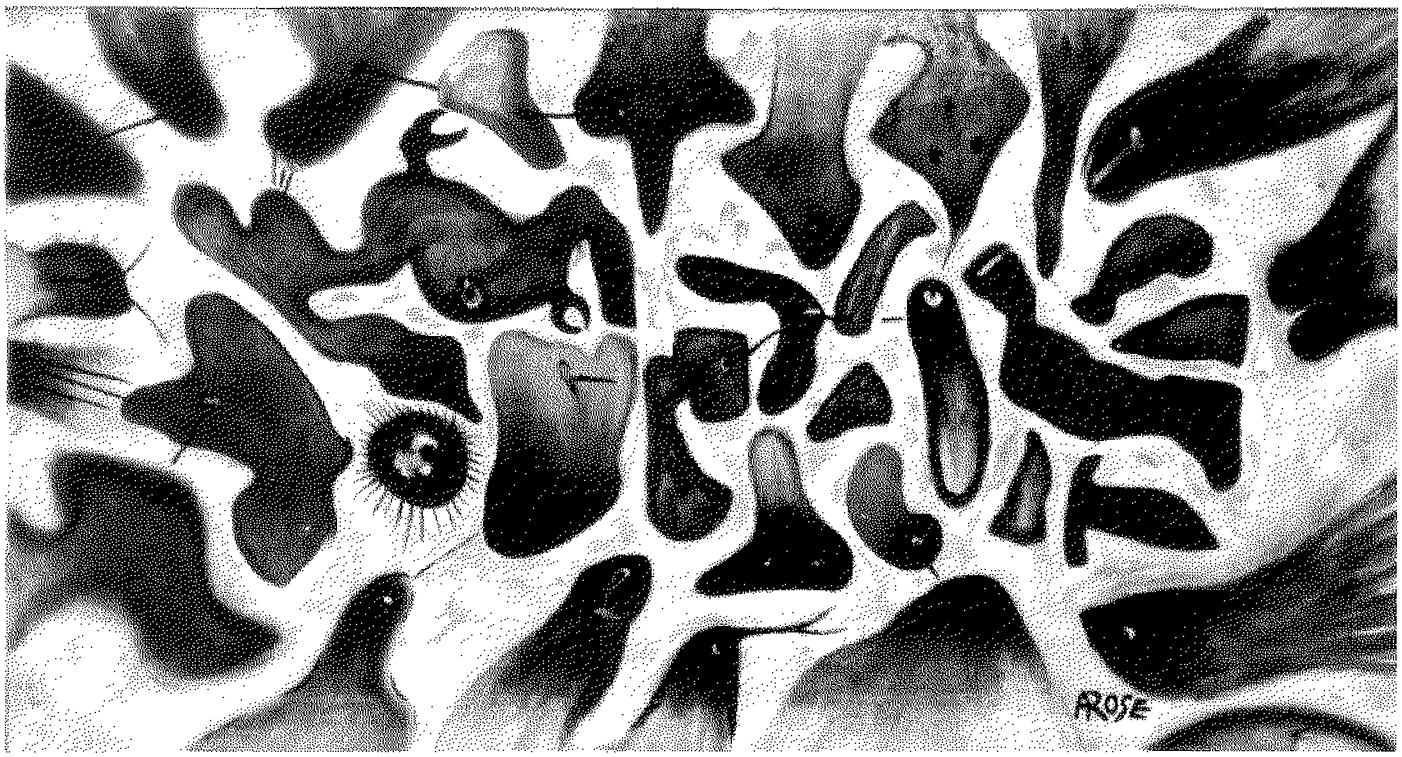
Although in many ways his life was a tragedy, Johnson is recognized today as a talented artist. During his career, he experimented with a number of different styles of painting. His subjects range from landscapes to life in the African-American South to religion to political figures. In 1966, his work found a home at the Smithsonian in Washington. The National Museum of American Art has a collection of over 1,000 pieces of his work.

South Carolina, like many areas of the South, saw an exodus of talent in the years after the Civil War. In the 1900s, some of those who had left to study came home again. Arthur Rose is typical of those who returned to the South and helped enrich the lives of others. Born in Charleston, Rose became interested in art at the age of six. He received his undergraduate degree from Claflin College. He then left the state to study at New York University, where he earned a master's degree. Returning to South Carolina, he became chairman of the art department at Claflin College. He was responsible for training many other young African-American artists. Rose said that he liked teaching others how to create. He was an important role model to aspiring young African-American artists. Although he began as a painter, Arthur Rose also created metal sculpture. His work was highly praised. From the 1950s on, he had many shows, including five shows at Atlanta University. He received many awards, including one from the National Conference of Artists. He retired in Orangeburg.

Dr. Leo F. Twiggs of St. Stephen was a student of



"Scene in Corsica," a 1920s landscape painting by William H. Johnson. Courtesy of Gibbes Museum of Art.





(Top) "Creatures of the Deep," a 1970s painting by Arthur Rose. Oil on canvas. Reproduced with permission of the artist. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art. (Left) Ezekiel's Wheels, Window Child, a 1990 painting by Dr. Leo Twiggs. Batik reproduced with permission of the artist. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.

Arthur Rose at Claflin College. Like his mentor, he has been an important role model for African-American artists in South Carolina. He graduated summa cum laude from college. For six years, he taught art at the high school level. Continuing his education, he received a master's degree from New York University in 1964 and a Ph.D. from the University of Georgia in 1970. He is the director of the I. P. Stanback Museum and Planetarium at S.C. State University. His work in teaching art to disadvantaged African-American students and his other activities have earned him many awards. He has served on a number of boards and commissions, including the South Carolina State Museum and the South Carolina Arts Commission. His work in a number of different media, including oil, acrylic, and batik, has been widely exhibited. Many collections include his paintings. He continues to be a major influence on many young artists in South Carolina.

Folk artist Samuel Doyle was born in 1906. He grew up on St. Helena Island and studied at the Penn School. He supported himself by working as a por-

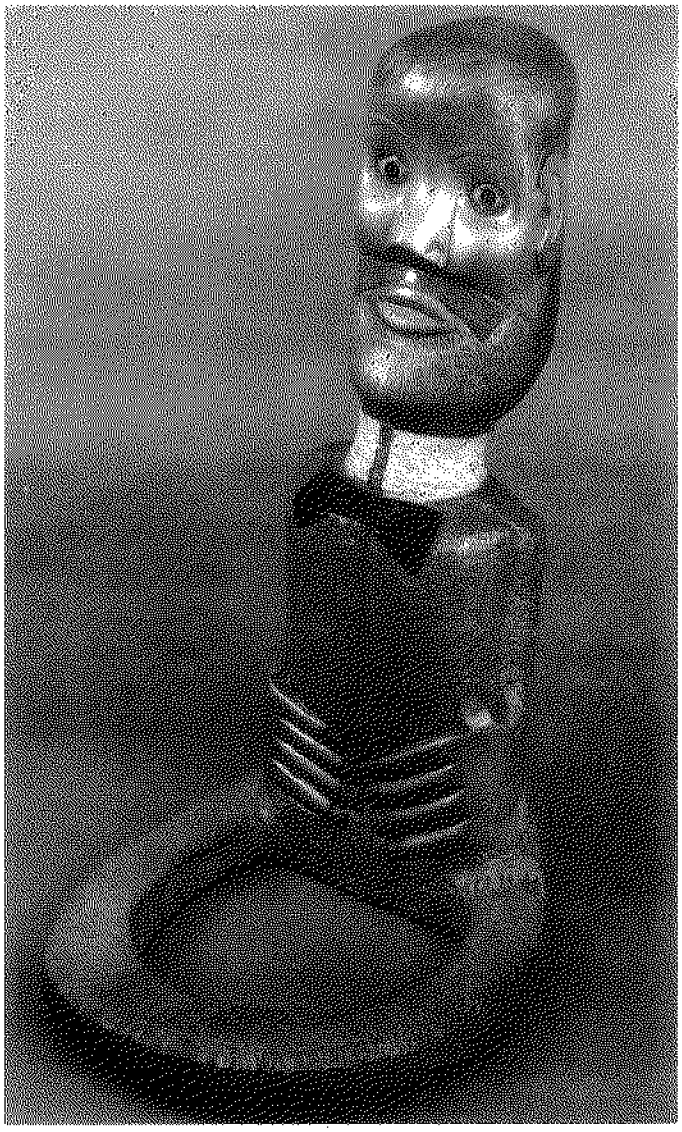
ter, a clerk, and a laundry attendant. A self-taught artist, he used anything he could find as his materials including plywood, tin, and house paint. Doyle displayed his work in his front yard. A wide variety of subjects attracted his interest including people, historical events, and scenes from the *Bible*. You can see an example of his work, "Lincoln in Frogmore," in the Civil War chapter earlier in the book. Doyle died in 1985.

James Hampton was born in Elloree in 1909 and passed away in 1964. Another emigre from the state, he moved to Washington, D.C. around 1928. He served in the army, then supported himself by working as a cook and a janitor. Hampton was also self-taught, but his work was quite different from Doyle's. It has a religious theme. His major work is called *The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations Millenium General Assembly*. He worked on it every night for a number of years. It was created from a variety of objects, such as light bulbs, wooden furniture, and bottles covered with foil. A religious vision inspired him to create this unique work. It may have been inspired by Kongo grave decorations, where reflective surfaces sometimes represent water. You will recall that in the beliefs of some African cultures, water connects the two worlds of the living and the dead.

Merton D. Simpson, born in Charleston in 1928, left the state to study at Cooper Union and New York University. In the early 1950s, he apprenticed as a framemaker. This gave him the opportunity to meet many important artists coming by to pick up their frames. The artists offered constructive criticism of his work, described as "semi-abstract." Simpson settled in New York where he paints and also owns an art gallery. He is known for his "confrontation" series of paintings. The South Carolina Arts Commission purchased "Confrontation #20," an abstract expressionist piece. In 1964 during the Harlem, N.Y. riots, Simpson witnessed a confrontation between police and African-Americans. Several weeks later he began a series of twenty-two mostly abstract paintings. The paintings are his interpretation of racial unrest in Harlem.

Mac Arthur Goodwin, an art educator who has lived in Columbia and Spartanburg, has worked in a variety of media. He trained as a painter but became interested in drawing and printmaking. A critic has described his work as seeming to give the appearance of a dream world. A museum curator described it as presenting a romantic image of Africa. As an educator Goodwin works with young people, who of-

"Preaching Bill or Man with Bowtie," by South Carolina folk artist Dan Robert Miller, made sometime between 1970 and 1987. Made of black gum wood. Miller was a truck driver who became ill and could not work. His creations were inspired by dreams. After each dream, he would go into the woods to find wood from which to make his carving. Museum purchase, Columbia Museum of Art. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina," organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.





Confrontation II, a 1964 painting by Merton D. Simpson. Note the differences between the two halves of the face. Reproduced with permission of the artist.

ten know little about art. He concentrates on ensuring that they understand the "context" of the art. By context he means the things around the artist that inspire and affect her creation. Goodwin has earned many awards, including U.S. Art Educator of the Year.

Jonathan Green, a Gardens Corner native now living in Florida, shows the richness of Southern African-American life in his paintings. His brightly-colored works show both the celebrations and everyday life among the Gullah. He has also co-authored a book entitled *Father and Son*. As a small child, Green lived with his grandparents in South Carolina and visited his mother, who had moved to New York, in the summers. In third grade, he moved to New York but returned South several years later. After finishing high school, he joined the military when he was told he would be trained as an artist. Instead, he was sent to North Dakota to train as a cook. Naturally, he was upset but all was not lost. The resourceful young man managed to find a nearby school where he could attend art classes each day after chef's school. Encouraged by his art teachers, he went to the Art Institute of Chicago after completing military service. He graduated in 1982 with a bachelor's degree. During his years in the Midwest, he began to think about his Lowcountry home, which became the subject of so much of his work. He is one of those who is helping to preserve Gullah culture through art.

Orangeburg native Floyd Gordon is a watercolor artist who paints landscapes, people, and abstracts. Much of his work focuses on everyday life of African-Americans. By the time he was six, he knew he wanted to be an artist. He achieved this goal after traveling widely and holding a number of difterent jobs. After high school, he attended Claflin College but soon dropped out. He moved to Washington State, then served with the Army in Germany in the 1960s. Later he lived in New York City. Gordon returned to Orangeburg and began a career as a freelance artist after four years in the North. Eventually, Gordon decided to complete his bachelor's degree in art and returned to Claflin College. He graduated in 1980. With his degree in hand, he began to display his work in shows in South Carolina. His work has appeared in shows all over the U.S. He has a gallery in Orangeburg.

Other modern artists include Winston Wingo, Leroy Marshall, Larry Lebby, and Tarleton Blackwell. Wingo is a sculptor. Marshall is a folk artist from Cherokee County, a paraplegic who creates by using the things people throw away. Lebby is a graphic artist living in Columbia, who has a piece of his work in the Smithsonian Collection. Tarleton Blackwell is a realist known for his work depicting images of hogs.

These and many others each in their own way portray the African-American experience.

Philip Simmons: Master Ironworker

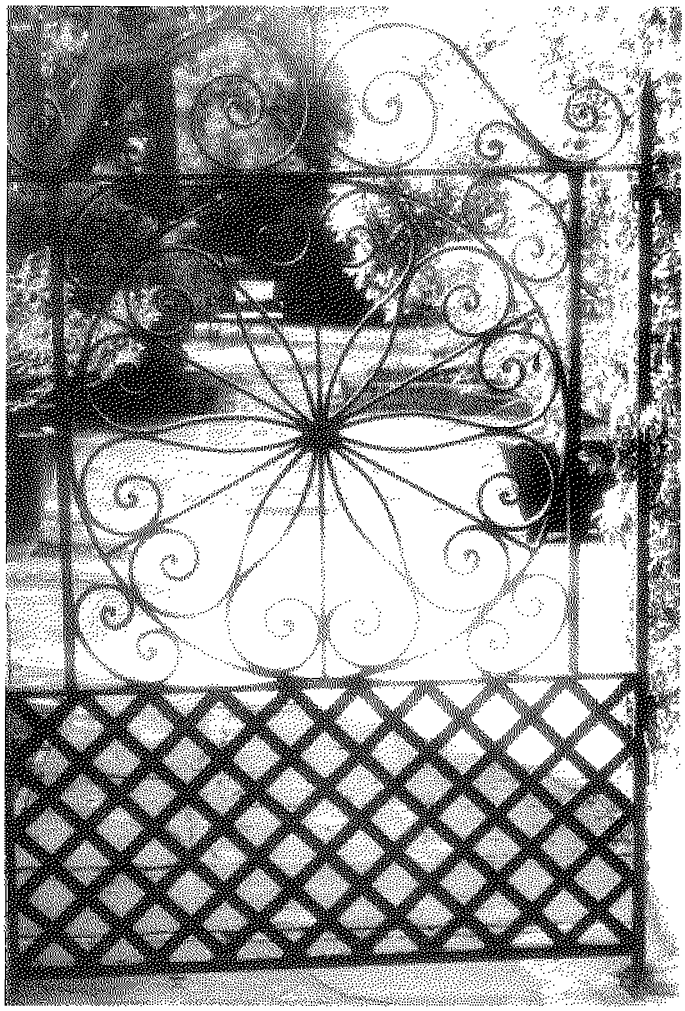
Ironwork represents a special kind of art. One very special ironworker lives in South Carolina. Philip Simmons of Daniel Island is famous for his ornamental ironwork. He carries on a long tradition. It began with the skills brought from Africa several hundred years ago. Generations of craftsmen carried it forward. A master craftsman, coincidentally also named Simmons, trained him. Philip Simmons has trained younger artisans who will carry the art forward. These include a younger member of the family of the master craftsman who originally trained Philip Simmons.

Born in Wando in 1912, Simmons' family moved to Charleston when he was a boy. As a child he watched his grandfather, a skilled carpenter, as he worked. He learned much of his craft by watching the blacksmiths at work. One of the blacksmiths trained him. Simmons earned a living at auto and truck repair in the 1920s and 1930s. Eventually, he began repairing and then making iron gates. His designs became more complex. In the next forty years, he produced over 200 gates. He made window grilles and fences as well. His work was in demand, and he was often asked to restore gates and iron railings. You can see much of his work outside of homes and buildings in historic Charleston.

The Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C. honored Simmons as a National Heritage Fellow. He designed and crafted a "Star and Fish" wrought-iron gate for the Smithsonian to display. His eye was good enough to do the work without measuring. As one

(Left) Iron grillwork by Philip Simmons in Charleston. Note the detail of the bird in the center. This is as much art as craft. Photo by Aimee Smith. (Right) Another example of Philip Simmons iron grillwork in a garden gate. Photo by Aimee Smith.





journalist reported, the end result was "perfect."

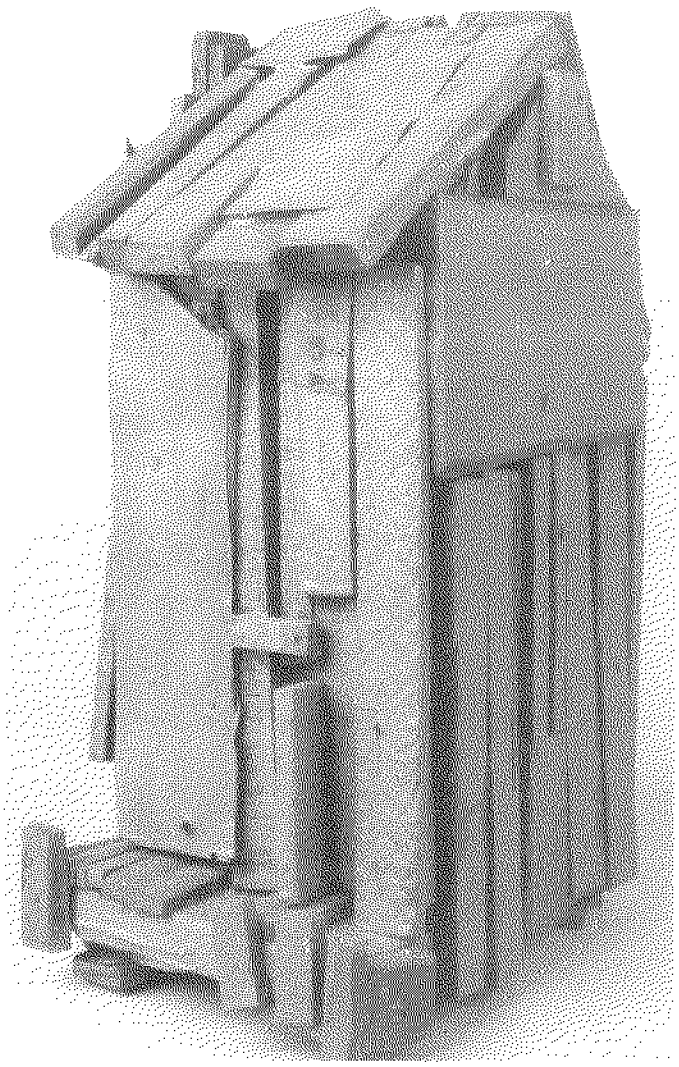
Simmons has also been inducted into the S.C. Hall of Fame, and the Folk Arts Program of the National Endowment of the Arts has recognized his work. The State Museum in Columbia displays a fine example of his work. While he says that he thinks of himself as a blacksmith, he will be remembered as an artist.

Losses and Gains to South Carolina

Through much of the 1900s, the work of African-American artists was almost totally ignored. Exactly how much was lost is hard to tell. That there was a loss is illustrated by the case of Charles Spears. Born around 1901 in Sumter, he was disabled fighting in World War I. He must have been talented because his paintings were exhibited all over the nation and abroad. We know that they were part of the 1930 Harmon Foundation exhibit. Supposedly, he painted landscapes and used a primitive style, but we have no examples of his work to see. All have disappeared. Spears must be considered a "lost" artist, another victim of apathy that resulted from living in a segregated society that placed little value on the work of its African-American citizens.

White society has only recently begun to recognize the importance and quality of African-American art. However, even today art exhibits still show little of the work of female African-American artists. Beverly Buchanan is an exception. She is one of the very few women usually included in standard lists of African-American artists. Buchanan's work looks at the rural South. African-American women had to face a double dose of discrimination against any creative efforts. Both their race and their sex posed barriers to recognition and success.

Hopefully, younger African-American artists of both sexes will face fewer barriers as time goes on. We will almost surely see a huge range and wide variety of work in years to come. Perhaps more of those making contributions in the future will be able not only to call South Carolina their home, but keep it as their home.



"Frank Owens' Blue Shack," 1989, by Beverly Buchanan. Made of pine, tin, and acrylic paint. Museum purchase. Columbia Museum of Art. From "Conflict and Transcendence: African-American Art in South Carolina, organized by the Columbia Museum of Art.

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 13

Military Service

In this chapter we will look at the military service of African-Americans in all of America's military conflicts, except the Civil War. We discussed the Civil War in an earlier chapter. Although we will concentrate on African-American soldiers with direct South Carolina connections, we will also review the history of African-American soldiers in general. This is for two reasons.

First, because nearly half of all Africans entered the nation through Charleston, odds are that almost half the African-Americans in military service have some South Carolina connection. If they themselves did not live in the state, then quite possibly their mothers or fathers or some other ancestor at least passed through the Palmetto State.

The second reason is even more important. Few people know this history. It has been all but ignored. We should understand that what African-Americans from South Carolina contributed was not unusual. African-Americans from all over the nation were making the same kind of sacrifices. We owe them all a great debt. After all, we may come from many places, but we are all Americans.

Why is military service important? Americans have almost always seen military service as both an obligation and a right of citizenship. How is it an obligation? Many people believe that if you benefit from living in a nation, you have a duty to help with its defense. For a democracy to survive, citizens must be willing to pay the price of defending it.

How is military service a right of citizenship? All citizens, if they are equal under the law, have an equal right to serve. If someone is not seen as equal under the law, he or she may not be allowed to serve. So the right to serve becomes even more important. If you think about it, one of the most important ways a person can claim full citizenship is to serve his or her nation in time of war.

The experience of African-Americans in general and South Carolina African-Americans in particular illustrates this idea. As you will see in this chapter, the history of African-American service in the military has one main theme. With a few important exceptions, African-Americans were saying that if they served and fought and died and proved themselves, other Americans must surely accept them as full citizens. If they were accepted as full citizens, then they would have all the blessings of liberty that other people have.

As you will see, African-Americans did all they could to make a strong claim that they loved their nation as much as anyone. In fact, half the battle was just trying to get the chance to prove this. Time and time again, African-Americans were denied the right to serve. However, when they did serve, their willingness to give their lives for their nation was not in doubt.

Sadly, as is the case with much of African-American history, the books left out the exploits of many brave men and women. As a result, their claims to full citizenship became much easier to ignore and reject. Unfortunately, many whites did ignore African-American military service. The time has come to give credit where credit is due.

Colonial America

We begin our story before there was a United States to defend. African-Americans helped defend the property and lives of white Americans in South Carolina long before they had any realistic hope of freedom for themselves. In 1708, enslaved African-Americans worked as mounted soldiers outside Charleston to protect the cattle and the settlement from Indian raids. In 1747, the South Carolina colonial legislature rec-

ognized this help. They passed a resolution of thanks. "In times of war, (they) behaved themselves with great faithfulness and courage, in repelling the attacks of his Majesty's enemies."

Despite this thanks, the state's leaders did not trust their enslaved soldiers. Whites made certain that the state militia had two armed whites for each armed black. This meant that if enslaved African-Americans did revolt against whites, the whites would outnumber them two to one.

The Revolutionary War

African-Americans served with distinction in the American Revolution. However, most of their service as combat soldiers on the American side was in the North. One of the first Americans to die in the cause, if not the very first, was Crispus Attucks, an African-American. British troops killed him when they fired on civilians in what became known as the Boston Massacre. A number of enslaved and free African-Americans served with the Minutemen at the beginning of the war in Massachusetts. They fought at Bunker Hill. African-Americans fought the British on both land and sea. They helped John Paul Jones in the Navy. Many served as pilots for boats in the Chesapeake Bay. Others fought as "privateers" on the high seas attacking the British Navy and merchant ships. Two African-American soldiers were with George Washington when he crossed the Delaware River to surprise the Hessian troops. Many Northern units were integrated. Blacks marched and fought alongside whites. After the battle of Yorktown, one reviewing officer had only high praise for the African-American troops. He noted that three-fourths of the regiment from Rhode Island were African-Americans. Compared to other regiments, he said, it was the neatest in dress and the best in military drills and maneuvers.

One great incentive for service in Northern states was the promise of freedom. For example, New York promised freedom to all enslaved African-Americans who signed up to fight for three years on the American side. The state would give their owners land in return. By the end of the war, almost all states, especially those in the North, were making similar offers. This greatly reduced the number of enslaved people in the northern parts of the nation. The bravery and sacrifice of African-Americans during the war encouraged abolitionists. It helped lead Northern states to completely end enslavement after the war.

Sadly, the story in South Carolina was quite different. The Continental Congress, George Washington, and one of South Carolina's more progressive military officers, Colonel John Laurens, all urged the state to take up the offer made by the nation's wartime government. The government promised to pay owners $1,000 for every enslaved African who became a soldier. When the war was over, the soldier would be freed and receive $50. Only South Carolina and Georgia completely rejected this plan. A number of enslaved African-Americans in these states ran away. They joined American revolutionary forces as soldiers in other states.

In South Carolina the major role African-Americans played in helping the American forces was as labor and support. It was not voluntary. Nevertheless, the labor of African-Americans was critical to the success of the revolutionaries. The state hired enslaved African-Americans from their owners to help build and man defenses. They erected forts around Charleston harbor. These included the two-layer Palmetto log walls on the fortifications on Sullivan's Island, later named Fort Moultrie. Those logs repelled the cannon balls of attacking British ships. In honor of that victory, South Carolina added a Palmetto tree to the state flag.

African-Americans served as firemen for Charleston when British ships shelled the city. They took the lead ornaments off buildings in Charleston and melted them into lead shot for muskets. Each cannon protecting Charleston had two African-Americans helping to man it. Even Francis Marion, known as the "Swamp Fox," counted among his men a number of African-Americans who served as scouts and in support roles.

African-Americans who belonged to white loyalists found themselves treated as the spoils of war. When the owners were unable to escape with the people they had enslaved, the Revolutionary Army often captured African-Americans. White officers put captured enslaved people to work as forced labor. They often kept them as their personal property after the war. Enslaved people captured from loyalist plantations in South Carolina were given to white American soldiers as an enlistment bonus. Both sides engaged in this practice. Enslaved African-Americans

captured by the British were sometimes kept by British officers. The British gave others to loyalist plantation owners who had lost the people they had enslaved to the American revolutionaries.

Just as in the case of white Americans, blacks fought on both sides in the war. The British appealed to enslaved peoples to join them and fight on their side. In return, they promised to free the enslaved people. This was very attractive to enslaved African-Americans in South Carolina and Georgia. They could not win their freedom fighting for the American revolutionaries. White owners threatened with harsh punishment any who took up this British offer. But many took the risk anyhow. They also believed the slogan, "Give me liberty or give me death!" One estimate is that between 1775 and 1783, at least 25,000 enslaved African-Americans in South Carolina alone fled to freedom. They fought on the side of the British as "shock troops" leading the charge against the Americans. Shock troops were those who charged first, and drew most of the firepower from the opponents. As a result, they usually suffered many more casualties than the troops that followed them. They also served as spies, guides, and skilled laborers. When the British left following their defeat, 20,000 African-Americans in British service left with them.

One group of African-Americans who fought on the British side stayed behind and remained a military force. They called themselves the "King of England's Soldiers." Hiding in fortifications in the swamps along the Savannah River, they carried on their own private guerrilla war at night against those who enslaved other African-Americans. They disappeared during the day. The combined militias of South Carolina and Georgia needed several years to finally drive them from the swamps.

By the end of the Revolutionary War, more than 5,000 African-Americans had risked their lives for the revolution. They fought for the political freedom of the revolutionary white Americans and for their own freedom in many cases. Ironically, the white Americans writing the new United States Constitution a few years affer the war treated African-Americans as property rather than citizens.

The War of 1812—The Battle of New Orleans

The role of African-Americans in the War of 1812 with Great Britain was similar to their role in the Revolutionary War. Once again, many free African-Americans served in units from northern regions of the nation. Again, the government promised freedom at the end of their term of service.

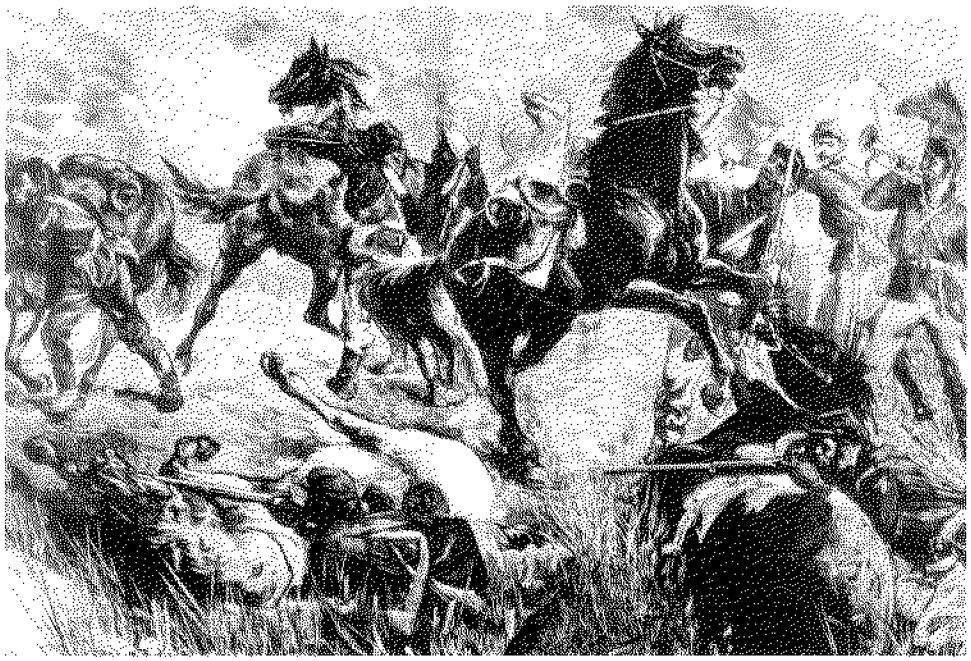
African-Americans had the most impact in naval battles. Some historians estimate that as many as one out of every ten sailors fighting in the Great Lakes were African-Americans. Following the Battle of Lake Erie, Admiral Perry said that his African-American sailors "seemed absolutely insensitive to danger." One captain spoke of an African-American sailor who had been hit by a twenty-four pound cannon shot. His dying words to his comrades were, "Fire away my boys." Another who was dying asked his shipmates to throw him overboard so he would not be in the way.

At the Battle of New Orleans, where Andrew Jackson won fame as a military commander, African-Americans played a major role. They fought beside regular white troops, turning back the main British assault on their position. They won particular praise in fights that led up to the main battle. Andrew Jackson told them that "the American Nation shall applaud your valor, as your general now praises your ardor."

The War of 1812 has one final similarity with the Revolutionary War. Once again the British tried to use the promise of freedom to lure enslaved African-Americans to their side. The numbers were not nearly as great as in the Revolutionary War, but some did risk their lives for freedom. According to records, once-enslaved people found safe haven living on British soil in Canada and the British West Indies in the period affer the war was over.

How the West Was Won

Most people do not associate African-Americans with the conquest of the Indians in the American West. We do not get to see many African-Americans as soldiers doing battle with the Indians on television or in the movies. However, if these "cowboy and Indian"



(Left) African-American Cavalry under fire in the American West. Courtesy William Loren Katz, Collection, Ethrac Publications, 231 W. 13th St. N.Y., N.Y. 10011. (Facing Page) The Black Seminole Scouts, one of the most famous fighting forces during the battles with the plains Indians in the late 1800s. Courtesy of William Loren Katz, Collection, Ethrac Publications, 231 W. 13th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011.

shows were really accurate, we would see many African-Americans among the U.S. Cavalry. One estimate is that as many as one out of every five soldiers fighting in the West was an African-American.

The name the Indians, or Native Americans, gave African-American troops was "buffalo soldiers." Native Americans saw African-American's dark and typically curly hair as similar to the hair on buffaloes. The famed all African-American Tenth Cavalry adopted the name "buffalo soldiers." With great pride they placed it on their military crest. Their service was so impressive that eleven African-Americans in their ranks even received the Congressional Medal of Honor.

One of the most feared groups of African-American soldiers was the "Black Seminole Scouts." These were the descendants of African-Americans who escaped enslavement. Most of them came from Georgia, but some of them may have escaped from South Carolina. They went to Florida where they joined the Seminole Indians and intermarried among them. Here, they helped the Seminoles successfully fight off the U.S. military for many years. Eventually they moved West with the Indians. They went to Mexico when whites tried to reenslave them. There they joined forces with the Mexican Army. Word spread far and wide about their great fighting skills.

In 1870 a U.S. general, knowing of their reputation as great scouts and fighters went to Mexico. He persuaded the Black Seminoles to help the U.S. Army in their war with the Indians in the American plains. With the promise of land and food, they and their families came North. They soon became known as one of the most successful fighting units in the West. They had a dozen major battles and never lost a single man. They survived in the desert on nothing but canned peaches and rattlesnake meat. In one skirmish, three scouts and their commander attacked a war party of thirty Indians. They won the battle and lost only the officer's horse. The three scouts won Congressional Medals of Honor.

Sadly, the U.S. Government broke its promise to the Black Seminole Scouts, just as it broke so many promises to Native Americans. The Scouts did not get the land or food for their families they were promised. Even worse, one of them, a Medal of Honor winner, was shot in the back by a Texas sheriff at a New Year's Eve dance. The 200 men and women, who had come back to help after being driven out of the country, once again packed their belongings and left the United States. This time it was for good.

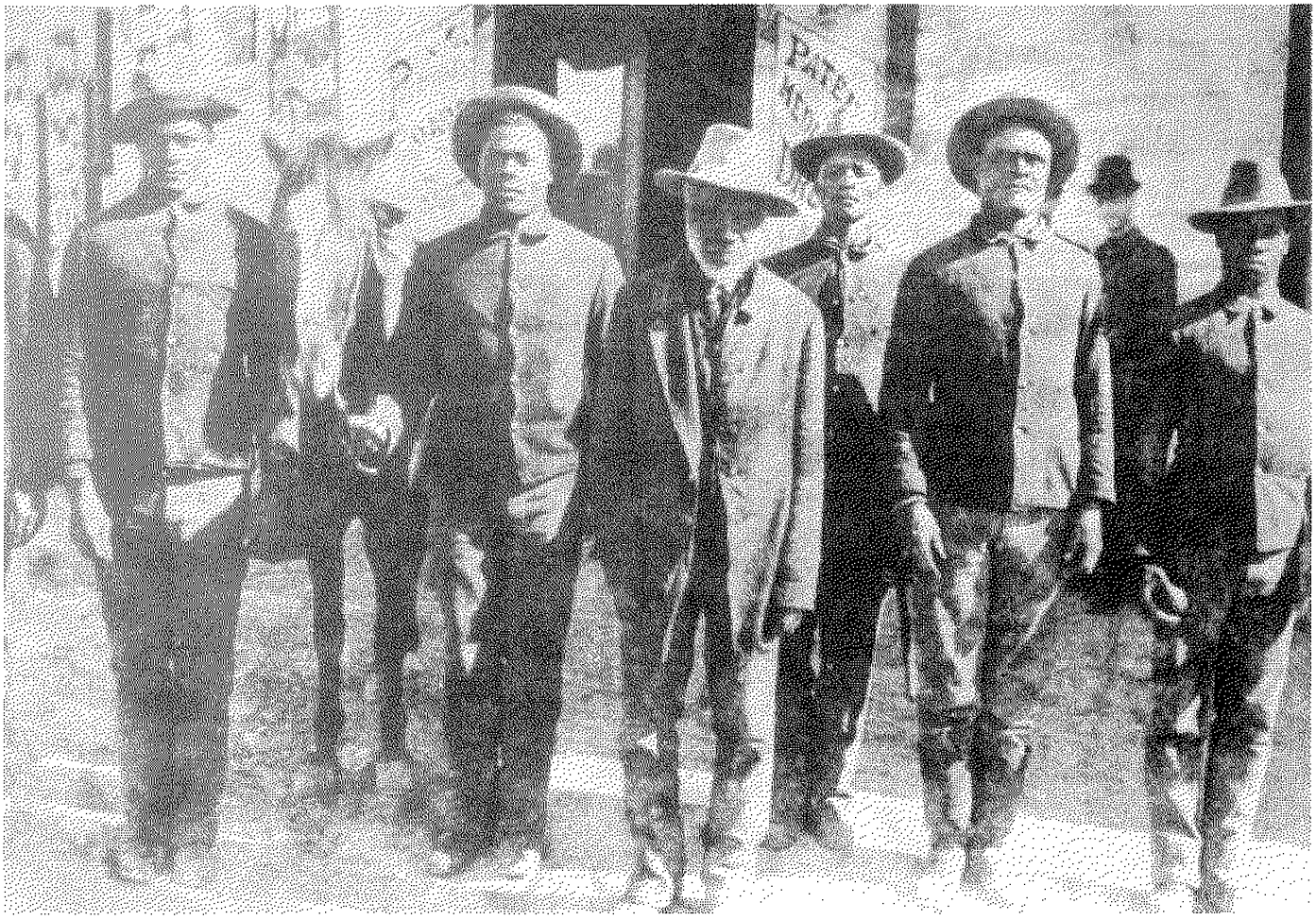
One of the saddest things about African-American involvement in the Western Indian wars is that both they and the Indians suffered the prejudice of white Americans. The Indians seemed aware of this. They felt a strange sense of kinship with these "buffalo soldiers" who helped to defeat them. At the Battle of Little Big Horn, the only one of General Custer's

men not scalped was Isaiah Dorman, an African-American scout who was also part Indian. The Indians said that he belonged to the Indians but happened to be among the soldiers.

The First African-American West Point Cadet

While the U.S. military was willing to allow African-Americans to sacrifice their lives in defense of the nation, it was unwilling to allow them to be officers. White officers commanded virtually all African-American troops until the late 1800s. The U.S. military did not give African-Americans the chance to prove they could lead as well as follow. After persistent efforts, the military allowed a few to try. Once again, the odds were greatly against them. They had to endure the usual hardships and harsh discipline. They also had to survive the hatred of all their fellow officers.

In the late 1800s, West Point allowed twenty African-Americans to enter as cadets. The first to attempt this nearly impossible feat was James W. Smith of South Carolina. Unfortunately, West Point expelled him for hitting a fellow cadet on the head with a large serving spoon. The cadet had insulted him beyond what he could endure. One of the worst cases took place in 1880 after Johnson Whittaker of Camden survived two years of rough treatment at West Point. Then white cadets tied him to his bed. They slashed his ears and shaved his head. But the school expelled him, not his tormenters. West Point found him guilty of supposedly injuring himself and then accusing others. Finally, in 1877, Henry O. Flipper, the son of an enslaved Georgian, survived the full four years and graduated. By the end of the century only two others had made it.



See page 164 (facing page) for caption.

Winning the Battle of San Juan Hill

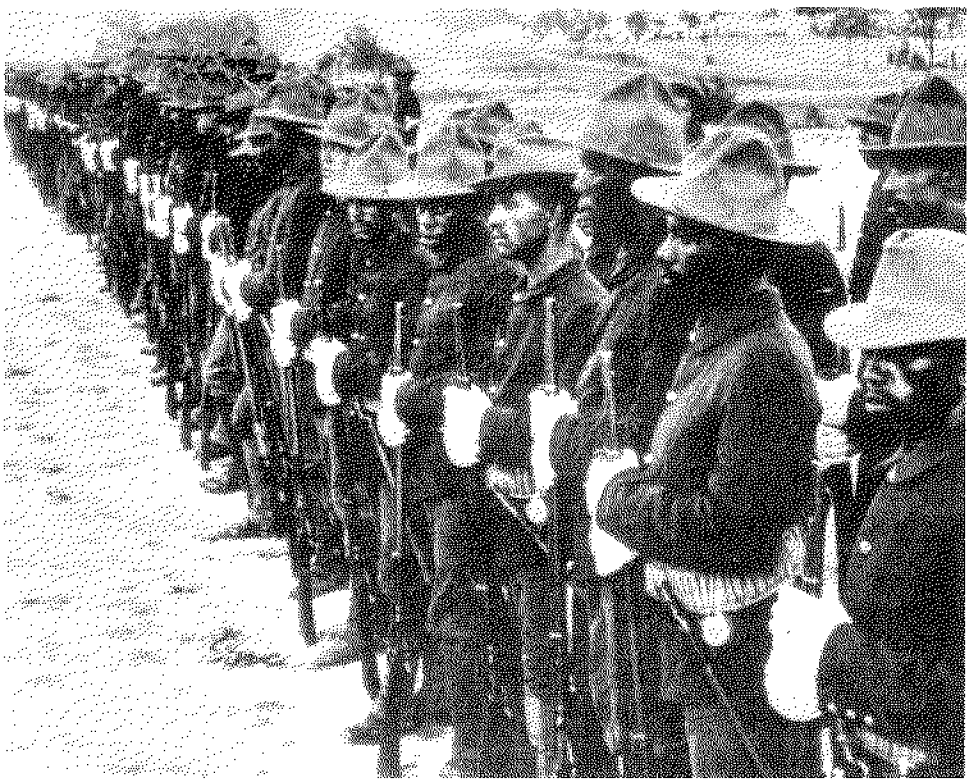
The short war with Spain in 1898 involved African-American soldiers and sailors from the very beginning. The war began with the sinking of the American battleship *Maine* by Spanish forces in the harbor of Havana, Cuba. Among the more than 200 sailors who lost their lives were twenty-two African-American sailors. "Remember the *Maine*!" became the battle cry for the rest of the war. Sadly, few remembered that about one in ten of those lost on the *Maine* were African-Americans.

Most of the action took place in Cuba. The same African-American cavalry units that had gained fame in winning the West played a decisive role. When Teddy Roosevelt led his "Rough Riders" in their victorious charge up San Juan Hill, he found African-American soldiers from the Tenth Cavalry had already taken the hill. They had cleared away much of the opposition. Some soldiers even claimed that the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries saved the Rough Riders from defeat. One said that because he was a Southerner he had always been prejudiced against "the colored man." But the bravery and hard fighting he saw had changed his feelings. He went on to note that their "battle hymn" was "There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight."

Not all the bravery and heroics took place under enemy fire. When an epidemic of yellow fever broke out, nearly a hundred African-American soldiers volunteered for nursing duty. They knew full well that they could catch the fatal disease themselves.

Jones Morgan, born in Newberry County, South Carolina, was thought to be the last surviving member of the Ninth Cavalry that helped take San Juan Hill. At the age of fifteen, he ran away from home and joined the Ninth, still known as buffalo soldiers from their frontier days in the American West. Although a South Carolina native, he spent his last years living in Virginia, where he visited schools and taught students about the buffalo soldiers. Chief of Staff General Colin Powell, the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. Military Services, and President Bush all met and gave honors to this living legend. In October of 1993 at the age of 110, Jones Morgan left this world and joined his fellow brave soldiers.

George Washington, who was born near Columbia in 1831, served with the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries. At the age of 97, he recounted his experiences from the Civil War to World War I. He served his owner, General Wade Hampton, during the Civil War and after the war for twelve years before joining the Army



Soldiers who helped take San Juan Hill after the battle in the Spanish American War. Courtesy of William Loren Katz, Collection, Ethrac Publications, 231 W. 13th St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011, Library of Congress.

himself. Washington claimed to have fought at Havana, where he was wounded and sent home. If this is correct, he would have been in his sixties by that time! He retired with the rank of sergeant. Because he had learned to speak Spanish in Cuba, the military asked him to help communicate with the Spanish-speaking prisoners during World War I. Doubtless he saw a great deal during his long life.

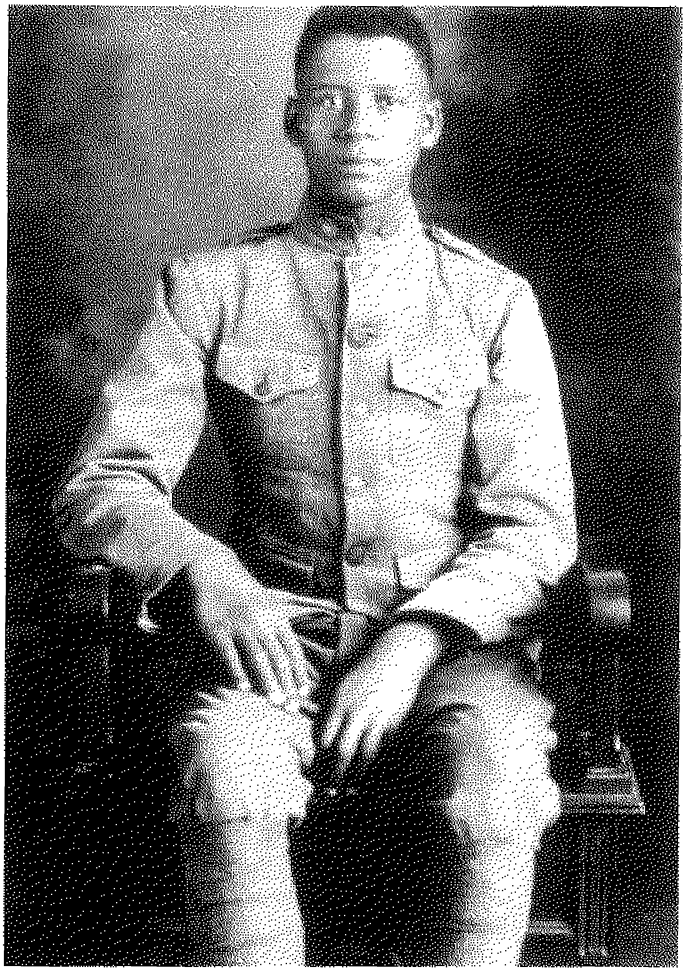
Nearly all Americans remember the battleship *Maine* and swell with pride at the exploits of Teddy Roosevelt. Few have even heard about what African-American soldiers did. They fought bravely to set Cubans free from Spain. Yet they were hardly free from prejudice themselves in the country whose uniforms they proudly wore.

World War I

African-Americans played a large role in the First World War. Many of those who served in the Army from the North were trained on South Carolina bases. Nearly half of all South Carolinians who served in the war were African-Americans.

The hopes of African-Americans were much the same as in the past. Charles Johnson taught school for thirty years and was an officer in the YMCA unit that served African-American troops being trained at Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina. In 1919, he spoke to an African-American audience in Union, South Carolina. Later, he published the speech in a small booklet. He described how he and so many other African-American citizens felt. "The American Negro is proud that he was given the opportunity to preserve Christian civilization and to show what is in him and give good account of himself. The history of the World War cannot be justly written and leave out his very conspicuous and heroic part. The world sees the American Negro in an entirely different light and will give him a chance in life as never before. This is the hope and expectation of all." Sadly, despite all the hopes for a chance, it was not yet to be. Nearly another half century passed before that hope become reality.

The most famous unit with many African-American soldiers from South Carolina was the 371st Infantry Regiment. It was part of an all African-American division. The other three regiments were composed of soldiers from Northern states. The 371st trained at Fort Jackson in late 1917. After only a few weeks of training, young men who had known only farm labor were changed into soldiers. An officer described them as "excellent" in drill, "unbelievably perfect" in handling their rifles, and extremely "proud" of their entire unit.



An unidentified young Columbia resident posing for Richard Roberts in his uniform just after World War I. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, slide B-148 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of Roberts family.

This pride carried over onto the battle fields of Europe less than a year later. The Army assigned them to become part of a famous French division. The "Red Hand Division" used a red hand as its shoulder patch. The 371st fought with such courage and ferocity that the Germans began calling them the "black

devils" and "hell fighters." A white American colonel said that "These men of ours, whom I saw in death on Hill 188, these black men who dignified death, who brought honor to their race and glory to our colors. . .were soldiers who helped to elevate our pride" (Chester D. Heywood, *Negro Combat Troops in the World War: The Story of the 371st Infantry.* New York: AMS Press, 1969, original edition, 1928, p.177). The French awarded the unit a large number of medals for their courage and successes. This included the shooting down of three airplanes with rifle fire. The French erected a monument in a field to commemorate their exploits. Along with names and mottoes, it has the picture of a cotton field and a Palmetto tree, the symbol of South Carolina.

Sometimes, it takes many years to win recognition. Sometimes, recognition comes long after you are gone from this earth. Such was the case of Corporal Freddy Stowers. Stowers was born to a family of seven children on a small Anderson County vegetable farm around the turn of the century. As a youth, he joined the 371st Infantry and made the rank of corporal. On September 28, 1918, he led his men in a charge on a hill held by the Germans. The German gunfire wounded him badly. This did not stop Corporal Stowers. He kept on firing his own weapon and urged his men on until they captured the hill. There he died. Almost seventy-three years later the U.S. military awarded him the Congressional Medal of Honor he deserved. The military had been reluctant to give African-Americans the nation's highest award. Convincing them to do the right thing took a long time. In April of 1991, President George Bush awarded the medal to one of Stowers' sisters who was still living.

The slogan used by American leaders to rally public support for the war was that this was "the war to make the world safe for democracy." Despite their great contributions in the war, African-Americans did not find democracy when they returned home. They were still treated like second-class citizens. In 1935, *The Palmetto Leader,* an African-American newspaper, noted that the nation had built a memorial for white soldiers at a cost of $105,000, then a great sum. Nothing had been done to honor African-Americans who had fought in the "War to End All Wars."

World War II

For much of the Second World War, African-Americans found themselves fighting to get a chance to fight. The military, dominated by white prejudice, was still not ready to offer full equality. Units remained segregated by race. African-Americans found that becoming officers was nearly impossible.

Retired chemist, Edwin R. Russell remembers that at the beginning of the war, he taught classes for the U.S. Army in the chemistry of powder and explosives. The classes, taught at Howard University in Washington, D.C., included 100 blacks and whites. The white students then entered the service as officers, but the black students entered as privates. Unable to persuade the Army to treat African-Americans fairly, Russell left Washington.

Nevertheless, about a million African-Americans served in all branches of the military in World War II. About half a million served overseas where the actual fighting took place. About the same percentage of the armed forces were African-American as African-Americans were of the general population. At the beginning of the war, the military allowed African-Americans to hold only lowly jobs, like kitchen assistants. Even there, they made the most of any chances they had. One young African-American was stationed on a ship docked at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Dorie Miller was assigned to the ship's kitchen, or ship's "mess," to use the naval term. When the Japanese attacked the base, he manned a gun and shot down a number of planes. The military awarded him the Navy Cross. Many observers feel that he really deserved the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Thanks in part to Mary McLeod Bethune, the South Carolina civil rights leader, African-Americans had a chance to do other things. She was a friend of Eleanor Roosevelt. She persuaded Mrs. Roosevelt to convince President Roosevelt to expand opportunities for African-Americans in the military. By the end of the war, African-Americans served in all parts of the military. This included tank battalions, artillery, infantry, and officer candidate schools. In the Air Force, they served as pilots. Given these opportunities, African-Americans proved their mettle. Over eighty African-American pilots won the Distinguished Flying Cross.

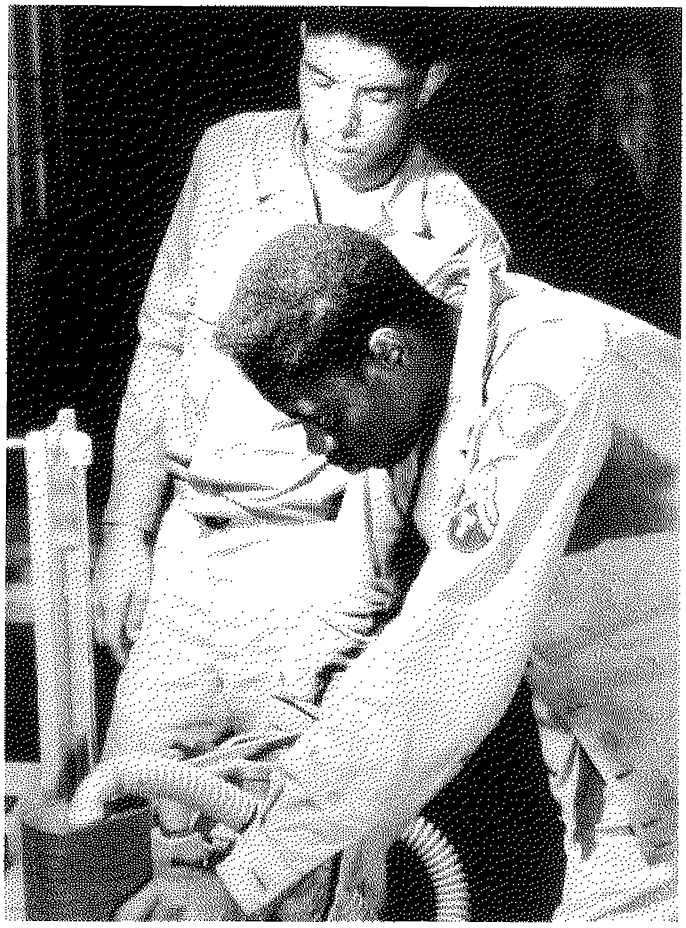
African-Americans had to fight hard to prove that they had the ability to be pilots. One of those who made this possible was Ernest Henderson, who trained the Tuskegee Airmen. Henderson, one of ten children, grew up in a log cabin in Laurens County. His family had little money. As a boy working on the farm, he liked to watch the planes that flew by once in a while. He sold produce from the farm to pay for his high school tuition in Clinton in the 1930s. A bright student and a hard worker, he graduated with honors. Henderson worked his way through college by selling vegetables, getting bottle refunds, and working in the kitchen at Hampton Institute in Virginia.

At this time the military refused to train African-American pilots, believing they could not fly airplanes. As war approached, the military picked six black colleges, including Hampton Institute, to train civilian pilots on an experimental basis. Henderson, a business major, was one of the students they trained.

In 1941 the Defense Department set up the all-black 99th Pursuit Squadron at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Henderson became a flight instructor and then assistant squadron commander. The men gave him the nickname "Pepsi-Cola Henderson" because he did not drink alcohol. Although he wanted to fly in combat, the military asked him to stay and train pilots. He stayed there until the war ended.

When the Tuskegee program began, the armed forces still considered training African-American pilots to be experimental. Henderson and his men always believed that they had to be better than whites in order to prove themselves. At first, African-American pilots were segregated overseas. They had to show the military how good they were. They showed them. Integration of the pilots finally resulted.

After the war, the Tuskegee program became a civilian flight training corporation. Henderson taught there for four years. In 1949, he came to Columbia where he taught pilots and organized a group called the Black Eagles. Henderson was the first African-American man from South Carolina to get a commercial pilot's license and to have ground instructor, flight instructor, and instrument ratings. Later he was a businessman, teacher, assistant principal, and counselor in the schools. His children, all professionals themselves, could be proud of their father, a man who shattered stereotypes.



Soldiers of a chemical unit testing gas masks in July, 1943 in Columbia. Library of Congress LC-USW3 35645.

While Ernest Henderson served his country at home, many others served overseas. There are thousands of stories of bravery and valor. What follows are just a couple of them.

Late in the war after the Allies had invaded Europe, Hitler made a desperate attempt to turn them back. The Nazis massed troops and tanks. They broke through a weak point in the Allied lines in a great battle called the Battle of the Bulge. The Nazis surrounded outnumbered American troops. Americans were cut off from their support. The Germans trapped the famed 101st Airborne paratroopers in the city of Bastogne. This all-white unit was in danger of being wiped out.

Two African-American units came to the rescue, the 183rd combat engineers and the 761st tank battalion. In order to rescue the 101st, they had to build a bridge in an area that was under heavy German fire and airplane attacks. It was the dead of winter. A

heavy snow covered the ground. The African-Americans in the 183rd built that bridge, even though many soldiers died in the effort. With the bridge built, the 761st tank battalion crossed over. It rescued the soldiers of the 101st Airborne. Today, if you should travel to Bastogne, France, you can see one of the tanks still standing in the town square as a monument to this victory.

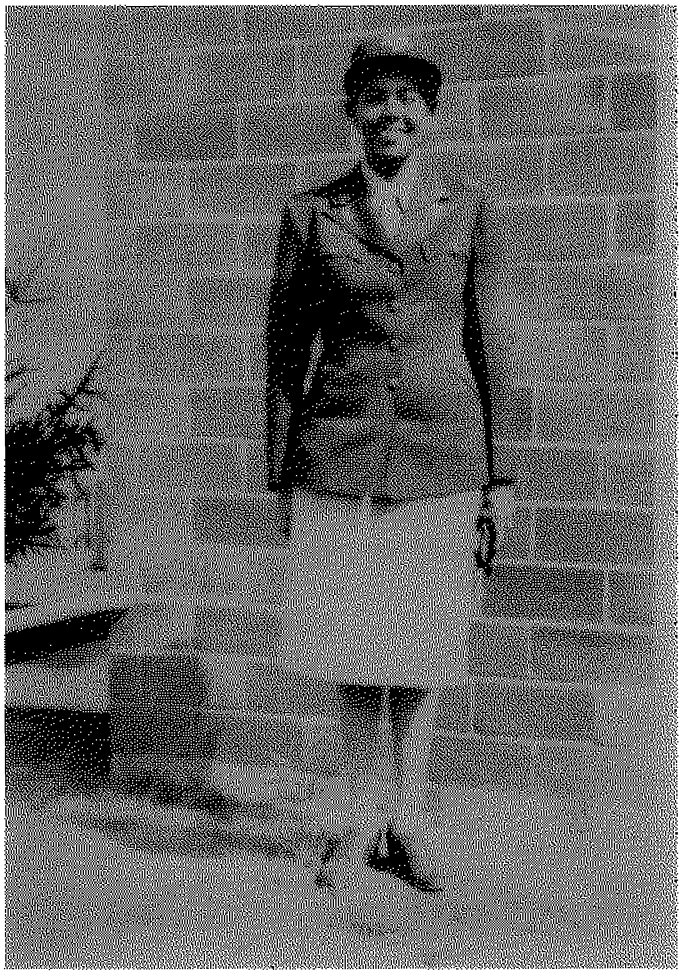
Later, both the tank battalion and the engineers helped free Jewish prisoners who were still alive in concentration camps. One survivor said that the troops who broke down the gate to free them had both black and white faces, but "for us they were angels."

One of those who entered the concentration camp was Leon Bass, who later earned his doctorate and became a high school principal. Interestingly, his father, who was born in South Carolina in 1891, had also fought in Europe. Bass' father had been a member of the American forces sent to fight Germany in the First World War. Leon Bass remembers the anger and bitterness he felt when he saw his buddies killed in the war. He remembers wondering what he was fighting for when he knew white Americans at home did not think he was good enough to share drinking fountains or restaurants or even seats on the bus. Then he saw the horrors of millions of people being killed in concentration camps because of their race. He understood that we all must fight against racism abroad and at home.

By the end of the war, the 761st had one of the most impressive records of any American unit. With less than 600 men, the men and tanks of the 761st had killed and captured over 20,000 of the enemy. Nearly half of these African-American soldiers received Purple Hearts because of the wounds they suffered in combat.

Toward the end of the war, the military integrated some regular Army units on an experimental basis. Evaluating the experiment, one white officer said that no soldiers he had ever seen had done better under fire than those in the integrated units. Despite this success, the military went back to segregated units immediately affer the war. One of the reasons was fear that Southern whites would not accept integrated military bases located in the South. No matter how well African-Americans performed, they were not treated as equals.

Although their role is often ignored, women also played an important part in the war effort. Lieutenant Colonel Charity Edna Adams Early achieved a higher rank in the U.S. military during World War II than any other African-American woman. She was a member of the first Women's Army Auxiliary Corp (WAAC) Officer Training Class and served in the Women's Army Corp for nearly four years. The then Miss Adams served as Company Commander, Station Control and Training Officer, and Battalion Commander in the European Theater of Operations.



Lt. Colonel Charity Edna Adams in uniform in World War II. Courtesy of Charity Edna Adams Early.

This Columbia native was an achiever in other areas of life as well. Her parents, a minister and a teacher, expected her and her brothers and sister to succeed. She learned self respect from her father. In her book, *One Woman's Army*, in 1989, she relates her father's response to a white insurance salesman who insisted on addressing her by her first name,

rather than "Miss." At this time, she was already a college graduate and a teacher. Her father bluntly told the man to cancel the insurance policy and never to return.

She graduated from Wilberforce University in Ohio with a B.A. in mathematics and science. After teaching math and science for four years, she was anxious for other challenges. When the military decided to recruit women so that more men would be available to fight at the front, she volunteered. She served as an officer in charge of training other women for jobs in the service. Military life required some adjustment for women, many of whom had led relatively sheltered lives. The military, in turn, was not sure what to do with the women and had trouble even finding uniforms to fit them. Life was not easy for African-American women, who were segregated even when serving their country. The black women lived in separate quarters from the white women. They experienced prejudice both within and outside the military. On a trip home on the train, Charity Edna Adams was refused service in the dining car. A white officer, also a Southerner, was furious when this happened. He escorted her into the dining room, ate dinner with her, and then escorted her back to her seat. She later recalled him as a true Southern gentleman.

After serving in the United States for several years, the military sent Adams to Europe, where she served in both England and France. Her unit was responsible for distribution of mail and packages. On more than one occasion, she found herself the senior officer in a situation where military personnel were unused to taking orders from either women or African-Americans. One foggy night, Adams was leading a convoy of vehicles from Rouen to Paris. The convoy found itself behind another convoy that had stopped when a piano they were moving fell on a soldier and pinned him down. Major Adams had to assume command and see that the injured soldier reached a hospital. She pulled her vehicle into the lead position. The fog was so thick that no one could see ahead. Two soldiers rode on the front fenders with flashlights. After traveling all night, they finally reached Paris. The injured soldier, who had a broken back, recovered.

Adams decided to leave the service at the end of the war rather than accept an assignment at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Boarding the ship home, she was the senior female officer. Under her command were not only African-American women but also several hundred white nurses. Some of the nurses refused to accept her authority. Adams demonstrated the leadership abilities that had allowed her to rise to the highest position then available to any woman in the Army. She told the women that she was not leaving the ship and that they would sail in twenty minutes. The women could accept her command or disembark. The white nurses backed down. However, when the ship's captain asked Adams to set up a duty roster to take care of seasick passengers, Adams diplomatically asked the white nurse major to handle this. By the end of the voyage, the women had begun to accept each other.

After leaving the military, Adams returned to graduate school and received an M.A. in psychology from the Ohio State University. She then took a position with the Veterans Administration. Later, she served as Dean of Student Personnel Services at Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial College and Georgia State College. After her marriage, she moved with her husband to Switzerland, where he was studying medicine. With her usual determination, she learned to speak the local language (German) and then studied psychology at the University of Zurich and the Jungian Institute of Analytic Psychology.

Returning to the states, Charity Edna Adams Early began to raise a family and become active in community affairs. This mother of two has given of her time to numerous community activities. A partial list includes volunteering with the YMCA, Urban League, and United Negro College Fund. She is co-director of the Black Leadership Development Program of Dayton, Ohio and a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Early is on the board of directors of the United Way, Dayton Power and Light, and Sinclair Community College. She chaired the Montgomery County Human Service Council. She has received many awards. In 1991, Wilberforce University awarded her the Doctor of Humanities degree. Early has been recognized by the Ohio Woman's Hall of

Fame, received a Brotherhood Award from the Dayton Area National Conference of Christians and Jews, and a Public Administrators' "Outstanding Citizen Service in Public Affairs", award. She received a "Black Women Against the Odds" tribute to the top 100 women in Black History sponsored by the Smithsonian Institute.

Other African-American women from South Carolina have followed in Charity Edna Adams Early's footsteps. In 1993, Irene Trowell-Harris, a native of Aiken, became the third female general and first African-American female general in the National Guard. In Washington, D.C., Trowell Harris plays an important leadership role in the Air National Guard.

Korea

By the time of the Korean War in the early 1950s, the military had been desegregated. President Truman had ordered total integration using his powers as commander-in-chief. Blacks and whites served together throughout the war. Although there was some friction, many Southern white men began to learn that differences were only skin deep.

One such white South Carolinian was Melvin Calvert. He was wounded and needed a blood transfusion to live. The medics laid him on a cot next to an African-American soldier who had volunteered to donate his own blood. A tube ran from the arm of the African-American to the arm of Melvin Calvert. Calvert remembers thinking that according to what he had been taught all his life, this was not supposed to work. Yet it did work. He began to question segregation. Calvert eventually became a United Methodist minister. In that role, he began working to bring the races together on Sunday and in the rest of the week.

Vietnam

By the time of the Vietnam War in the 1960s and early 1970s, the Armed Forces were nearly fully integrated from enlisted men through the officer corps. African-Americans from South Carolina and other states served in all parts of the military and at all ranks. The military was probably more integrated than other parts of society. The Vietnam era was a period of great unrest in America. The nation was locked in struggle over the civil rights movement. The movement challenged racial barriers in all parts of life. African-Americans were impatient, and whites were often resentful about that impatience. The murder of Martin Luther King in 1968 increased tensions. The fact that the war did not go well for America added further tension. No one wanted to die in a war we were going to lose.

The men whom the Army drafted took all these tensions with them to Vietnam. In interviews with South Carolina veterans after the war, we can hear the tension and the common ground found by both races. A white veteran complained that African-American soldiers "would band together and do black power things, and I got to feeling real uneasy about them." An African-American veteran from South Carolina questioned the very purpose of the war. "We didn't have nothing against the Vietnamese. I never met them. . .you would go to Vietnam and sacrifice your life and fight for stuff like this and come to the U.S. and get treated like a second-class citizen. You know, that's the hurting part" (from unpublished interviews transcribed with Vietnam veterans by the students of Dr. Robert E. Botsch, University of South Carolina-Aiken).

At the same time, both of these South Carolinians did share common ground. They saw that both races could work and fight for each other rather than against each other when they faced a common danger. Most of the problems in Vietnam between the races took place away from the fields of battle. As the white soldier said, "In combat you don't care if your buddy is red as long as he is OK." The African-American soldier said that where there was fighting against the enemy, "whites and blacks got along nice because of the simple fact that you could go out and somebody could zap you and nobody would ever know what happened."

Ralph H. Johnson cared about his fellow soldiers so much that he gave his life for them. Johnson lived his first eighteen years in Charleston before enlisting in the Marine Corps in 1967. Not quite a year later, he was in Vietnam serving as a scout with a company of fellow Marines. On March 5, 1968, Private First Class Johnson was with two fellow Marines in an observation post overlooking a valley controlled by the enemy. The enemy attacked. A hand grenade landed in their foxhole. In the words of the citation that explained the awarding of the Congressional Medal of Honor: "Realizing the inherent danger to his two comrades, he shouted a warning and unhesitatingly hurled himself upon the explosive device. When the grenade exploded, Private Johnson absorbed the tremendous



Sergeant Webster Anderson of Winnsboro, South Carolina, wearing the Congressional Medal of Honor. Courtesy of Webster Anderson.

impact of the blast and was killed instantly. His prompt and heroic act saved the life of one marine at the cost of his own and undoubtedly prevented the enemy from penetrating his sector of the patrol's perimeter." Greater love hath no man than this nineteen-year-old South Carolinian.

South Carolina has a second African-American son who earned the Congressional Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War. Unlike Ralph Johnson, Sergeant First Class Webster Anderson of the 101st Airborne Division was a career military man. Anderson was lucky enough to live to tell his own story, although at a terrible cost to himself. Born in 1933 in Winnsboro, Anderson joined the Army in Columbia at the age of twenty. He served at many posts and won many awards, including the Master Parachutist Badge.

On October 15, 1967, a large enemy force attacked Anderson's artillery unit. The enemy charged past the first line of defense. Then, Anderson went into action. Again, in the words of the Congressional Medal of Honor citation: "Sergeant Anderson, with complete disregard for his personal safety, mounted the exposed parapet of his howitzer position and became the mainstay of the defense of the battery position. Sergeant Anderson directed devastating direct howitzer fire on the assaulting enemy while providing rifle and grenade defensive fire against the enemy from his exposed position. . . .two enemy grenades exploded at his feet knocking him down and severely wounding him in the legs. Despite excruciating pain and though not able to stand, Sergeant Anderson valorously propped himself on the parapet and continued to direct howitzer fire upon the closing enemy and to encourage his men to fight on. Seeing an enemy grenade land within the gun pit near a wounded member of his gun crew, Sergeant Anderson, heedless of his own safety, seized the grenade and attempted to throw it over the parapet to save his men. As the grenade was thrown from the position, it exploded and Sergeant Anderson was again grievously wounded. Although only partially conscious and severely wounded, Sergeant Anderson refused medical attention and continued to encourage his men. . .and was able to maintain the defense of his own section and to defeat a determined enemy attack."

Although Anderson lost both of his legs and part of an arm, he did recover from his wounds. He moved back to lead an active life with his family in Winnsboro. Anderson is an outgoing man who carries no bitterness for the heavy price he paid. Like thousands of other South Carolina Veterans of Vietnam from all ethnic backgrounds, Anderson is proud to have served his nation.

The Persian Gulf War of 1991

Since Vietnam, the military has become fully integrated as it opened top ranking officer positions to African-Americans. Although tensions still exist, soldiers of all races have more opportunity than ever before. In the Gulf War, units from South Carolina in-

cluded people of all races. They worked well together. They drove Saddam Hussein's army out of Kuwait. The highest ranking officer during the Gulf War was General Colin Powell, an African-American. Some people even talked about nominating him as Vice President of the United States after the war was over.

Lessons

The experience of all these wars teaches important lessons to those who pay careful attention. All citizens want and deserve a chance to serve. We are stronger when we use the talents of all our people, regardless of race or other differences. Thousands of African-Americans from South Carolina along with other Americans have given their lives so that the rest of us can live in a nation that is free and independent. Let us make sure that it really is free. Let us make sure that every human being is free to make the most of her or his life. If we do not, then all those who died in our defense will have died for nothing.

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 14

Civil Rights

One of the greatest contributions of South Carolina's African-Americans is in civil rights. They moved the state and the nation to practice the values of democracy. They gave us all a better chance to be the best we can possibly be. As a result, all of us today live in a happier and wealthier state and nation.

South Carolina has produced many civil rights leaders of national fame. You can read about them in most modern history books. They include Mary McLeod Bethune, Modjeska Simkins, Matthew Perry, and of course, Jesse Jackson. We can also be proud of leaders whose fame usually does not go beyond South Carolina. Many of these spent most of their lives within the state. You will meet some of these people, perhaps for the first time. They include Septima Poinsett Clark, James Hinton, and I. DeQuincey Newman.

We want to include two other groups of people. First, we will look at civil rights leaders who history books have almost completely ignored. Two of the men you will meet that fit into this group are Ossie McKaine and the Reverend J. A. Delaine. Second, in telling the story of how we moved from a segregated state to a state where all people had at least some opportunities, we will look at average people. They took great risks in their daily lives to bring about change. Without them, change could never have taken place no matter how great the leaders. We should be proud of them all.

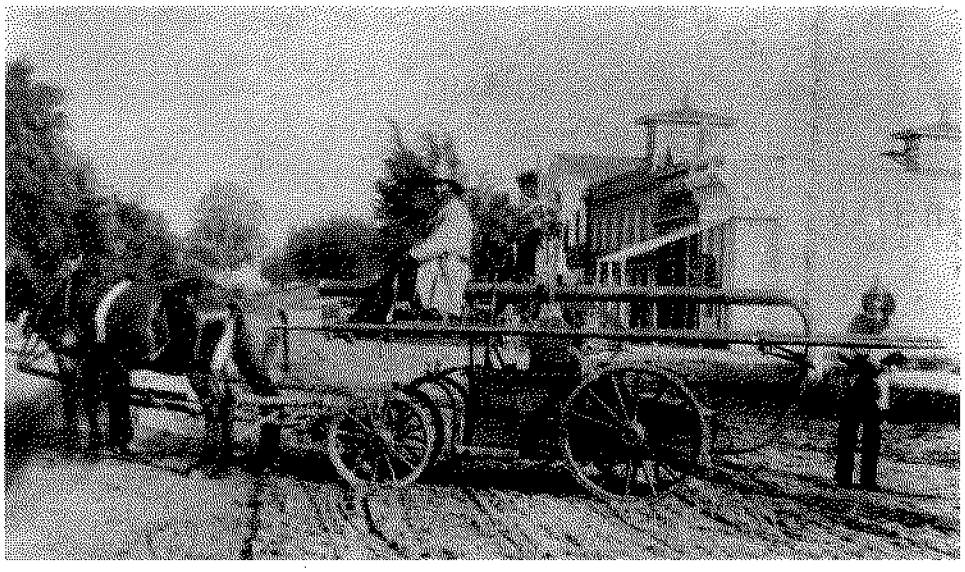
The Story of Ossie McKaine

Osceola E. McKaine is one of the least well-known civil rights leaders both in and out of South Carolina. He is one of the most remarkable men ever born in this state when we consider his many accomplishments. McKaine was a military hero, a successful businessperson, a great orator, a journalist, and a civil rights organizer. He spoke four languages fluently and could get by in about eleven other languages. Despite the limited education South Carolina provided him, he did all this.

"Ossie" McKaine, as he was called by his friends, is also a good person with whom to begin the story of the civil rights revolution in South Carolina because of when he lived. He was born in Sumter in 1892. This is the period when the last surviving African-American leaders from Reconstruction, like Robert Smalls, were being forced out of power. The legislature was passing segregation laws, called "Jim Crow" laws. After 1896, the state could pass such laws and not be in violation of the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that the "equal protection" clause of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution did not forbid separate facilities for the races. So McKaine grew up with legally enforced segregation. He helped change that. Before he died in 1955, he saw the beginning of the end of these laws. Just the year before, the U.S. Supreme Court had overturned the *Plessy* decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The Court decided that separation did violate the 14th Amendment. Before we get too far ahead of the story, let us go back and look at McKaine's early life.

At the age of sixteen, McKaine left the state to begin an adventure that would take him far. At first he worked on a merchant ship and saw Latin America. He ended up in Boston where he furthered his education. Then, at the age of twenty-two, he joined the U.S. Army. He was first stationed in the Philippines. Later, the Army sent him with General John J.





(Top) African-Americans had to provide their own facilities during days of segregation, such as this library in Greenville. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide I-96 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of Greenville County Library. (Bottom) Even fire companies were segregated. Each race had their own department. This was one of two African-American fire units in Georgetown in the early 1900s. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed.,* The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide I-104 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of Georgetown County Library.*

Pershing to fight the Mexican bandit Pancho Villa. Three years later, after the outbreak of the First World War, he joined a new African-American unit, the 367th Regiment. It inherited the old name from African-American cavalry units. They were called the "Buffalo Regiment." McKaine was now an officer. He fought in the trenches of France and was promoted to first lieutenant for his bravery in taking a German fortress. After the war, he left the Army and came home a hero.

For a while McKaine worked in New York as a journalist. He met important figures in the "Harlem Renaissance" like James Weldon Johnson. McKaine became more and more frustrated and angry with the barriers created by racism. So he returned to Europe. He remembered Europeans had much less prejudice toward people of color. He opened a very successful nightclub in Belgium. He hired many African-American entertainers who delighted European audiences with jazz and other new kinds of African-American music. Living in a luxurious home nearby, he seemed completely happy until racism once again forced its way into his life.

In 1940, the German army took over Belgium. The invaders forced McKaine's club to entertain Nazi officers. He closed the club and left for the United States. His arrival in Sumter began the third and perhaps most important phase of his life.

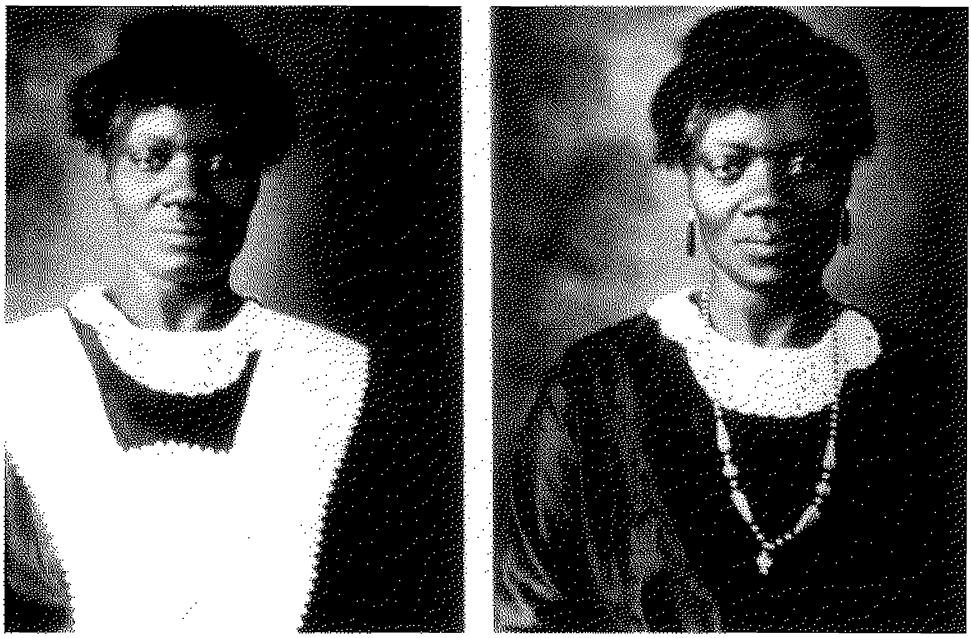
McKaine supported himself once again by writing. Although most of his work appeared in African-American newspapers, *The State* newspaper in Columbia carried some of his articles. Because of his experiences, people from all over the state asked McKaine to speak. He developed great skill as a speaker from these many speeches. Later, he used that skill to rally support for civil rights action. The white establishment tolerated his talking about racism in South Carolina because he softened the blows by saying that things were worse in Northern cities.

One of the things that most angered Ossie McKaine was the poor public schools for African-American children in the state. The private schools we read about earlier were too few to help all children. McKaine remembered having to go to Boston to get his own education. Part of the problem was money. Since the end of Reconstruction when spending was about the same for both races, the difference had been growing. In 1930, the state spent almost $53 on each white student compared to only $5.20 on each black student in public schools. By 1940, the situation had improved somewhat, but it was still very unequal. The state still spent more than three times as much on white students. Teacher pay was also unfair. McKaine went around the state and collected figures to prove his case. He found that public schools paid white teachers nearly twice as much as equally qualified black teachers. No wonder many African-American teachers left the state in order to earn a living.

McKaine had helped reorganize the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Sumter after it had fallen apart. He convinced the NAACP to make teacher pay their number one issue. McKaine went all over the state making speeches to help raise money for the cause. Money was needed to pay the costs for court cases to get equal pay. In 1944 and 1945, teachers won equal pay in Charleston and Columbia. These first big victories marked the beginning of many things to come.

McKaine also worked to get equal school bus transportation for African-American students. School districts provided bus transportation for white students, but black students had to get to school on their own, no matter how far away they lived. His speeches helped convince local civil rights leaders to begin court cases in this area. The case that began in Clarendon County eventually turned into one of the cases that outlawed school segregation. We shall look at that case later in this chapter.

In the area of voting rights, McKaine helped mount voter registration drives. Voting laws created



Regardless of education, African-Americans were limited in their career options. This woman, photographed around 1920 by Richard Roberts, is shown in both her jewelry and in her maid's uniform. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide G-83 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of Roberts family.*



Options for work fell mainly in two categories, either in domestic service or in agricultural labor. To survive in agriculture, the entire family had to go to work in back-breaking labor, as this family was in 1939 in a field near Manning. Library of Congress LC-USF34 51919.

difficulties for minorities to register to vote. Because the Democratic Party did not allow African-Americans to participate in party affairs, McKaine helped organize a new branch of the Democratic Party called the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP). In 1944, the PDP nominated him to run against Governor Olin Johnston for the U.S. Senate. McKaine had no chance of winning, but the effort encouraged many average African-American citizens to become interested in voting and politics. McKaine was the first African-American to run for the U.S. Senate in South Carolina since Reconstruction. He went on to help organize voter registration drives all over the South.

In late 1946, the war in Europe was over. McKaine's nightclub in Belgium had survived intact. His business associates there persuaded him to return and reopen it. In 1955, he was about to return to the America. However, he was in poor health. Breathing problems that were complicated by exposure to poison gas back in the First World War led to his death before he could return. In December 1955, Ossie McKaine was buried in Sumter. A military honor guard from Shaw Air Force Base stood at attention as this remarkable man was laid to rest.

The Importance of Organization

Why was organizing civil rights groups like the NAACP so important? The answer to this question lies in what life was like for most African-American South Carolinians in the early 1900s. They lacked the rights that white South Carolinians had, political, civil, and social rights. Simple physical protection was a problem.

How do you break out of a situation like this? There are two answers. First, you can leave. That is what many people did. They left the state and took with them the talents and energy that could have made the state richer than it is today. You read about this in an earlier chapter. Some, like Ossie McKaine, came back. Most did not.

Second, you can organize politically. There is strength in numbers. If you can get enough people together, you can protect yourself better, and you can work together. You can raise money to challenge laws that prevent you from getting a decent education. With education, you can make more money so that whites want your business and need your skill.

With education, you might be able to pass the literacy test and pay the poll tax that barred so many African-Americans from voting. Of course, the literacy test and poll tax were not the only barriers. State laws prevented all but whites from participating in primary elections. This was called the white primary. Because there were so few Republicans in the state, whoever won the Democratic primary would win the general election. So the primary election is really what

counted. Organization and education could help you take these unjust laws to court.

If you could vote, then politicians would have to pay attention to you. They would have to provide you with the same services they provided white folks. You would have better schools, paved roads in your neighborhood, running water, a sewer system for better sanitation, access to doctors and hospitals and social services when you needed them. You could begin to elect fellow African-Americans to political office and win appointments to boards and commissions and judgeships. You could sit on juries. You could begin to expect equal treatment before the law. You could end laws that segregated buses and hotels and restaurants. You could end school segregation and improve education even more. Finally, you could begin to demand equal job opportunities because you would have the political and economic power to make it happen.

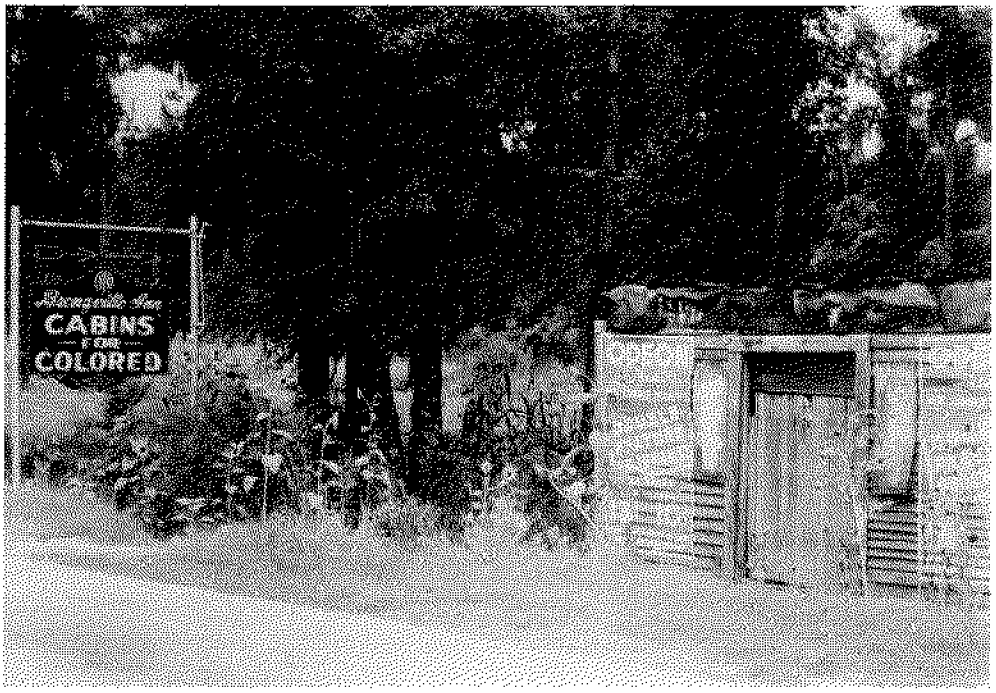
All of this was possible, but first you had to organize politically. That would not be easy in South Carolina. Some whites had done all they could to stamp out any black organization that had a political purpose since the end of Reconstruction in 1876.

The many self-help organizations we have already studied started the foundation for political organization. The small, but important, middle class that accumulated a little wealth over several generations of hard work added to the foundation. The churches that gave a few African-Americans an education and trained leaders strengthened the foundation. All of this was necessary before action could take place.

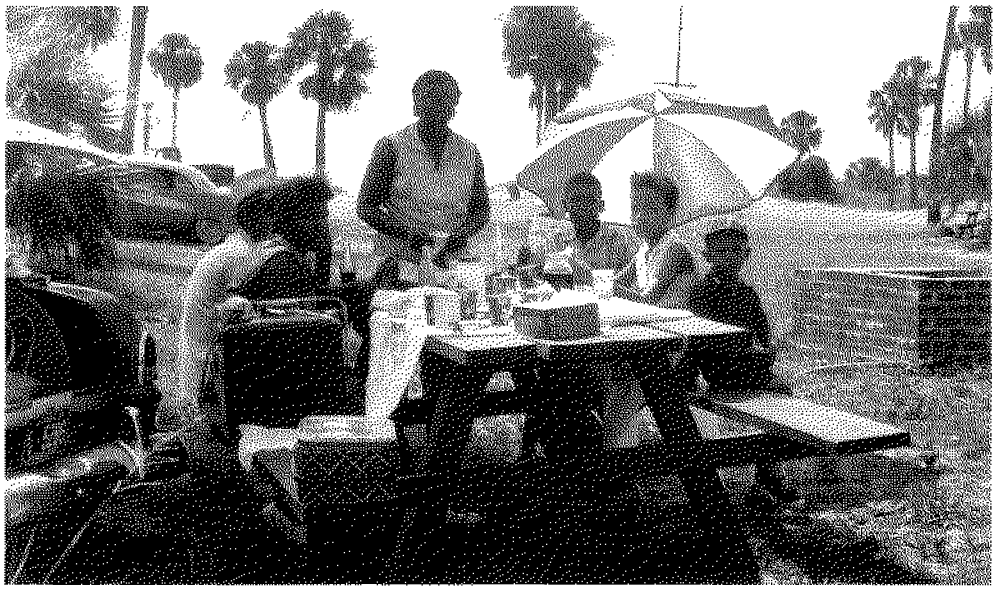
Septima Poinsett Clark

Septima Poinsett Clark was in some ways South Carolina's version of Mary McLeod Bethune. Her work with the African-American children of South Carolina was much like that of Mary McLeod Bethune elsewhere in the South. In 1916, Poinsett began her teaching career on Johns Island. She remembered being paid $25 a month. Out of that she had to buy all her supplies. The school did not even supply her with chalk. She and her 132 pupils also had to gather their own firewood for the open fire that heated the drafty cabin serving as their one-room school.

Poinsett soon realized that education could not solve problems until the state changed laws to allow African-Americans an equal chance for a good education. Thus, began her long career in civil rights. She became deeply involved in many of the struggles you will read about in this chapter. She helped organize the NAACP in Charleston in the 1920s. The public schools fired her because of her civil rights activity. That did not stop her. In the 1960s, she joined another civil rights group, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). This was the organization founded by Dr. Martin Luther King.



Motels were segregated by race, as were these cabins near Summerton, shown in a 1939 photo. Courtesy of the Library of Congress LC-USF34 51945.





Even state parks were segregated by race, as shown in these two photos of families enjoying their facilities. The top photo is a family picnicking at Hunting Island in June of 1956. The bottom photo shows a group eating outside a cabin at Pleasant Ridge State Park, also in June 1956. Courtesy of the S.C. Dept. of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism.

She organized "citizenship schools." There she helped illiterate African-Americans prepare to read and interpret the state constitution so they could overcome one of the legal barriers to voting.

As if all this were not enough, she was active in the YWCA, the Charleston Public Health Department, and the Tuberculosis Association. As a result, she is often called the grandmother of the civil rights movement in South Carolina.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

After the end of Reconstruction in our state, African-American citizens were no longer able to enjoy their civil rights. By "civil rights," we mean those rights all citizens should enjoy as a matter of law in a democracy. Civil rights include the right to vote, the right to be treated equally in courts of law, and equal access to public facilities like schools and public transportation. Having civil rights is necessary to have any chance to succeed in life. In New York in 1909, W. E. B. DuBois and Oswald Garrison Villard, editor of the *New York Evening Post* and grandson of the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, were founding members of the NAACP. William English Walling, a wealth white southerner whose family had been slave owners; Moorefield Storey, a white Boston lawyer; and several other concerned people were also founders.

Walling was the first chairman of the organization, Storey was the president and DuBois the director of publicity. The first executive secretary of the NAACP was James Weldon Johnson, whom you met earlier as part of the Harlem Renaissance movement. As executive secretary, one of Johnson's duties was to organize chapters of the NAACP throughout the country. The NAACP was founded as an organization of people of different races, and religions from the North and the South.

The NAACP and the efforts they were making to reestablish the civil rights of African-Americans were impressive to black South Carolinians, and they wanted to be a part of the Association. An African-American attorney, Butler W. Nance of Columbia, wrote a letter to W. E. B. DuBois, asking whether a civic club of which he was a member could become a chapter of the NAACP. The club, the Capital City Civic League, was a local civil rights organization. Nance explained in his letter that the only purpose of the club was that "of contesting and contending for our every constitutional right, privilege and immunity, in a quiet, legal and peaceful manner." This civic organization was one of many local organizations throughout South Carolina that were seeking to change by legal means their second-class status within the state. By February of 1917, the Columbia Branch of the NAACP was established as the first branch of the NAACP in South Carolina. Its membership included the ministers of several of the oldest African-American churches in Columbia. Other African-American members were the city's attorneys, a medical doctor, black businessmen, teachers from Benedict College and Allen University, and federal employees. The Columbia chapter began a series of projects. The first was a voter registration drive to get black men registered to vote. In 1920, women in America were given the right to vote. In South Carolina, African-American women were not allowed to register and vote. The Columbia NAACP branch sued the state to enable them to vote.

A chapter of the NAACP was also established in Charleston in 1917, and by 1919 the Columbia and Charleston chapters had more than a thousand members. In Charleston, African-American teachers were able to teach African-American children living on the islands near Charleston, but not in the city. This practice denied qualified African-American teachers' jobs in Charleston. In 1920, the Charleston NAACP branch succeeded in getting African-American teachers hired to teach in the city of Charleston's black schools.

By 1939, there were eight local branches of the NAACP in South Carolina: Aiken, Charleston, Cheraw, Columbia, Georgetown, Greenville, Florence, and Sumter. These local NAACP branches organized into a state body known as the South Carolina Conference of the NAACP, and, like the national organization, began organizing lawsuits. Initial leaders of the state conference included Levi S. Byrd, who headed the local branch in Cheraw; Reverend A. W. Wright, who was elected the first state president; and Reverend James M. Hinton of the Columbia branch. Hinton later became the leader who took the conference through many important battles over the next twenty years. The NAACP was not like later civil rights organizations such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee that lead demonstrations in order to make changes in the country. The NAACP sought to achieve changes through the use of the courts.

The conference's first law suit was a fight to equalize the salaries of teachers across the state. Black teachers' salaries were less than those of white teachers with the same education and years of teaching. They were paid less because they were black. The teachers won their case in Charleston in 1944 and in Columbia in 1945. After the teachers' salary cases were won, the NAACP next sought to dismantle South Carolina's white primary election. In South Carolina and other southern states, the state political parties did not permit black voters to vote in their primaries. So they had no voice in the selection of candidates to run in the elections. In the white primary cases, Attorney Thurgood Marshall came to South Carolina to represent the National NAACP, and a local attorney, Harold Boulware, represented the local branches. The case called *Elmore v. Rice* was won in 1947. The South Carolina Democratic Party was able to circumvent the ruling, and the NAACP had to develop a second case, *Brown v. Baskins*, in



An example of a private library provided for African-Americans near Bettis Academy in Edgefield County. Photo by Aimee Smith.

order to obtain full voting rights. The second case was won in July of 1948. The most important lawsuit begun by the NAACP in South Carolina was the school integration case that began in Clarendon County in 1947. The case became part of the Supreme Court decision *Brown v. The Topeka Board of Education* that was decided by the court on May 17, 1954.

South Carolina African-Americans who petitioned the state school boards to comply with the *Brown* decision often lost their jobs or suffered economic reprisals. State and national NAACP members sent food and clothing to needy victims. Donations came from other organizations and from prominent black churches such as Harlem's Abyssianian Baptist Church, pastored by Congressman Adam Clayton Powell. Donations came from faraway places like Europe and South America.

After the NAACP won the lawsuits to invalidate the white primary and to integrate the public schools, many leaders in South Carolina realized the NAACP was changing South Carolina. To prevent the NAACP from making changes in the state, an attempt was made to destroy the organization. One of the most common charges against the organization was that it was a communist organization. This charge was disproved. In April of 1956, the South Carolina legislature passed a law "which barred state, county or municipal employees from membership in the NAACP." The NAACP survived the attacks even though many of its members suffered job losses.

Modjesko Monteith Simkins

One of the most important and active officers in the state organization was Modjeska Monteith Simkins. Born to Henry and Rachel Monteith in 1899 in Columbia, Modjeska Monteith became one of the most important civil rights leaders in the state's history. Her great-grandmother had been an enslaved African belonging to Wade Hampton. Her father worked as a builder in construction to send her to Benedict College for her entire education. Back in those days, Benedict provided education from the first grade through college. Simkins remembered having very good teachers. She was one of the last students who was taught at Benedict by white Northerners. These teachers were schooled in some of the best Northern universities and came to Benedict to teach for idealistic reasons.

Modjeska Monteith was a member of a remarkable family. From her father she learned pride and courage. He was brave enough to stand up to white racists. With a rifle in hand, he defended the family one night when racists attacked his home. She may have acquired her organizational skills from her mother, who started a church in the living room of their home. One of her brothers, H. D. Monteith, became a medical doctor. He founded Victory Savings Bank, the only bank in the state owned and run by African-Americans.

After college, Monteith became a teacher at Booker T. Washington High School. She was a very

demanding teacher in the six algebra classes she taught each day. If students did not bring in an assignment, she made them stay at school until it was finished. In 1929 she married Andrew Simkins, a successful businessman from Edgefield.

Modjeska Simkins served as the secretary of the NAACP until the mid-1950s. She did publicity for the group and raised money. She helped plan the court cases that really began to change things: equal pay for teachers of both races, ending the white-only primary, providing school bus transportation for both races, and ending school segregation. She was also active in improving health care. In addition, she was active in business. For many years she ran the accounting department for her brother's bank. She worked for the Tuberculosis Association. In the 1960s, she challenged the state Mental Health Department to provide better facilities for both races and equal pay for whites and blacks working in them.

When Modjeska Monteith Simkins died in 1992, she was remembered as someone who spoke her mind. She was a strong advocate for anybody who was treated unfairly. Race did not matter.

A Richard Roberts photo in the early 1920s of Modjeska Monteith before she married and took the last name of Simkins. At the time she was teaching six classes of algebra each day at Booker T. Washington School in Columbia. Courtesy of Roberts family.

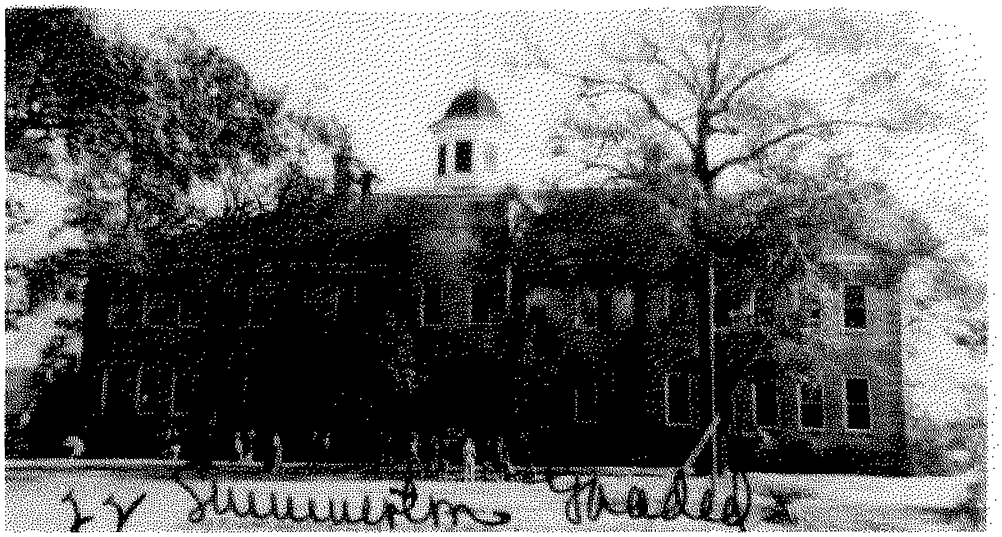


School Integration

One of the most important civil rights cases in U.S. History started with the NAACP's help in Clarendon County. It began as a simple effort to obtain school buses for African-American children. In recent years, people sometimes have objected to school busing. Modjeska Simkins remembered that busing was not an issue until the state was asked to provide buses for both races. For a long time, schools had provided school buses for white children. Black children had to find their own rides. Sometimes they had to walk ten miles or more each way.

When the state did not provide buses, sometimes parents did it themselves. Clarence McFadden was one such parent. As a sharecropper with only a fourth-grade education, he wanted his children to have a better chance than he did. Just as in Clarendon County, Lee County, where McFadden lived, had buses only for whites. In the mid-1940s, McFadden made several trips each day in his car taking his and other children to school. Too many children needed rides. So he and some friends bought an old 1935 Chevy bus for a little over $100. They repaired it and paid all the costs themselves. He drove it for several years before the county began to give him any help. Donations paid for gas and upkeep. Sometimes parents gave him beans, eggs, peas, or even chickens to help out. His children all graduated from high school, and several even earned college degrees.

The NAACP persuaded a group of fourteen brave parents to start a court case in Clarendon County. They asked the state to give their children transportation to their schools just like white children had to their own schools. Among these parents was Harry Briggs. Because his name was last on the list, the court named the case for him along with the school official who was being sued *Briggs v. Elliott.* Later,





Summerton school for white children and Liberty Hill school for African-American children. Even as late as around 1950 there was still a striking contrast in public schools for each race. Just before the famous Brown and Briggs decision of 1954, the state tried to avoid ending the dual system by imposing a sales tax to build schools for African-Americans. State Budget and Control Board, Sinking Fund Commission, Insurance File photographs, 1948-51, S.C. Department of History and Archives.

the NAACP decided to expand the case and ask for total equality in education. Other parents joined the case so that the list numbered 100.

The case was not an easy one. People needed courage to place their names on the list. Local whites who controlled jobs fired many of those involved in the case. They could not get loans or buy goods in local stores owned by whites. Those in business found it impossible to secure the things they needed to keep their businesses open. Some even had their homes firebombed. A local gas station fired Harry Briggs from his job. A local motel fired Annie Gibson, another of the parents whose name was on the suit. The Reverend J. A. Delaine had helped organize the case. He was an AME minister at several churches and was also a teacher and principal in the local schools. The local school board fired him and several family members who were teachers. The state even made membership in the NAACP grounds for firing public employees like school teachers. This clearly violated the constitutional right of free assembly.

Briggs became one of several cases from different states that the U.S. Supreme Court heard together in 1954. T ogether they were known as *Brown v. Board of Education.* The lawyer for the NAACP was Thurgood Marshall, who later became the first African-American on the U.S. Supreme Court. When the Court decided these cases in favor of school desegregation in 1954, DeLaine's church was burned to the ground. He was physically chased out of the state with threats on his life. Given the long and sad history of lynchings in the state, he had every reason to be afraid. With the help of friends, he safely escaped to New York. There, he founded a new church

and served as its minister. He never returned to South Carolina to live, though he came close. He retired to Charlotte, North Carolina. He lived there until his death in 1974, exactly twenty years after the famous case that changed South Carolina and the nation.

Sadly, the Supreme Court decision of 1954 did not end school segregation. The state tried to quickly build and improve African-American schools in order to claim that schools were equal. The state passed the first three-cent sales tax for this purpose. The tax did not work. The Supreme Court had said that any separate schools were unequal. What schools looked like did not matter. Having two separate school systems was also wasteful. As a poor state, South Carolina did not have the money for one good school system. It certainly could not afford two.

Whites resisted for many years. Many left public schools and started their own segregated private schools. In some parts of the state even today, most whites attend private schools, and most students in the public schools are black. In many places, officials tried token integration. They would let a few blacks into mostly white schools and hope that the courts would be satisfied. African-American parents had to once again take the schools to court.

The real change in education finally came in the middle 1960s. The U.S. Congress threatened to cut off all federal money if states did not completely integrate schools. In addition, federal courts ran out of patience. They allowed no further delay.

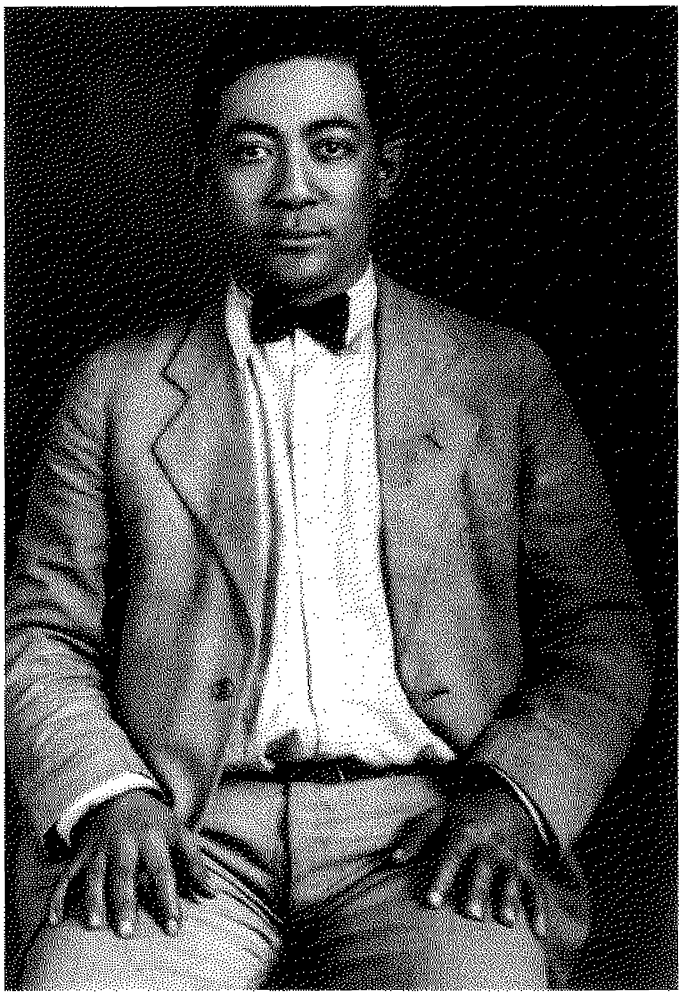
In January of 1963, Governor Ernest "Fritz" Hollings admitted that white efforts to keep schools segregated had failed. In a widely reported speech, Hollings said that "South Carolina is running out of courts. If and when every legal remedy has been exhausted. . .we must realize the lessons of 100 years ago and move on for the good of South Carolina. . . .This must be done with dignity. It must be done with law and order." With this speech, Hollings left office. The new governor, Donald Russell, invited citizens of both races to share barbecue with each other at the Governor's mansion. They came and ate together.

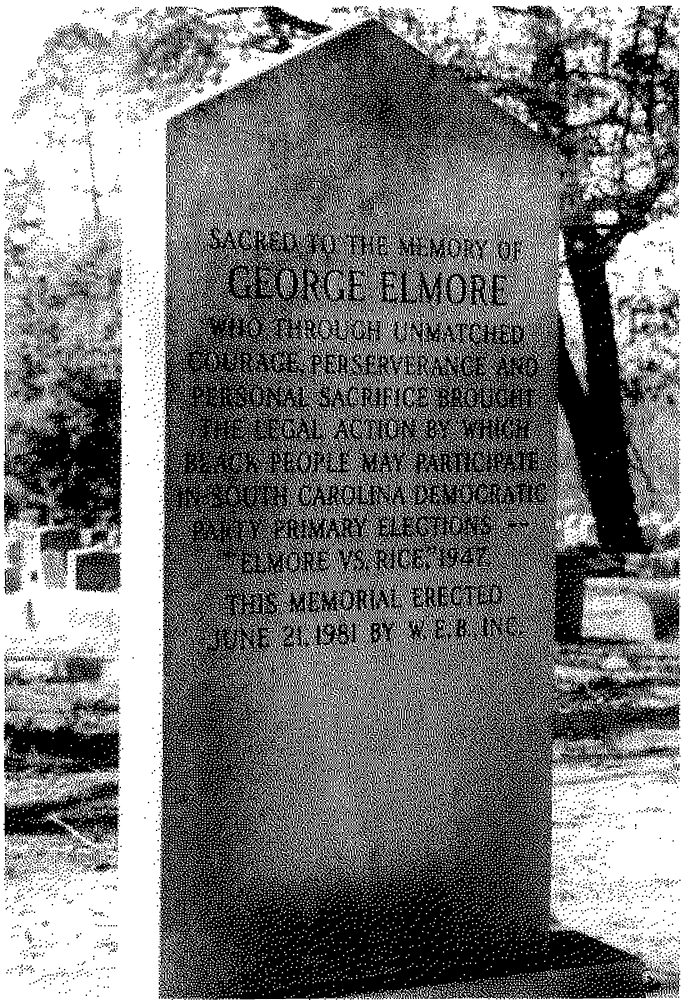
Within a few days, the federal courts ordered that Clemson University admit Harvey Gantt of Charleston. By the end of the month, Gantt was the first African-American to become a student at Clemson. He graduated and later in life won election as mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina. Looking back at those difficult times, Gantt is not at all bitter. He gives some credit to whites in South Carolina. Even if whites were morally opposed to doing the right thing, Gantt feels whites had good manners about integration. He feels that students in South Carolina did not have as hard a time as those in other states where they almost always faced angry white mobs.

The University of South Carolina (USC) at Columbia was integrated eight months later. To the credit



Harvey Gantt, right, talking to Matthew Perry, who served as his attorney in gaining admission to Clemson University in 1963. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide B-197 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Photo by Vic Tutte. Courtesy of The State newspaper.*





(Left) A Richard Roberts photo of George Elmore in the 1920s. In 1946, Mr. Elmore attempted to vote in the state's all white primary and became the person behind the test case that led to overturning segregated election laws. Thurgood Marshall argued that case before U.S. District Judge Waties Waring in the case Elmore vs. Rice. Courtesy of Roberts family. (Right) A monument to George Elmore in the B. F. Roberts Cemetery in Columbia. Elmore and his family were harassed for his brave actions in the civil rights movement. Photo by Aimee Smith.

of all concerned, it happened very quietly. The move sparked no protests or demonstrations. Three African-American students, Robert Anderson, James L. Solomon, and Henri Monteith were the first to break the color barrier. Monteith was the grandniece of Modjeska Simkins. She earned a degree in biochemistry at USC. Later, she earned her doctorate and became famous for her research and for work with young people. Solomon went onto a career in public service. He sat on school boards in two counties and was on the Richland County Council. Later, he directed the State Department of Social Services.

Many average people made sacrifices to gain better educational opportunity for all. They took personal risks to bring about change. We should not forget them and what they did.

This fairly happy ending has a sad side. Most citizens across the state share schools and learn from each other as well as learn with each other. That is not the case where it all started in Clarendon County. Whites left the local public schools rather than integrate. The result is that once again Clarendon County has two school systems.

Voting Rights

In 1944, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that primary election laws blocking African-Americans from vot-

ing were illegal. Although, the test case for this ruling came from Texas, civil rights leaders in South Carolina played an indirect role. They raised money to help pay the legal costs for that case.

After this victory, black leaders in the state called upon white leaders to obey the law. White leaders chose instead to change the law. Governor Olin Johnston called a special session of the General Assembly for that purpose. In what was called the "South Carolina Plan," the state repealed all laws about primaries and tried to make the Democratic Party into a private club. As a private club, they would be free to turn away minorities.

African-American groups all over the state united against this obvious attempt to evade the law of the land. The Palmetto Medical, Dental and Pharmaceutical Association, the state association for African-American doctors, dentists, and druggists charged that this action violated basic rights. They and other groups asked how America could expect African-Americans to fight in World War II and buy war bonds if the state did this to them. White leaders did not answer.

George A. Elmore tried to vote in the Democratic primary in August 1946. The Party refused him, and the NAACP filed its case. In July 1947, the courts ruled against the state in the case known as *Elmore v. Rice*. Federal Judge Waties Waring ruled that all citizens must be allowed to vote regardless of race.

The battle was not yet over. There were still barriers to overcome. A poll tax prevented many African-Americans from voting. The greatest barrier was the literacy test, which was applied in unfair ways. Voting officials asked African-Americans who wanted to vote to read and interpret the most complicated parts of the state constitution. The white registrar decided if they passed. Whites in the state came up with new barriers. In some parts of the state, officials required African-Americans to take an oath if they intended to vote. The oath said they "solemnly swear. . .to support the social, religious, and educational separation of the races." Few African-Americans were willing to take this insulting oath. Once again, whites had to be taken to court. The courts ruled this barrier to be illegal.

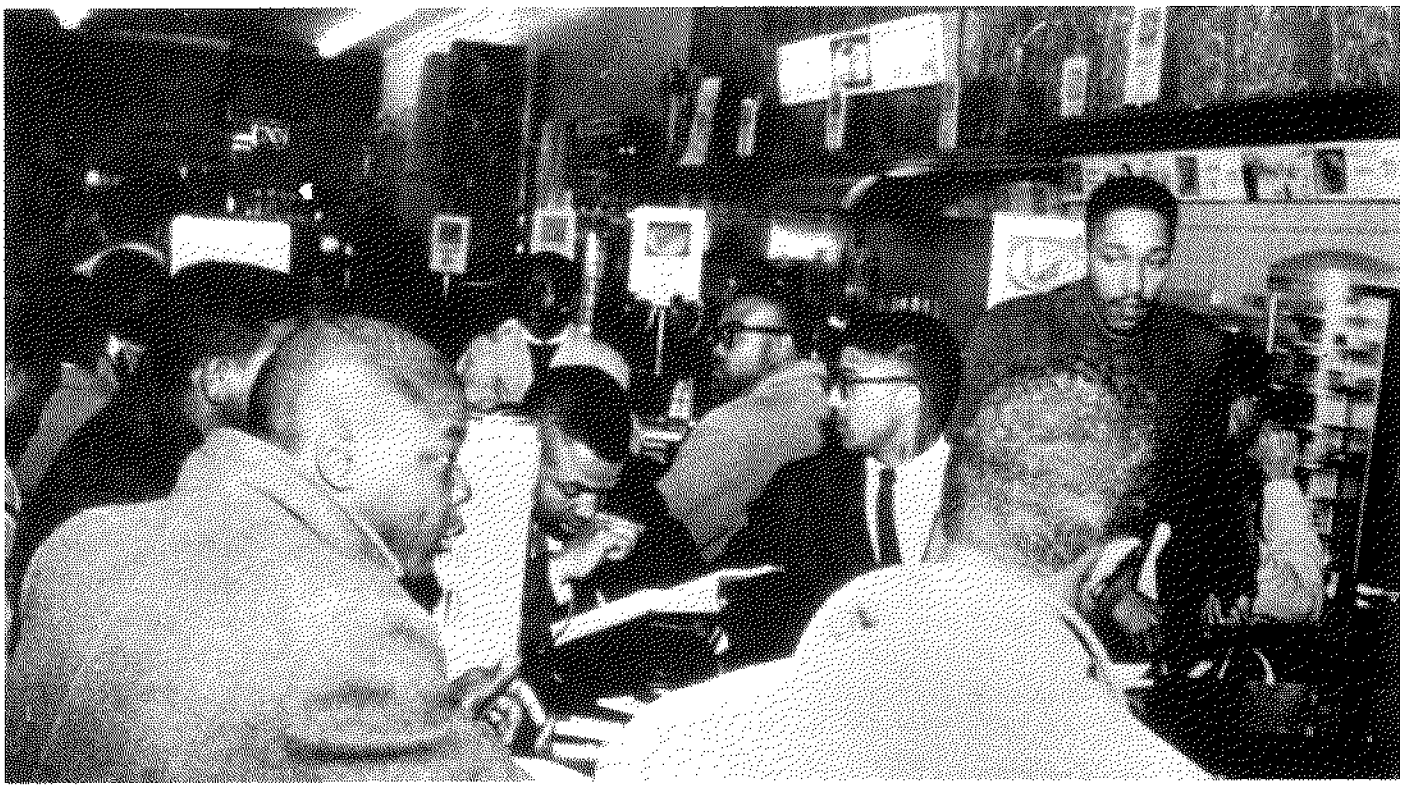
Despite these victories, voting discrimination continued. Enough African-Americans were able to vote in some areas of the state so that they began to see better treatment by state and local government. However, few voted in many parts of the state, especially rural areas where organization was weak. Threats of violence and unfair literacy tests still stood in the way.

Only after the U.S. Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 did all citizens have an equal right to vote. The new law ended the literacy test and threatened to use federal officials to register African-Americans to vote if local officials failed to do so. Even here, South Carolina resisted. It challenged the Voting Rights Act in a case that went all the way to the Supreme Court before the state lost.

Earlier victories in voting rights helped win passage of civil rights laws. Enough African-Americans



Monument at S.C. State College campus to those who died in the gunfire of the state patrol. Photo by Aimee Smith.



A sit-in demonstration in Columbia in the 1960s. Usually, it was college students who led demonstrations. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, slide B-196 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Photo by Vic Tutte. Courtesy of The State newspaper.

were voting in 1960 to help John Kennedy win the state in his race for the White House. Kennedy was the first president to ask for broad and strong civil rights legislation. The new laws did not pass until after Kennedy was killed. However, without pressure from African-American voters, the president would not have proposed the laws. Both Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, his vice president who succeeded him in the White House, owed their election to African-American voters.

Moderation and Violence

As long as integration took place only on a token basis, South Carolina avoided the violence that was taking place in many other Southern states. Much of the credit for the relative peace should go to African-American leaders in the state. Credit goes to NAACP leaders such as James Hinton, James McCain, Modjeska Simkins, and Matthew Perry. They were much more moderate in their demands than the whites were in their resistance. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, African-American leaders urged patience combined with slow and peaceful progress.

In most parts of the state, slow and peaceful progress took place. A few exceptions occurred. By the late 1960s, the violence and turmoil found in the rest of the nation reached South Carolina.

In Orangeburg the local white majority refused to go beyond token integration. Students at S.C. State College were not willing to be quite as patient as their parents. From their point of view, whites had violated the law long enough. The time had arrived to fully integrate whether whites liked it or not. When confronted with more than token school integration and demands for full access to restaurants and other public facilities, some whites reacted with force.

Throughout the 1960s, many protests took place in Orangeburg. In 1967, students protested the firing of two popular white professors whom the school administration saw as too radical. That protest led to the resignation of S.C. State's president.

In February of 1968, white highway patrol officers shot their weapons into a crowd of protesting students. Three students were killed and another

twenty-eight were wounded. The students were protesting the refusal of a local bowling alley to integrate. They lit a bonfire on the edge of the campus. The students threw bottles and other objects, and one object hit a policeman. After a few minutes, a patrol officer fired a warning shot in the air. Other officers immediately shot into the crowd. A monument marks the spot today.

According to Jack Bass, a reporter who was covering the event at the time and who later helped write a book on the tragedy, the shootings should never have taken place. The patrol was backed up by National Guard troops and was in no real danger. Patrol leaders made the fatal error of allowing officers to decide on their own when to fire, rather than wait for an order as did the National Guard.

The real tragedy was the refusal of state officials to admit any mistakes. They blamed the confrontation on Cleveland Sellers. Sellers, a native of Denmark, South Carolina, was on campus to organize a protest for SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. This was a civil rights group that was active all over the nation. Local authorities and Governor McNair labeled Sellers as an outside agitator and a troublemaker.

Sellers may have come from outside Orangeburg, but he was certainly not from outside of the state. He was of a younger generation of African-Americans who were impatient with the slow legal tactics of the NAACP. In 1960, he had participated in some of the first sit-in demonstrations in the state in his home town of Denmark. He and friends at Voorhees College sat at a "whites only" counter at a local drugstore lunch counter and asked for service. They refused to leave and police arrested them.

Sellers arrived at the protest meeting at the S.C. State campus just before the shooting took place. One of the shots wounded him. The state arrested him and charged him with incitement to riot. At Sellers' trial, with the jury out of the court room, the judge told lawyers that no real evidence against Sellers existed. Nevertheless, the judge went ahead and allowed the jury to deliver its verdict. They found him guilty and the judge sentenced him to a year in prison.

Cleveland Sellers could easily have become totally embittered by this injustice. Instead, he worked to do positive things. While waiting for his case to come to trial, which took nearly three years, he earned a masters degree in education from Harvard University. After several months, prison officials freed him for good behavior. Then, he worked for the City of Greensboro, N.C. and earned a doctorate in education. In 1990, he moved back to his hometown of Denmark and worked in a real estate business. In July of 1993, the state granted him a full pardon. That same year, he began teaching courses at the University of South Carolina in Columbia in the African-American Studies Department. In addition, he continued to serve the state as a member of the State Board of Education. He has been working to give all children the chance denied to so many generations of African-American children.

In 1969, South Carolina narrowly avoided violence, thanks in large part to the restraint and patience of African-Americans. Civil rights and labor leaders from around the nation came to Charleston to help in a hospital workers' strike. About 300 women, mostly African-Americans, were protesting low wages and poor working conditions at the hospital run by the Medical University of South Carolina. Police arrested hundreds of them. Thousands of National Guard troops arrived. Tensions ran high, but protests remained peaceful. The strikers finally won. As Rosetta Simmons saw it, this was a victory for all poor people in the state, not just for her and her fellow workers.

In 1970, violence struck in Lamar, South Carolina. Schools there were finally integrating. African-Americans had been patient, waiting for the courts to order integration. Whites had resisted, refusing to voluntarily integrate. When the courts ordered integration and school buses with black children arrived at formerly all-white schools, white mobs met them. Angry whites overturned a bus, frightening young children in a way the children would never forget. Then the authorities restored order.

The Impact of Voting

By 1970, enough African-Americans were voting to change the state. In the election for governor, the Republicans ran Congressman Albert Watson. He openly appealed to whites who wanted to go back to the era of segregation. Democrat John West de-

feated Watson. West won by combining the votes of black voters with those of progressive whites. Once in office, Governor West created the state Human Affairs Commission. Its purpose was to bring about fair treatment, to stop discrimination, and to encourage understanding and respect. The head of the commission was James E. Clyburn. Clyburn served well in this most difficult position until 1992. Then he ran for the U.S. Congress and was elected. He became South Carolina's first African-American to win a seat in Congress since the 1800s.

In 1970, three African-Americans, I. S. Leevy Johnson, James Felder, and Herbert Fielding were elected to the House of Representatives in the General Assembly. However, winning elections was hard for African-Americans because of the way district lines were drawn. Voters from each county as a whole chose all the legislators in that county. This is called "at-large" elections. Therefore, winning was impossible for a black candidate unless blacks were a majority in the county or unless a lot of white voters voted for him. Only a few counties had enough African-Americans in the county as a whole to elect African-American legislators.

After a series of court rulings decided that district lines could not be drawn to discriminate against African-Americans, South Carolina changed its election laws. One of these rulings took place as a result of a 1960 court case, *Gomillion v. Lightfoot.* Even though this case began in Alabama, a native South Carolinian put his life on the line.

Dr. Charles Gomillion was born in 1901 in Johnston, South Carolina. The public schools there provided only three months of school each year. Parents found enough money to extend school another two months. Although Gomillion had only about an eighth-grade formal education, Paine College in Augusta accepted him as a probationary student. By working hard he succeeded. He earned his Ph.D. from Ohio State and went to teach at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. He began fighting for the right to vote in the 1930s. By the 1950s, he and others had managed to get a fairly large number of African-Americans registered to vote. Whites in power felt threatened. Whites tried to redraw district lines so the lines split



DeQuincey Newman, 1983. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide B-212 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Photo by Jeff Amberg. Courtesy of The State newspaper.*

black voters into several districts. Then blacks would not have enough votes in any district to elect anyone to the city council. That was when Dr. Gomillion went to court. He won. Drawing district lines to discriminate, a practice known as "gerrymandering," was illegal.

In 1974, the S.C. Legislature changed "at large" county-wide districts to smaller districts of equal size. Each district would elect only one representative. This made it more likely that enough African-American voters would live in a district to elect an African-American candidate. That year, voters elected ten more African-Americans to the General Assembly. With more than a dozen members, African-American legislators formed the Legislative Black Caucus so they could work together. Caucus is simply a fancy

word for meeting. Ernest Finney, Jr., the first chairperson of the group, became an associate justice on the S.C. Supreme Court in 1985.

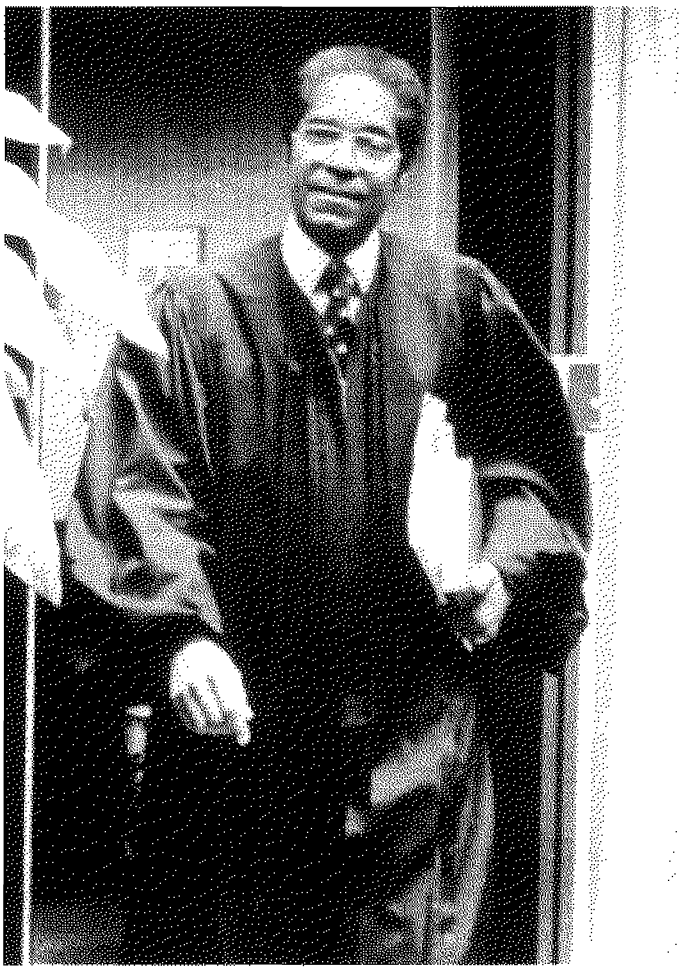
Progress continued. Federal Court rulings stopped the S.C. Senate from using county lines as district lines. The Senate had to draw lines so that the same number of people lived in each district. In 1983, voters elected the Reverend Isaiah DeQuincey Newman to the state Senate. He was the first African-American senator since 1886.

Newman had come a long way. He was born on a farm in Darlington County in 1911. When he was eight, he saw the Ku Klux Klan burn an African-American convict alive. He remembered shining shoes for state senators in the 1920s. He had been a member of the NAACP since his college days in Atlanta. When he returned to South Carolina in 1937, he began a career as an educator and a pastor in Pageland. He began working with the South Carolina NAACP. By the mid-1940s, he was state vice president. In 1943, he helped organize the NAACP in Orangeburg. In December 1958, Newman was elected president of the South Carolina Conference of the NAACP. He resigned a few months later to become field director of the organization. His function was to coordinate the activities of the NAACP in South Carolina, this was a paid position. During his tenure as field secretary, he focused the organization on four areas. He got petitions to desegregate schools. He lead economic boycotts to provide jobs for African-Americans. He led "wade-ins" to open public parks and beaches and "sit-ins" to open public facilities to African-Americans. Under Newman's leadership, several thousand citizens were involved in civil rights activities. More than 2,000 persons were arrested in South Carolina from 1960-1965, and Newman was arrested five times. He remembered being chased in his car at 120 miles an hour all the way through Marion and Florence Counties by an angry mob of whites. They were upset that he had led a peaceful "wade-in" protest at Myrtle Beach State Park.

In 1983, Newman became South Carolina's first African-American state senator since Reconstruction. A few weeks after Newman won a seat in the Senate, Senator Marion Gressette ask Newman for a favor. Gressette had been one of the most stubborn opponents of integration. In the 1950s, the Gressette Committee was established to help maintain a legal and political challenge to school desegregation in South Carolina. Senator Gressette asked for the honor of being photographed with Newman. Senator Newman knew that he had won the fight.

Senator Strom Thurmond saw the importance of African-American voters. When whites were the only ones voting, he had tried to stop civil rights. He holds the all-time record for "filibuster" in the U.S. Senate in trying to stop a civil rights bill from passing. Filibuster means talking nonstop until the other side gives up. Realizing that times were changing, Thurmond sponsored the appointment of Matthew J. Perry to become a federal judge in 1976.

A 1983 photo of Matthew J. Perry, civil rights lawyer and the state's first African-American federal judge. Reproduced from Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide C-112 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Photo by Vic Tutte. Courtesy of The State newspaper.*



For more than twenty years before this, Perry had been the NAACP's chief lawyer in the state. For example, Perry had won key cases like that which forced the integration of Clemson. He also won the case that forced the legislature to move to single-member districts. Perry went on to have a distinguished career as a federal judge.

In 1990, Senator Theo Mitchell won the Democratic nomination for governor. He was the first African-American ever nominated for governor by the Democrats. Although he lost to the popular Republican incumbent governor, Carroll Campbell, the campaign was a real milestone. It was also important because neither candidate campaigned on racial issues. However, race was doubtless an unspoken issue in the minds of many voters. The state still had not overcome the burden of its history.

The Legislative Black Caucus

After the 1992 election, twenty-five African-American legislators sat in the 170-member S.C. General Assembly. That is fifteen percent, about half the percentage of African-Americans in the general population. However, it is enough to make a difference. Organized into the Legislative Black Caucus, they were now in a stronger position to continue the work begun nearly two decades earlier.

The Black Caucus has played a significant role in the making of many laws. The establishment of the S.C. Human Affairs Commission, which investigates instances of discrimination on the basis of race, age, or gender, was one of the group's more notable accomplishments. The Caucus was also instrumental in passing a law that allowed state employees the option of Martin Luther King day as a holiday. The Caucus persuaded the governor to create an office to promote minority business. It helped pass laws that encouraged the state to consider buying goods and services from minority-owned and run businesses. Listed below are the members of the Legislative Black Caucus as of the 1993-94 legislative session, including the chairperson of the group, Rep. Joe Brown. All together the members have nearly 150 years of experience in the S.C. General Assembly.

Legislative Black Caucus Members: 1993-94

Senate

Sen. Robert Ford
Sen. Maggie Wallace Glover
Sen. Darrell Jackson
Sen. John W. Matthews
Sen. Theo Mitchell
Sen. Kay Patterson
Sen. McKinley Washington, Jr.

House of Representatives

Rep. Ralph Anderson
Rep. Donald W. Beatty
Rep. Floyd Breeland
Rep. Joe E. Brown
Rep. Alma W. Byrd
Rep. Ralph W. Canty
Rep. Gilda Cobb-Hunter
Rep. Jerry Govan, Jr.
Rep. Jesse Hines
Rep. Curtis B. Inabinett
Rep. Kenneth Kennedy
Rep. W. B. McMahand
Rep. Bessie Moody-Lawrence
Rep. Joseph H. Neal
Rep. John L. Scott
Rep. Lucille S. Whipper
Rep. Juanita M. White
Rep. Dewitt Williams

In the 1980s, the courts extended single-member districts to county council districts, city council districts, and school boards. One of the key cases started in Edgefield County. As a child Tom McCain attended Bettis Academy and later became a college math professor. He felt the "at-large" method of electing council members was unfair. His case took ten years, but he was a patient man. Starting his case in 1974, he finally won it in 1984. He later became County Administrator in Edgefield.

McCain's long effort had a dramatic effect. African-American communities and neighborhoods could now get representation that had once been nearly impossible. In Edgefield County, about two of every five voters are African-Americans. With the "at-large" method of electing the county council, no

African-Americans were elected. After the 1984 court ruling, the county changed to single-member districts. The result was that African-Americans won two or three of the five county council seats in the years that followed. Other units of government began making the same changes.

This change meant that local governments had to begin caring about everyone's needs. They could no longer just provide services to white areas. Black areas were able to get streets paved and parks built. They had better access to human services. With power in city halls and county governments, African-Americans found jobs more easily in government service.

Benefit for All

If we are able to meet the educational and social needs of all citizens, more citizens will be productive. We will all have a happier, healthier, and wealthier state.

South Carolinians continue to play an important role in the civil rights movement. Dr. William Gibson, a dentist from Greenville, is president of the state NAACP. Like so many others, he became involved in the civil rights movement in the 1960s. The national NAACP, an organization with 400,000 members, chose Gibson to be their vice chairperson. When the chairperson died in 1985, Gibson took over the top position on the board. As chairperson, he was involved in setting goals for the NAACP. One of his goals was to see that African-Americans get their "fair share" of opportunities in life. He wants to ensure that government and business promote blacks as well as whites into decision-making positions. This includes both management roles and positions on boards and commissions. Gibson also believes in the importance of the vote. African-Americans must turn out at election time if they are to have an influence on government policies.

Nelson B. Rivers, III, is a former executive director and currently the executive director of the state NAACP. At a celebration of black history in February of 1993, he told an Aiken audience that we should remember the past because people gave their lives for the freedoms we now enjoy. He graduated from the Citadel. Only a few years ago the Citadel would not have let him attend. About the only thing he could have been at the school was a janitor. While much progress must yet be made, a great deal of progress has taken place. That progress is one of the greatest contributions of African-Americans.

▼ ▼ ▼ CHAPTER 15

African-Americans and South Carolina Today

As a result of the civil rights revolution, African-American citizens have a much better chance to play a variety of roles in life. While barriers still exist, the door of opportunity is open wider than ever before. People once had to spend all their energy merely enduring or fighting for rights. After they pushed the door open a little, many rushed through. Some are still working to open the door completely.

Many others have turned their skills and talents in other directions. They are building upon the work of the pioneers you met in this book. They blazed trails in many directions: politics and government service, education, business, science, sports, media and the arts, and religion.

Politics and Government Service

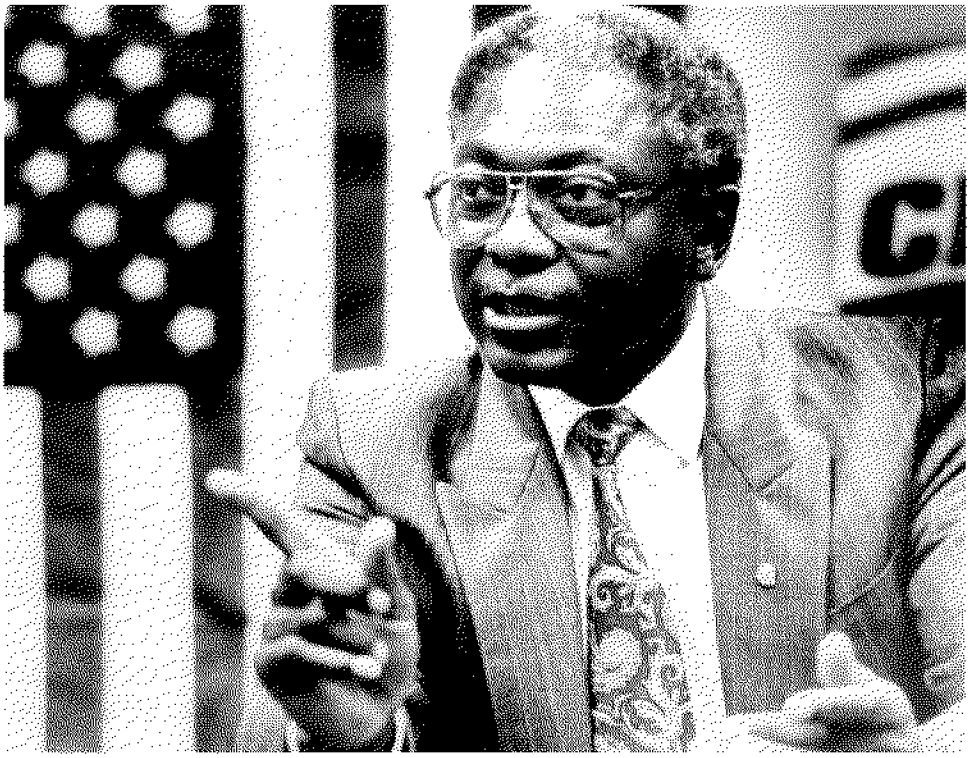
Today, African-Americans from South Carolina are making contributions in politics and government service at all levels. You can find Carolinians in international, national, state, and local government.

The Reverend Jesse Jackson is one of South Carolina's most famous political sons. Although he has never been active in South Carolina politics, he is known around the world. While Jackson is controversial because he is so outspoken, many people admire him for his eloquent and moving speeches, including some of those who disagree with him. He speaks for poor people of all races and all nations. When he ran for the presidency of our nation, he tried to build what he called a "rainbow coalition." By "rainbow" he meant people of all colors and all creeds. When Jackson spoke to the Democratic National Convention in 1988, he talked about America being like a quilt. A quilt is made of many different patches and patterns. Each one is different and unique and each one adds to the beauty of the whole. So we are as a nation. Those are ideas expressed in a way that nearly all Americans can understand and enjoy whether or not they agree with Jackson on other things.

Jesse Jackson began his rise to international fame in Greenville, where he was born in 1941. He bears the hurt of the segregated society that South Carolina was in that day. He remembers having to walk right past a white school to reach the all-black school six miles away. He remembers as an eight-year-old boy whistling at a store owner. The owner pulled a gun on him, cursed him, and warned him never to whistle at a white man again. He was born out of wedlock, and the other kids teased him, saying that "he was nothing but a nobody because he didn't have no daddy." He has spent the rest of his life proving that he is indeed somebody. He has made millions of others feel that they, too, could become "somebodies," regardless of how society treated them.

Jackson started learning leadership and speaking skills in school and church. His skills improved with practice. He was also a very talented football player—a star quarterback. Despite his talent, he did not let sports come in the way of education. One of his teachers remembers that he was different from a lot of athletes. He asked for his assignments ahead of time if he knew he was going to miss class because of sports. Jackson was so good in football that the University of Illinois offered him an athletic scholarship. He accepted the offer. Then they told him that they only allowed whites to play quarterback. He left and went to North Carolina A&T University, a school with all African-American students. There he could play any position he had the skill to win.

This was the early 1960s. He became involved in civil rights demonstrations. He led sit-ins at theaters and lunch counters in Greensboro, N.C., where



U.S. Representative Jim Clyburn, the state's first African-American congress person since the turn of the century. Photo by Scott Webster.

he was in college. He met other civil rights leaders and eventually began working with Martin Luther King, Jr. Along the way, he went to the Chicago Theological Seminary, earning a degree to become a minister. Following the murder of King in 1968, he began his rise to become the most well-known civil rights leader among African-Americans.

In 1973, Jackson returned to Greenville. After winning international fame, citizens of Greenville welcomed him home as a hero. They gave him a great dinner at the hotel in which he had once worked as a waiter. They honored him in a dining room that once would not have served him dinner. What he told the people at that dinner is the same message he has been preaching all over the world: "I was raised and born in the ghetto, but I am a child of the universe. War anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere" (Barbara A. Reynolds, *Jesse Jackson: The Man, The Movement, The Myth.* Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1975, p. 44.).

When Bill Clinton took office as President of the United States in January of 1993, African-Americans from South Carolina helped mold the direction of the new government. The Clinton Administration offered Marion Wright Edelman a position. She turned it down, preferring to influence Clinton from the outside. She is head of an organization called the Children's Defense Fund.

Like Jesse Jackson, Marion Wright first became interested in politics during the civil rights movement. Childhood memories of the segregated South in the 1950s deeply affected her. She remembers an auto wreck in front of her house. The ambulance only took the white victim, who was not badly hurt. It left behind the badly injured black family. Yet she still loves the South. She remembers that both her parents' families left the South for better opportunities in the North. Her father, a minister, returned to South Carolina to preach in a small church in Bennettsville. She feels she learned more about feelings of the heart by living in a small southern town.

She has spent her life giving of her heart to others. She earned a law degree so that she could help African-Americans in Mississippi fight legal barriers to voting. She showed U.S. Senators the poverty of families living in the deep South. Children whose stomachs were swollen with hunger deeply moved the senators. One of those senators was Bobby Kennedy. She later married one of his aides and took the name Marion Wright Edelman. Shortly after that

she founded the Children's Defense Fund. The group has fought for all kinds of programs like Head Start and health care to help children of all races.

Edelman became a close friend of Hillary Rodham Clinton, who later was chair of the Children's Defense Fund. With Bill and Hillary in the White House, Marion Wright Edelman now has an inside voice in national politics. In a way, Edelman is the child of Mary McLeod Bethune, whom you met earlier in this book. If you remember, Bethune was a friend of another president's wife, Eleanor Roosevelt.

In 1992, James Clyburn became the first African-American to win a seat to Congress from South Carolina since the 1800s. He has proved that racial barriers in voting are beginning to crack. Although he was elected from a newly-created district that had a majority of African-American voters, he also won many white votes. Clyburn openly appealed to voters of both races. To be an effective leader for the sixth district, Clyburn felt that he needed white support. Even his white Republican opponent agreed that Clyburn's election was in some ways positive, saying that the state would be better off when blacks winning elections would not be considered unusual.

For most of the 1900s, African-Americans in South Carolina could not sit on juries or serve as judges. As a result the legal system did not always treat them fairly. Today, African-Americans do far more than just sit on juries. They help make the law and also interpret the law as judges. In 1985, Ernest Finney became the first African-American on the S.C. Supreme Court since 1877. In that year, Judge Jonathan Jasper Wright resigned from the Court. Wright knew that the whites who had regained control of state government would force him off the Court.

Finney is not a native South Carolinian. When he was fourteen-years-old in 1946, he moved to the state when his father took a job as a dean at Claflin College. His father insisted that he train as a teacher even though he did not want to teach. He wanted to be a lawyer. He worked hard and earned degrees in both areas. As a teacher, Finney earned very little. To make a little extra money, he worked as a waiter for meetings of the all-white S.C. Bar Association in Myrtle Beach. In the 1990s, lawyers of both races argue cases that Finney helps decide as judge.

Many African-Americans work as professionals in government service. The state boasts two nationally known police chiefs. Charles Austin is police chief in Columbia. Austin is relatively new in his role. However, he is quickly building a reputation as a man who searches for new ideas and tries them out. Reuben Greenberg has been chief in Charleston a little longer. He is a most unusual man. A former college professor, he is a member of two minority groups. He is both African-American and Jewish. This police chief is very tough on crime. His book, *Let's Take Back Our Streets,* reveals his ideas. He wants citizens and police to drive criminals off the streets and keep them off. While this idea could lead to police brutality, Greenberg has been careful to make sure that his officers follow correct procedures. Sometimes, he puts on roller skates to check out what is happening on the streets. The head of the International Association of Police Chiefs says that every city needs a chief as good as Greenberg.

Education

The list of important African-Americans in the field of education is long. Here is a short sample of some of those who have been and are working to improve our knowledge and education in both the state and the nation. They represent nearly 7,000 African-Americans who are teaching in South Carolina's public schools. African-American teachers make up more than eighteen percent of all the teachers in the state.

In Aiken County, Dr. Frank Roberson is the school system's top administrator over instruction. Like many Southern African-Americans, Roberson left the South after finishing his basic education. Like many other Southerners of all racial backgrounds, he felt strong ties to his family roots and to the land. After he earned enough money in New York to complete his education, he came back to South Carolina. He began teaching and earned advanced degrees. Moving into administration, he became the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services. In the early 1980s, he and his wife built their own house with their own hands on land that his grandfather once owned. As Roberson works to improve the education of all the children in Aiken County Schools, his family is



Dr. Frank Roberson, giving instructions to an aide in the public school system in Aiken County. He is only one of thousands of African-Americans who today play a vital role in preparing the children of South Carolina for the challenges of the future. Photo by Ginny Southworth. Courtesy of The Aiken Standard.

growing even deeper roots in the state. Roberson is representative not only of all those unsung heroes of the classroom, but also of the many African-Americans who help run South Carolina schools in important administrative positions.

Dr. Thomas Elliott Kerns became the first African-American superintendent of the Greenville County Schools. The district has the largest number of students of any in the state. In 1991, he was recognized as one of the top eight school administrators in the entire nation. Kerns is no longer unique. By late 1993, twelve percent of South Carolina's school superintendents (eleven individuals) were African-American.

In the area of higher education, African-Americans are active and prominent in and out of South Carolina. Dr. Augustus Rogers organizes a yearly conference at the University of South Carolina (USC) that presents research on the black family. He has built a national reputation in this important area. Dr. Grace McFadden teaches African-American studies classes at USC. She is famous for her work in oral history. She and her assistants videotape interviews with prominent people so that future generations cannot only read their words, but hear and see them. Dr. Ed Hayes works in the state Criminal Justice Academy in Columbia. Dr. Ricky Hill is chairperson of the Political Science Department at S.C. State University. He often explains political events in interviews with news reporters.

Dr. Theresa Singleton, a native of Charleston, is one of only a few African-American female archaeologists in the nation. After teaching and working at the State Museum, she became curator for historical archaeology at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. She has been a pioneer in uncovering the story of the daily life of African-Americans who were brought to America.

Dr. Sara Dunlop Jackson was born in Columbia. Working at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., she has taught scholars how to do research. Many historians give her credit for teaching them how to track down the important tidbits of information they needed in their work.

Business

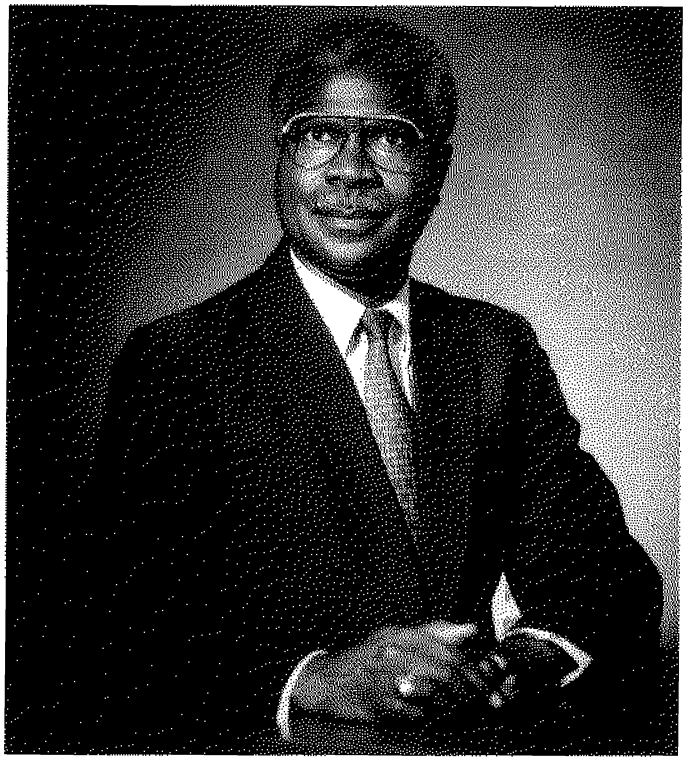
The danger in talking about important African-American business leaders today is that we must leave important people out. You do not have to look very far to see how much African-Americans contribute to the state and the national economy in business activities.

W. Melvin Brown is perhaps one of the best examples. Brown is the chief operating officer, or CEO, of a North Charleston company, the American Development Corporation. His company provides jobs for 350 people. It makes equipment for the military. Much of his equipment helped America win the war with Iraq in the Persian Gulf in 1991. Brown's company is among the 100 largest private firms in South

Carolina, and it is the thirty-third largest African-American owned company in the entire nation. CEO Brown has a great deal to do in running a company that makes about $35 million each year. All these responsibilities do not keep him from volunteering his time. Brown is on the board of trustees for several colleges, including Clemson, and chaired the Election Commission in Charleston. In 1993, he became the first African-American to be inducted into the South Carolina Business Hall of Fame. In a year when over 200 people were nominated, Brown was one of only four people to win the honor.

South Carolina has another African-American business that is among the nation's best. The DeCosta family contracting business has a long history in the state. It dates back through three generations to the 1890s. Herbert A. DeCosta, Jr. brought it national fame in the 1970s. In the 1930s, DeCosta worked as a carpenter, learning the family business from the ground up. In 1940, he graduated from the Avery Institute in his hometown of Charleston. After earning degree in architectural engineering at Iowa State, he went to work for NASA. Later he returned home to run the construction business. His greatest talent is in the restoration of old buildings. Among the buildings he has restored are St. Stephens and St. Mark's churches in Charleston and Claflin College's Tingley Hall. In recent years, DeCosta turned to help his community. He has won awards in volunteer work for helping such groups as the Boy Scouts, the Spoleto Festival, and the Penn Community Center.

In 1993, Mr. W. Melvin Brown became the first African-American inducted into the S.C. Business Hall of Fame. His company, the American Development Corporation, is one of the top African-American owned businesses in the state. Courtesy of Melvin Brown.



Science

Edwin R. Russell was a key figure in the nuclear age that began with development of the atomic bomb. Russell was born in Columbia more than eighty years ago. His interest in science led him to study chemistry at Benedict College. He received a B.A. from Benedict and a master's degree from Howard University. In the chapter on the military, you learned that he left a job in Washington, D.C. when the Army refused to accept his African-American students into the new chemical warfare service as officers. He returned to South Carolina, but before long he was offered a job at the University of Chicago. Russell went to Chicago where he worked on production of the atomic bomb. In 1942, he was one of two African-American scientists involved in the first experiments with nuclear weapons. Russell was one of twenty-seven people who received a citation from President Franklin D. Roosevelt for his work. He still has the silver lapel pin he received. The War Manpower Commission also awarded him for his work.

After the war, Russell returned to South Carolina and worked with the Atomic Energy Commission at the Savannah River Plant for more than twenty-one years. His work there focused on how to purify nuclear materials and how to remove ingested materials from the human body. The peaceful use of nuclear materials was one of his concerns. Russell retired to Columbia, to the same street where he had lived during his youth. After his retirement, he tried to help others through his work in the construction field.

Charles Bolden is one of the most well-known South Carolinians in the field of science. Bolden was born in Columbia in 1946. Ironically, in 1984, years after the University of South Carolina refused to admit him because of his race, the school honored him



Charles Bolden, one of South Carolina's two African-American astronauts. Courtesy of NASA.

with an honorary degree. Perhaps by refusing him they did him a favor. Instead of USC, he went to the U.S. Naval Academy. After winning honors as a student, he joined the Marines and became a pilot. He won military honors for flying more than 100 combat missions in Vietnam. Bolden has a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering and a master of science in systems management. In 1979, he completed the Naval Test Pilot School. In 1980, he survived the rigorous selection process to become an astronaut. Bolden was pilot on two space shuttle flights and commander on a third flight, logging nearly 500 hours in space. Bolden was so successful in his work at NASA that in 1992 the government asked him to develop a new mission for the entire space agency. Where we go in space in the years to come may be decided by a brilliant and talented man from South Carolina. Over his career, three schools have awarded him honorary doctorates.

Bolden flew the last shuttle mission before the Challenger disaster in 1986. Unhappily, one of his best friends was killed when the Challenger exploded on take off. That was Ron McNair of Lake City, South Carolina. Son of an auto mechanic, McNair also had to overcome many obstacles in becoming an astronaut. He was valedictorian of his high school class, lettered in three sports, and played the saxophone in a school jazz band. After graduating with honors from North Carolina A&T University, he earned a doctorate in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Known for his expertise in laser technology, he beat out 1,000 other applicants to join the space shuttle program in 1978. He flew in one successful mission aboard the Challenger in 1984. Like other African-American heroes from South Carolina, McNair made the greatest sacrifice one can make in serving his nation. He gave his life. His memory and inspiration lives on in the students of the Ronald E. McNair Junior High School in his home town of Lake City.

South Carolina African-Americans are not only exploring space, but they have also won fame in exploring the inner body. Dr. Edward Sawyer Cooper, another Columbia native, was elected president of the American Heart Association in 1992. At the age of seventy, this honor was the capstone of a long and distinguished career. His research includes not only heart diseases but also strokes. In Philadelphia, he founded a research center for strokes. Public education about how to prevent these deadly diseases was another of his concerns. His work has improved your chance for a longer and healthier life.

Sports

South Carolina has certainly produced its share of star athletes. Among them are many African-Americans. We would like to introduce you to just a few of them.

One of the most remarkable young men to come from the Palmetto State in recent years and to win national fame as an athlete could also be considered a poet or humanitarian. Alex English was named after Alexander the Great. He lived up to the name. A native of Columbia, he was so good in basketball that over 100 schools recruited him. He chose to stay home and play for University of South Carolina. After setting the all-time school scoring record, he graduated in 1976 with a degree in English. Few NBA players have ever been better. He was the leading scorer in

1983. He has played in several all-star games. All of that was his basketball side. His other sides are just as impressive. He wrote three books of poetry. He tells how important writing is to him in his autobiography, which is titled *The English Language.* He has been an actor in movies and on television. Alex English cares about people both here and around the rest of the world. He has raised over $100,000 to feed the hungry children of Africa.

In 1970, a South Carolinian became the world champion in heavyweight boxing. In what some regard as one of the best fights of all times, "Smokin' " Joe Frazier beat Muhammad Ali when Ali was at his peak. Frazier had first won fame in 1964. He was the first American to win an Olympic gold medal in heavyweight boxing. Frazier used his fame and fortune to help others. He has helped many charities. One of his many projects was a "Father's Day Picnic for Homeless Children." A native of Beaufort County, the state legislature invited Frazier to speak after his victory over Ali. If you remember, this was the time when the state was just beginning to really end segregation and when tension was high. Frazier told the all-white legislature that we need to get closer together and work together and make the state a better place. The legislators gave him a standing ovation.

South Carolina can be very proud to claim one of the greatest female athletes of all time as a native daughter. Born in the little town of Silver, South Carolina, in 1927, Althea Gibson grew up in Harlem, New York. Her father taught her to be tough and competitive by giving her personal boxing lessons. She grew

Today there are many African-American athletes from S.C. who have made their mark competing against people of all races and all nations. Prior to desegregation, African-Americans were limited to compete against only those of their own race, such as this Columbia professional baseball team, shown around 1946. Reproduced f om Constance B. Schulz, Ed., The History of S.C. Slide Collection, *slide G-6 (Sandlapper Publishing Company, 1989). Courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.*



tall and strong. She soon became one of the best athletes in her neighborhood. A local musician encouraged her to try tennis and arranged lessons for her. Two doctors from the South saw her play in a tournament and offered to help. She went to live in Wilmington, North Carolina, where she worked on her tennis. In addition, she played in the band, was captain of the basketball team, and often played football and baseball with the boys at school. After winning a college scholarship, she began winning professional tennis tournaments. She was the first African-American to play in and win the U.S. Open title and the first to win the Wimbledon title. In the late 1950s, she was the best woman tennis player in the world. After retiring from tennis, she changed sports and became a very successful pro golfer. Her reputation for power in tennis carried over. She was known as one of the longest drivers on the pro golf tour. In 1983, the S.C. Athletic Hall of Fame inducted her as a member.

Breaking into the ranks of coaching has been difficult for African-American athletes. While colleges and professional sports organizations were willing to appreciate the playing talents of blacks, they were less willing to place blacks in positions of authority. This has been especially true at the professional level. The first African-American National Football League coach was named in 1989. He was Art Shell, a native of North Charleston. Shell had already proven his worth as a player, as have other South Carolinians. Charlie Brown of Charleston was a star receiver with the Washington Redskins and the Atlanta Falcons. The Perry brothers of Aiken (William, "the refrigerator" and Michael Dean) both earned all-pro honors as defensive linemen. Barney Chavous, also of Aiken, played as a defensive end for the Denver Broncos.

However, Art Shell was exceptional. He made the Pro Bowl seven times in a row, played in two Super Bowls, and was taken into the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Within a year as a coach, he turned the losing Raiders into a playoff team. Regardless of how the rest of his coaching career goes, he proved that great men, whatever their race, can make great coaches.



Charlayne Hunter-Gault, famous television news journalist on public television. Courtesy of SCETV.

Media and the Arts

African-Americans from South Carolina are making contributions in the media and the arts that touch people all over the world. You met quite a few of these people in earlier chapters. Here are a few more. You can see some of them on television each day. You can find their work in your library. They are an important part of our culture. They help us understand it. They make it richer. They preserve it. Remember, these are only a few who represent many, many more.

Charlayne Hunter-Gault was born in the small South Carolina town of Due West in 1942. She did not live there long before she moved out of the state. Yet, despite memories of racial discrimination, she remembers South Carolina in a positive way. Like so many other Southerners, black and white, she feels a sense of place, a sense of belonging here in South Carolina. She went on to shoot for higher goals than even her teachers saw for her. In 1960, Hunter-Gault was one of the first two African-Americans to enter the University of Georgia. After earning a degree in journalism, she worked as a reporter for *The New*

Yorker magazine and *The New York Times* newspaper. Later she moved into broadcast journalism. In recent years she has been one of the anchor reporters on the award-winning MacNeil/Lehrer Report that is seen nightly on public television. If you want to know more about her, you can read about her life in her autobiography, *In My Place.*

Bill Terrell is one of the most visible African-Americans on public television in South Carolina today. Though he moved to South Carolina only in the late 1960s, his work for South Carolina Educational Television will have a lasting impact. Terrell began producing and hosting "Jobman Caravan" in 1968 as a way to help young men find work. By the 1990s, it developed into a popular news magazine type show that won S.C. Educational Television its first Emmy award. Terrell looks at a wide variety of issues that concern African-Americans in the state. As with so many other giving people, he is especially concerned with ideas that will help children succeed in a tough world.

Bill Terrell, producer of the award winning *S.C. Educational Television program "Jobman Caravan." Courtesy of SCETV.*



Poet, writer, television journalist, and talk show host, Listervelt Middleton may be a familiar name to many of you if you watch public television. Born in Pineville in 1952, Middleton earned a degree in political science from Benedict College in 1972. He began his career as a news director for a commercial television station in Columbia. From there he moved to S.C. Educational Television and soon began winning awards as host and producer of the show "For the People." His main concern is helping people understand the rich tradition of African culture. He is helping us to see that Africans have affected the entire world. Three of his books of poetry are read all over the world. He is also a performing poet who has given readings of his work in major cities across the nation. The poetry reflects his roots both here and in Africa. He wants us to remember the past, but he also asks us to face the challenges of today and tomorrow.

You have already met many South Carolinians who have made the state famous the world over in the field of music. African-Americans from South Carolina helped create jazz and the popular music we hear on the radio. The tradition of gospel singing that is so strong in the state continues into the 1990s. Gospel carries over into more formal kinds of singing. Myrtle Hall Smith, born in Greenville, is known the world over as a lyric soprano singer. She first won fame as a soloist with the Billy Graham Crusade. Since then she has sung in formal concerts as well as in religious services as far away as China, Australia, and South Africa.

Religion

African-American ministers have played a central role in the history of South Carolina and in the history of civil rights. In part, this is due to the central importance of religion in African-American life. A second reason is the limited number of opportunities educated African-Americans had in other professions. Finally, you will recall that the church was about the only place where large numbers of blacks could gather without alarming the white community.

Today, the civil rights movement has moved beyond the bounds of the church. As you see from this

chapter, more and more African-Americans have moved into other leadership roles. This does not mean, however, that African-American ministers no longer play leadership roles. Many still do.

Some ministers of churches with African-American members continue to serve as leaders in local chapters of the NAACP. Others, such as the Reverend Ben Snoddy of Spartanburg, are asking whether churches should change themselves as well as change society. Reverend Snoddy sees all races interacting in most areas of life in South Carolina today. On the other hand, he echoes Martin Luther King, Jr., in observing that Sunday morning is the most segregated morning of the week. Reverend Snoddy is working to change that. He brought together ministers from several white churches in order to reduce conflict between the races. He helped organize discussion groups of members from black and white churches. He hopes that this and other cooperative projects like day care centers will some day lead to integrated churches.

Listing all the individuals who have contributed to South Carolina is nearly impossible. However, these people deserve to be recognized. In 1989, the United Black Fund, working with Benedict College, began planning to recognize some of these people and their accomplishments. The United Black Fund raises money to help organizations in the African-American community, such as community centers and programs for students from rural areas. The Committee of 100 Black Men, which raises money for the United Black Fund, established the S.C. Black Hall of Fame. Persons both living and dead who have helped other African-Americans and contributed to the state and the nation are honored each year at the organization's banquet. Honorees are selected from a list of several hundred persons. Many persons outside the organization, including religious and community leaders, have suggested names. The Black Hall of Fame holds photographs and materials on the persons who are inducted. Eventually, they hope to find a permanent home for all of these materials.

In 1991 the Black Hall of Fame inducted the first group of thirty. The group included many people you have met elsewhere in this book, such as astronauts Ronald McNair and Charles Bolden, Jr., and others who are less well-known. Each year, the Black Hall of Fame honors a group of people who have made the world a little better place.

Changing Lifestyles

For many average African-American families in South Carolina, life has changed a great deal in the last twenty-five years. Change has been a long time coming. After the Civil War, seventy-five years of hard work were needed to build enough wealth and power to begin challenging segregation. Breaking down these barriers took another twenty-five years. Many African-Americans still live in poverty, just as many white South Carolinians live in poverty. In the last quarter century more and more families have entered the middle class. What does this mean in daily life?

Fewer families live on farms. Those that do often farm part-time. Most of their income comes from work in town and cities around the state. At the same time, family ties are still important. Many choose to live in family groupings and commute to work rather than move.

We can see this in the little community of Promised Land. If you remember, Promised Land was the little town created by African-Americans just after the Civil War. Once they owned the land, they created a close-knit community that lasted. Change has touched Promised Land. Once the people lived by farming. Now most people have just small fields or gardens in which to grow a few things to eat. Stands of pine trees grow in many of the old fields. The trees will eventually be sold as pulpwood for paper. Small housing developments now cover other fields. People who had left returned. They did not need as much land because they did not have to farm for a living. Most of the roughly 500 residents work in skilled factory jobs outside the community, work in clerical jobs, are self-employed in small businesses, or just sell their labor.

Other things remain the same in Promised Land. Most important, the community endures as a community. It survived because of the self-reliance and pride of its residents. In 1978, the men of the community created their own fire department. They made their own tanker truck using their own skills. They welded a water tank onto a surplus military truck. Church is still the center of community life. When a family has problems, neighbors help.

Those who left for economic reasons or for better chances in life have kept in touch with their roots. Each August, Promised Land holds a Homecoming Day. Relatives and friends from cities all over the nation return to celebrate and renew their ties. Others, who were sent to Promised Land as youths from cities where they could not find work, revisit the tiny community. They found more than work in Promised Land. They found love and family.

Promised Land represents many other small rural African-American communities all over the state. Some have died as farms were lost and people moved to cities. Some, like Frogmore on St. Helena Island, are fairly well-known. Others, like Promised Land, are not. But they are there.

More families live in urban areas. Of course, this is true for both whites and blacks. Most neighborhoods in towns and cities across the state are still primarily white or black in racial composition. However, more and more people are living together in upper middle class suburbs that are springing up. This is most true among highly trained and paid professionals and businesspersons.

Returning and Rediscovering Roots

One of the most remarkable changes in recent years is that African-Americans are moving back to South Carolina. People who had to leave the state made many contributions to the nation. As you have seen, some left for better chances for education. Others left just to find work, and others for professional opportunities. Although many began leaving in the late 1800s after Reconstruction ended, blacks outnumbered whites in the state until the 1920s. The African-American percentage of the state population fell until the 1970s. Sometime in the 1970s, the trend reversed. The 1980 census showed that during the 1970s more African-Americans came into the state than left. The hard work of generations was beginning to pay off. Conditions had improved enough so that South Carolina was beginning to attract talented people back. Public opinion polls are showing that despite remaining problems, African-Americans in the South see race relations as better than in the North.

David Floyd returned to Charleston, the city of his birth, from Washington, D.C. in 1978. He felt he had more opportunity in Charleston. As an administrator in the public schools, he is working to create more opportunities for others. He is providing them with reasons to stay.

Cecilia Trottie left Columbia in 1936 after she graduated from Booker T. Washington High School. She was a teacher in New York for forty years. She came home in 1984. She lives in the very house in which she grew up. Though she has many friends in New York, she came back to Columbia because it was home. It had always been home.

Between World War I and World War II, Balus Glover left family and friends in Promised Land to find work in the North. He was part of the "great migration" that took place back then. He worked for railroads for many years but always kept his ties to home. In 1974, he returned to the land of his youth. He had always said he would return. In his retirement, he has come back to the land. He grows the things he likes to eat on that land, land that African-Americans have owned and farmed since the 1870s. He is content.

Sherman Anderson left South Carolina twice. As one of eleven children of a landless Laurens County family, Anderson's parents had to work hard just to feed their family. They moved to Philadelphia trying to find more opportunity. The family moved back to South Carolina in the 1960s, and Anderson became one of the first African-Americans to go to Irmo High School in Lexington County. Anderson again left the state, this time on his own. He sought higher education, attending Morehouse College in Atlanta and law school at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, where he won several awards as a student. After law school, he worked in the mid-West, but in 1991 he chose to return to Irmo. Since returning, he has directed the Educational Opportunity Center at USC, which helps adults improve educational skills, begun a consulting firm, and won election to the school board for District Five of Richland and Lexington counties.

Verne Dooley's family had lived in the North for generations. Although he thought his only Southern roots were the roots of enslavement, he found other roots when he moved to Columbia in the late 1980s. Because South Carolina is recognizing the contributions of African culture to the state, Dooley found new roots—much more positive roots. He also found that

he and his family were welcome to live in any neighborhood they wanted. As a high ranking computer corporation executive, Dooley has been active in the community. He is contributing to an even richer culture by promoting the arts, raising funds for the United Way, helping train new community leaders, and giving his time to schools.

In this chapter we have looked at the people who live all around us. Some of them you knew because you see their names in the news. Others you did not know because they are not famous. Even though they are not famous, they are important. They are making South Carolina and the nation a better place for all of us. We cannot possibly talk about all of them. For every one that we have named, countless others exist. Some of those we have left out may be your parents, their friends, your neighbors down the street, or someone who lives nearby.

This closing thought suggests a good project for your class. Identify African-Americans who are doing important things in your community. Invite them to visit your class. Have them tell you about their lives. Ask them their feelings about their cultural and ethnic roots. Then you may want to expand and invite people with other cultural roots. The more we know about each other, the better we will get along in the future.

▼ ▼ ▼CHAPTER 16

Conclusion: What is South Carolina?

We began this book by asking two questions. What does Africa mean to you and what does Africa mean to South Carolina? If you have read this book carefully, you know the answer to these questions is in the title of this final chapter. What is South Carolina? Whether your ancestors are European, African, Asian, Native American, South or Central American, or some mixture of all of these does not matter. In one sense, the answer is the same. If you are a South Carolinian, regardless of your personal ethnic background, Africa is part of you. It is part of South Carolina. Africa is in our history, politics, art, music, food, methods of growing food, buildings, religion, our manners, and even our very speech. Some scholars even claim that we can see as much African culture in white Southerners as in black Southerners. It is time we all understand, acknowledge, and appreciate this fact. South Carolina is many things, but a very important part of it is Africa.

We have spoken about many contributions made by generations of people. Africans who were brought to South Carolina and their African-American children contributed much of the skill and labor that made the state relatively wealthy in colonial times. They created the rice culture. This includes not just rice, but the way of life that surrounded what was grown. The crafts and skills they brought and learned changed not only South Carolina, but the nation. They brought important practices in cattle herding that helped create the American cowboy. Even though enslaved, they never lost their thirst for freedom. They took their own religious heritage and combined it with Christian religious beliefs to express that thirst for freedom in rich and emotional ways. This changed forever the practice of religion in America. Many of their hopes had to remain hidden. They taught us that religious expressions have different levels of meaning. Generations of African-Americans endured hardships that we can only try to imagine. That endurance is another kind of contribution. Their endurance inspires us to know that we can endure what we think of as hardships today. That endurance lasted through failed revolts, a Civil War, the short-lived hopes of Reconstruction, and nearly 100 years of second-class citizenship. During the Reconstruction years, African-Americans made great political contributions. A bill of rights, a public school system, and a state government that begins to see that it should help build prosperity are no small things. Through all these years African-Americans worked and built. They ran farms, started family businesses, and helped each other whenever possible. Surely, they must have felt discouraged at times.

Progress came ever so slowly. Finally, when the time was right for a "second reconstruction," as the civil rights movement is sometimes called, they were ready. They contributed to a national movement that has given all of us better chances in life. Those who led that movement in South Carolina showed great patience. They acted with moderation. They suffered perhaps a little longer than they might have. That enabled the civil rights movement in the state to take place with relatively little violence.

Along this journey African-Americans contributed in other ways. Some of these ways are just now being recognized. African-American scholars, scientists, artists, and performers have all contributed to our knowledge, wealth, and culture. Even though they were never fully free in what was supposed to be the land of the free, generations of African-American sol-

diers gave their lives to defend the nation. They are among the heroes of battles from even before the American Revolution through today's modern high tech wars.

Today African-Americans are contributing to all aspects of life in South Carolina. Among them may be teachers in your school, local officials, civic leaders in your community, businesspersons helping your community to grow, and those who write and report your local news. We could only talk about a very few of these important people. Thousands had to be left out.

We are moving to a multicultural society. We are moving to a society where we are learning to share a common culture that was created by us all. At the same time, we are moving toward the time when we are brave enough and secure enough to learn about and respect all of the cultures that we bring to South Carolina. We are moving to a day when English, Irish, Germans, Jews, Native Americans, all of us will feel comfortable in celebrating and learning about African heritage. We are moving to a day when we can study the past, but not to make someone feel guilty or inferior. Rather, we will be able to admit mistakes and learn to do better.

While we may be moving in this direction, the journey is not over. We still have a way to go. The fact that this book had to be written as a supplement shows that we have not yet arrived. African contributions need to be better integrated into a common text. The same can be said of cultural contributions of Native Americans and others.

The journey will not be entirely easy. However, it will be no harder than the long way we have already come. Some fear this. They fear that their own backgrounds will be lost. Those fears are misplaced. We cannot expect respect for our own backgrounds unless we afford the same respect for the backgrounds of others. Tolerance and mutual respect are among the most basic values of a democracy.

All groups have their own challenges to face. The African-American community is facing their own special challenges as well. We can see this in the statements and actions of community groups today in the state. The first step is admitting that problems exist. That is being done. You will find that almost any panel of African-American community leaders today will talk about a number of critical problems. An African-American health expert at the Black Family Summit at USC advised African-Americans to "think smarter, eat smarter, and do smarter." Part of that comes from building self-confidence. Gwen Owens, mother of the 1993 "Black Family of the Year," spoke of the special responsibility of African-American parents. She said that parents have to spend time with children and build their confidence. This requires more effort when children belong to a minority group. Adults must provide the kind of positive role models that make young people want to achieve. Thomas Martin, uncle of astronaut Charles Bolden and a teacher for thirty years, urged parents to be more involved providing leadership and to spend more time in the schools.

Representative Jim Clyburn often speaks to groups about giving African-Americans a sense of power over their lives. This can overcome peer pressure which sometimes tells African-American school children that getting good grades is "acting white."

After reading this book, you should clearly understand from all the people you have met that success comes in all colors. Generations of African-Americans have found success in all fields. We just have not given them the recognition they deserve. That is beginning to change. Ollie Hough and her company, O. H. Productions, sponsored the first "South Carolina Black Male Showcase" in Columbia in 1992. The event recognized twenty-two average yet extraordinary African-Americans who are family-oriented, successful, and active in their communities.

What can you do? Reading this book is a small start. Talking to each other is the next step. Students at Marion High School, led by its new African-American principal, are taking that next step. Their motto is "Harmony with Diversity." They are sharing ethnic foods, dances, and having trivia contests about all the various cultures that make up the state. They are integrating different cultures into all the parts of their classes.

The different ethnic cultures that make up this state have lived together for a long time. We have not always gotten along very well. We have wasted talents and driven good people away. As a result, we



Schofield Middle School students link their arms in solidarity in front of the old bell tower that marks the original Schofield School, built to educate African-Americans after the Civil War. Just like you, these students are the link between the past and the future of South Carolina. Photo by Aimee Smith.

are a much poorer state than we otherwise might have been. The future of the state is in your hands. We can learn about each other and respect each other. We can build on the contributions made by all the people who have come before us. Or we can ignore, disrespect, forget, and fail to learn from our past. The choice belongs to you.

What does Africa mean to you? What is South Carolina to you? It is part of your past. That is true. It is also part of your future. What South Carolina will be to you and your children depends on how you view the past. We have looked back at ancestors who made many contributions. Soon it will be your turn.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

African-American State Senators 1868-88

Name	District
Barber, George W.	Fairfield
Bird, Israel R.	Fairfield
Cain, Lawrence	Edgefield
Cain, Richard Harvey	Charleston
Cardozo, Henry	Kershaw
Clinton, Fredrick Albert	Lancaster
Duncan, Hiram W.	Union
Duncan, Samuel L.	Orangeburg
Ford, Sanders	Fairfield
Gaillard, Samuel E.	Charleston
Green, Samuel	Beaufort
Green, Joseph	Orangeburg
Hayne, Charles D.	Aiken
Hayne, Henry E.	Marion
Hoyt, William R.	Colleton
Jamison, James L.	Orangeburg
Jervey, William R.	Charleston
Johnston, William E.	Sumter
Jones, William H.	Georgetown
Lee, John	Chester
Martin, Moses	Fairfield
Maxwell, Henry J.	Marlboro
Miller, Thomas E.	Beaufort
Myers, William F.	Colleton
Nash, William Beverly	Richland
Rainey, Joseph H.	Georgetown
Randolph, Benjamin F.	Orangeburg
Reynolds, Thomas John	Beaufort
Robinson, Hamilton	Beaufort
Simmons, Robert	Berkeley
Smalls, Robert	Beaufort
Swails, Stephen A.	Williamsburg
Walker, Dublin I.	Chester
Warley, Jared D.	Clarendon
White, John Hannibal	York
Williams, Bruce H.	Georgetown
Wimbush, Lucius	Chester
Wright, Jonathan Jasper	Beaufort

APPENDIX B

African-American State Senators
1983 to Present

Name	Years Served	District
Ford, Robert	1993 - present	Charleston
Fielding, Herbert U.	1985 - 92	Charleston
Gilbert, Frank	1989 - 92	Florence
Glover, Maggie Wallace	1993 - present	Florence
Jackson, Darrell	1993 - present	Richland
Matthews, John W.	1985 - present	Orangeburg
Mitchell, Theo	1985 - present	Greenville
Newman, I. DeQuincey	1983	Richland
Patterson, Kay	1985- present	Richland
Washington, McKinley	1990 - present	Charleston

APPENDIX C

African-Americans Who Served in the South Carolina House of Representatives 1868 -1902

Name	Years Served	County
Adamson, Frank	1870-74	Kershaw
Adamson, William	1869-70	Kershaw
Alexander, Purvis	1876-78	Chester
Allman, Jacob C.	1872-76	Marlboro
Anderson, Robert B.	1890-98	Georgetown
Andrews, William J.	1874-78	Sumter
Artson, Robert Betal	1872-74	Charleston
Bampfield, Samuel J.	1874-76	Beaufort
Bascomb, John	1870-74	Beaufort
Baxter, Jonathan A.	1884-90	Georgetown
Beckett, William W.	1882-84	Berkeley
Bird, Daniel	1876-77	Fairfield
Bolts, John William	1898-1902	Georgetown
Bosemon, Benjamin A.	1868-73	Charleston
Boston, Hampton	1876-78	Clarendon
Boston, John	1868-70, 72-74	Darlington
Boston, Joseph D.	1868-76	Newberry
Bowley, James A.	1869-74	Georgetown
Bryan, Richard	1870-74, 78-77	Charleston
Brown, Stephen	1868-70	Charleston
Bridges, Sampson S.	1872-78	Newberry
Brodie, William J.	1868-70, 76-77	Charleston
Burton, Barney	1868-72	Chester
Byas, Benjamin	1870-72	Orangeburg
Cain, Everidge	1870-74	Abbeville
Cain, Lawrence	1868-72	Edgefield
Caldwell, Christian	1876-78	Orangeburg
Capers, Benjamin F.	1876-77	Charleston
Chisolm, Caesar	1882-84	Colleton
Coker, Simon P.	1874-78	Barnwell
Coleman, Samuel	1875-78	Chester
Collins, Augustus	1872-76	Clarendon
Cook, Wilson	1868-70	Greenville
Curtis, Andrew W.	1872-78	Richland
Dannerly, Abraham	1872-74	Orangeburg
Dannerly, William	1870-72	Orangeburg
Davies, Nelson	1872-76	York
Davis, James	1870-72	Richland
Davis, Thomas A.	1870-72, 74-76	Charleston
DeLarge, Robert C.	1868-70	Charleston
Dibble, Eugene H.	1876-78	Kershaw
Dix, John	1872-74	St. Matthews
Drayton, Paul B.	1880-82	Charleston
Driffle, William A.	1868-70, 80-82	Colleton
Duncan, Samuel L.	1872-78	Orangeburg
Eckhard, Sidney C.	1877-80	Charleston

Name	Years Served	County
Edwards, Frederick S.	1876-77	Charleston
Elfe, Willam T.	1878-80	Charleston
Elliott, Robert Brown	1868-70	Barnwell
	1874-76	Aiken
Ellison, Henry H.	1870-74	Abbeville
Evans, John	1876-78	Williamsburg
Ezekiel, Philip E.	1868-70	Beaufort
Farrow, Simon P.	1874-76	Union
Fields,Thomas R.	1890-92	Beaufort
Farr, Simeon	1868-72	Union
Ford, Adam Pyatt	1870-74, 76-77	Charleston
Frazier, William H.	1872-74	Colleton
Frederick, Benjamin	1878-80, 82-84	Orangeburg
Freeman, John M.	1874-76	Charleston
Frost, Florian Henry	1870-72	Williamsburg
Forrest, Ellis	1876-78	Orangeburg
Gnatt, Hastings	1870-84	Beaufort
Gardner, John	1868-70	Edgefield
Gary, Stephen	1870-72, 74-78	Kershaw
George, Ebenezer	1874-76	Kershaw
Gibson, John	1874-77	Fairfield
Giles, Fortune	1870-74	Williamsburg
Gilmore, John T.	1872-74	Richland
Glover, William C.	1870-72, 76-77	Charleston
Goggins, Mitchell	1870-72, 74-76	Abbeville
Goodson, Aespo	1868-72	Richland
Gourdin, Erasmus H.	1872-74	Marion
Graham, David	1872-76	Edgefield
Grant, John G.	1868-70	Marlboro
Grant, Joseph J.	1872-76	Charleston
Grant, William A.	1872-74	Charleston
Grant, William H. W.	1868-70	Charleston
Green, Charles S.	1872-74	Georgetown
Greene, Samuel	1870-75	Beaufort
Greenwood, Isham	1872-74	Newberry
Hamilton, Morris C.	1892-94	Beaufort
Hamilton, Thomas	1872-78	Beaufort
Harriott, Robert M.	1874-76	Georgetown
Harris, David	1868-72	Edgefield
Hart, Alfred	1870-72	Darlington
Hayes, Even	1868-70, 72-74	Marion
Hayne, Charles D.	1868-72	Barnwell
Hayne, James N.	1868-72	Barnwell
Hayne, William A.	1874-76	Marion
Henderson, James A.	1868-70, 74-76	Newberry
Henderson, John T.	1870-72	Newberry
Holland, Gloster H.	1872-76	Aiken
Holland, William	1874-76	Abbeville
Holmes, Abraham	1870-74	Colleton
Hough, Allison	1872-74, 76-78	Kershaw
Hudson, Allen	1870-72, 74-76	Lancaster
Humbert, Richard H.	1870-78	Darlington

Name	Years Served	County
Humphries, Barney	1868-70	Chester
Hunter, Alfred T. A.	1874-78	Laurens
Hunter, H. H.	1870-72	Charleston
Hutson, James	1868-70	Newberry
Jacobs, Henry	1868-70	Fairfield
James, Burrell	1868-70	Sumter
Jamison, James L.	1870-72	Orangeburg
Jefferson, Paul W.	1874-76	Aiken
Jervey, William R.	1868-72	Charleston
Johnson, D. I. J.	1868-70	Chesterfield
Johnson, Griffin C.	1868-72	Laurens
Johnson, Henry	1868-70	Fairfield
Johnson, John W.	1872-74	Marion
Johnson, Samuel	1868-70	Charleston
Johnston, William E.	1868-9	Sumter
Jones, Marshall	1866-88	Orangeburg
Jones, Paul Edward	1874-76	Orangeburg
Jones, William H., Jr.	1868-72	Georgetown
Keith, Samuel J.	1870-77	Darlington
Keitt, Thomas	1876-77	Newberry
Lang, Jordan	1868-72	Darlington
Lazarus, Joseph S.	1876-77	Charleston
Lee, George H.	1868-70	Charleston
Lee, John	1876	Chester
Lee, Levi	1872-74	Fairfield
Lee, Samuel J.	1868-72, 72-74	Edgefield/Aiken
Lesesne, Joseph	1876-77	Charleston
Lily, John	1872-74	Chester
Logan, Aaron	1870-73	Charleston
Lomax, Hutson J.	1868-70	Abbeville
Lowman, William M.	1878-78	Richland
Maree, William	1876-80	Colleton
Martin, Prince K.	1876-78	Fairfield
Martin, Thomas H.	1872-74	Abbeville
Mayer, Julius	1868-70	Barnwell
Mays, James P.	1868-70	Orangeburg
McDowell, William John	1870-72	Fairfield
McDowell, Thomas D.	1870-72	Georgetown
McKinlay, Whitefield J.	1868-70	Orangeburg
McKinlay, William	1868-70	Charleston
Meade, John W.	1868-72	York
Mears, George Maxwell	1880-92	Charleston
Mickey, Edward, Sr.	1868-72	Charleston
Middleton, Benjamin W.	1872-74	Barnwell
Miller, Isaac	1872-74	Fairfield
Mills, James	1872-74	Laurens
Mills, L. S.	1882-84	Beaufort
Miller, Thomas E.	1874-80	Beaufort
Milton, Syfax	1870-72, 74-78	Clarendon
Minort, Charles S.	1872-74, 76-77	Richland
Mitchell, Friday S.	1884-86	Beaufort
Mobley, Junius S.	1868-72	Union

Name	Years Served	County
Moore, Alfred Phillip	1870-72	Fairfield
Morgan, Shadrach	1874-78	Orangeburg
Morrison, William C.	1868-70	Beaufort
Moultrie, William J.	1880-84	Georgetown
Myers, Nathaniel B.	1870-75, 76-78	Beaufort
Nash, Jonas W.	1868-69	Kershaw
Nelson, William	1868-70	Clarendon
Nix, Frederick, Jr.	1872-74, 76	Barnwell
North, Charles F.	1872-74	Charleston
Nuckles, Samuel	1868-72	Union
Owens, Joseph	1880-82	Barnwell
Parker, Joseph	1880-82	Charleston
Palmer, Robert John	1876-78	Richland
Pendergrass, Jeffrey	1868-72	Williamsburg
Peterson, James	1872-78	Williamsburg
Perrin, Wade	1868-70	Laurens
Petty, Edward	1872-74	Charleston
Pinckney, William G.	1874-77	Charleston
	1882-84	Berkeley
Pressley, Thomas	1872-74	Williamsburg
Prioleau, Isaac	1872-74, 76-77	Charleston
Purvis, Henry W.	1868-70	Lexington
Ramsay, Warren W.	1869-76	Sumter
Ransier, Alonzo J.	1868-69	Charleston
Reed, George A.	1872-74, 78-78	Beaufort
Ravenel, Cain	1882-84	Berkeley
Ravenel, C. A.	1890-92	Berkeley
Reynolds, Andrew Cash	1880-90	Beaufort
Riley, Henry	1872-74	Orangeburg
Rivers, January R.	1890-94	Beaufort
Rivers, Prince R.	1868-72	Edgefield
	1872-74	Aiken
Robinson, Joseph	1876-78	Beaufort
Rush, Alfred	1868-70, 74-76	Darlington
Rue, John C.	1880-82	Beaufort
Sasportas, Thaddeus K.	1868-70	Orangeburg
Saunders, Sancho	1868-72	Chester
Shrewsburg, Henry L.	1868-70	Chesterfield
Scott, Robert F.	1868-70	Williamsburg
Scott, William H.	1874-78	Williamsburg
Sheppard, William H.	1884-86	Beaufort
Simkins, Augustus	1872-76	Edgefield
Simkins, Paris	1872-76	Edgefield
Simmons, Aaron	1874-78, 84-86, 88-90	Orangeburg
Simmons, Hercules	1874-76	Colleton
Simmons, Robert	1876	Charleston
Simons, Limus	1872-74	Edgefield
Simons, William	1868-72, 74-76	Richland
Singleton, Andrew	1882-84	Berkeley
Singleton, Asbury J.	1870-72	Sumter
Singleton, J. P.	1871-72	Chesterfield
Singleton, James	1876-77	Charleston

Name	Years Served	County
Smalls, Benjamin F.	1876-77	Charleston
Smalls, Robert	1868-70	Beaufort
Smalls, Sherman	1870-74	Colleton
Smalls, William	1878-80	Charleston
Smiley, James	1868-70	Sumter
Smith, Abraham	1868-72, 76-77	Charleston
Smith, Jackson A.	1872-78	Darlington
Smythe, Powell	1868-70	Clarendon
Spears, Butler	1872-74	Sumter
Spencer, Nathaniel T.	1872-74	Charleston
Sperry, Charles H.	1872-74	Georgetown
Straker, Daniel A.	1878	Orangeburg
Stubbs, Thoroughgood	1868	Marlboro
Sullivan, Caesar	1872-74	Laurens
Sumpter, Edward M.	1870-78	Barnwell
Tarlton, Robert S.	1870-74	Colleton
Thomas, John Williams	1870-72	Marlboro
Thomas, William M.	1868-76	Colleton
Thompson, Benjamin A.	1868-70	Marion
Thompson, Samuel B.	1868-74	Richland
Tingman, Julius Caesar	1872-74, 76-77	Charleston
Turner, Robert W.	1872-74	Charleston
Warley, Jared D.	1870-74	Clarendon
Washington, Julius Ervin	1886-90	Beaufort
Weldon, Archie	1874-76	Edgefield
Wells, James N.	1876-78	Richland
Westberry, John W.	1874-78	Sumter
Weston, Ellison M.	1874-76	Richland
Whipper, William J.	1868-72, 75-76	Beaufort
White, John H.	1868-72	York
Wideman, Hannibal A.	1872-76	Abbeville
Wigg, James	1890-92	Beaufort
Wirder, Charles M.	1868-70	Richland
William, Bruce H.	1874-76	Georgetown
Wilson, James Clement	1872-74	Sumter
Wines, Zachariah	1876-78	Darlington
Wright, John B.	1868-70	Charleston
Valentine, Richard M.	1868	Abbeville
Young, James	1872-76	Laurens

APPENDIX D

African-American State Representatives 1971 to the Preaent

Name	Years Served	District
Anderson, Ralph	1991-present	Greenville
Bailey, Kenneth	1985-91	Orangeburg
Barksdale, Hudson	1975-81	Spartanburg
Beatty, Donald	1991-present	Spartanburg
Blanding, Larry	1977-90	Sumter
Breeland, Floyd	1993-present	Charleston
Broadwater, Thomas	1981-84	Richland
Brown, Joe E.	1986-present	Richland
Brown, Theodore	1995-present	Georgetown
Byrd, Alma	1991-present	Richland
Canty, Ralph	1991-present	Sumter
Cave, Wilbur	1995-present	Allendale
Clyburn, William	1995-present	Aiken
Cobb-Hunter, Gilda	1992-present	Orangeburg
Faber, James	1985-90	Richland
Fant, Ennis	1989-90	Greenville
Felder, James	1971-72	Richland
Ferguson, Tee	1983-89	Spartanburg
Fielding, Herbert U.	1971-72, 83-84	Charleston
Finney, Ernest	1973-76	Sumter
Foster, Samuel R.	1981-92	York
Gadson, Tobias	1981-84	Charleston
Gilbert, Frank	1983-88	Florence
Glover, Maggie	1989-92	Florence
Goggins, Juanita	1975-80	York
Gordon, Benjamin	1973-89	Williamsburg
Gourdine, Amos	1997-present	Berkeley
Govan, Jerry N.	1993-present	Orangeburg
Hines, Jesse E.	1993-present	Darlington
Hines, Mack	1997-present	Dillon
Howard, Leon	1995-present	Richland
Inabinett, Curtis	1991-present	Charleston
Joe, Isaac	1981-84	Lee/Sumter
Johnson, I. S. Leevy	1971-80	Richland
Kennedy, Kenneth	1991-present	Williamsburg
Lee, Brenda	1995-present	Spartanburg
Lloyd, Walter P.	1995-present	Colleton
Mack, David	1995-present	Charleston
Martin, Daniel	1984-92	Charleston
Matthews, John W.	1975-84	St. Matthews
McBride, Frank	1985-89	Richland
McMahand, Willie B.	1993-present	Greenville
Middleton, Earl	1975-84	Orangeburg
Miles, Mary	1983-84	Calhoun
Mitchell, Herbert	1985-86	Orangeburg
Mitchell, Theo	1975-84	Greenville

Name	Years Served	District
Moody-Lawrence, Bessie	1993-present	York
Murray, Joseph	1975-79	Charleston
Murray, Julius	1979-83	Richland
Neal, Joseph	1993-present	Richland
Patterson, Kay	1975-85	Richland
Pinckney, Clementa C.	1995-present	Jasper
Scott, John L.	1990-present	Richland
Shelton, Sara	1985-90	Greenville
Smith, Fletcher	1995-present	Greenville
Taylor, Luther	1983-89	Richland
Washington, McKinley	1975-90	Charleston
Whipper, Lucille S.	1986-present	Charleston
Whipper, Seth	1995-present	Charleston
White, Juanita	1980-present	Beaufort/Jasper
Williams, Dewitt	1983-present	Berkeley
Wilson, George	1975-78	Richland
Woods, Robert	1973-86	Charleston

APPENDIX E

South Carolina African-American Congressmen 1869-1897

Name	Years Served
Rainey, Joseph H.	1869-1879
DeLarge, Robert C.	1871-1873
Elliott, Robert Brown	1871-1875
Cain, Richard H.	1873-1875, 1877-1879
Ransier, Alonzo	1873-1875
Smalls, Robert	1875-1879, 1881-1887
Miller, Thomas E.	1889-1891
Murray, George W.	1893-1897

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