

The Journal of
THE IBERIA AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2019

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Iberia

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The Journal of The Iberia African American Historical Society 2019

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A Message from the Editors

The history of African Americans in Iberia Parish (formerly part of the Attakapas district) dates back to the 18th century. Shamefully, that history has been ignored, marginalized, and in some cases erased. At least one history book written about World War II veterans of Iberia Parish and still found in the Parkview branch of the Iberia Parish Public Library ignores the service and sacrifices of African American men and women veterans from Iberia. Another book written in the early 1960s to celebrate the physicians of Iberia Parish from the 19th century to the 1950s purposely excluded African American doctors, including George W. Diggs, M.D., who was actually practicing in New Iberia at the time the book was produced. Dr. Diggs' years of practice in New Iberia spanned 50 years.

This is the inaugural issue of The Journal of The Iberia African American Historical Society. It is an online journal composed of articles about the long and unique history of African Americans of Iberia Parish. It is our intent that the journal will be a first step in countering the falsehoods, omissions, and distortions of Jim Crow-era books such as the ones described above. It will be published yearly for the benefit of our members. The public, however, will have access to a printed version of the journal to be housed in the Genealogy Room of the Parkview Branch of the Iberia Parish Public Library and the African American Collection in the St. Peter Street Branch Library.

IAAHS has begun to recover the histories of African Americans in Iberia Parish, including: (1) Emma Wakefield-Paillet, M.D., a New Iberia native and the first African American woman to become a physician in Louisiana (1897); (2) Dr. Wakefield's father, Samuel Wakefield, who was a Reconstruction-era politician that represented Iberia Parish in the Louisiana state senate; and (3) Adolph J. Wakefield (son of Samuel Wakefield and brother of Emma Wakefield-Paillet) who was Iberia Parish's first and only African American Clerk of Court. Adolph later served in the Spanish American War as a member of the United States Colored Infantry and was ultimately promoted to the rank of 1st Lieutenant. Recently, IAAHS has commemorated the 75th anniversary of the 1944 violent expulsion of all the Black

doctors and NAACP leaders from the parish. The historical society has erected official state markers to commemorate some of these histories.

In the current issue, you will find articles introducing two women born into slavery and associated with the Weeks family of New Iberia. One (Charity Pope) was enslaved by the Weeks family of The Shadows on the Teche. The other (Harriet Nottingham Turner François) was born into slavery in Kentucky and had a longtime relationship with the same family, though it cannot be confirmed that she was ever their chattel property.

We invite IAAHS members and the public to submit manuscripts on the history of African Americans in Iberia Parish up to the end of the Jim Crow era of segregation. These manuscripts must be research-based. We strive for accuracy and as such require that submissions include primary sources (such as oral histories, journals, photographs, archive materials, civil records, etc.). Contributions may be submitted to: info@iaahsonline.org. Please provide your name, email address and phone number. Thank you and we look forward to many years of producing a journal that grows in quality and meets the expectation of our members. Feel free to share any comments, suggestions, and/or concerns at the above email address. IAAHS members and the public may purchase a hard-copy of this journal for \$20.00. Please call (337) 519-3957 for more information.

New Iberia graphic designer and IAAHS member, Anne Darrah, designed the beautiful cover for this issue. Forming the cover's background is a handwritten 1874 letter that Iberia Parish state senator Samuel Wakefield wrote to the president of New Orleans' Straight University. Anne also enhanced most of the other images included in the articles in this issue. All the photographs used on the cover come from Phebe's family collection.

Phebe A. Hayes & Claire Manes

RESEARCH AID

Inventory of Enslaved Persons (EP) from the David Weeks Estate February 24, 1835, Grand Cote (Weeks Island)

Patricia Kahle

"I hereby certify that the Negro Man Frank which I have this day sold Mr. David Weeks is only 25 years old, & that he is sound and Healthy and he is a slave for life..." [Bill of Sale, July 7, 1809]

One of the earliest documents in the Weeks Family Papers from The Shadows, is this receipt for "Frank" who was to be a "slave for life." Twenty-five years later, David Weeks was dead, and when an inventory of the David Weeks Estate was made in early 1835, Frank was one of the 164 persons listed as "slaves" for life. Frank and his wife Martha worked at the New Iberia property (The Shadows) along with 22 other slaves, while the remaining 140 worked the sugar plantation at Grand Cote (now Weeks Island).

For The Shadows, the value of the inventory (discovered in the mid 1980s) is that it allows us to talk about the men and women who worked the sugar fields, cared for The Shadows and the Weeks family, as individuals, by name, and in at least a few cases, identify families. Learning as much as we can about Frank, Martha, Louisa, Isaac and their children makes our site tours and education programs richer and much more truthful. It also helps us to work toward our goal of telling the full American story.

Of course, this is only the beginning. The 1835 inventory becomes an even more useful source, when compared with the 1846 estate inventory or the 1846 partition lists and other documents in the Weeks Family Papers and parish courthouses in St. Martin, St. Mary and Iberia Parishes. There is much more work to be done, but The Shadows and the National Trust for Historic Preservation are committed to finding out as much as possible and sharing that information through tours, school programs, exhibits and public programs.

1 st	The island called the Grand Cote established as a Sugar Plantation (exact quantity of land not known) with all the buildings and improvements thereon, rights and appurtenances thereunto belonging – valued at seventy-five Thousand Dollars	\$75,000.00
	The following Slaves for life—thereon:	
2 nd .	Peter Congo negro aged 42 years (sugar Boiler) valued at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
3 rd	Casey wife of Peter aged 56 years valued at Three hundred dollars	\$ 300.00
4 th	George Mulatto (Driver) aged about fifty-five years valued at Seven hundred dollars	\$ 700.00
5 th	Jenny, wife of George, aged 34 years, with her children Amanda, aged 9 years, George aged 7 years, Abraham, aged 5 years, Lewis aged 4 years and Martin, aged one year, valued together at Sixteen Hundred Dollars.	\$ 1,600.00
6 th	Isaac, son of Jenny, aged 17 years valued at Nine hundred dollars.	\$ 900.00
7 th	Nancy, daughter of Jenny, aged 15 years valued at Seven hundred and fifty dollars.	\$ 750.00
8 th	Bridget, daughter of Jenny, aged 12 years valued at Six hundred dollars.	\$ 600.00
9 th	Suddy, a man aged about 50 years valued at five hundred dollars.	\$ 500.00
10 th	Nelly, wife of Suddy aged about forty years with children Rose aged 9 years, Martha aged 7 years, Sally aged 6 years, Dina aged 4 years, Moses aged 2 years, and Abraham aged (infant) valued together at two thousand dollars	\$ 2,000.00
11 th	Viney daughter of Nelly aged Sixteen years valued at Seven hundred fifty dollars.	\$ 750.00
12 th	Henry a man aged 33 years valued at Eighteen hundred dollars (blacksmith)	\$ 1,800.00
13 th	Katy wife of Henry aged 34 years with her children Amalo aged 9 years, Hamilton aged 5 years and Lucy aged 2 years, valued together at fifteen hundred dollars	\$ 1,500.00
14 th	Susan daughter of Katy aged 12 years valued at Six hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 650.00
15 th	Daniel, a man aged 38 years valued at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
16 th	Sally Ward wife of Daniel aged 45 years with children Levi aged 9 years, Rachel aged 5 years valued together at Eleven hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 1,150.00
17 th	Dennis, son of Sally Ward aged 14 years, valued at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
18 th	George, son of Sally Ward aged 11 years valued at five hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 550.00
19 th	Somersett a Sawyer aged 36 years valued at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
20 th .	Peggy, wife of Somersett, aged 30 years with her children Minerva aged 9 years, Spencer aged 7 years, Minty aged 5 years, Eliza aged 3 years and Ian aged 2 years, an infant valued together at two thousand five hundred dollars	\$ 2,500.00
21 st	Jake Highland aged 36 ears (a rough carpenter) valued at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00

22 nd	Nancy wife of Jake Highland aged 31 years with her children Sissy aged 9 years, and an infant valued together at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
23 rd	Phillis, daughter of Nancy aged 10 years valued at Four hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 450.00
24 th	Littleton, a man aged 32 years valued at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
25 th	Mathilda, aged 6 years and Anna aged 3 years (Mother dead) children of Littleton, valued together at Four hundred dollars.	\$ 400.00
26 th	Edmund, a man aged 26 years valued at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
27 th	Priscilla, aged 21 years, wife of Edmund with her children Miah, a boy aged 2 years and infant valued together at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
28 th	Mary aged 35 years with her two children David aged 4 years and Peggy aged 2 years valued together at nine hundred dollars.	\$ 900.00
29 th	Esther, daughter of Mary aged Thirteen years valued at Six hundred dollars	\$ 600.00
30 th	Aaron, Son of Mary aged 10 years valued at five hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 550.00
31 st	Letty, a woman aged 25 years valued at Eight hundred dollars	\$ 800.00
32 nd	Hannah, aged 48 years with her two children Mahala a girl aged 7 years and Theorick aged 5 years valued together at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
33 rd	Maria daughter of Hannah aged 16 years valued at Eight hundred dollars	\$ 800.00
34 th	Charity, daughter of Hannah aged 12 years valued at five hundred fifty dollars	\$ 550.00
35 th	Leven a man aged 45 years valued at Seven hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 750.00
36 th	Judy, wife of Leven aged 68 years valued at one hundred dollars	\$ 100.00
37 th	Carter, a man aged 53 years valued at Six hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 650.00
38 th	Rachel, wife of Carter aged 53 years valued at two hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 250.00
39 th	Grace aged 21 years (house servant) with her daughter Pamela aged two years valued together at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
40 th	Leah, aged 36 years (trusty servant) with her three children Israel aged 8 years, Shepherd aged 4 years and Rebecca aged 2 years valued together at Fourteen hundred dollars	\$ 1,400.00
41 st	Stephen, son of Leah aged 18 years valued at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
42 nd	Sarah, daughter of Leah aged 16 years valued at Eight hundred dollars	\$ 800.00
43 rd	Sterling son of Leah aged 12 years valued at Six hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 650.00
44 th	Sam aged 51 years (blacksmith and Cooper) valued at Eight hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 850.00
45 th	Charlotte wife of Sam aged 41 years valued at Three Hundred Dollars	\$ 300.00
46 th	Bob aged 20 years valued at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
47 th	Hannah wife of Bob aged 18 years valued at Eight hundred dollars	\$ 800.00
48 th	Old Stephen aged about 45 years valued at two hundred dollars	\$ 200.00
49 th	Milly wife of old Stephen aged 43 years with her two children Mathilda aged 4 years and Cintia aged 2 years valued together at Eight hundred dollars	\$ 800.00
50 th	Violet daughter of Milly aged 16 years valued at Six hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 650.00

51 st	Stephen son of Milly aged 11 years valued at five hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 550.00
52 nd	Orange aged 22 years valued at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
53 rd	Hetty wife of Orange, aged 21 years valued at Seven hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 750.00
54 th	Jenny Bang aged 28 years with her five children Henry aged 9 years, Alleck aged 7 years, Selina aged 5 years, John aged 3 years and Washington aged one year valued together at Eighteen hundred dollars	\$ 1,800.00
55 th	William aged 23 years valued at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
56 th	Clara aged 23 years wife of William with her two children Johnson aged 5 years & an infant valued together at one Thousand and fifty dollars	\$ 1,050.00
57 th	John Little aged [14 or 40]? years valued at Eight hundred dollars	\$ 800.00
58 th	Ephraim aged 58 years valued at Four hundred dollars	\$ 400.00
59 th	Phibi a woman aged 45 years valued at Four hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 450.00
60 th	Sangry aged 56 years valued at Four hundred dollars	\$ 400.00
61 st	Amy aged 70 years valued at Fifty Dollars	\$ 50.00
62 nd	Abraham aged 17 years valued at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
63 rd	Little Seven aged 17 years valued at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
64 th	Sam Rock aged 65 years valued at Two hundred dollars	\$ 200.00
65 th	Bristoe aged 45 years valued at Seven hundred dollars	\$ 700.00
66 th	Lotty aged 24 years with her two children, Sidney aged 4 years and Joshua aged 2 years valued at one thousand and fifty dollars	\$ 1,050.00
67 th	Fanny aged about 50 years diseased valued at nothing	\$ 0.00
68 th	Little Sam aged 39 years valued at Seven hundred dollars	\$ 700.00
69 th	George Martha aged 24 years valued at one thousand dollars	\$ 1,000.00
70 th	John Paine aged 38 years valued at Eight hundred dollars	\$ 800.00
71 st	Little Isaac aged 14 years valued at Seven hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 750.00
72 nd	Betsy aged 12 years valued at five hundred dollars	\$ 500.00
73 rd	Little Aimy [?] aged 17 years valued at Seven hundred dollars	\$ 700.00
74 th	Dick Towles aged 48 years valued at Five hundred dollars	\$ 500.00
75 th	Dick Crocker aged 47 years valued at Seven hundred dollars	\$ 700.00
76 th	Tamer a woman aged 48 years valued at Four hundred dollars	\$ 400.00
77 th	Lizy aged 30 years valued at Six hundred dollars	\$ 600.00
78 th	Cyrus aged 21 years valued at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
79 th	David Blue aged 25 years valued at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
80 th	Sampson aged 26 years valued at 300 dollars	\$ 300.00
81 st	Candis a woman aged 52 years valued at two hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 250.00
82 nd	Jim (Carpenter) aged 51 years valued at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
83 rd	John O'Conner aged 35 years valued at nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
84 th	Harry aged about 70 years (now on Petit Anse) valued at nothing	\$ 0.00
85 th	Hector aged 25 years (now runaway) valued at Five hundred dollars	\$ 500.00
86 th	Elija aged 30 years (now runaway) valued at Seven hundred dollars	\$ 700.00
87 th	Dick Kelly aged 28 (now runaway) valued at eight hundred dollars	\$ 800.00
88 th	Frederick aged 16 years (now runaway) valued at Eight hundred dollars	\$ 800.00

	These names were listed for the New Iberia property (now Shadows):	
1 st	A negro man named Frank aged about 50 years and his wife named Martha aged about Sixty years valued at four hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 450.00
3 rd	A negro man named Manuel aged 22 years valued nine hundred dollars	\$ 900.00
4 th	A negro woman Sarah aged 45 years valued three hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 350.00
5 th	A mulatto woman named Charlotte aged 22 years valued Seven hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 750.00
6 th	A griffe woman named Thereza aged 17 years, valued Seven hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 750.00
7 th	A negro man named David aged 55 years valued two hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 250.00
8 th	A negro man named Isaac aged 35 years and Louisa his wife aged 24 years, with their Eight children, named Caroline, Perry, Nathan, Little Isaac, Riley, Granville, Ann and the last one not yet named, valued together at the sum of Three thousand seven hundred dollars	\$ 3,700.00
9 th	Amos a negro man aged about 35 years and Patty his wife aged 30 years and their four children named Philippe, Henry, Caleb and Susan valued together at the sum of Two thousand three hundred and fifty dollars	\$ 2,350.00

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St. Mary Parish Estate #293. Archives. Shadows on the Teche

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Charity Pope: Chattel Property of Charles “Charlie” Weeks

by Claire Manes

“Everything can be taken from a [person] but one thing, the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitudes in any given circumstances, to choose one’s way out.” These words from Victor Frankl, an Austrian Jew and a survivor of the Holocaust, give us a lens for reflecting upon the lives of enslaved human beings whose stories have remained untold.

The bamboo surrounding the Shadows on the Teche in New Iberia, Louisiana, conceals more than a stately antebellum home. It shrouds the history of the enslaved men, women, and children who toiled there as property of the Weeks family. The period of slavery was real, brutal, and immoral, scarring both Black and White until today.

Charity Pope whose life spanned enslavement, Reconstruction, and the early Jim Crow era is a woman whose life teaches us about our unspoken history. The research into letters and records of the Weeks family by Pat Kahle, Executive Director of the Shadows-on-the-Teche and Charity Pope’s own 18-line obituary offer us broad strokes for a portrait of this woman whose voice has not yet been heard. In her booklet *Shadows on the Teche: Preserving a Picture of a Life*, Kahle reminds us: These enslaved persons were “individuals living the best life they could within the system of slavery.” (24)

Weeks family records tell us that Charity was a daughter, a sister, and a mother. 1835 accounts indicate that her mother, Hannah, had three daughters: Mahala (7), Maria (16), and Charity (12). Hannah also possibly had a son, Theorick (5) based on his name

(Weeks, 1835). Twelve-year-old Charity was part of a family. She lived at the time on Grand Cote (Weeks Island) the large sugar plantation owned by the Weeks family. By the time she was twenty-three she had two children of her own, Charles 7 and Sidney 2 (Weeks, 1846) and was living at The Shadows. Her obituary indicates that she had another child, Charlotte, with whom she lived later in her life. In the 1900 census¹, Charity reported that she was widowed and had birthed 10 children but only two were alive. In this 1900 census, Charity was living with her daughter Charlotte and son-in-law Rufus Scott on Weeks Street. In the earlier 1880 census, a woman (Lodora Pope) identified as Charlotte's sister, lived with them.

Charity was a seamstress and a gardener prior to and after the war. Her skills in needlework and gardening may have been more than rote actions as both abilities do allow for creativity and choice. The few documents we have suggest that Charity may have exercised some creative inclinations to resist enslavement. We know that with her needlework in particular Charity took some level of care and initiative, despite the consequences of her actions. Harriet Clara (Ally) Weeks Meade in a letter to her mother Mary Conrad Weeks Moore, mistress of the Shadows, acknowledges that Charity can do "fine needle work as she sews very neatly," but Ally cautions Mary to be strict with her. (Kahle, unpublished notes).

This letter and another to Mary Moore suggests that on occasion Charity made her own choices in her work. William F. Weeks writes in 1855 that Charity (then about 32) "made a pretty mess of [her work], cutting the jackets without a pattern." We can't know Charity's mind in this action but Pat Kahle, Executive Director of The Shadows, offers

¹ Ancestry.com, 1900 U.S. Federal Census

some thoughts. We will never know “[w]hether Charity was attempting to be creative and cut jackets to fit individuals, rather than the ‘one size fits most’ or was deliberately trying to cause trouble for the Weeks family or just forgot to use the pattern” (Kahle, *Shadows* page 24). We don’t know her reasons, but on some occasions with the limited choices she had available, Charity took agency for her actions. She continued to work as a seamstress and gardener for the Weeks family after the war, so her skills must have been appreciated despite the “pretty mess” she could make.

She worked at the *Shadows* before the war. During the war she was one of three enslaved women who remained at the plantation during the 1863 federal occupation: Louisa (age 57), Charity (age 40), and Sidney (age 19), one of Charity’s daughters. All remained at the *Shadows* with Hannah Jane Conrad, Mary’s sister-in-law and with Mary C. Weeks Moore who was in ill health. The five women lived on the second and third floors of the *Shadows* while the Union Army occupied the first floor of the home for a period of time in 1863. Others in the family including Mary’s husband John Moore had already refugeed² to north Louisiana and Texas to avoid confiscation of their slaves by Federal Troops. Mary C. Moore died at the *Shadows* in 1863 just a day before she was to leave to stay with relatives.

What of Charity, Louisa, and Sidney at this time? We do not know much about their lives following Emancipation. We only know that Charity, like many formerly enslaved persons who had nowhere to go and no resources immediately after the war, continued to live and work at *The Shadows* for a time. The Union army’s occupation of

² Cooper, Abigail (2015). “Lord, Until I Reach My Home”: Inside the Refugee Camps of the American Civil War. A Dissertation in History. Presented to the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, p. xviii.

the former Confederate states ensured that the freedmen (term used to refer to the formerly enslaved persons regardless of gender and age) were paid wages for their work. This was foreign to Charity and other freedmen accustomed to the brutal slavery system that forced them to work for no wages.

Ironically we know less of Charity as a free woman than during her period of enslavement. This gap leaves room for speculation. What did Emancipation mean for her? Did the brief years of Reconstruction excite her? Did she look forward to a more hopeful future, envisioning a better life for herself, her children, and her people? What, if anything, did she know about state senator Samuel Wakefield, a person of color like herself who lived on St. Peter Street, a street only one block from the Shadows? Were he and his son, Clerk of Court Adolph Joseph Wakefield, symbols of hope for her or were they merely names whispered by White Iberians frightened and threatened by this new society?

For her post war life, we have only the 18 lines of her obituary published in the *Weekly Iberian*³ (October 20, 1900) and a 1900 census record. The census confirms the obituary account that at the end of her life Charity lived with her daughter, Charlotte Pope Scott and son-in-law Rufus Scott. Her obituary tells us that she was born on Weeks Island and “owned” by Charles C. Weeks. From the obituary we learn that she was “always an honest, respectable woman, faithful to her duties and careful in their performance.” Later when she lived at Weeks Canal years after emancipation she was “widely known and liked by everyone throughout the prairies.”

³ “Charity Pope Obituary”, *Weekly Iberian*, October 20, 1900. www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov.

One final remnant from history adds to our knowledge of Charity Pope. A single



Figure 1: Charity Pope

headshot (i.e., cabinet card) of Charity tells her story better than the snippets gleaned from the Shadows archives and her own obituary. The picture presents her, a free woman, speaking for herself. The picture is of an older woman, full figured with a flawless complexion. She wears a dark colored dress, perhaps made by her own hands. The dress is neat, well-tailored and buttoned carefully but pulling slightly across her bust line. Her lips are closed, and her eyes stray slightly from the camera. She sits assured

and proud, adorned with a bold, multicolored tignon, tiny earrings, and a pin, attached at her throat. She keeps her own counsel, this woman who witnessed so much.

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St. Mary Parish Estate #293. Archives. Shadows on the Teche

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Harriet Nottingham Turner Francois and the New Iberia Weeks Family

by Claire Manes

Harriet Nottingham Turner Francois was a nineteenth century woman who parlayed her talents as a hairdresser into a successful career and comfortable life despite being born into slavery. Enslaved as a child in Kentucky, she eventually ended up in Louisiana where she worked for the Weeks family of New Iberia. Newspapers reported that she was freed prior to the Civil War. At this point it is unclear if Harriet was enslaved by the Weeks family or worked for them as a Free Person of Color. What is known is that she had longstanding relationships with the Weeks family that spanned decades. Over the years Harriet was much in demand because of her hair dressing skill and accompanied wealthy White women to Europe and throughout the United States to do their hair in the latest styles of the day.

The few records about Harriet Francois include her 1904 probate record filed after her death (July 15, 1904) in the Orleans Civil District Court and obituaries published in the *New Orleans Times Democrat*, *The Tacoma Times*, and other newspapers of the day. In a deposition, Lily Weeks Hall (member of the New Iberia Weeks family) confirmed that she knew Harriet for thirty-five years and was with her two weeks before she died.

Lily's husband, Gilbert L. Hall¹, was also deposed and declared that he had been acquainted with Harriet for 20 years prior to her death and that he had last seen her in

¹ Gilbert and Lily Weeks Hall were the parents of William Weeks Hall, the last Weeks family member to own the Shadows on the Teche.

June of 1904, the month before she died. Another person, W.B. Davis, was also deposed as part of Harriet's probate proceedings. Davis, an employee of the Weeks family reported that he resided in New Iberia and had been acquainted with Harriet for many years and had seen her just before her death.



Figure 1: Picture of Harriet Nottingham Turner Francois in The Shadows on the Teche collection

Harriet married twice. After the death of her first husband, A. Turner, she married Edward Francois but divorced him around 1899. She had no children so at her death in 1904 her sister, Winnie Carter, was declared her sole heir. In her deposition

Winnie declared that Harriet left no debts and owned a home fronting Gasquet Street (aka Cleveland Avenue) in New Orleans.

The *New Orleans Times Democrat* (July 14, 1904) carried Harriet's obituary with the headline, "Aunt Harriet Dead: Famous Hairdresser Who Practiced Art in Olden Days." Harriet never had a salon of her own. She served her clients in their rooms at the Hotel Royal in New Orleans and later at the St. Charles Hotel which was destroyed by fire in New Orleans in 1894. Although her services had not been employed for ten years prior to her death, her talent was still recognized. She was identified after her death as "probably the most famous hairdresser in Louisiana," a woman who had a "rare art" which enabled her to travel to Europe and every state in the union along with her clients. The *Times Democrat* (July 16, 1904) noted that "scarcely a ball given in the city or the state, the belle of which had not been made lovelier by Harriet Francois' rare art."

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The Shadows on the Teche private collection, New Iberia, LA., National Trust for

Fannie Weeks & Charles C. Weeks vs. William F. Weeks re: Succession of Mary Conrad

Weeks Moore, 1893. Archives – Special Collections, University of New Orleans.

Claire Manes, Ph.D., is a member of The Iberia African American Historical Society (IAAHS) and co-editor of its inaugural annual journal. Dr. Manes retired from the University of Louisiana as Instructor in the Department of English. She is editor of the website www.leprosychronicles.com and author of the book Out of the Shadow of Leprosy, University Press of Mississippi.

RESEARCH AID

Iberia Parish Civil War Veterans, Police Jury Ward 2

by Phebe A. Hayes

The men listed over the next two pages are Union veterans of the Civil War (1861-1865) from Police Jury Ward 2 of Iberia Parish. Although most are of African descent, a few on the list are Caucasian (designated as “White”). The names are taken from the *1890 Veterans Schedules* as listed on the Ancestry.com database online (www.ancestry.com). To confirm the racial identity of the veterans (those not identified as members of the U.S. Colored Infantry), the names were cross-checked with census records from the same online source (Ancestry.com). Because the names on the original record are handwritten (see the example at end of this paper), some are illegible and difficult to read. In such cases, they are identified as UNKNOWN.

The 1890 Veterans Schedules for Iberia Parish include veterans from Jeanerette, New Iberia, Police Jury Ward 2, and Police Jury Ward 5. In this issue we start with Police Jury Ward 2 for no logical reason except that we had already begun to research the historically Black Iberia Parish communities of Neco Town and Olivier (included in Police Jury Ward 2). In the next issue of this journal, we will feature the African American veterans of Jeanerette, Police Jury Ward 5, and the city of New Iberia.

As a research aid, it is hoped that this paper will help researchers and family historians in their search for Civil War veterans of African descent who resided in Iberia Parish in 1890.

James Smith, Pvt
 N.Y., Company B, 25th Regiment
 Enlisted 1861
 Discharged 1862

William L. Bailey, Pvt (*White*)
 Michigan 1st Artillery
 Enlisted 1861
 Discharged 1864

Robert Eliotte, Cpl
 Company C, Cavalry
 Enlisted 1862
 Discharged 1865

Mitchel Clay, Pvt
 Company G, 1st LA Cavalry
 Enlisted 1862
 Discharged 1865
 Note: Right leg shot off

Eugene E. Brettmayer, Pvt (*White*)
 Company A, 103rd N.Y. Infantry
 Enlisted 1864
 Discharged 1866

Thomas Boutte, Pvt
 Company A, 1st LA Cavalry
 Enlisted 1862
 Discharged 1865

Alphonse Manuel alias Alphonse Wily,
Pvt
 Company E, 78th LA Infantry
 Enlisted 1863
 Discharged 1865

Joseph Manuel alias Joe Johnson, Pvt
 Company E, 97th U.S. Colored Infantry
 Enlisted 1863
 Discharged 1866

Oliver Shaw, Pvt
 Company E., 97th U.S. Colored Infantry
 Enlisted 1863
 Discharged 1866

Harrison Hines, Pvt
 Company G, 81st U.S. Colored Infantry
 Enlisted 1863
 Discharged 1866

Jean Jeanlouis alias John Broussard, Pvt
 Company E, 78th Infantry
 Enlisted 1863
 Discharged 1865
 Note: "Sickness-Rheumatism. Has been sick
 ever since"

Eugene Goltier, Orderly (UNKNOWN)
 Company F, 17th N.Y.
 Enlisted 1861
 Discharged 1865

R_(?) Buitos (?) Ralph Burios (?), Pvt
 Company F, 81st U.S. Colored Infantry
 Enlisted 1863
 Discharged 1866

Louis Reed, Pvt
 Company F, 81st U.S. Colored Infantry
 Enlisted 1863
 Discharged 1866

Theodule Pierre alias John Olivier, Pvt
 Company E, 84th U.S. Colored Infantry
 Enlisted 1863
 Discharged 1866

Joseph Green, Pvt
 Company D, 84th U.S. Colored Infantry
 Enlisted 1863
 Discharged 1866

**Washington Moore alias Washington
Brusaw, Pvt**

Company K, 93rd Regiment U.S. Colored
Infantry
Enlisted 1863
Discharged 1866

Dennis Luckey, Pvt

Company K, 93rd Regiment U.S. Colored
Infantry
Enlisted 1863
Discharged 1866

Note: Was wounded in combat

**Bernard Hypolite alias John Allison,
Sailor**

Ship: ?
Enlisted 1864
Discharged 1867

Archie Young, 1st Lt (UNKNOWN)

Company D & E, 83rd OH Infantry
Adjut, 83rd OH Infantry
Enlisted 1862
Discharged 1865

Mack Dernay(Sp?), Pvt

Company D, 98th U.S. Colored Infantry
Enlisted 1863 Discharged 1866

**Jean Batiste Narciste alias John Batiste,
Pvt**

Company E, 97th U.S. Colored Infantry
Enlisted 1863
Discharged 1863

Francis Journey alias Francis Johney, Pvt

Company J, 92nd U.S. Colored Infantry
Enlisted 1863
Discharged 1865

Martin Crana(sp?), Pvt

Company B, 14th U.S. Colored Infantry
Enlisted 1862
Discharged 1865 or 1866

William J.S. Randle, Pvt

Company B, 6th U.S. Colored Infantry
Enlisted 1864
Discharged 1865

Angella Fonnell (widow)

No additional information

Manual Johnson

No additional information

Eraze Hebert, widow

No additional information

PAGE		Special Schedule.—Surviving Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines, and Widows, etc.								
D		S. D.: H ; E. D.: 57132, Minor Civil Division:								
From Schedule No. 1.		NAMES OF SURVIVING SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AND MARINES, AND WIDOWS.	Rank.	Company.	Name of Regiment or Vessel.	Date of Enlistment.	Date of Discharge.	Length of Service.		
House No.	Family No.							Yrs.	Mos.	Days.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
13	140 150	Helen Jasper					186	186		
14	177 184	Engine Gotten	Private	F 17	Reg	Apr = 1861	Jan > 1861	4 0 0		
15	200 210	Ralph Burns	Private	F 80	Co. S. 1st Reg. Inf.	Oct 22 1863	Nov 20 1864	3 - 28		
16	231 238	Louis Reed	Private	=	=	=	=	3 = =		
17	10 13	John Oliver	Private	E 84	Co. G 1st Reg. Inf.	May 18 1863	Nov 14 1864	3		
18	13 16	Joseph Green	Private	D =	=	=	=	= = =		
19	17 20	Alma Mackintosh	Private	K. 93	Co. S. 1st Reg. Inf.	Mar. 21 1863	= = 1864	= = =		
20	18 21	Bernard Hypolit	Sailor	X 83	Co. S. 1st Reg. Inf.	Mar. 21 1863	= = 1864	= = =		
21	83 88	Archie Young	Private	X 83	Co. S. 1st Reg. Inf.	2 1862	Jul 25 1863	3 0 0		
22	104 109	Maack Samsy	Private	J. 98	Co. S. 1st Reg. Inf.	= 1863	= = 1864	2 6		
23	140 126	Jean Baptist Narciste	Private	E 97	Co. S. 1st Reg. Inf.	186	186	2 6 -		
24	150 156	Francis Johnson	Private	J. 92	Co. S. 1st Reg. Inf.	6 1863	Dec 31 1864	2 4 -		
25	205 214	Martin Grand	Private	B. 14	Co. S. 1st Reg. Inf.	25 1862	Aug 20 1864	3 = -		
10		11			12					
13		14			15					
16		17			18					
19		20			21					
22		23			24					
25		26			27					
28		29			30					
31		32			33					
34		35			36					
37		38			39					
40		41			42					
43		44			45					
46		47			48					
49		50			51					
52		53			54					
55		56			57					
58		59			60					
61		62			63					
64		65			66					
67		68			69					
70		71			72					
73		74			75					
76		77			78					
79		80			81					
82		83			84					
85		86			87					
88		89			90					
91		92			93					
94		95			96					
97		98			99					
100		101			102					

Figure 1: Copy of one of the pages from The 1890 Veterans Schedule used to compile this Research Aid

Sources

Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. *1880 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2010

Ancestry.com *1890 Veterans Schedules* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005

Phebe A. Hayes, Ph.D. is founder and president of The Iberia African American Historical Society (IAAHS) and editor of the inaugural issue of its annual journal (2019). She retired in 2013 from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette as Dean of the College of General Studies and Professor of Communicative Disorders. Dr. Hayes is a Fellow of the Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana (2020-2025).

RESEARCH AID

Iberia Parish 1878 Yellow Fever Epidemic: Relief Efforts of Black Churches

by Phebe A. Hayes

In response to the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1878, the African American churches of Iberia Parish formed a Church Relief Committee on September 11, 1878 to collect and donate provisions and supplies for citizens impacted by the disease. Families were decimated by the disease. All over Louisiana and the South people were unable to find work and hence unable to provide for their families. Thousands of children suddenly became orphans when parents died, leaving them at the mercy of orphan asylums. Calls went out to the public for the care of these families. The African American churches responded to these calls to aid those suffering and in need.

The following prominent African American members of the community were elected to serve as officers on the committee: Ben Keller, President; Mathilde Wakefield, Secretary; and S. Keller, Treasurer. Committee members chosen were L.J. McGAFFEY, Allen HANDY, William BUTLER, Rufus SCOTT, Aaron BOWLS, and Nelson HENDERSON (**St. Paul's Congregational Church**); Jessie GILL and Peter LARGE (**Star Pilgrim Baptist Church**); Willis CARR, N. GILES, and E. JOHNSON (**St. James Church**); John LIVINGSTON and Green RICHARD (**Mt. Calvary Baptist Church**); Homer JONES and Boston CONNER (**St. Peter Church**); Charles SMITH, Gus JOHNSON, and A. GOFNEY (**St. John Church**); Jacob SUTTON, J. MEYER, Hendson CHAMBERS (**St. Luke's Church**); Louis HILL and John

OWEN (**Star Pilgrim Baptist Church**); S. GILBERT, Tom PERRY, H. THOMPSON, William MONTAGNE; James FORD, Paul MARTIN, and Charles LARGE (**Island Church**).

By the next month, two of the parish's African American churches and their members had responded to the call for donations (below). The Relief Committee continued to function throughout the duration of the epidemic.

St. Paul's Congregational Church (*located on Madison Street, later renamed Pershing Street*)

1. One goose, Georgianna
2. One goose, Sarah Jefferson
3. One goose, Emelie Henshaw
4. One chicken, Nelly Sullen
5. One chicken, Mary Cowen
6. One goose, Celina O'Brien

St. Thomas Baptist Church (*located on Manuel Road in the Neco Town community*)

1. One chicken, Laure Mayem
2. One chicken, Mary Manuel
3. One chicken, Mrs. Turner
4. One chicken, Miss Norco
5. One chicken, Mrs. Celero Rauger

Sources:

“Church Relief Committee,” *The Louisiana Sugar Bowl* (New Iberia, Louisiana), October 10, 1878,

Page 2

Phebe A. Hayes, Ph.D. is founder and president of The Iberia African American Historical Society (IAAHS) and co-editor of its annual journal. She retired in 2013 from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette as Dean of the College of General Studies and Professor of Communicative Disorders. Dr. Hayes is a Fellow of the Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana (2020-2025).

RESEARCH AID

List of Iberia Parish Petit & Grand Jurors of 1878

by Phebe A. Hayes

Below is the list of Iberia Parish Petit and Grand Jurors beginning on the first Monday of September 1878. The list includes the names of Iberia Parish males, both Black and White “drawn to serve the first week of the next regular term of the District Court.” The names were cross-referenced with 19th and early 20th century census records when possible to identify African American citizens of Iberia Parish who were able to participate in one of the most basic rights accorded to voters in the democratic process: service on juries. The names of jurors who could be positively identified as African American are in boldface and have an asterisk after their names. The names are entered as they were originally spelled in the official journal, *The Louisiana Sugar-Bowl*, New Iberia, Louisiana, 25 July 1878, Page 2.

Benoit Bayard	Samuel Wakefield*
Theárd Bonnin	John Picket Jr*
Luc Benoit	Allen Dorsey*
H W Crews	William Fisher
Sylvanus Gall	Hornand Freeman
Désiré Hébert	Martial Gonsoulin
Simon Collins*	Pierre Doumange’*
Aaron Bouls*	Henry Hall*
F J Hébert	Joseph Bruner

Laurent F. Boutte´*

E A Simoneaud

Casimir F. Boutte´*

Archy Payne

Felix Boutte´*

Alexandre Colette*

Lassaline Bonnin

Angelin Cheval

Alcide Borel

Duperon Bonnin

Felicien Broussard

Sam R Bell

Adrien Hebert

León Castillo*

John Vincent

Ulger Vital*

Auguste Hector*

St Cyr Judice

Jean Frilot*

A H Flory

Alexandre Fuselier*

John Lafayette*

Theódore Frilot*

Jean Baptiste Naco

Félix Frilot*

John Hill Ruben Camp

Wm H Harvey*

Lubin Duval

Jno E Bourg

Chas Lee*

H. Bussey

Sources

The Louisiana Sugar-Bowl newspaper, New Iberia, Louisiana, 25 July 1878, page 2

Phebe A. Hayes, Ph.D. is founder and president of The Iberia African American Historical Society (IAAHS) and editor of the inaugural issue of its annual journal (2019). She retired in 2013 from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette as Dean of the College of General Studies and Professor of Communicative Disorders. Dr. Hayes is a Fellow of the Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana (2020-2025).

RESEARCH AID

1907 Graduation at Howe Institute

by Phebe A. Hayes

In 1907 under the administration of principal Jonas Henderson (a.k.a. Professor Henderson), Howe Institute graduated 12 students from the area. A private school, Howe Institute is one of the earliest schools created for African Americans of Iberia Parish and surrounding communities following the end of the Civil War. Two other early Iberia Parish educational institutions founded for African American students, include Douglas Institute (a public school, located on French St.) and Wakefield Institute (a private school, located on Bank Avenue). The New Iberia newspaper, *Daily Enterprise-Leader*, identified the 12 students by name. Please note that the names below appear exactly as they did in the original news article. No attempt was made to correct spellings:

Harvey T. BUTLER**Joseph Mr. MARTIN****Anna CASTILLO****Irma OLIVIER****Althemus G. DELAHOUSAYE****Maud PETRY****Annette FONTENETTE****Bertha WHITE****Crypus A. HENDERSON****Sullivan WILKINS****Courtney LUCKEY****Bertha WILLIAMS**

The list includes Professor Henderson's oldest son, Crispus Attucks Henderson who went to Meharry Medical College, School of Dentistry, and earned a dental degree. After graduation Dr. Henderson returned to New Iberia and opened a dental practice on St. Peter Street, establishing him as Iberia Parish's first African American dentist.

Sources

- Ancestry.com. U.S. World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918 [database on-line]. Provo, Utah, United States of America: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005
- "Colored School Notes," *Daily Enterprise-Leader*, May 18, 1909, Page 3
- "Howe Institute Graduation," *Daily Enterprise-Leader*, May 16, 1907, Page 3
- "A Tornado," *The Louisiana Sugar-Bowl* (New Iberia, Louisiana), August 20, 1874, Page 2

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RESEARCH AID

Historically Black Schools of Iberia Parish in 1937

by Phebe A. Hayes

The following is a list of historically Black public schools in Iberia Parish as identified in a 1937 newspaper article in *The Daily Advertiser*. The schools and staff were listed under the heading “Colored teachers”. Note that the names below appear exactly as listed in the 1937 newspaper article. If you or someone you know attended one of these schools, please contact us (info@iaahsonline.org).

Patoutville School

Annie Louise Robertson

Weeks SchoolEdran Louis Auguster, principal
Cherry Cooper**Camelia School**

Myrtle Lily

Olivier School

Darliska Napoleon

St. Thomas School

Meldia Domonique

Sorrell School

Willie Sims

Belle Place

Clara Sparrow

Little Wood School

Agnes Johnson

Pharr School

Irma Dupree

Loreauville School

Irma Bimjou

Freetown School

Alma Spencer

Lozes School

Esther M. Bernard

New Iberia Training School

A.B. Simon, principal

J.B. Henderson, Jr.

Frank W. Patty

Florence Pemilton

Jonas Henderson

Rona Cooper

Mary Amos

Bessie King

Ruth Robertson

Lizzie Ruth Brown

Irria Garrett

Morbihan School

Ruby Robertson

Cora Lee Joseph

Jefferson Island School

Mildred Broussard

Jeanerette School

M.B. Poulk, principal

Susie Mae Boutte

Viola Bowles

Minty Simon

Myrtle Ruth Davidson

Lottie Mae Amaos

Beatrice Brown

Rynella School

Lola Bowles

Avery Island

Marguerite Spencer

Rodere School

Bessie Parker

Petit Anse School

Ethel V. Hill

Vital School

Ella Louise Louis

New Elementary School

Chester B. Smith, principal

Josephine Kelly

Gladys Bouttee

Mary Fontennette

Simonia Brown

Leola Franklin

Katie Sims

Boudra School

Vacant

Source

“Iberia Parish Teachers Named for New Season,” *The Daily Advertiser*, 16 July 1937, p. 5

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Was Dr. Vivien Thomas from Iberia Parish?

by Phebe A. Hayes

There is very little evidence to support the claim that Dr. Vivien Theodore Thomas was born in Iberia Parish or has family ties to the parish. It is understandable, of course, why a community would wish to claim Dr. Thomas as its own native son. Brilliant and creative, he developed the innovative procedure to treat cyanotic heart disease (blue baby syndrome), a condition responsible for the death of infants throughout the world, well into the mid-20th century. However, in his 1985 autobiography *Partners of the Heart: Vivien Thomas and his work with Alfred Blalock* published shortly after his death, Dr. Thomas stated:

“In 1903 William Maceo Thomas married Mary Eaton. They made their home in Lake Providence [Louisiana]It was there that their fourth child, Vivien Theodore Thomas, was born on August 19, 1910” (p. 3).

Lake Providence, Louisiana, situated in Carroll Parish, is actually the birthplace of Dr. Vivien Thomas. In 1912 his parents moved their young family to Nashville, Tennessee, where he and his four siblings grew up and were educated. In his own words Dr. Thomas recounted the motivation behind his parents’ decision to move away from Lake Providence:

“Each Spring the small community in which we lived fell victim to the flooding of the Mississippi....My parents finally grew tired....and in 1912 decided to move to higher ground. They settled in Nashville....” (p. 3).

Google entries seem to contradict Dr. Thomas’ autobiography. When the query “Where was Dr. Vivien Thomas born?” is entered into the Google search window, the response “New

Iberia, Louisiana” surfaces. That response is based on internet entries such as those by Morehouse School of Medicine, University of Virginia, and others which list New Iberia as Dr. Thomas’ birthplace. However, other entries like Vanderbilt University (where Dr. Thomas worked as a Laboratory Assistant for 10 years) correctly reported Lake Providence, LA as his place of birth.

United States census records should be of some help in verifying the Thomas family’s residence in 1910 and earlier. To date, the earliest census record found in which Dr. Thomas and his parents appear is the 1920 census when the family had been living in Nashville for 10 years. So far census records have not been found for them in Louisiana.

An interesting find was Dr. Thomas’ United States World War II Draft Registration Card. At first glance, the card seems to confirm that Dr. Thomas was born in New Iberia, Louisiana (see line 5):

SERIAL NUMBER 2282		1. NAME (Print) VIVIEN THEODORE THOMAS <small>(First) (Middle) (Last)</small>		ORDER NUMBER 2401
2. ADDRESS (Print) ELM HILL ROAD NASHVILLE, DAVIDSON, TENN. <small>(Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)</small>				
3. TELEPHONE NONE	4. AGE IN YEARS 30	5. PLACE OF BIRTH New Iberia <small>(Town or county)</small> La.	6. COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP U. S. A.	
7. NAME OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS Mrs. Clara Flanders Thomas <small>(Mr., Mrs., Miss) (First) (Middle) (Last)</small>				
8. RELATIONSHIP OF THAT PERSON Wife				
9. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON Elm Hill Road Nashville, Davidson, Tenn. <small>(Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)</small>				
10. EMPLOYER'S NAME Dr. Alfred Bealock, School of Medicine, Vanderbilt Univ				
11. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS Vanderbilt Univ Nashville, Davidson, Tenn. <small>(Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)</small>				
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.				
REGISTRATION CARD D. S. S. FORM 1 <small>(over)</small>		16-17105 Vivien Theodore Thomas <small>(Registrant's signature)</small>		

Figure 1: United States World War Draft Registration Card

However, close scrutiny of the card reveals three (if not four) different handwritings suggesting that Dr. Thomas did not complete the card which may account for error. None of the handwritings (items 1-11) match Dr. Thomas’ signature at the bottom of the card.

The aim of this paper is to review evidence of Dr. Vivien Thomas' place of birth. Given the records available and his own autobiographical statement about his place of birth, we are led to conclude that Dr. Vivien T. Thomas was not born in New Iberia, LA. Furthermore, we are unable to confirm that his parents or grandparents ever resided in New Iberia or Iberia Parish. Should additional evidence be found in the future that refutes this conclusion, we will update our readers.

Sources

Ancestry.com, U.S. WWII Draft Cards Young Men 1940-1947 (database on-line). Lehi, Utah, United States of America; Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

Thomas, Vivien T. (1985). *Partners of the Heart: Vivien Thomas and His Work with Alfred Blalock*. University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia

Phebe A. Hayes, Ph.D. is founder and president of The Iberia African American Historical Society (IAAHS) and co-editor of its annual journal. She retired in 2013 from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette as Dean of the College of General Studies and Professor of Communicative Disorders. Dr. Hayes is a Fellow of the Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana (2020-2025).

Taylor Miller and Family: Master Craftsmen and Artisans Helped Brick New Iberia, Louisiana

by Rosalind Miller Garrett

The Miller family name was synonymous with masonry in Iberia Parish and beyond for many years. Patriarch Romeald Miller (1876-1945) was a bricklayer who helped construct the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament original convent located at St. Edward Church in New Iberia, Louisiana. He also did construction work on the original St. Edward School and was an original member of the Iberia Bricklayer's Union.

Romeald had three sons who continued his legacy in other states: Robert Miller, a painter and mason in San Francisco, California; Huffman Miller, a bricklayer in Texas; and Willie Miller, a carpenter and mason in Oakland, California.. Two sons, Lloyd Miller, Sr. and Taylor Miller remained in New Iberia to continue their father's legacy. Lloyd Miller was a bricklayer who was the foreman for the building of the current St. Edward Church and the priests' original home/office.

Taylor Miller, the youngest son, was born in 1913 and became a popular bricklayer in New Iberia. Taylor was a 34-year-plus member of the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers. Affectionately known as "Mr. Skeeboo" - Master Bricklayer, he was my "Poppee." In conversations with him, he shared that he earned the name Skeeboo because he was a mischievous boy who would get into mischief and "skee-boo" away before his father could discipline him.



Figure 1: Mr. Taylor “Skeeboo” Miller showing his granddaughter Rosalind Miller the cistern he bricked at The Shadows on the Teche. He also bricked the fishpond at The Shadows. (Picture courtesy of Mr. Taylor Miller’s family private collection).

Taylor’s pleasant, happy personality continued throughout the years. Current New Iberia Mayor Freddie Decourt recalled how Taylor would sing and crack jokes while laying bricks at the Decourt family home.

Taylor worked with his brother on the St. Edward Catholic Church building, church sign, and annex. He bricked hundreds of homes around Iberia Parish. In some cases, he bricked the homes for several generations of a single family. He repaired the plastering of more than a few buildings on Main Street. He also did brick work at the Shadows on the Teche including the cistern and the fishpond. Taylor worked on several churches: constructing the bell tower at New Iberia’s St. Paul Congregational Church (corner of Providence & Pershing Streets), the massive

sign at Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church in Loreauville, Louisiana, and doing the brick work at St. Marcellus Catholic Church on Avery Island. In an oral interview with the author, Luther Branham who worked with Taylor from 1969 to 1992 recalled that Taylor had also worked on a church and school in Morgan City, Louisiana, and did brickwork on the original jail in Jeanerette, Louisiana.

During World War II Taylor and another New Iberia brick mason, Leonard Jones, worked on government defense jobs in Salt Lake City, Utah, building airplane hangars. When that work was completed the two men returned to Louisiana and worked in Lake Charles pouring concrete for the airport runways. Over his long career as a brick mason and artisan, Taylor provided jobs and training for young African American men, such as Raymond Sims and Luther Branham, at a time when Black men were denied access to industrial and skilled labor jobs because of unjust Jim Crow laws. Raymond Sims described Taylor as “a hard worker, serious about his craft and a demanding boss who expected his workers to be on time.” He also described him as “a great man and one of the best bricklayers.”

Luther referred to Taylor as a father figure: “He was like a father to me”. He taught Luther how to lay bricks, referred Luther for jobs when he was no longer able to work, and shared stories of his past jobs. In his many conversations with Taylor, Luther learned that Taylor built the first cement foundation for a house in New Iberia. He also learned that Taylor, his father Romeald, and others bricked the New Iberia paper mill tower (an unusually high structure). Ordinarily scaffolding was built on the outside of the building, but for the paper mill tower the crew built the scaffolding on the inside. This allowed Taylor’s father and his crew to brick the exterior of the tower. When the tower was completed, Taylor and the other laborers dismantled the inside scaffold.

Taylor Miller was recognized for his craftsmanship and work ethic but also for his generosity and humorous, pleasant personality. He would often build, clean, and repair tombs in local cemeteries free of charge. He was particularly generous to St. Edward’s parish building signs, tombs, and booths for the fair. Luther recalled that “if he had extra mortar and supplies he would do the work for free.”

His final lifelong masterpiece was his home, his own unique artistic creation. He designed and bricked the house, updating it over the decades. The final renovation was completed in 1996. The side of the house is made with pieces of the original marble altar from St. Edward's Catholic Church. The altar was being replaced with a smaller, wooden one, so he asked to have the discarded marble. He then added it to his home. Many have described his house as "the gingerbread house" or "the Flintstone house" because of the unique colors, stones, plaster, colored bricks, and ceramic tiles he used to complete it. It was his final major project, a mosaic of art and craft from a lifelong Master Bricklayer and Artisan.



Figure 2: Mr. Lloyd Miller (second from right) with members of team that led the construction of the church at the time. [The Daily Iberian](#), Wednesday, June 21, 1995.



Figure 3: Mr. Taylor Miller restoring the old Provost Café & Bar, Main Street, New Iberia. The Daily Iberian, 21 June 1995.

Sources

Ancestry.com 1930, *United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, Utah, United States of America: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2002

Conrad, Glenn (2016). *New Iberia*, University of Louisiana at Lafayette Center for Louisiana Studies Publishing, Lafayette, Louisiana, p. 449.

Oral history interviews with Mr. Taylor Miller's former workers (Luther Branham, Raymond Sims) in New Iberia, Louisiana, Spring, 2019.

Strong, Robert G. (2000). *Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers Union—Local 8*, Austin TX.

“TEAM that Guided the Building of St. Edward's,” *The Daily Iberian*, Wednesday 21 June 1995.

The Taylor Miller family private collection.

United States Census, 1930. Ancestry.com.

Rosalind Miller Garrett is the Master Teacher at Park Elementary with The Iberia Parish Public School System, New Iberia, Louisiana

Rediscovering A Link Between the Weeping Time and Louisiana: Researching Enslaved Ancestors

by Brian Sheffey

Editor's Note: In this invited paper, Brian Sheffey provides a moving account of a terrible time in U.S. history when families were torn apart and sold. In this paper, the author recounts the story of one of the largest sales of human beings in this country. The trauma to the families was so great that to this day it is referred to as "the weeping time." There is some evidence of a Louisiana connection in that some of the sales were made to Louisiana slaveowners.

The history of slavery in America is replete with horrific episodes. In terms of scale, no single event surpasses the 1859 sale of human beings at a racetrack two miles west of downtown Savannah, Georgia. Over three rain-soaked days, 440 human beings were sold to satisfy the \$700,000 debt amassed by Pierce Mease Butler. His debt, approximately \$21,768,734 in today's money, was a combination of gambling losses and living beyond his means in his Philadelphia and Georgia residences.

A battery of commercial DNA tests revealed a lost link to this group of enslaved people. I understood in early 2019 the extensive and significant amount of research work that uncovering my lost ancestral connection to the Weeping Time enslaved people (hereinafter referred to as EPs). My time was consumed with other research that would yield more immediate results. I decided to put any Weeping Time research on the back burner. An Irish DNA cousin, Martine Brennan from the *Beyond Kin Project*, reached out to me later in the same year. Martine was

working on her Master's Degree thesis around Irish enslavers in America. Beyond Kin is a supportive genealogical research group where the descendants of enslavers and those they enslaved meet and share information online. The Butler family was part of her research, and she asked me if I would be interested in working with her on researching the souls who were sold. I took her request as a sign and leaped at the chance.

We created a Weeping Time research group on Facebook. We were quickly joined by five researchers who were familiar with the Weeping Time and familiar with some of the EPs who were sold. Our research group identified the numerous moving parts that are necessary to research this historical group of EPs. I will address many of these moving parts later in this article. It quickly became apparent that we needed to break a monumental research task into bite-sized, manageable pieces of research work. We opted to split our overall research task into five pathways. Each path would have two or three researchers assigned to it. The five research pathways are:

1. Researching the first generation of Africans who were the forefathers and foremothers of the Weeping Time EPs. This aspect of the research includes finding the importation dates, accounts, & records of the Africans who were ancestors of the Weeping Time EPs;
2. A genealogical work-up of the inter-connected families who were crucial to this history: Blake, Branford, Bull, Butler, Guerard, and Middleton. This research included document the dispersal of EPs within this interconnected family group over four generations;
3. Researching the population of EPs enslaved by Pierce Mease Butler's maternal grandfather, Maj. Pierce Butler of Philadelphia and South Carolina. Two groups of EPs enslaved by Maj. Butler went away with the British during his lifetime. They would eventually settle in Nova Scotia in Canada, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Trinidad and

Tobago. The first group went away with the British during the American Revolution. The second group of EPs left Butler's Island in Georgia during the War of 1812. Identifying the EPs who left with the British reduced the number of individuals the researchers are required to focus on back in the United States. Researching the EPs who left with the British will be examined in the future;

4. Finding the descendants of the 400 enslaved souls who were sold; and
5. Finding the descendants of the hundreds of EPs who remained enslaved by Pierce Mease Butler in Georgia.

Each pathway has its set of numerous moving parts. However, breaking an overall research project down into constituent parts makes the whole research task manageable and far less daunting a prospect to tackle. This approach also suits our methodology of tackling the unknown by working every angle of known information.

From the Weeping Time to the Present

It is believed that the EPs sold during the Weeping Time were taken to all points throughout the slave-holding states. To date, we have identified those who remained in Georgia as well as those who were taken to South Carolina, North Carolina, and Louisiana. It is believed that at least one unnamed enslaved man was taken to Tennessee. Research has failed to identify him at the time of writing.

During our research, one enslaved man grabbed our interest: John Butler.

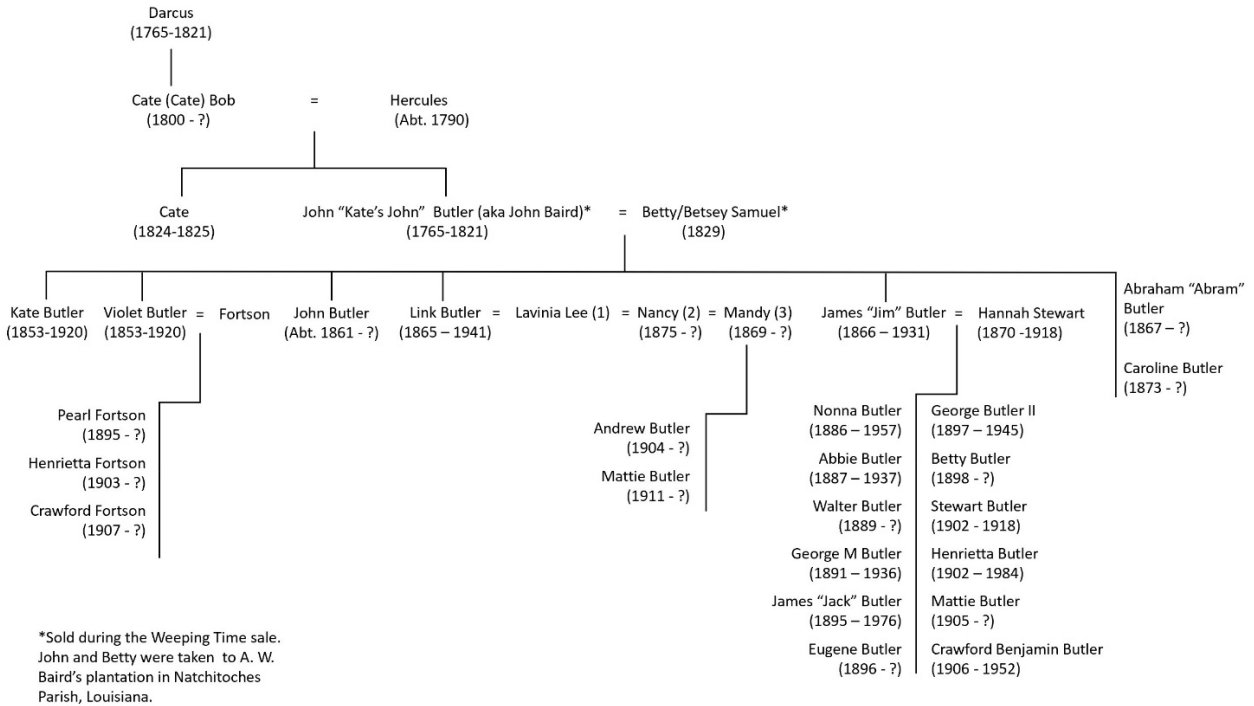


Figure 1: The ancestors and descendants of John Baird Butler of Georgia and Louisiana

John was referred to as “Kate’s John” in Butler’s sales manifest. John initially took the surname of his Louisiana purchaser and enslaver, A. W. Baird. John is enumerated as John Baird in the U.S. 1870 Federal Census while resident in Natchitoches Parish. Baird is the surname he gave his children. However, in 1880 and 1900, in Red River Parish, John is known as John Butler. His children also carried the Butler surname.

I found John through a seeming fluke: DNA testing. Three of his descendants were among my DNA matches. Working through the paper trail –U.S. Federal Censuses and death records – plus an old Butler family history book enabled me to trace his ancestry back to Maj. Pierce Butler. Understanding the distinctive naming conventions used by the Butler Island community of EPs also helped the team and me verify that we had indeed found the correct John, who was sold in 1859. First names such as Kate, Violet, Stewart, Abram, and Crawford were essential pieces of information to identify who John’s Georgia ancestors were.

The Glynn County Genealogy website (<http://www.glynngen.com/enslavement/butler.htm>) is another invaluable resource. With excellent citations and sources, the Glynn County website lists the EPs who were sold as well as the EPs Butler chose not to sell in 1859.

From the Weeping Time Backwards

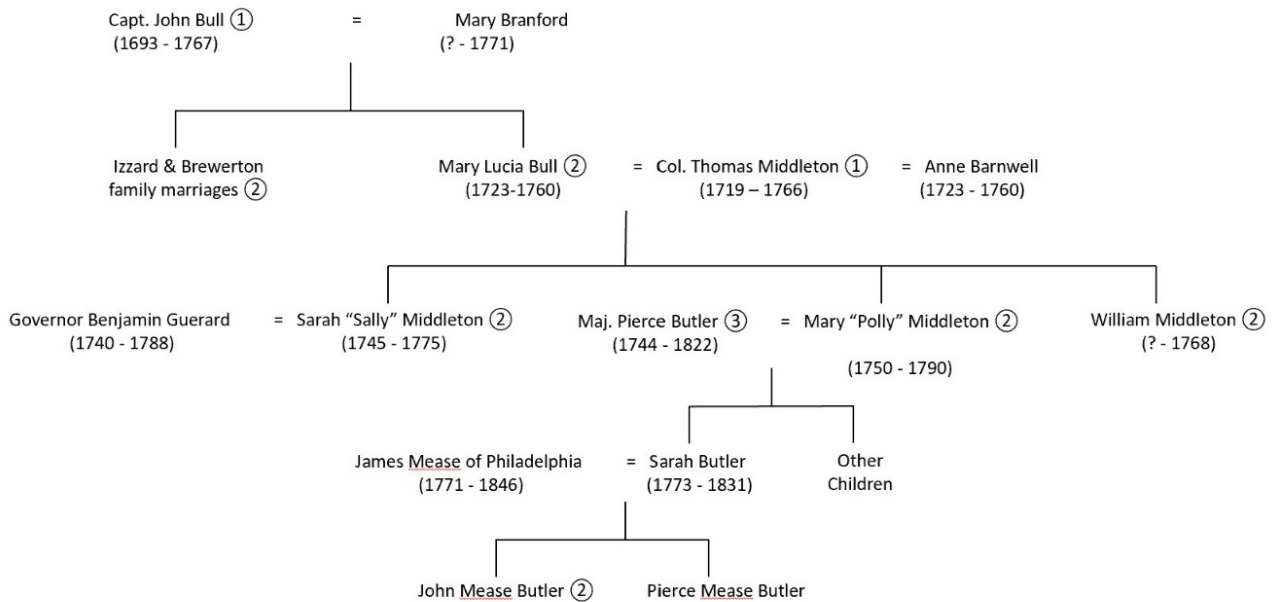
The ancestral origins of the Weeping Time people are an aspect of research that hasn't been vigorously undertaken. It is a break-through area of research regarding a specific population of imported Africans into the middle period of the American colonies. This strand of the team's research is still in its early stages. What is offered here is a synopsis of the strategy behind the work that is necessary to complete this phase of our research.

Our research strategy looks something like this:

1. We needed to do a substantial amount of reading about Pierce Mease Butler, the Weeping Time sale, and the history of the Butler plantations in Georgia. The books below were all crucial to this task, and enabled us to identify more of the enslaved families held by the Butler family:
 - Bell, Malcolm, Jr. 2004. *Major Butler's Legacy: Five Generations of a Slaveholding Family*, University of Georgia Press
 - Leigh, Frances Butler, 1883. *Ten Years on a Georgia Plantation Since the War*, Richard Bentley & Son, London.
 - Kemble, Fanny. 1863. *Journal of a residence on a Georgian plantation in 1838-1839*, Harper & Brothers, New York.

- o Doesticks, Q. K. Philander, Pierce Butler, and Daniel Murray Pamphlet Collection, 1863. *What became of the slaves on a Georgia plantation?: great auction sale of slaves, at Savannah, Georgia, March 2d & 3d.: a sequel to Mrs. Kemble's journal.*
- o DusiBerre, William, 2000. *Them Dark Days: Slavery in the American Rice Swamps*, University of Georgia Press.

2. Researching the history of enslaving within the earlier generations of the Butler family, with a specific focus on Pierce Mease Butler's maternal grandfather, Maj. Pierce Butler:



KEY

- ① = large scale importers of Africans from Africa and Barbados into South Carolina
- ② = family members whose Eps and descendants of their Eps ended up with Pierce Mease Butler
- ③ = Key person responsible for the movement of his wife's family's EPs from South Carolina to Glynn and McIntosh Counties in Georgia.

Figure 1: The movement of enslaved people within the Izzard-Bull-Middleton-Butler-Brewerton family of South Carolina and Georgia

- o Creating a family tree covering Pierce Mease Butler's lineage;

- Locating family wills, estate inventories, lawsuits, slave mortgages, slave insurance policies, deeds of purchase and sale for the enslaved; Farm Books, Day Books, journals, letters, etc.;
- With regards to Maj. Pierce Butler, accessing vital research items, which are held by the Pennsylvania Historical Society in Philadelphia, include:
 1. His slave register pages covering 1775-1815;
 2. His list of enslaved people who went away with the British during the Revolutionary War;
 3. His 1815 list of enslaved people who went away with the British during the War of 1812. This population of people went to Nova Scotia, Trinidad & Tobago, Sierra Leone, and possibly Bermuda. Identifying their descendants is important for DNA matching work. Identifying them from the enslaved within the family reduces the known number of people we need to research in the United States;
 4. His birth and death lists for his enslaved people (1800-1834);
 5. Purchases and sales of enslaved people;
 6. The weekly reports sent from his overseers in South Carolina and Georgia to Maj. Butler in Philadelphia; and
 7. Notes of punishments meted out to his enslaved people.
 8. Understanding the naming conventions the enslaved adopted to identify family groups and the interconnections between these family groups. For a

people who were forbidden from reading and writing, understanding family naming patterns are critical.

- Mapping the EPs held by Maj. Pierce Butler to the EPs his wife, Mary Middleton, and their children, inherited from Mary Middleton Butler's South Carolina grandmother, Mary Branford Bull;
- Mapping the EPs held by Maj. Pierce Butler back to the EPs who were inherited by Mary Bull Middleton's other children, but were taken into Maj. Pierce Butler's possession;
- Mapping the EPs held by Maj. Pierce Butler to the Africans who were imported into Charleston by Maj. Pierce Butler, and his relations via marriage, the Bull and Middleton families. Finding those ship records, while falling within the last strand of research, is far from being the lesser part of the research. This is ground zero for the fate that would befall their descendants during the Weeping Time. Their slave importation advertisements appeared in the *South Carolina Gazette* (1732–1775), a colonial-era magazine that is now held by the company Accessible Archives (www.accessible-archives.com).
- Armed with the advertisements for the sale of these enslaved Africans in South Carolina, the team knows the dates the Africans arrived in Charleston, South Carolina. We have the names of the ships and the names of the ships' captains. We can extrapolate the date these ships set sail from Barbados and Africa and the likely ports from which these ships sailed. Further research will entail research

trips to Barbados, Angola, Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau to find additional records, documentation, and information.

Part of what drives the *Genealogy Adventures* team is the belief that while researching the genealogy of enslaved people can be daunting, challenging, and filled with seemingly insurmountable obstacles and barriers – the answers we seek are far from impossible to discover. It is in this spirit that I offer this real-world working example of enslaved research. To relay the history of a community of people, from their capture in Africa to the sale of many of their descendants to identifying living descendants will be some of the most worthwhile genealogical research work the Genealogy Adventures team will have ever undertaken. Hopefully, too, this example will provide readers with insights into creating their own research strategies when it comes to researching their enslaved ancestors.

Brian Sheffey is a professional genealogist; author of Practical Genealogy and its accompanying workbook Family Tree Workbook, and founder/co-host of the podcast, “Genealogy Adventures.” In 2017 he presented at the Le Comité des Archives Summer African American seminar, at the Ernest Gaines Center (University of Louisiana at Lafayette; Lafayette, Louisiana).

From Our Archives: JONAS HENDERSON, JR.

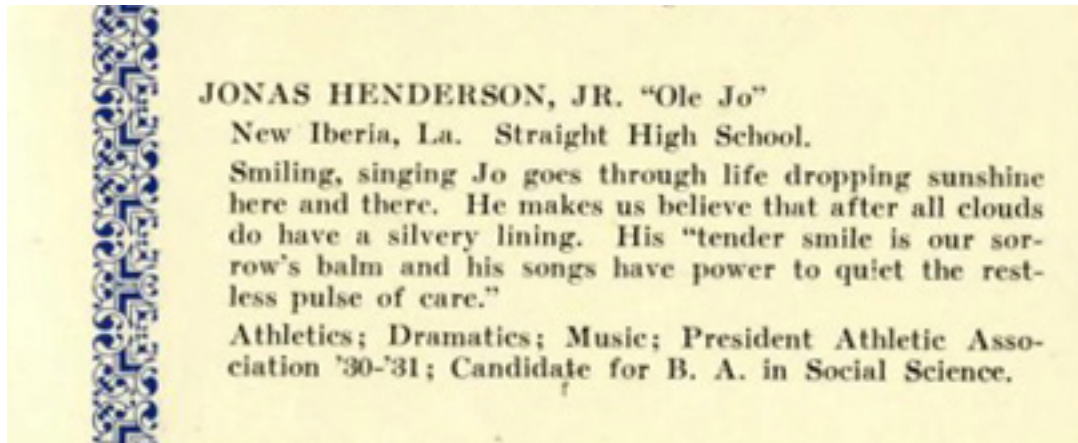
by Phebe A. Hayes

When Jonas Henderson, Sr. moved his family from New Orleans to New Iberia, Louisiana to assume the principalship at Howe Institute, he was a widower and father of young children. His first wife, Martha E. Jackson, had died earlier in New Orleans. Mr. Henderson later met and married New Iberia resident, Rebecca James. The Hendersons added more children to their family, including John Berry "J.B." Henderson. John Berry would later become principal of Jonas Henderson High School of New Iberia, named after his father.

Another of Mr. Henderson's sons, Dr. Crispus Attucks Henderson, graduated from the Meharry University School of Dentistry and became Iberia Parish's first African American dentist. The son featured in this issue, **Jonas Henderson Jr.**, graduated from Straight University and became a teacher in the Meridian, Mississippi public school system. Below is Jonas Jr.'s yearbook picture taken in his senior year (1931) at Straight University, New Orleans.



This is the caption that accompanied Jonas, Jr.'s yearbook picture:



Sources

Crimson Tide Yearbook, 1931; Straight University, New Orleans. Uploaded by Dillard

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Ancestry.com. *New Orleans, Louisiana, Birth Records Index, 1790-1915* [database on-line].

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USA: Ancestry.com, Operations, Inc., 2011.

Phebe A. Hayes, Ph.D. is founder and president of The Iberia African American Historical Society (IAAHS) and editor of the inaugural issue of its annual journal (2019). She retired in 2013 from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette as Dean of the College of General Studies and Professor of Communicative Disorders. Dr. Hayes is a Fellow of the Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana (2020-2025).

IAAHS STORE

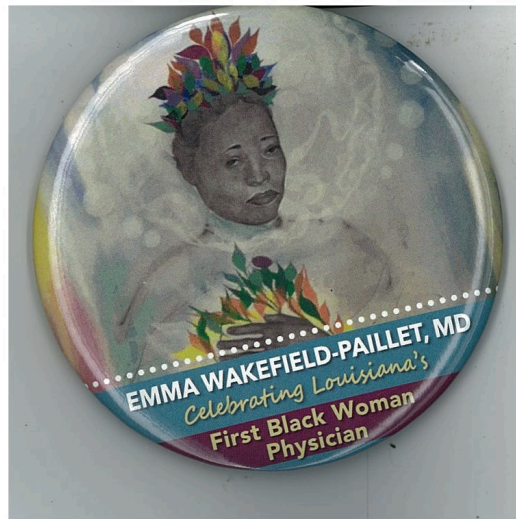
Merchandise

We have a few IAAHS items available for sale but supplies are limited. Send a check to P.O. Box 9923; New Iberia, LA 70562. If paying by Paypal, add an additional \$1.00 to cover the Paypal fee. Purchasers may also pick up the items at The Shadows-on-the-Teche, Main St. New Iberia, LA.



\$17 each or \$15.00 if purchasing 2 or more.
 (Gildan short sleeve gray t-shirts 50% cotton/50% polyester).

Commemorative Buttons sold at the 2018 Dr. Wakefield-Paillet Day Celebration. The buttons feature the original art of St. Martinville artist, Dennis Paul Williams. **\$5.00 each.**



Check out these wonderful and unique decorative paper parasols (below) available for **\$10.00 each** at the **DaBerry Fresh Market (520 Hopkins Street)**. They can be decorated with original designs using paints and other media. All proceeds benefit The Iberia African American Historical Society. **DaBerry Fresh Market is open Wednesday-Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.**



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