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COLLECTION GUIDE

Black History Task Force Collection **Collection Number: 1786 THL**

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS: Collection is open to all researchers.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING REPRODUCTION AND USE: Restrictions may apply concerning the use, photoduplication, or publication of items in this collection. Consult a member of the archives staff for information concerning these restrictions. The user assumes all responsibility for identifying and satisfying any claimants of copyright. Some materials may require special handling.

PROCESSING INFORMATION: Processed by Lorna M. Loring, September 23, 2023. Updated January 26, 2024.

EXTENT: 0.42 linear feet

CREATOR: Black History Task Force (Winchester, Va.)

DATE: 2018-2023

SCOPE AND CONTENT: Materials in this collection consist of research into the history of African Americans from the Winchester-Frederick County area compiled by members of the Black History Task Force. The material includes photocopies of census records, deeds, wills, military records, newspaper and magazine articles, and other items. Material has been collected from a variety of online and archival sources.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL: The Black History Task Force consists of members of the local community who have an interest in highlighting the contributions of African Americans to the Winchester-Frederick County Community. Their research has led to the installation of several historic markers around Winchester to commemorate the achievements of African Americans.

Series 1: Brown family of doctors: The first series in this collection includes research into the family of Charles C. and Maria Fairfax Brown, who married in 1865. The couple went on to have eight children, of which six embarked on careers in medicine or pharmacy. A marker to honor their achievements in the medical field, as well as their philanthropy, was erected at the site of the Brown's family home (now demolished) at 202 N. Loudoun Street in Winchester, Virginia in June 2023.

Sara (1868-1948) graduated from Howard University's Medical School to become a gynecologist. She also became the first female alumnus elected to Howard University's Board of Trustees in 1924. John (1870-1951) practiced medicine in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Edward (1872-1912) studied pharmacy, also graduating from Howard University. He established Jennings and Brown Pharmacy, the first African American pharmacy in Pittsburgh, along with a colleague, Dr. Isaac Jennings.

Harrison (1874-1935) became an internist. He too practiced in Pittsburgh and was the first African American alumnus of Williams College, Massachusetts, to become a medical doctor. Nancy (1877-1958) chose pharmacy as her career, graduating from Howard University's Pharmaceutical School in 1909. Additionally, she co-founded the National Association of University Women (NAUW) for African Americans. James (1864-1958) studied urology and pharmacy at the University of Pittsburgh's Medical School. He and his brother Harrison were the first African Americans to earn degrees from the institution. James became the first Black person in the United States to become a urologist.

Series 2: Briscoe, Madison Spencer: Dr. Madison Spencer Briscoe was born in 1904 in Winchester, Virginia. He graduated from Douglas School in 1918 and later went on to study at Storer College in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. He would later teach at Storer and design its pre-med courses. Briscoe continued post-graduate studies in biological sciences at various institutions before completing a PhD in parasitology at Catholic University in St. Louis.

During World War II, Briscoe served as an expert in parasitology and tropical diseases, becoming a captain in the Sanitary Corps and then Commanding Officer of the 16th Malaria Survey Detachment of the U.S. Army. Following the war, he became an assistant professor at Howard University in the Department of Bacteriology, Preventative Medicine, and Public Health. The highway marker for Dr. Briscoe is located on the corner of East Cork and South Kent Streets, at the site of Briscoe's childhood home. The marker recognizes Briscoe's achievements in the fields of entomology and parasitology.

Series 3: Orrick, Robert: Robert Orrick (c.1827-1902), was an African American businessman and Methodist minister. Orrick was born into slavery in c.1827. His owner, Joseph Kean, allowed Orrick to start a livery business before the Civil War. Livery stables rented out horses and wagons and boarded horses for travelers. They were in essential service in any nineteenth-century town. Orrick's business did well, and after Emancipation he continued to prosper. He built a large stable on south Braddock Street, which he operated until his death. In 1865, Orrick was granted a contract with the U.S. Postal Service to deliver mail from Winchester to Romney, West Virginia.

Orrick was also a licensed Methodist minister and often preached to African American congregations in Winchester and Frederick County. In the late 1860s, Orrick donated materials to rebuild an African American chapel in Stephens City, which is now known as Orrick Chapel. For his entrepreneurship and philanthropy, Orrick was recognized with a highway marker in June 2022. It is located outside his former house at 15 S, Braddock Street in Winchester.

Series 4: Orrick Cemetery: Orrick Cemetery, located on Valley Avenue and named for African American entrepreneur and philanthropist Robert Orrick, is the only surviving African American cemetery that is still active in Winchester. It was formally incorporated in 1921 but had been used for decades prior to this date. The application for a Virginia Historical Highway Marker for this site has not yet been completed and submitted.

ARRANGEMENT: Material is arranged in folders alphabetically within the following series: Series 1: Brown Family of Doctors; Series 2: Briscoe; Series 3: Orrick, Robert; Series 4: Orrick Cemetery.

RELATED MATERIAL: Spottswood Poles Virginia Historic Highway Marker, 1681 WFCMS

IMMEDIATE SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: Research undertaken by the Black History Task Force.

CONTAINER LIST:

BOX 1

Series 1: Brown Family of Doctors

Articles

Brown, Charles (1828-1908) and Maria (1841-1908)

Brown, Edward Peter, 1872-1912

Brown, Harrison Morgan, 1874-1935

Brown, James Errol, 1864-1958

Brown, John William, 1870-1951

Brown, Nancy Fairfax, 1877-1958

Brown, Sara Winifred, 1868-1948

Brown, Sara W. and Nancy Fairfax (Howard University Material & Correspondence)

Census Records, Brown family, 1870-1940

Deeds for Brown properties (photocopies)

Historic Marker Application

Photographs, Brown Family

BOX 2

Series 2: Briscoe, Madison Spencer

Briscoe, Madison Spencer - Highway marker application and supporting materials.

Series 3: Orrick, Robert

Orrick, Robert - Highway marker application and supporting materials.

Series 4: Orrick Cemetery

Orrick Cemetery – Draft highway marker application and supporting materials.