Negro Author Cites Proud Record Of Black History

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Edgar A. Toppin, born in Harlem, New York, in 1928, is the author of the 15-part series on Negro history starting in today's Daily Mail. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in American history from Howard University, and his doctor's degree from Northwestern University, where he is a member of the Virginia State College faculty, he has written ten books on Negroes in American history.

He spent so much money on the pilgrimage that Mansa Musa made a lasting impact on the consciousness of the Western world, according to his biographer, who had no knowledge of the "Negro history," "black studies," "American history," or anything else. Here is the first of 15 dramatic chapters in what may be the nation's—perhaps the world's—most neglected area of history: "African Pre-History (Pre-History to 1951)."

By EDGAR A. TOPPIN

As Mansa Musa stepped into the palace yard, he had more in his mind than the customary audience. Soon he would be leaving on the Hajj—a pilgrimage to Mecca which was considered a sacred duty by the Moslems of North Africa and the Middle East. He was anxious to resume preparations for this journey, but his subjects awaited him. Drums, trumpets and bugles sounded as he took his seat on the platform—a three-tiered, silk-covered, and bezelled platform. But as the emperor listened to the thoughts kept turning to his trip.

Finally, the audience were over. Mansa Musa now could concentrate again on the Hajj, the journey of the holy ruler, and undertake at least once in his lifetime.

Mansa Musa would not be the first ruler of Mali to make the Hajj—but he planned a more lavish display than any of his predecessors. He wished to make an impression on all of Europe and Africa, and many parts of his far-flung empire on the way to Mecca. Moreover, he was anxious to press forward Moslems of the Middle East and also the whole world to convert to Islam.

With the preparations completed, Mansa Musa set forth in the year 1324 from his capital city of Jenne. Historian John Hope Franklin states that his "entourage comprised 60,000 persons, a large portion of which consisted of a military escort. No less than 12,000 were servants, 500 of whom marched ahead of his king, each bearing a staff of pure gold. Books, baggage and royal secrets were then in abundance. To finance the pilgrimage, the king carried 80 camels to bear his more than 24,000 pounds of gold." Altogether, Mansa Musa was spending almost $5 million worth of gold with him to make a princely presents—such as a gold-covered, three-tiered, silk-covered, and bezelled platform.

Thus he rode out of West Africa in golden splendor, this historic journey eastward.
Many Blacks Perished in Slave Trade Horrors

(Professor's Note: Eyewitness accounts from the 13th century tell of callous indifference to the horrors of the developing African slave trade. The following is a summary of 15 articles, titled "The Slave Trade and Latin American Slavery (1441-1563)."

By Edgar A. Toppin

Prince Henry the Navigator had sent Captain Antón Goncalves of Portugal to get skins and oil in West Africa, but the youthful captain was ambitious. He sought to do more.

He hesitated, fearing that his brash captain might cause trouble by exceeding orders. Sensing their uncertainty, Captain Goncalves pleaded with them, as recorded by Antonio de Atahualpa, the chronicler of Portuguese exploration:

"How fair a thing it would be to open a passageway into this land for a cargo of such merchandise, were to call upon you to bring the first captives before the face of our Prince." Prince Henry agreed and by proscriptions of obtaining gold and glory, the men agreed. They elected five of them to go down to Cape Bi- hor (now in Spanish Sahara, 110 miles south of the Canary Islands) in 1540, to take the first captives.

Arab caravans traveled overland, exchanging European fabrics or goods for African gold, ivory, and slaves. Now Portugal was the only African trade route that included captives. In 1448, the Portuguese had reached the Cape of Good Hope, with four small crews. In 1480, Vasco da Gama reached India after sailing around Africa. Portugal's search for a direct route to the Far East had ended.

Profitable Business

Portugal had also discovered a very profitable trade in Africans, bypassing the Arab slave trade. Portuguese slavers treated blacks as commodities. In 1444, a man named Lancarote received the first license to trade in blacks from Prince Henry.

When Lancarote returned with 46 captives, the chronicler Azurara was at the port where they were brought ashore. He was deeply touched on seeing "their heads low and their faces thick in tears." When they divided up these captives, Afro- Vite was at the port to receive his share of the cargo. One, five-year-old. Azurara described how the partitioning of these families was done: they placed them in one part, the sons, seeing their fathers, another, the females, and so on. In 1450, the Portuguese sold them to another African slave trader, and the slave trade was born.

The African Role

Initially, the Portuguese were interested in selling African products to Europe. They soon abandoned this because the suspicion and hostility it aroused. In 1562, they found it more expedient and less hazardous to make slaves of the indigenous peoples who were accused of selling their surplus slaves to Arab traders.

African slaves were in the West Indies, where the colonists treated them as an adopted member of the family. Their art, when preserved, was considered praiseworthy. Their culture was preserved by their spouses and children, all sharing a residential organization. Any needy member of the extended family could call on his relatives for support.

Wealth was unnecessary, because even persons lacking a genealogical tie would be given the right of return for performing service labor for the extended family. To this day, African slaves are still treated as if they were an adopted member of the family.

Despite the efforts of the Portuguese to keep African life as it was, their arts and traditions were preserved by the descendants of the first occupants of the land. They were so used to use by individual descendants, but when active cultivation was required, they reverted to the collective 

Many, Many captives were treated as a family organization. It consisted of several generations of the same family, with a common ancestor, together with their spouses and children, all sharing a residential organization. Any needy member of the extended family could call on his relatives for support. Wealth was unnecessary, because even persons lacking a genealogical tie would be given the right of return for performing service labor for the extended family. To this day, African slaves are still treated as if they were an adopted member of the family.

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In Slave Trade Horrors, black explorers Henry the Navigator, Captain Antón Goncalves of Portugal, Diego el Negro, and the greatest black explorer, the Spanish conquistador, Francisco Coronado, were shipwrecked on Galveston Island off Texas.

The survivors-Cabeza de Vaca, Castillo Dorantes, and a few others, including Cabeza de Vaca's captive, Estevanico, who later became a Spanish citizen and later a Spanish citizen and later a Spanish citizen, were shipwrecked on Galveston Island off Texas.

The negro was in constant conversation with the Indians, the Spanish explorers, and the Spaniards. He was shipwrecked on Galveston Island off Texas.
Revolution Awakened Many Americans To Their Treatment of Blacks

By EDGAR A. TOPPIN

Tension ran high in Boston as the British military, under Gen. Gage, arrived to enforce the port closure ordered by Parliament. In the hot summer of 1775, a group of Black soldiers and sailors, led by a man named Crispus Attucks, confronted British soldiers at thesite of the British military and attempted to disarm them. The ensuing clash, known as the Boston Massacre, occurred on March 5, 1770, and resulted in the deaths of five Black men at the hands of British soldiers.

The American Revolution, which began in 1775, could have started five years earlier over this Boston Massacre. The event was significant because it marked the first time that a British soldier had killed a Black American in America. The British government was forced to issue a formal apology, which was signed by 14 officers, including Gen. Thomas Gage.

During this era, individual Black Americans, including Crispus Attucks, typifies service of blacks in the colonial forces besieging British-held Boston. Minutemen were rushing to Concord, where shots rang out. Eight colonists lay dead. Whatever Salem's role at Breed's Hill in what has come to be called the Battle of Bunker Hill, his career typifies service of blacks in the war for independence.

On June 16, Gen. Artemas Ward, in command of the colonial forces besieging British-held Boston, sent various regiments to occupy Charles-town Peninsula on Boston's northwest side. Led by Col. William Prescott, the American oversight fortified Breed's Hill on the Peninsula, with Bunker Hill as a preliminary line. When the British under Gen. Howe landed on the peninsula on June 17 to dislodge the Americans, reinforcements were sent in, including Colonel Nixon's regiment.

In the battle which followed, one British charge was led by Maj. Pitcairn, who had commanded the redcoat vanguard at Lexington. According to Massachusetts history George Livermore: "Pitcairn, it is well known, fell just as he mounted the redcoat shouting 'The day is ours.'" The shot which laid him low was fired by Peter Salem.

Many writers agree, though others question whether Salem was indeed the hero who fired the shot that repulsed this British charge. Whatever Salem's role at Bunker Hill, another Black whose name is not forgotten was his. Peter Salem, a Black who served in the Continental Army in the Northwest, was shot down on June 27, 1775. The 2,000 Black soldiers were 1-10th of the naval forces; blacks constituted only 140th of the Army.

In both branches they served in integrated units; in 1830 there were only three or four all-black units.

More than 20,000 slaves fled the planters to gain freedom on the British side — most as military laborers, some as soldiers. The British carried at least 19,000 of them subsequently to such places as Nova Scotia, the West Indies, and London. In 1787 the British established the colony of Sierra Leone in Africa for these former slaves.

The revolutionary struggle awakened many Americans to their treatment of blacks. Slaves petitioned for freedom, many times.

In the revolutionary atmosphere, Northern states began abandoning slavery and Southern states restricting importation of Africans.

The peak of the antislavery movement was reached in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 which stated that the Northwest should be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the future.

But the new federal Constitution, drafted in 1787, recognized slavery, by (1) counting five slaves as three persons for determining taxes and representatives; (2) providing for the return of fugitive slaves fleeing to other states; and (3) restricting for 20 years congressional interference with the African slave trade.

During this era individual blacks gained recognition, especially Abiel Whipple, who was known as "Slaver" in the slave trade.

Phillis came to America on a slave ship in 1761 and was purchased by John and Sarah Wheatley of Philadelphia. Phillis proved adept at learning to speak, read, and write English, the compositional poems after the style of Alexander Pope, publishing in 1733 a book, "Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral.

Benner, who was born free in Maryland, attended an integrated Quaker school near Baltimore. In 1761 he made a clock out of wooden parts, the first clock made wholly in America. In his late 20's he studied and mastered as a carpenter, then began issuing annual almanacs in 1791. President Washington appointed him to help survey the new national capital. Although Secretary of State Jefferson aided him to thus become the first black presidential appointee, Benner wrote him a blistering letter on Aug. 19, 1791, also sending him his first almanacs as proof of what blacks could do.

Richard Allen, who was born in Philadelphia, became a devout Methodist. Encountering discrimination in the Methodist Episcopal Church, Allen and his fellow blacks withdrew in 1787-87. Seven years later he founded Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. In 1836 the African Methodist Episcopal denomination was established with Allen as its Bishop. Thus blacks began proving their ability and protesting injustice.

Next: "The Cotton Kingdom and Plantation Slavery" (1871-1886).
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Revised May 23, 1924

WILLIAM LEHR
Lt. Col., Corps of Engineers
Supervisor, Specialist Training Branch

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
3-4996
Board of Barber Examiners
of the State of Maryland

NO. 64 M-C

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of HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND.

having met the requirements contained in Ch. 371, Acts of 1935,
is hereby granted this

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and by virtue of said registration is permitted to practice the oc-
cupation of a master barber in the State of Maryland, in
accordance with the provisions of Ch. 371, Acts of 1935, until
such time as the Board revokes this certificate, for the viola-
tion of any of the provisions of said Act or for the failure
on the part of the holder of this Certificate of Registration to
pay the annual renewal fee provided for in said Act.

In Testimony Whereof the seal of the Board and the sig-
natures of the President and the Secretary have been attached
at Baltimore this 17th day of JANUARY 1936

[Seal]

[Signature]
President.

[Signature]
Secretary.
This Is To Certify that JAMES TRAYMAN, JR.

of HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND,

having met the requirements contained in Ch. 371, Acts of 1935, is hereby granted this

Certificate of Registration as Journeyman Barber

and by virtue of said registration is permitted to practice the occupation of a journeyman barber in the State of Maryland, in accordance with the provisions of Ch. 371, Acts of 1935, until such time as the Board revokes this certificate, for the violation of any of the provisions of said Act or for the failure on the part of the holder of this Certificate of Registration to pay the annual renewal fee provided for in said Act.

In Testimony Whereof the seal of the Board and the signatures of the President and the Secretary have been attached at Baltimore this 17th day of JANUARY 1936.

President.

Secretary.
SANITARY RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Each barber shall display his license in front of his stand in such a manner that it can be observed by persons whom he serves. A copy of these Shop Rules shall be posted in a conspicuous place in every barber shop.

2. No operator shall be employed in any such establishment who is affected with syphilis in the infective stage or with any other communicable disease in an infective stage or with any communicable infection of the skin.

3. Every person in charge of a barber shop shall keep such establishment in a clean and sanitary condition. There shall be available an adequate supply of running hot and cold water.

4. The hands of operators shall be washed with soap and water before serving each customer.

5. Shaving mugs and brushes shall be thoroughly rinsed with hot water after each use thereof.

6. There shall be a separate clean towel for each customer and no towel shall be used for more than one person without being thoroughly laundered.

7. A clean towel or individual neck strip shall be placed around the patron’s neck to avoid contact with the hair gown.

8. The head rest shall be covered by a clean towel or clean paper for each customer.

9. No powder puff, sponge or finger bowl shall be used in any such establishment.

10. Alum or other material used to stop the flow of blood shall be applied in powdered or liquid form only.

11. The use of cake or solid soap is prohibited in any such establishment.

12. The instruments used on each customer shall be made safe immediately after such use, by rinsing in hot water, or by dipping for one minute in a 10% solution of commercial formalin, or by dipping for three minutes in alcohol (70 to 80%); or by the use of some equally efficient disinfectant.

13. After the handling of a customer affected with any eruption, or whose skin is broken out, or is inflamed or contains pus, the hands of the attendant shall be disinfected immediately. This shall be done by thoroughly washing the hands with soap and hot water, followed by rinsing in alcohol (70 to 80%) or in a solution of corrosive sublimate (1 to 1,000), or by the use of some equally efficient disinfectant.

14. No barber shop shall be used as a dormitory or for any other purpose except such as may be reasonably appropriate to its use as a barber shop.

15. It is advisable to keep all implements, such as razors, scissors, combs, hair and shaving brushes, and neck dusters, in an air-tight cabinet containing a 10% solution of commercial formaldehyde.

Adopted and promulgated by the Board of Barber Examiners, with the approval and consent of the State Board of Health, in accordance with the requirements contained in Chapter No. 371 of the Acts of 1935.

DR. ROBERT H. RILEY, Director of Health

ARTHUR W. DUEER, President.

VINCENT A. CINQUEGRANI, Secretary.

ROBERT W. SMITH, Treasurer.

Allegany County’s Oldest Black Church Fights For Survival

June 20, 1976

BY L. EUGENE GORDON
Sunday Times Staff Writer

FROSTBURG — No one alive now knows where the free blacks of Frostburg first worshipped. Even the history books appear mistaken on that point. Whenever or wherever it was, it certainly preceded President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation.

Today, more than a 130 years after the establishment of the first black congregation of free blacks, the old church is still serving Frostburg through the Dickerson African Methodist Episcopal Church. But for how much longer one really knows.

"It keeps every penny we’ve got to keep the church going," says Mrs. Dorothy Davis, who remembers being a little girl when the cornerstone of the present church was laid back in 1875.

According to Mrs. Davis, the congregation has become so small in recent years that "I can tell who’s in church by hearing the sound of their footsteps coming through the door for Sunday service," she states.

The Dickerson AME Church has seen its congregation dwindle from about 50 active members two decades ago to 11 today. Despite the decline, the church still carries its members on its discipline for AME general conference purposes.

Although the black population of Allegany County’s Mountain City is just under 100, the congregation on Sunday rarely tops the 20 mark.

"I guess the most we’ve ever had in the church at one time in recent years was the day Curt Harper got married," said Mrs. Georgia Wailes, one of the church’s two oldest members. Mr. Harper, a fourth grade teacher at Cumberland’s Penn Avenue School, is the church’s youngest member.

The one-room church, which touches the property line on three sides of the lot by 40-foot lot at the corner of Pine and Mechanic Streets, has not had a resident pastor for over 20 years, but is served today by Rev. Leroy Jackson, recently ordained "seminary" pastor from Seabrook, Md., for both Dickerson and Metropolitan AME church.

"Most of the black people who used to come to our church attend services at any of the older churches in the city," declared Mrs. Davis. "And most of the black students at Frostburg State College don’t even know we exist. All we want is a few more active members to keep the church going."

"We’re keeping it alive now only by the sweat of our brow," chimed Mrs. Wailes, who shares the title of eldest member at age 71 with Mrs. Garnell Stamper. "And the cost of keeping up the church is going up every day."

The Dickerson church, until about 10 years ago, was one of the two black congregations in Frostburg. However, under the Methodist Church unification a decade ago, the John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church joined the congregation of the First United Methodist Church.

According to the church’s cornerstone, the congregation had its beginning in the year 1845. It is believed that the church was located on Ormond Street then, known as Hall Harper after its pastor, Rev. A. Hall. But then, it might not have been because no member remembers.

The first preacher was also believed to be Jeffrey Golden, a freed slave, while another (Fred Tau) Rev. Thomas W. Henry was forced to flee Frostburg, according to the famous Harper County abolitionist John Brown.

The present wooden frame church had whitewashed Frostburg winters, although Mrs. Davis admits that the winds in the winter "shake the lights and rattle the windows a bit."

The light fixtures themselves attest to another era, being etched glass chandeliers. But the stained glass windows is another story," she adds.

"We had beautiful stained glass windows here at one time. Mrs. Wailes declared, "but it seems that we can’t keep up with the beer cans that keep flying through them."

Pine Street is a narrow alley next to the church, and the five parking spaces on church property across the alley is a haven for young beer drinkers.

And the financial upkeep mounts elsewhere, too. Twice in the past couple years the church’s gas meter has been knocked off its pipes in front by drivers, while just last week a concrete block was jarred loose on the foundation from yet another parker across the street.

"We have been able to keep the church solvent to date," said Mrs. Wailes, "but the way things keep getting broken around here, we won’t be able to keep our heads above water."

Shelton are the church’s future.

Dickerson AME Church — Frostburg, Md.
Corner Pine and Mechanic St.
The vault held treasure but not the kind Olga Woodward expected.
Pressured for office space, the Washington County recorder of deeds was
looking for an unlisted vacant room to rent when
she uncovered two lettered books —
proof that slavery once flourished
in Western Pennsylvania.
They were the Court Record of
Yohogania County, Va., 1776-1781
and the Negro (slavery) Register of Washing-
ton County, 1762-1785 (the county was
not incorporated as Washington until
1784).

THROUGH HER membership in the state Recorder of Deeds Association,
Mrs. Woodward discovered Washington
and Adams (Gettysburg) are the only
Pennsylvania counties still possessing
their slave registers.

Using the books as root-tracing
sources would be difficult, though, not
much because of the flowery handwriting
but because most slaves were not
identified by first name only. Some
were named of all and there's
no way of knowing if a freed slave or his
descendants assumed the listed mas-
er's surname.

Still, even a cursory glance through
the tomes yields interesting facts on the
status of blacks in colonial Pennsylvania.

In the register, in which every mas-
ter had to record his slaves, a typical
entry reads, "One negro woman named
Lore aged 16 years."

Women sometimes were listed
"wench" (which back then had no
offensive connotations); sexual design-
ation sometimes was preceded, if at all,
with any of three spellings of "mulatto."

WHO OWNED slaves? Just about
everyone: lawyers, doctors, millers,
"gentlemen," farmers — even minis-
ters. Isabella Wallace of Fallowfield
Twp., owned the most, 29.

Most slaves were young (age always
was listed soon after its adoption as a
price determinant had the master wish
to sell children, teens and young adults
among them in the Register.

Only three men and three women 40
or older are listed. The oldest were
David, owned by Joshua Meek of Nett-
ingham Twp., and Moll, belonging to
Francis Wallace of Fallowfield, both
69.

Note: kinship among slaves was not
important. Many entries obviously in-
clude a family or at least one parent
and children, but rarely were the rela-
tionships given.

This extends to the birth records in
the back of the register. The owner had
to report the births of slave children, so
her or her name was listed, but the
child's and mother's names were not.

AND NOWHERE is paternity identi-
fied, indicating it was unknown, of no
consequence or being covered up (more
than one owner registered the birth of
a "mulatto" child — his own,
perhaps?).

The court record shows just how
slaves were valued. They were
appraised in estate inventories along
with "ordinary" household goods and live-
stock such as "black hogs" and "wolves."

In the inventory of Jonathan Reed,
dated Dec. 18, 1777, two Negro males,
Pompy and Frank, were valued at $250
and $244 pounds respectively. Reed's
bay horse, in comparison, was listed at
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35.

And in Edward Griffith's estate of
Aug. 24, 1778, his boy Harry and
woman Sail were worth 54 and 88
pounds, his 34 sheep and 61 and three beds
and their bedclothes 78 total.

Slaves sometimes were freed and
their new status was public record.
"Certificate of Negro Yara's freedom" is
on page 21 of the county register nestled among various farmers' cattle
brands.

Mrs. Woodward had the register
recovered and rebound and the pages
laminated; the record remains torn and
frayed with some pages missing.

"I was afraid they'd be damaged or
destroyed if left in the courthouse," she
said, especially after one woman,
browsed through them drinking coffee
and smoking a cigarette.

So she got permission from the
County Records Committee of the
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum
Commission to donate them to the His-
torical Collections Library at Wash-
ton and Jefferson College.

"There will be copies at the court-
house for the public to see and you will
be able to make duplicates of pages to
take home," she said.

Above, Washington County Recorder
of Deeds Olga Woodward holds
the restored Negro Register
and its original, now shopworn, cover.
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