

## BLACK HISTORY BLACK CULTURE

### Diane Oliver 1943-1966

She was a writer who was born in Charlotte, NC. She was the managing editor of *The Carolinian*, the University of North Carolina's newspaper, and served as guest writer for *Mademoiselle* magazine in 1964. Oliver has written many short stories which have appeared in journals and magazines. Oliver was also a student in the Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa.

### Toussaint L' Overture 1743-1803

A slave until he was almost 50, he led a slave revolt in Haiti against the French in 1791. In 1793 when slaves were freed by the French, he aided them in fighting the Spanish. In 1799, a civil war broke out between blacks and mulattos. Toussaint was the leader of the Blacks. Later he was the ruler of Haiti. Determine to subdue Haiti, Napoleon reestablished slavery. Toussaint had resisted which cause a French expedition against him. He was eventually captured and he died in prison. The name L' Overture (The Opening) was given to him by the French governor of Haiti because he said that Toussaint was a man who finds an opening everywhere to break through enemy lines.

### Salem Poor

**Salem Poor**, a soldier of the American Revolution, was born in 1758 as a freeman in Massachusetts. Very little is known about his adolescence, but when the colonies declared war on England, Poor answered the call by enlisting in a Massachusetts Militia company under Capt. Benjamin Ames. He was said to have served with valor and bravery at the Battle of Bunker Hill on June 17, 1775. A most memorable fact about Poor is that he was credited with **picking off** Lt.Col. James Abercrombie. Later, thirteen of his fellow white officers petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts suggesting that he be rewarded for his actions and praising his display of bravery and his great character.

There is no record that Poor received an award. He did however, go on to serve at Valley Forge, Pa., and at White Plains, N.Y., although his service went unrecognized.

### John R. Mitchell Jr

**John R. Mitchell Jr.**, was born on the northern outskirts of Richmond, Va., to slave parents. He managed to acquire a formal education and after graduation,

spent a brief time as a teacher and as a correspondent for *The New York Globe*. Mitchell assumed control of *The Richmond Planet* in 1884 and transformed it into one of the nation's leading Negro newspapers.

Mitchell was best known for his stands against discrimination, lynching, and "ruinous race-legislation". He was also one of the nation's most outspoken Negro opponents of imperialism.

In 1902, Mitchell founded the Mechanics Savings Bank of Richmond, Va., in hopes of economic betterment of the black people. He became a very successful businessman and created many opportunities for his race.

### Nathan Ashby

Nathan Ashby was a former slave. He became the first black minister of an independent Negro Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

### Benjamin Mays

Benjamin Mays was the first Black man to head an all Black Male school in the nation. The school is located in the city of Atlanta Georgia named Moorehouse College.

### W. E. B. Dubois

W. E. B. Dubois is known for being the President of the National Association Advancement of Colored people, (NAACP). He was also the first black to be admitted to The House of Representatives in the United States Government.

### Thurgood Marshall

Thurgood Marshall is known for being the first Black elected Supreme Court Judge. He was also a member of the NAACP where he was a lawyer who was active in the Civil Rights Movement

### Matthew Hanson

Matthew Hanson was responsible for breaking the trail on the hind leg of the trek to the North Pole with explorer Robert Peary.

### Scott Joplin (1868 - 1917)

Born in Texarkana, Texas on November, 24. His father was a former slave and his mother was born free. Both

of his parents were musically inclined. Scott was one of six children. His musical interest was with the piano. He left home at an early age and went to St. Louis. He played Ragtime Piano, which was big at that time. He also toured the Vaudeville Circuits. His composition "Maple Leaf Rag" (1897), reportedly sold over a million copies of sheet music. After this success, he taught and composed such music as "Guest of Honor" a Ragtime Opera, "The Entertainer," "Paragon Rag", and his greatest negro folk opera - "Treemonisha". Joplin was considered a **Genius** by many people.

### Ida B. Wells Barnett (1862 - 1931)

Born in HollySprings Miss., she was left an orphan at 14 with 7 younger brothers and sisters to care for. She taught school, and later became an Editor and Publisher of "Free Speech" in Memphis, Tenn. Her fight against lynching was so fearless that her plant was burned and she was forced to flee for her life. In New York she continued her Anti-Lynching Editorials thru the Black New York Age Newspaper. She took her cause to England in 1893-94. In 1895 Miss. Wells married Ferdinand L. Barnett, the Publisher of Chicago's first Black Newspaper, The "Chicago Conservator". They fought tirelessly for Equal Rights in America. She organized Civic and Welfare Groups. **A courageous woman with vision.**

### Anna Julia Cooper (Pioneer Teacher)

Anna Julia Cooper had a lifelong quest for higher education for Blacks. She fought for Women's Rights. Born in 1858 in Raleigh, N.C. and historians presumed, fathered by her master, Dr. Haywood. As a child was sent to Raleigh's St. Augustines Normal School and Collegiate Institute, a school to prepare Black teachers. At 19, she married her Greek Studies Teacher George A.C. Cooper, who died two years later (1879). Anna became a full - time teacher. Eager for higher education, she enrolled at Oberlin College (Ohio) in 1881. Cooper became one of the first black women to earn a Bachelor's Degree at a major college (1884). She headed the Science and Modern Language Department at Wilberforce College. For this work, Oberlin Awarded her a master's degree. She taught a "M" Street Preparatory School a black school in Washington,

D.C. — became Principal in 1902. The D.C. School Board fired her in 1906. Later, the D.C. System rehired her. She went to Paris and earned a Doctorate at Sorbonne University. She died in 1964 at the young age of 106 years..

### Robert Smalls (1839 - 1915)

Born a slave, he rose to become a **Congressman** from South Carolina. In 1862 he was a pilot on the Armed Confederate steamer (The Planter). One night he stole the boat and ran it into the union lines. It had valuable war dispatches and cargo. The U.S. Navy made him the Chief Pilot on the The Planter. After the attack on Charleston, he was promoted to Captain. He also served as a Brig-Gen., in the Militia in South Carolina.

### Fanny L. Jackson Coopin (1835 - 1913)

Was born a slave in Washington, D.C., in 1835 and left an orphan at an early age. Her Aunt bought her freedom for \$125. Fanny worked for her schooling at State Normal School in Bristol, R.I. Later to Oberlin (Ohio) College where she graduated in 1865. She accepted a Teacher position in Philadelphia, PA., at the "Institute for Colored Youth." (Later known as the Cheyney Training School). In 1874 she became Principal and was outstanding as an Educator until her death, Jan. 21, 1913. Mrs. Coppin was active as Organizer and Lecturer in the Black Women's Rights Movements.

### Harriett Ross Tubman (1821-1913)

Harriett Tubman became the greatest conductor of the Underground Railroad, a network of waystations that helped Blacks escape from the South to free states and Canada.

She almost always began her escapes on Saturday night because it gave her 24 hours before anyone could advertise for runaway slaves. She also made a practice of escaping in the carriages of slave masters.

Fugitive slave laws passed in the United States in 1850 forced Harriet to move to Canada. She carried her aged parents there in 1857. Getting her parents out of Maryland was perhaps the most daring of the 19 trips she made.

Blacks referred to her as Moses and they sought her assistance. Tubman helped free more than 300 slaves.