



Newsletter

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USCT Civil War Digest

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USCT Civil War Digest

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The Lineage of HRH Duchess of Sussex and Ms. Doria Ragland: Another Perspective



Source: Meghan Merkle and Doria L. Ragland
Courtesy: Skynews, UK

When American Meghan Markle wed Prince Harry on May 19, 2018, it ushered in not only a new era for the British Royal Family, but also for African American history. The historic event no doubt captured the imagination of millions of persons worldwide. This included a legion of researchers, who delved into the family lineage of both Her Royal Highness of Sussex and her mother, Ms. Doria Loyce Ragland.

WikiTree, an online site, provided one of the first “oops” moments by stating that “Jeremiah Ragland was born on September 6th about 1881 in Georgia as a ‘mulatto,’ meaning of mixed race, the son of a black father and white mother...” The source provided a correction (a second “oops” moment) that “he (Jeremiah) was born to a 15 year old black mother and unknown white father.”


Sadly, the marriage between a white person and a black person during the 1880s was against the law in Georgia and was treated as a felony offense. The law was in place from 1750 until the year 1967. Similarly, bi-racial marriages were illegal in Alabama until 2000. According to Carolyn Gould’s article *Genweekly*, “in

Colonial times the word *mulatto* did not refer to African mixed bloods. It referred to whites who had intermarried with Natives. It wasn’t until the mid-1800s that the word *mulatto* began to have a different meaning due to changes in verbal usage.” The usage of the term was expanded to include a person with a bright complexion (and possibly body features and hair texture) attributed to bi-racial mixing or miscegenation. When the term appeared as a label applied to a person in census records and other documents, it usually occurred when an enumerator determined that the person had physical attributes that fit the stereotype of a bi-racial person, usually without any documented proof of such. The moral of the story is do not believe everything written about the lineage of HRH, particularly as it pertains to her African American lineage.

The Royal wedding and its aftermath energized the discussion about respecting differences, while pursuing common ground reference points. Where did the mother and daughter duo get the courage to dare to be true to themselves and their heritage, while respecting old customs and the traditions of another era? Certainly, Prince Harry’s remembrances helped, as he pondered his own realities and how they meshed with those of his princess bride. In a similar way, so many other people began reflecting upon their own respective journeys, even as they continued to be intrigued by the heritage and history of HRH. Nothing is more telling than the various slants of articles written about the new Royal and her mother. When several news sources announced that the new Royal was a descendant of a United States Colored Troop of the Civil War, a light lit up in the mind of Harry Bradshaw Matthews, the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

The Lineage of HRH Continued from page 1



founding President of the United States Colored Troops Institute for Local History and Family Research at Hartwick College. Matthews, the Associate Dean and Director of the Office of Intercultural Affairs at Hartwick, is a noted family researcher. He decided to follow the trail of evidence connecting the USCT ancestor with Ms. Ragland and her daughter.

The starting point for Matthews was reviewing the lineage research shared by the *DailyMailTV* of England. It was complete with family charts and an extensive narrative about HRH's bi-racial lineage, with her maternal side researched by the "Georgia-based genealogist Margaret Eves." The narrative identified Meghan's great-great grandfather, Jerry Miah (Jeremiah) Ragland, who was born in Jonesboro, Clayton County, Georgia in 1883 and died in 1944 in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Jerry's death certificate provided addition information for the narrative. His wife was Claudie Ragland and his parents were Steve and Texas Ragland. The informant of Jerry's death was Mrs. Dora R. Cooper.

Using the information on the death certificate, *DailyMailTV* located the 1880 census, District 723, Henry County, Georgia, which provided information about the black household of Steve Raglin (Ragland). He was a 30-year-old farmer and his wife was 30-year-old Ellin (Ellen). The couple's children included Texas (12), Charles (10), Henry (8) and 1-year-old Angeline.

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> 3387 21344 </div> CERTIFICATE OF DEATH CITY OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEPT. OF TENSNESS COOPERATING WITH BUREAU OF THE CENSUS		SUPP. <u>33</u> REG. DIST. <u>33</u>
1. FULL NAME <u>JOSEPH</u> <u>DAVIDSON</u>		2. DATE OF DEATH <u>DEC 24</u> <u>1914</u>
3. PLACE OF DEATH COUNTY <u>CLATSOP</u> CITY <u>DISTRICT</u> <u>1</u>		4. USUAL RESIDENCE <u>AT STATE</u> 5. OCCUPATION <u>SEAMAN</u> 6. CITY OR TOWN <u>Chatsano</u> 7. STREET NO. <u>610</u> NAME OF STREET <u>BLVD</u> 8. NAME OF NEAREST RELATIVE <u>BY HIS NAME</u> <u>OR NO</u>
9. NAME OF WITNESSES <u>JOHN J. LINDEN, Wm. BRADY</u> 10. LENGTH OF ILLNESS <u>NO</u> 11. CAUSE OF DEATH <u>HEART DISEASE</u> 12. COLOR OF SKIN <u>C</u> 13. PREVIOUS MARRIAGE <u>YES</u> 14. AGE <u>61</u> 15. SEX <u>M</u>		
16. BIRTH <u>WASH</u> 17. MONTH <u>SEP</u> 18. YEAR <u>1854</u> 19. PLACE OF BIRTH <u>Windsor, England</u> 20. AGE OF IMMIGRATION <u>16</u> 21. YEARS <u>IN U.S.</u> <u>48</u> 22. IF IN VETERAN <u>NO</u> 23. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER <u>NO</u> 24. NAME OF WAR <u>NO</u>		
25. USUAL OCCUPATION <u>Seaman</u> 26. INDUSTRY OR BUSINESS <u>For sale</u> 27. PLACE <u>WASH</u> 28. STATE <u>INDIAN</u> 29. PLACE <u>CLATSOP</u> 30. COUNTY <u>CLATSOP</u> 31. MOTHER NAME <u>WESLEY</u> 32. UNKNOWN 33. BIRTHPLACE <u>WASH</u> 34. YEAR <u>1854</u> 35. UNKNOWN 		
36. INFORMANT <u>Wm. Brady</u> 37. NAME <u>Wm. Brady</u> 38. RELATION <u>Friend</u> 39. BIRTHAL <u>INDIAN</u> 40. DATE <u>DEC 24</u> 41. YEAR <u>1914</u> 42. CERTIFY <u>DR. J. M. KELLY</u> 43. PLACE <u>CLATSOP</u> 44. TOWN <u>CLATSOP</u> 45. UNDERTAKER <u>W. H. KELLY & SONS</u> 46. ADDRESS <u>100 S. 4th St.</u> 47. CITY <u>CLATSOP</u> 48. STATE <u>INDIAN</u>		39. IF DEATH WAS DUE TO EXTERNAL CAUSE, FILL IN THE FOLLOWING: 49. ACCIDENT, SUICIDE OR HOMICIDE (SPECIFY) 50. WHERE <u>INDOOR</u> 51. IF DEATH OCCURRED IN OR ABOUT HOME, ON FARM, IN INDUSTRIAL PLANT, IN PUBLIC PLACE 52. WHILE AT WORK <u>NO</u> 53. WHILE ON TRAVEL <u>NO</u> 54. SIGNATURE <u>Wm. Brady</u> 55. DATE SIGNED <u>NOV 10</u>

Source: Certificate of Death, Jerry M. Ragland. Oct. 4, 1944
Courtesy; Tennessee, Dept. of Public Health

When the 1880 census was compared with the 1900 census, along with Jerry's death certificate, the information supported the *DailyMailTV* assertion that Jerry (b. 1883) was the son of Texas (b. 1868) and the grandson of Stephen Raglan (b. 1850). An "oops" moment occurred, however, with the *DailyMailTV* narrative that Jerry's "family's racial group was carefully documented in the census - as 'mulatto,' bi-racial - and his children went to segregated schools..."

Knowing that segregation was rampant during the latter time period, Matthews located the entry for Stephen Raglan (Ragland) in the 1900 census. All persons in the household were identified as black.

Further investigation of census reports revealed that it was true that the 1910 census identified the members of Jerry's household as 'mulatto,' along with the other households on the numeration sheet. It was only the 1910 and 1920 census reports that identified the family as such. More often than not, the terms "Black" and "Negro" were used by enumerators as the identifying terms for the Ragland family from the census reports of 1880, 1900, 1930, and 1940. Thus, the conclusion was that the enumerator recording households during each census year identified a person with a racial label thought to best fit that person's physical appearance.

The true legacy of the Ragland family was not its complexion, but rather the family's advancement throughout the generations from slavery to freedom and beyond.

The *DailyMailTV* did a good job in placing the generations from Jerry to his college educated daughters, Dora and Lillie; and yet further to the historic journey of Ms. Doria and her daughter.

The lineage narrative, as prepared by *DailyMailTV*, helped set the stage for further research, documenting the early events that set the Ragland family on its path to current history. Two important clues were provided, which pushed Matthews, on behalf of the USCT Institute, to research for further connections.

1. Steve Raglan was identified in the 1870 census in Henry County, Georgia; and
2. Joseph Betts possibly enlisted in a regiment of the United States Colored Troops in 1864. In 1870 he was living in Madison County, Alabama near the town of Gurley.

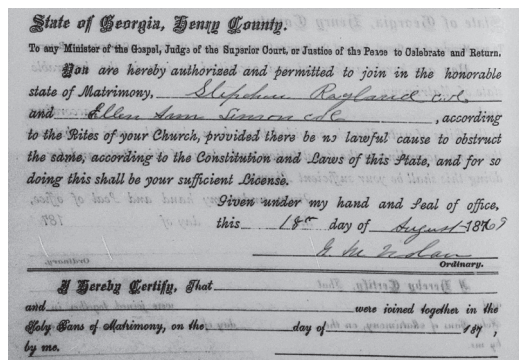


Neighboring Counties, Georgia, 1864

1870 Census, 723 Militia District, Henry County, Georgia – Stephen Ragland, a 22-year-old black man, was residing with his wife, Ellen, 23, and the couple's two children, 2-year-old Ann and infant Charles. His occupation was not listed. His household rested next door to that of A. Ragland, a black 40 year old farm hand. His family included Viny, a 24-year-old black female, the infant Willie, and Laura Merset, a five-year-old black female.

Then, there was the white household of the 60-year-old Mary Ragland. Her real estate was valued at \$3,000. She also had a personal estate of \$1,200. The latter was an important clue that Mary Ragland had sufficient worth to have previously owned enslaved persons, who as freedmen assumed the same surname as her. While the census document did not indicate whether or not Mary was married or widowed, the hunch was the latter. Living with her was George Harris, 17, Fannie Pare, 35, and James Morris, 22, who assisted with farm labor.

Georgia, Henry County Marriages, 1785-1950 – Stephen Ragland, *col.*, married Ellen Ann Lemon, *col.*, on August 18, 1869.



Source: Marriage Certificate for Stephen Ragland and Ellen Ann Lemon. Courtesy: Georgia, County Marriages, 1785-1950, County Courthouses, FHL microfilm, 175,290.

The marriage record called into question the accuracy of the *DailyMailTV's* family chart for the Ragland line. The source for the error was the Geni.com website that includes a genealogy reference to Mahalia Texas "Texie" Ragland, the daughter of John J. and Mary Elizabeth Hendrick, born in October 1853 in Heard County. She died on March 2, 1937 in Brooks County, Georgia. Steven Ragland was noted as her husband and the couple's son was noted to be Jeremiah "Jerry" M. Ragland. Note: Heard County is approximately 80 miles from Henry County. Brooks County is approximately 198 miles from Henry County. The marriage of Steven and Ellen was further supported by Ellen's death certificate of March 4, 1924. It indicated that she was a Negro buried in Stockbridge, Henry County, Georgia. She was born in 1849, the daughter of Charles Lemon and Mariah Hendrick. Once again, the information questioned the family chart's assertion that Steve was married to a white woman named Texie Hendrick. To be clear, the surname "Hendrick" was the maiden name of Ellen's mother. Further, Steve Ragland's death certificate in 1926 identified him as "colored" which did not necessarily mean "mulatto" but was a common identifier for black people of multiple complexions. He was born in 1848, the son of Richard and Mary Ragland. Thus, his parents were probably born in 1830 or earlier. In the case of Ellen's parents, the 1870 census placed them in a household next to their daughter. The elders, Charles and Mariah Lemon, were respectively 53 and 56 ages of year, thus born about 1817 and 1814. This information corrects the genealogy of HRH by properly including Ellen as the wife of Stephen Ragland.

40th USCT – Organized in February 29, 1864; USCT Civil War Digest, June 2014. A member of the 40th USCT was Joseph Betts, an ancestor of Ms. Doria and her daughter. According to the November 28, 2017, article, "Royal Connection: Prince Harry's Bride-to-Be Has Local Ties," that appeared in *enewscourier.com*, Joseph Betts was the likely soldier of the United States Colored Troops with connections to HRH. One military record indicated that he was 24 at the time of his enlistment in August 1864 at Athens, Limestone County, Alabama.

Facebook postings by both the Sons of Union Veterans of Arkansas and from the Alabama Department of Archives and History shared information supporting the claim that HRH and her mother descended from Joseph Betts. The supporting documents were the 1870 census and the soldier's available military records. If other supporting evidence was located, it certainly would have strengthened the claim of ancestry.

An interesting find by Matthews was learning that two other soldiers surnamed Betts - Byron Betts (21) and William Betts (24) – were born

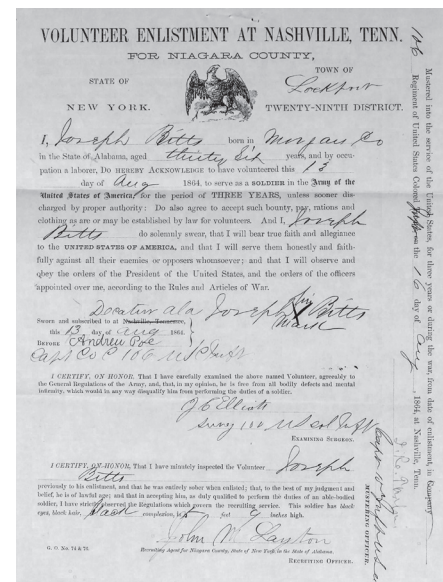
in Madison County, Alabama and enlisted on August 22, 1864. Both were transferred to the 40th USCT and were captured as prisoners of war. Prior to transfer to the 40th USCT, they had enlisted with the 106th, similar to Joseph Betts. On all three certificates the soldiers volunteer enlistment at Nashville, Tennessee for Lockport, Niagara County, New York. William was 18 years of age at the time of first enlistment and Byron was 20.

United States, Freedmen's Bureau Labor Contracts, Indenture and Apprenticeship Records, 1865-1872 – February 19, 1866 - Joe Betts, freedman, entered into a contractual agreement with E.F. Betts to cultivate 40 acres of land, with one-third of the crop given to E.F. Betts. Similarly, Giles Betts, freedman, agreed to cultivate 80 acres. In another contract, Taylor Betts, freedman, agreed to cultivate 100 acres. William Betts contracted on January 15, 1867, to cultivate land on O.M. Handy's land.

Joe Betts, freedman, Giles Betts, Taylor Betts, William Betts, plus James Betts, were residing in Madison county. These freedmen advanced themselves when their names were included on the *Alabama 1867 voter registration*. They became among the first African Americans to vote after the civil war.

Returning attention to Joseph Betts, only four persons located in the area during 1870 shared the Joseph Betts name and had the respective ages of 45, 44, 11, and 14 during 1864. In another military document, Joseph was identified as born in Madison County.

During the soldier's term, he was first a member of Co. B., 106th USCT. Matthews learned from Joseph Betts' enlistment certificate that he was born in Morgan County, Alabama and was 36 years of age at the time he enlisted on August 13, 1864 at Decatur, Alabama. Interestingly, his enlistment was credited to the town of Lockport, New York. Had he escaped there by way of the Underground Railroad, then returned to his birth state during the Civil War?



Fold3. Compiled Military Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers, Joseph Betts

The 106th USCT was organized May 16, 1864, from the 4th Alabama Colored Infantry. It was attached to the District of North Alabama, Dept. of the Cumberland, to February, 1865. It participated in the Defences of Nashville & Northwestern Railroad, Dept. of the Cumberland, to November, 1865.

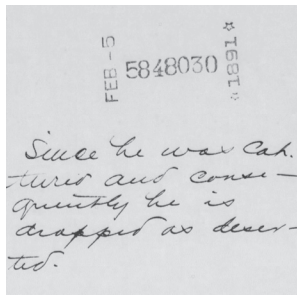
The Lineage of HRH Continued from page 3

The 106th USCT provided garrison at Pulaski and railroad guard duty its entire term. After Bedford Forest's attack on Athens, September 23-24, 1864, the 106th was consolidated with the 40th USCT on November 7, 1865.

Fold3. Compiled Military Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers, Joseph Betts

Fold3. Compiled Military Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers, Joseph Betts

Joseph Betts was captured and made a prisoner of war. The reason for his absence from his regiment went unknown, resulting in the belief by officers that he had deserted. The error in judgement was finally corrected by 1891.



Courtesy: Joseph Betts, Military Record, Fold3



The Colored Soldiers
40th USCT: organized at Nashville & Greenville, Battle of Nashville, Dec. 1864. Source: Kurz & Allison, Art Publishers, 1890. Courtesy: The Matthews Collection

The 1870 Census, Township #4, Madison County, Alabama - Joseph and Catherine Betts black household (dwelling #109) included Sarah (19), Thaddeus (17), Jacob (14), Isaac (11) and Genesee (8). The elder was recorded as a farmer with a personal estate value of \$600. In sequential order, other Betts households were 1) 75-year-old Dolly who was born in Virginia (dwelling #100); 2) Farmer William Betts (23) and his spouse, Mary (22) and infant Moses (dwelling #102); 3) Farmer Giles Betts (45) and 65-year-old Susan, who was born in Virginia (dwelling #106); 4) Farmer Taylor Betts (32), Joseph (17), Page (15) Thomas (13), Dennis (12) and some other farm laborers (dwelling #107). Clearly, the elders within the Betts households were originally migrants from Virginia and South Carolina.

1880 Census, Township 4, Madison County, Alabama - Joseph Betts at 60 years of age was a farmer residing with his 58 year old wife, Catherine, and their son, Isaac, 21. The family was recorded as black. Joseph was born in South Carolina, while his parents were born in Virginia. Catherine's parents were also born in Virginia. On the same census sheet were several surprises.

Elisha F. Betts (60) was a farmer and the head of his white household that included his wife, Mary (57), their son, Elisha, Jr. (21), and Hall E. (22). The senior was born in Alabama, while his father was born in Virginia and his mother in Ireland. Mary, on the other hand, was born in South Carolina, while her parents were born in Virginia and Ireland.

Jiles Betts (50) (also spelled Giles) was a farmer residing with his black family including Harriet (35), Otis (12), Ellen (9), and Lillie (2). While Jiles was born in Alabama, his parents were born in Virginia.

Taylor Betts (48) was a farmer residing with his black children Thomas (24), Rachel (20), and Allen (12). Taylor was born in Alabama, while his parents were born in Virginia.

Salley Betts (35) was a black laborer and mother of Manerva (14), Willie (7), and Johnie (1). Salley was born in Alabama, while her parents were born in South Carolina.

Manerva Betts (24) was a black farm laborer and the mother of Manerva (12), Willie (7) and Edward (6). The mother and her parents were born in Alabama.

Jacob Betts (22) was a black farmer living with his mulatto wife, Ida (20).

Thomas Betts (26) was a farmer and the head of his black family, including his wife Jane (22), Joseph (5), and Milley (2).

Page Betts (23) was a mulatto farmer residing with his black family, including his wife, Agnes (18), and his mulatto brother-in-law, Allen Sarey? (14).

All of the parents of Betts household members aged between 35 – 60 were born either in South Carolina, Virginia, or Ireland. This was an intriguing clue that pointed to a shared journey by the elders.

The Madison County Probate Cases identified several persons surnamed Betts who were involved with cases that included enslaved persons. Specifically, 1) Barbee Betts, 1832; 2) Charles Betts, 1835; 3) Elisha F. Betts dealt with guardian issues, 1839; and 4) Eliza J. Betts, 1855.

With HRH and Ms. Ragland being direct descendants of Jacob Betts, Matthews researched for the ancestor, locating a record of his marriage to Ida Saws in 1879. Neither the bride nor the groom was identified as colored.

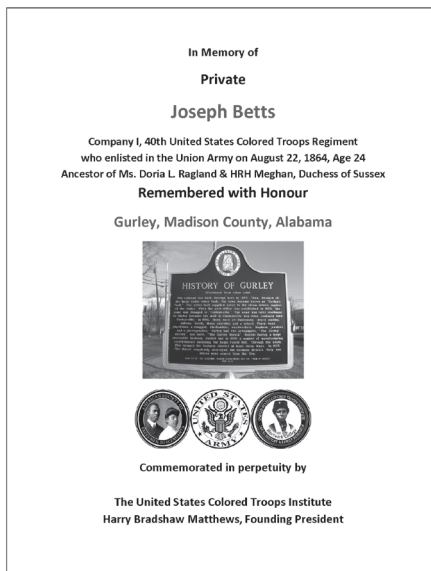
However, the Madison County Marriage Licenses 1809–1899, identified Jacob and Ida as colored and married on January 9, 1879. Further, the 1880 census identified Jacob as black and Ida as mulatto. Recall, that Jacob was similarly identified as black in the 1870 census. Jacob died on March 20, 1909 at Huntsville. He was identified as a white laborer, yet the names of his black parents were listed in the Alabama, Deaths and Burials Index, 1881-1974.

46-3-P2-88	Page(s)	(1584)	
STATE OF ALABAMA Department of Archives and History Inventory of County Archives Marriage Records Madison County Vol. 10, Oct. 9, 1878 to Feb. 12, 1880			
<u>Date of Marriage</u>	<u>Mens Name</u>	<u>Womens Name</u>	<u>Vol. Page #</u>
Jan. 9, 1879	Jacob Betts Married by Eli Patton Minister of Gospel.	Ida Saws	142
Jan. 10, 1879 (Col)	Cornelius Franklin married by W. Montgomery no title given.	Katie Robinson	143

Also worth noting was that Taylor Betts opened an account with the Freedmen's Saving and Trust Company in Huntsville on July 15, 1869. His application listed him as a farmer with a black complexion. The names of his parents were Syrus and Susan. His two children were Tomas (Thomas) and Rachel, similar to the 1880 census entries. Were his financial resources pooled with the other Betts freedmen who resided near him?

Other Connections of the Betts

The notoriety of the Royal wedding resulted in a lot of sharing by various people who claimed to have knowledge of connections between various families surnamed Betts. One article that gained Matthews' attention was about the possible common ancestors between HRH and the Major League Baseball star Mookie Betts. Included within the *Nashville Post* of May 8, 2018, was the declaration "two sons of Virginia plantation owner Elisha Betts bequeathed seven slaves to his children when he died and two of his sons moved to what is now Huntsville, Alabama."



The book, *Adventures of Negro History (Negro History of Huntsville – Madison County, Alabama)* indicated that the 1860 U.S. Census revealed that there were 11,685 whites, 192 'free colored' and 14,573 enslaved persons. Among the slave owners was Elisha F. Betts, who owned 46 enslaved persons. Returning to the Betts households for 1880, all black and mulatto persons listed with at least the age of 20 could have been previously owned by Elisha F. Betts in 1860. According to *MyHeritage*,

the senior Elisha was born in 1825 in Alabama, the son of Martha C. Betts. He married Mary N. Betts. The roots of the Betts extended family was acknowledged in the 1893 text, *History of Texas, Together with a Biographical History*, connecting the family to Virginia and Alabama.

The research conducted by Matthews establishes a new sequence of lineage (generations) on the Ragland side:

- 1) Meghan Markle; 2) Doria Ragland – mother; 3) Alvin Azella Ragland – grandfather; 4) Steve & Lois Ragland – great-grandparents; 5) Jerry Miah & Claudia Ragland – great-great – grandparents; 6) Texas Ragland – great-great-great grandmother; 7) Steve and Ellen Ragland – great-great-great-great-grandparents; 8) Richard & Mary Ragland –great-great-great-great-great-grandparents.

It is hoped that the interest in the American who recently became a British Royal will continue and that appropriate attention will commemorate the USCT ancestor of Ms. Doria Ragland and her daughter.

Harry Bradshaw Matthews has written several books about the Freedom Journey including the following catalogued texts at leading universities and libraries:

African American Freedom Journey in New York and Related Sites, 1823-1870: Freedom Knows No Color, 2008. Catalogued at Cambridge University, U.K; Library of Congress, New York State Library, New York Public Library/Schomburg Center, and Northwestern University.

The family legacy of Anthony Johnson : from Jamestown, VA to Somerset, MD, 1619-1995 : a multi-racial saga in Black, Red and White : the Negro Johnson and Indian Puckham lineage. Catalogued at Cornell University, SUNY Oneonta, U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Library of Congress, and Hartwick College.

Whence They Came : the Families of United States Colored Troops in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, 1815-1995 : a case study in historiographic genealogy. Catalogued at Gettysburg College, Cambridge University, Library of Congress, New York State Library, New York Public Library, and Thomas Balch Library (VA).

African American Genealogical Research : How to Trace Your Family History : Historical and Genealogical Connections. Catalogued at Cornell University, Library of Congress, Princeton University, New York State Library, New York Public Library, Hartwick College, and SUNY Oneonta.

HONORING TWO PERSONALITIES OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

In the picture below, Lydia Hamilton Smith is portrayed by Darlene A. Colón, Vice President of the USCT Institute. She took on the character of Lydia because of the heroine's accomplishments in a time of turbulence (enslavement/civil war) and became a successful entrepreneur, purchasing her first home in Gettysburg in 1858, six homes in Lancaster and a boarding home in Washington, DC. She also was tutored by Congressman Thaddeus Stevens in the matter of finance and became his household manager, which was useful as she and Stevens became active in the Underground Railroad.



William Goodridge is portrayed by Kelly Summerford of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Kelly, an active participant of the annual USCT Student Mini-Conference, became Goodridge because of the hero's successful support of the Underground Railroad and for being the most successful businessman in York, Pennsylvania. Goodridge used his home and storefront in his role as a Stationmaster in the UGRR and transported Freedom Seekers on the many rail cars he owned. Kelly is a seasoned actor having worked in Hollywood and was actually a stunt double for Eddie Murphy. Kelly is active throughout the arts community in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and works with several youth groups in that venue.

HARRIET TUBMAN MENTORS RELEASE "STORIES OUR MOTHERS TOLD US: BOOK 4"

Students of the Harriet Tubman Mentoring Project at Hartwick College continue to place their ancestors within historical context through primary research. Nine students are profiled in "Stories Our Mothers Told Us: Book 4," in which each shares initial findings.



Eleuthera, The Bahamas, – Shanria Jolly started her research by acquiring a copy of the 1954 marriage license for her grandparents, John A. Delancy and Ruth Brown. The document included the fathers of the couple, who were James Delancy and Gerald Brown. She next located the obituary for her grandfather, only to learn that his first and middle names were at times reversed. A constant between the documents was the identity of Advilda as John's sister. Acquiring the sister's obituary reaffirmed that John and Advilda were siblings. The birth certificates of

Advilda (Adwilda) and other siblings revealed that their parents were James Delancy and Edith Gibson Delancy. Edith (b. 1897) was the daughter of Edgar and Daphne Gibson. Concluding her research, Shanria learned that Edgar's father was Richard Alfred Gibson, thus documenting to her great-great-great grandfather in the mid-1800s.



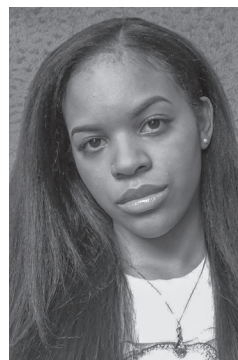
Dominican Republic – Scarlett V. Estevez of Manhattan, New York, began her research with an extensive oral history. Her maternal grandparents were opponents of the dictator Rafael Trujillo during the 1950s leading to their membership in Union Civia in 1962. Scarlett began researching the history of Spain and France in an effort to learn the origin of her grandmother's maiden name, Morel. In the process, Scarlett learned the surname derived from both France and Spain, meaning dark and swarthy (as a moor).



Grenada & Trinidad – Destiny John documented the 1909 arrival of her great-great-grandfather, John E. Scott, from St. Patrick's, Grenada. He relocated to Cleveland, Ohio. John served in the Army during World War I. His wife was Eugenia, who was born in Alabama. A surprising fact was learning that John served as a Sleeping Car Pullman Porter. John is memorialized in the National A. Phillip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum in Chicago, Illinois. The elder died in February 1939.



Jamaica, West Indies – Candace C. Barrow, a resident of Brooklyn, New York, documented her great-great grandfather's role in the British West Indies Regiment during World War I. By tracing the Peart family origin in Jamaica to the 1798 will of Joseph Peart, she learned of a free mulatto son and a quadroon slave son belonging to Robert Peart. Both sons received inheritance from Robert's brother. Barrow's research explored the historical reference point of racial mixing or miscegenation in the British West Indies during the colonial period.



Jamaica, West Indies – Elektra Hoyoun of Brooklyn, New York went on a whirlwind journey in search of her roots. Fortunately, most of her research was conducted by usage of online resources. Her oral history spoke of Jamaica, Brazil, Virginia, and even Portugal. She managed to get through the maze. By using Jamaican Civil Registrations, she was able to locate the marriage of Wilfred Norman Hudson and Lena Veronica Motta in 1934. After learning the names of the fathers of the bride and groom, more clues led her to the Amalgamated Congregation (1883-1921) and

the United Congregation of Israelites (1921-1963). It was not too long after that Elektra learned of the Jewish Motta family connection to Portugal and Brazil. Next was documenting the paternal side of her lineage to William Edlow, Sr. of Virginia, who served with the Merchant Marines during World War II. A World War I Draft Registration Card helped place her lineage further back to the birth of Junius Edlow in 1875.



South Carolina – Symphany Rochford of Brooklyn, New York began her research by locating the burial site of her great-grandfather, Mark Adams, Sr. who served in the Army during World War II and was later interred at the Calverton National Cemetery in Calverton, New York. Knowing that the soldier was born in 1921, Symphany located him in the 1930 census for Aikens, South Carolina, residing in the household of his parents, Walter and Addie Adams. Symphany received Walter's WWI Draft Registration Card before reviewing additional census

recordings. She learned of the earlier homestead in Moss, Edgefield, South Carolina. The 1880 record led her back to the elder Robert Adams, who was born in 1858.



St. Lucia, West Indies – Kiara S. Biroo explored the arrival of East Indians to the Caribbean, and particularly to St. Lucia. In the process, she learned that her surname, Biroo, was prominent in the Jalandhar district in Doaba region of the state of Punjab in the North-West Republic of India. Her ancestors arrived to St. Lucia as indentured servants between 1859 and 1893 to replace the work previously done by enslaved Africans.



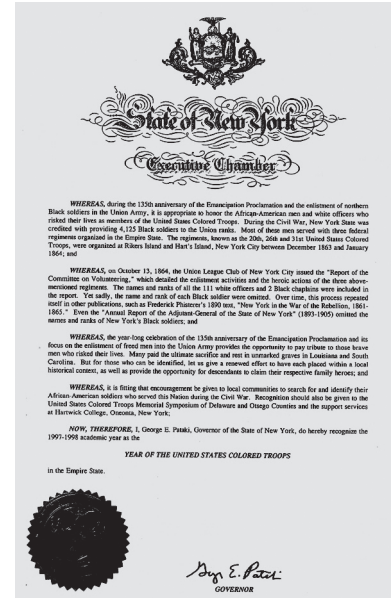
Tennessee – Olivia M. Boddie of the Bronx, New York, reached back to her great grandfather, Samuel M. Boddie, who served in the Army during World War II. It was only the beginning of her journey. As her research progressed, she gained an understanding of the intra-state slave trade extending from Maryland to Mississippi. She identified her maternal great-great-great-great-grandmother, Jane Jones, who was born in 1820 to unknown parents. She was even able to access a picture of this elder ancestor.



Virginia – Tiara S. Cooper of Bristol, Pennsylvania traced her roots to Scottsville, Albermarle, Virginia. Her usage of the Social Security Death Index led her to a couple of marriage certificates, then onward to the World War I military records that supported census data, Tiara gained knowledge of her ancestors extending back to the birth of Martin Waynes in 1805. He and his wife, Maria, were Tiara's great-great-great-great-grandparents.

USCT INSTITUTE: 1998-2018 20 YEARS STRONG

As the USCT Institute celebrates 20 years of progress, it is fitting to share in this issue of the *USCT Civil War Digest* the New York State Proclamation that helped set the stage for the founding of the USCT Institute, as well as the American Society for Freedmen Descendants.



Nearly Four months after H.R. 1635 was introduced on May 5, 1997, commemorating the Underground Railroad, a Garnett news article titled, "Bill Would Honor Underground Railroad," appeared in the *Detroit News and Free Press* on September 7, 1997. The four persons interviewed for the article were Professor James Oliver Horton of George Washington University; Hugh Price, President of the National Urban League; John Fleming, Executive Director of the National Afro-American Museum (in Wilberforce, Ohio); and Associate Dean Harry Bradshaw Matthews of Hartwick College.

The following week, on September 13, the *Oneonta Daily Star* reported that the United States Colored Troops Symposium of Delaware and Otsego Counties, New York, 1997-98, had commenced under the leadership of Matthews. A proclamation issued by New York Governor George H. Pataki affirmed the historical significance of honoring the USCT from the Empire State. Included as a part of the Symposium was the African American History and Genealogy Conference that was held in April, 1998 on the campuses of Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta. It was there that participants from nine states and Canada passed a resolution to reconvene at Hartwick College during October, 1998, to finalize the founding of the United States Colored Troops Institute for Local History and Family Research. Meanwhile, H.R. was finally passed as amended on June 9, 1998.

The significance of the parallel actions was that two of the more important historical venues to help African Americans document local personalities in the Freedom journey, including relatives, had been launched with the endorsement of state and national legislators. Certainly, other historical and preservation groups had long before established themselves in pursuit of the preservation of African American history. Therefore, the new entities joined the existing organizations to further preservation efforts.



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To become a member of the United States Colored Troops Institute for Local History and
Family Research at Hartwick College, please contact Harry Bradshaw Matthews, 410 Dewar
Union, Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York 13820.

