

grandpa's accomplishments during his life time.

PURPOSE

My name is Eunice Davis Pettigrew. I am Isaac Johnson's grand-daughter. While consulting many secondary materials on the history of the Buffalo Soldiers, the information detailing Isaac Johnson's life comes directly from me. This writing is to make known the facts as documented by my research in the Pine Bluff-Jefferson County Library, The Arkansas Historical Commission and The National Archives. I also have a collection of pictures, notes and the family Bible that I have kept over a period of about forty years. A pictorial tour will reveal some of the injustices that black soldiers endured. I have researched in eight states namely: Kansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee, Texas, Alabama and Arkansas.

I was about nine (9) years old when my grandmother passed in 1926. My grandpa came to live with us in Pine Bluff Arkansas after my grandmothers' death. Our family eventually moved to Forrest City, Arkansas. During the years that Grandpa lived with my family, he told me many stories of his life as a slave and as a soldier. I was fifteen (15) years of age when my grandpa died on December 7, 1931.

ISAAC JOHNSON'S LIFE SKETCH

My grandpa was born about 1846, a slave in Charlottesville, North Carolina. He was never told his real age. He had only one (1) family member, a sister, who was sold from him at a very early age. Grandpa's mother died during childbirth as well as a twin sister.

To understand the bond that Isaac Johnson and his sister shared, I think first we must examine the slave family. The slave family had no standing in law. Marriages among slaves were not legally recognized and masters rarely respected slaves in selling adults or children. The male's sole purpose was to breed in order to maximize the number of offspring. Slave holders would also take sexual advantage of the female slaves, most of the time with the master's wife's knowledge. This created a multitude of biracial babies and an even larger number of human beings to be used for servitude. Slave owners had little or no regard for the emotional needs of slaves. The slave holder, not the parents, decided at what age children began to work in the fields. The slave family could not offer its children shelter or security, rewards or punishments. Despite all of this, my grandpa spoke on many occasions of the close relationship that he and his sister shared. Grandpa worked as a water boy on the plantation while his sister worked as a wet nurse. She nursed all of the slave babies while the slave women worked the fields. She was also responsible for nursing the master's babies. Grandpa told me about his sister making small bags of sugar and butter called sugar ticks that were used to pacify the babies between feedings. The babies were housed in a tee-pee like structure with pallets all around the walls. My grandpa's sister still found time in her busy day to show him love and affection.

Isaac Johnson remembered never leaving the plantation, so when the opportunity finally arrived he was excited to say the least. On the journey, he remembered looking outside of the covered wagon and thinking out loud what a big world it was. He noticed his sister sitting with her eyes closed and tears streaming down her face. He could not understand her tears at the time because there was so much excitement in the air. He asked her continuously, what was wrong but got no

response. It was not until they reached their destination did grandpa's excitement start to fade away. Confusion began to set in for Grandpa, who was approximately two or three years of age at the time. He observed his sister on the auction block and being held up for public display to be sold. On completion of the bidding, his sister was led away blindfolded never to be seen by Grandpa again. What he observed was a very humiliating and degrading experience for his sister. Grandpa cried when he realized she had been taken away from him. The loss that Grandpa felt from this experience would be incomparable to anything else that he would endure in life. No longer did he have that strong family bond of someone to love him.

Grandpa often told me stories of life on the plantation. One incident in particular, a group of slaves had been chained together for a march when a woman went into labor. She was loosed from the chains and left alone to deliver the baby while the others continued on their journey.

To ensure the slaves obeyed the rules as set forth by the Slave Codes and the will of the master, whenever someone was found in violation of a rule, all the slaves were called to the "Big House" to watch the punishment of the slave in question. Grandpa told me that he observed many of these beatings. He described to me a large platform with a square cut out of the center in which slaves were placed face down and beat repeatedly with a whip. Violations of these rules were dealt with in a variety of ways. Mutilation and branding were not unknown. However, most violators were whipped. A slave owner was immune from prosecution for any physical abuse against slaves. This was due largely in part to the fact that slaves could only testify against other slaves accused of a crime. Alabama, as a store clerk. During this time he lived with Emma Clark, a white woman. Emma Clark was the head of her household and had a two-year-old daughter at the time. It is my belief that Grandpa was Emma Clark's slave. Clark's daughter's name was Maretta Clark, so I believe this was Emma Clark's married name and that her maiden name was Johnson. I further believe my grandfather having no slave family's name to take, took his owner's family name.

My grandpa entered the Army while living in Montgomery, Alabama. He enlisted on the 6th day of May, 1867. He was a private in Company K, 24th Regiment of Infantry. Grandpa was transferred to Company 38 Infantry. He fought in the war with the Comanche Indians in the territory of the Texas Frontier. Isaac Johnson was shot in the right shoulder by a Comanche Indian, while escorting mail from Fort Harker to Fort Union. The wound was received near Cow Creek, Kansas in the Spring of 1868. He was treated at Fort Selden, New Mexico and at Fort Harker by Surgeon McClindon. My grandpa, Isaac Johnson, was honorably discharged at Fort Selden, New Mexico, on about May 6, 1870, due to the injury he received in the Spring of 1868. Grandpa returned to Montgomery, Alabama and to Emma Clark's household. He worked as a hotel employee until he reenlisted in the Army on June 14, 1878. He served in the Colored Cavalry of Saint Louis, Missouri. Isaac Johnson served in the Army for a period of five years but due to his previous injury, complicated by other medical problems, he was honorably discharged at Fort Stanton, New Mexico. He last served in the Company F-9 Regiment Cavalry.

After my grandpa's service in the Army, he lived in several areas including Montgomery,

Alabama, Walls, Mississippi, Austin, Mississippi, Plummerville, Arkansas, and Menifee, Arkansas. Grandpa applied for bounty land and this undeveloped land was given to him in the township of Menifee, Arkansas. His family (The Johnsons), his sister-in-law's family (The Williamsons) and the Tally families were among the first settlers of this township. Menifee, Arkansas was my grandpa's home until the death of my grandmother, Sallie Walls Johnson, in 1926.

Isaac Johnson lived with my family in Pine Bluff, Arkansas and then Forrest City, Arkansas until his death on December 7, 1931. He was memorialized and buried at his church, Philadelphia Baptist in Menifee, Arkansas. He is buried in the Community Cemetery with some of his descendants.

HONORING MR. FRANK K. TURNER,
PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN
SHORT LINE AND REGIONAL
RAILROAD ASSOCIATION FOR VI-
SIONARY LEADERSHIP IN THE
RAILROAD INDUSTRY

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 12, 2002

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Frank K. Turner of Gainesville, Virginia, for visionary leadership in the railroad industry on the occasion of his retirement.

Mr. Turner currently serves as the President of American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA), a post he has held for some three years. This trade association ably represents 425 short line and regional railroads providing local rail service throughout the United States. Turner's work as a liaison between member railroads and the large railroads of this nation has been extraordinary.

During his tenure, Turner has served as a transportation expert on the Transportation Advisory Group, which advises the Bush Administration on numerous transportation matters of importance. Further, he represents the interests of short line and regional rail systems before Congress, Federal, and State Regulatory Agencies as well as on policy and technical committees of the U.S. Railroad industry.

With a wealth of railroad experience dating back to 1969, Turner has held several key positions throughout the industry, including Vice President of Operations for CSX Intermodal; President and Chief Operating Officer for Midsouth Railroad; and Key-Operating Officer with Norfolk and Western Railway.

A graduate of New Mexico Military Institute and Texas A&M University at Commerce, Turner also served as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps for eight years and is a Vietnam Veteran.

He is always available to offer a wealth of insight and knowledge into the railroad industry. His love and enthusiasm for rail travel is evident from his longtime commitment to this mode of transportation. With more than thirty years of experience and expertise, Frank Turner has served railroad interests and riders throughout our country well.