

c. 1890



Walker Sales



We'll begin the family's local story in the 1890s, with Walker Sales. Born in 1864 in Morganfield, Kentucky, he came to Lake Forest around 1890, after years working as a farm laborer in Kentucky. In the 1900 census, Sales and his family were among about 100 Black residents living in the town of 2,200.

Lake Forest's African-American community dated to the years just after the Civil War, and grew through the late 1800s with prospects of steady employment, integrated public schools, and tight-knit neighborhoods of homes driving migration from the upper and middle south, often through word of mouth and familial connections. By 1900, two churches served the local Black community, the African Methodist Episcopal church at Maplewood and Washington, and First Baptist Church, founded that very year and then still searching for a home.

In Lake Forest, Walker Sales first worked as a coachman for the Rumsey family. Captain Israel Parsons Rumsey, Union Army veteran, and his family lived at the Evergreens, 404 East Deerpath, just east of today's Lake Forest Library. While working for the Rumseys, Walker Sales lived in the upper floor of the coachhouse at 361 East

Westminster (pictured here), with third wife Tischa and their children. (If this building looks familiar, it should; it was the previous home of the Historical Society for nearly 20 years, and was only recently demolished).



By 1900, Walker Sales was part of the two-man Lake Forest police force, working as the night officer with James Gordon as the daytime patrol. He was hired on a regular basis after serving on special assignment, which is detailed in the article at left - he acquired the evidence necessary to prosecute a blind pig - to convict "Mr. Ast" of selling liquor without a license (possible George Ast, a Libertyville grocer at the time).

Walker Sales served as a member of the Lake Forest police department for nearly 20 years. As the two Lake Forester newspaper articles on the right attest, his night duty was at times full of incident, like with this attempted robbery he foiled: "This morning around 3:00 a man was detected by policeman Walker Sayles trying to get into Mrs. Holt's residence (on Sheridan). When detected the man ran, and Sayles gave chase, firing two shots at the fleeing burglar. One shot passed through the man's hat knocking it from his head, but he succeeded in effecting his escape minus the hat." Other nights were more tame, like in the lower article where he confirmed some unseasonably snowy September weather to the news reporter.

1903-4

Lost Two Boys Same Week.

Walker Sales, night policeman, is suffering from typhoid fever at his home in the north part of town.

Lake Forester, January 10, 1903

Mrs. Sayles, wife of night policeman Walker Sayles, died of consumption Wednesday night.

Lake Forester, September 5, 1903

Policeman Walker Sayles has been called on to part with his two boys this week. The youngest, about four years old, died Monday and was buried Wednesday. The second boy, about six, died Thursday night.

Since the death of their mother the children had been living with Mrs. Sales' mother at Kenosha, where both were taken sick. Walker went after them about four weeks ago and brought them here so that he could look after them, but the disease, bronchitis, had got too firm a hold on them and when bronchial pneumonia developed it was more than they could stand.

Only one child, a girl of fifteen, is left.

Lake Forester, March 12, 1904

Unfortunately, during this period the young Sales family met with tragedy: 1-year-old Mildred died in 1896; wife Tisha Sales died of consumption in 1903; and two sons, 6-year-old Richard and a 4-year-old, died in 1904 of bronchial pneumonia. Only Sales' eldest daughter Mamie, born in 1889, survived into adulthood.

1910

America Bridgeman



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1917

Policeman Walker Sales and Miss America Bridgeman were married at Waukegan on Wednesday. The Rev. Johnson performed the ceremony. Mrs. Sales is a graduate of Fiske University. Walker's many friends are wishing him all happiness.

Lake Forester, November 26, 1910

Bridgeman America	Feb 4 - 4	5	4028	1	Wisconsin	Louisiana	Private
Walker Mamie	Jan 10 - 10	10	10	10	Kentucky	None	
Walker Walker	Jan 10 - 10	10	10	10	Kentucky	Alfred	Coler, 1887

U.S. Census, 1910

After Walker Sales began working for the police department, he and his family left the Rumsey coachhouse and rented rooms in a house on Wisconsin Avenue. The 1908 city directory lists him residing with daughter Mamie Sales, by then working as a dressmaker. They were boarding on Wisconsin with America Bridgeman, a Black woman who ran her own laundry business. In November of 1910, Walker Sales and America Bridgeman were married in Waukegan.

1916

STAR "COPPER" (WALKER SALES) USES AUTO TIRE AS A SHOE SOLE

For a week or so the star copper of the Lake Forest department has been Policeman Walker Sales. He has been as nimble as a flea on a bound dog and the celerity with which he skips about has wrought amazement on the countenances of the assembled multitude, as Joe Davis would say.

Now comes it. He half soles his shoes with automobile tires!

"The high cost of living can't scare me," says he. "I used to be a chauffeur and I still got a fine limousine tire left. I found out the cobblers are using paper so I just tacked on a hunk of automobile tire. I gave a piece to Ferd Berghorn—he's on the fire department—and that's what makes him so fast."

Chicago Tribune, December 30, 1916



POLICE FUND	
James Gordon, salary	100 00
Walker Sales, salary	50 00
Albert Hopman, salary	50 00
William Heibel, salary	50 00
F H Berghorn, salary	50 00

Lake Forest City Council minutes

During Walker Sales's tenure on the police force, the department grew from two officers to five by 1919; his salary (and that of other officers as well) increased from \$50/month to \$100/month. As night officer, Sales was often on call for burglary cases, and among his many duties included keeping watch during the "offseason" on any shuttered Lake Forest residences. Local newspapers, while remaining complimentary, periodically felt the need to explicate this role of a Black policeman in a North Shore community. The Chicago Tribune wrote: "In winter when many of the residents closed their homes they often left keys in charge of Sales, trusting him with thousands of dollars' worth of furnishings. He was reputed to be a brave man and a crack pistol shot." The Lake Forester wrote: "The night was never too dark or the request too impossible for Walker to undertake to be obliging. ... Hundreds and hundreds of little things that another man never would think of helped to make Walker popular..."

Another Tribune article from late 1916, as the U.S. role as supplier for the war-torn European countries drove up the prices of many material goods, featured Sales and his innovation of using car tires to sole his shoes. "The high cost of living can't scare me," the newspaper quotes Sales. "I used to be a chauffeur and I still got a fine limousine tire left. I found out the cobblers are using paper so I just tacked on a hunk of automobile tire. I gave a piece to Ferd Berghorn – he's on the fire department – and that's what makes him so fast." - Berghorn, of course, being a member of one of our other Centennial Families.

1919

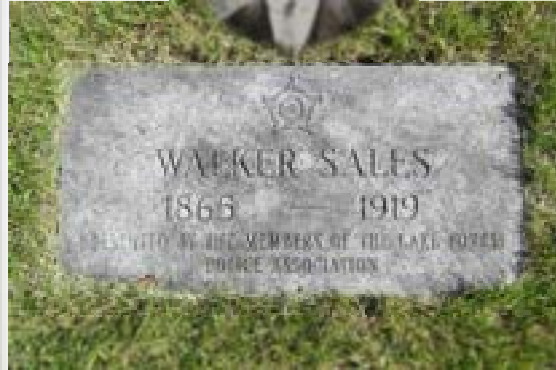
WALKER SALES

Walker Sales died at his home on Effner Street Monday, March third. He had been confined to his home for many weeks with a complication of diseases.

Walker came to Lake Forest twenty-five years ago from Morganstown, Ky. He first served as coachman for the I. P. Somsy family. After some effective special police duty it was thought practical to place him on the regular force where he has been the past fifteen years. Here he made many friends.

The night was never too dark or the request too impossible for Walker to undertake to be obliging. He has been missed greatly ever since he has been laid off the force. Hundreds and hundreds of little things that another man never would think of helped to make Walker popular and will keep his memory and to be desired.

He leaves a wife and daughter. Funeral services were held Wednesday afternoon at the First Baptist church, the Rev. H. E. Johnson, pastor of the Washburn A. M. E. church, officiating.



Lake Forester, March 7, 1919

On March 3, 1919, Walker Sales died following complications from asthma and heart trouble. His funeral was held at First Baptist Church and he was buried in Lake Forest Cemetery. After his death, the Lake Forest City Council passed a resolution: "Whereas, for over fifteen years, Mr. Sales had served the City, faithfully and efficiently, and by his kindly and sterling character and faithful discharge of duty, had won the approbation of the City Council and the officials of the City, as well as the citizens of Lake Forest..."

1938

Mrs. Amanda B. Sales, 80, Dies

Mrs. Amanda B. Sales, 80, widow of Lake Forest's only colored policeman, dropped dead on Sunday of a heart attack near her home at 321 East Granby Road. Mrs. Sales was proud of two things during her lifetime: that she had always been able to support herself, and of the splendid record made by her husband, Walker, as a member of the local police force.

Funeral services were held in the chapel of the Wenban Funeral Parlor on Wednesday at 3 p.m. Burial was in the Lake Forest Cemetery. Stuart Watson conducted the funeral services. Surviving Mrs. Sales are a sister, Mrs. Mattie Robertson, and a brother, Albert Bridgman, both of Tennessee.

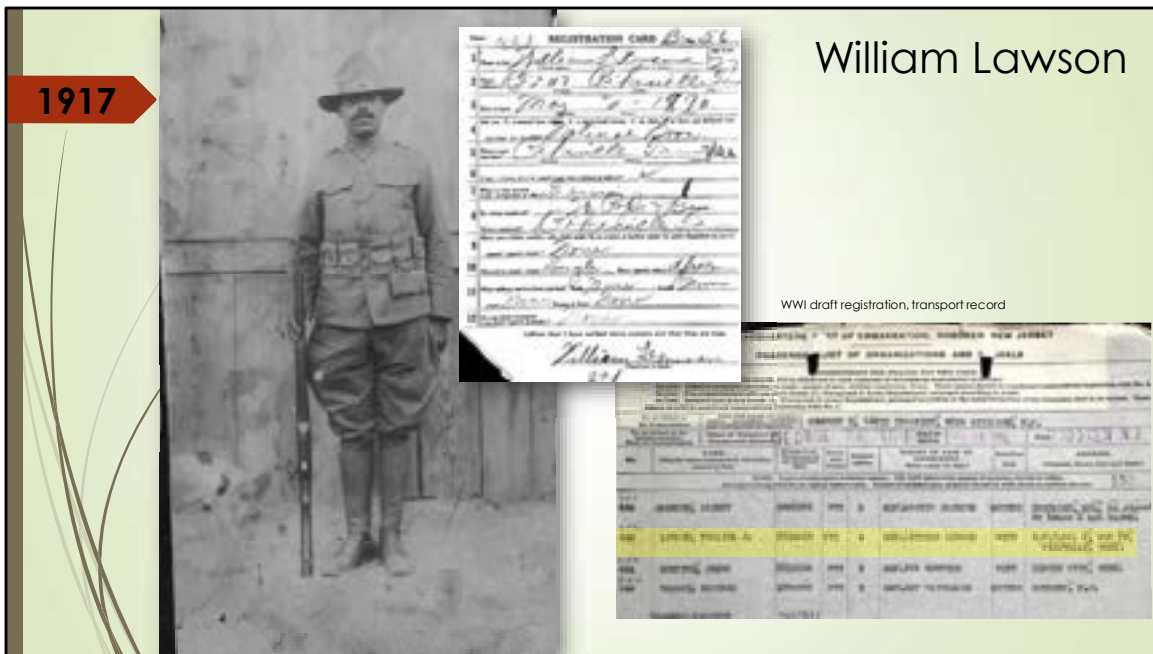
Lake Forester, March 3, 1938

America Bridgeman Sales



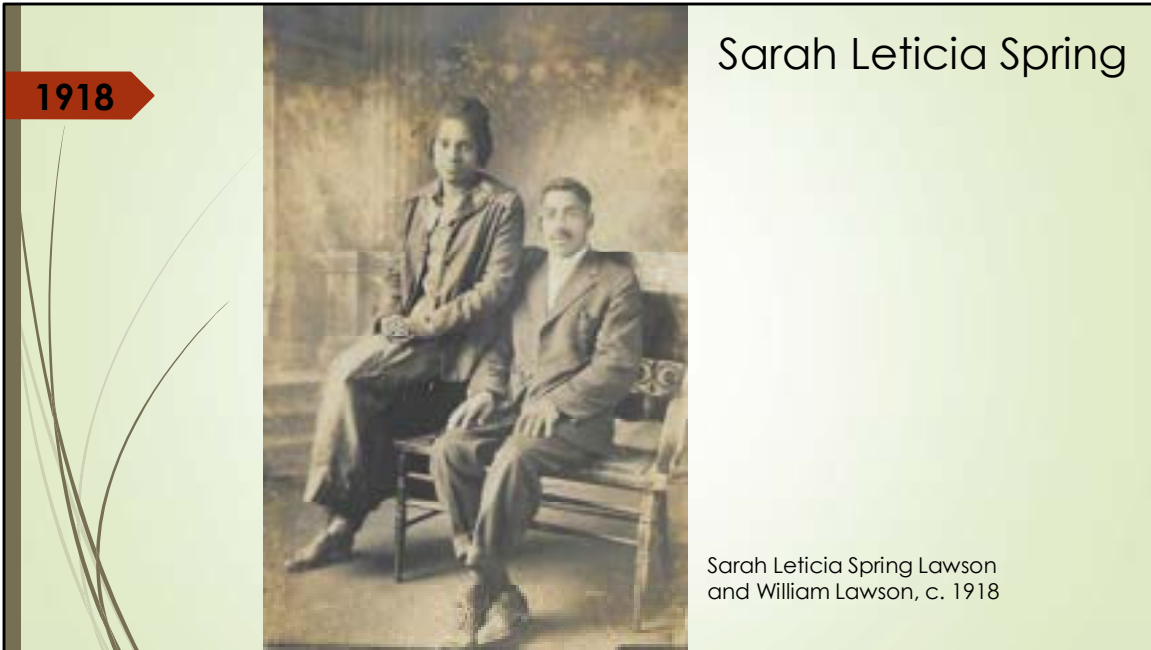
We haven't tracked down a photo of America Bridgeman Sales yet, but hope to at some point. She was born in 1876 in Pikeville, Tennessee, to William and Sarah Bridgeman. Her wedding notice lists her as a graduate of Fisk University, and she had made her way up to Lake Forest before 1908. After Walker Sales' passed on, she continued to live at 321 Granby and operate her laundry business until her own death in 1938. Her obituary in the Lake Forester, which mistakenly refers to her as Mrs. Amanda Sales, states that: "Mrs. Sales was proud of two things during her lifetime: that she had always been able to support herself, and of the splendid record made by her husband, Walker, as a member of the local police force." The obit lists only a couple siblings as survivors, but this was misleading.

Though America Bridgeman Sales had no children of her own, she was nonetheless a matriarch. Her house was a social center of the early twentieth century Lake Forest Black community. And not only did she serve as stepmother to Walker Sales' daughter Mamie, but her home was as the northern launching point and place of refuge for countless extended family members: uncles, nieces, nephews.

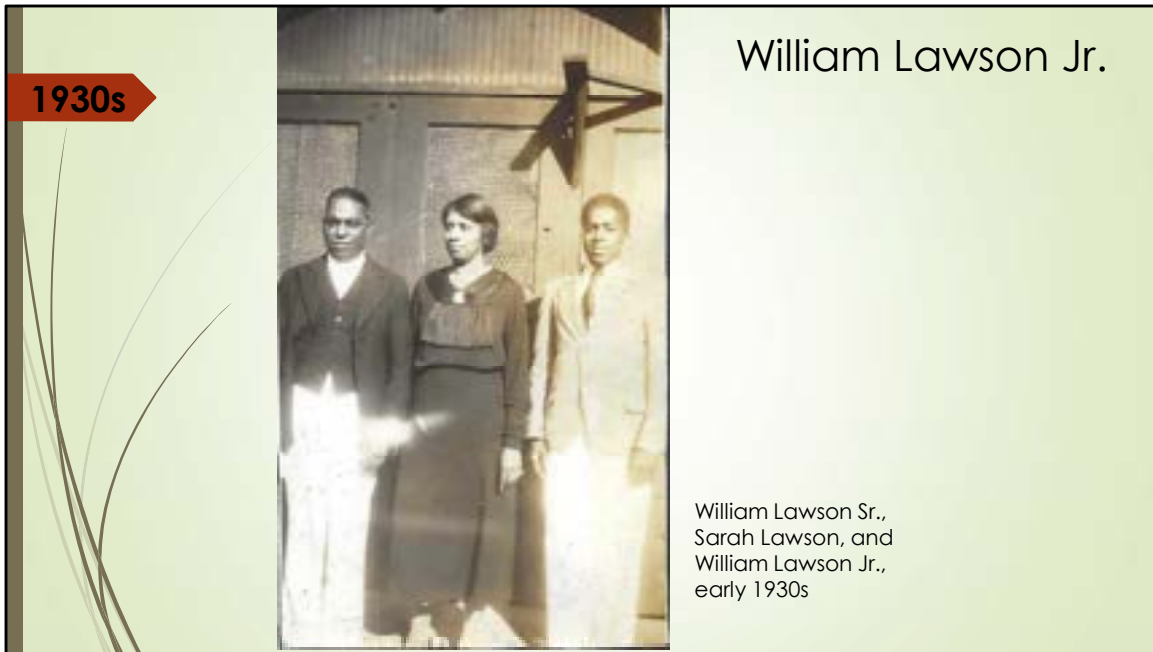


One such nephew is pictured here: William Lawson, born in 1890 in Pikeville, Tennessee, to America's older sister Arminta and Jasper Lawson. Pikeville is a rural town north of Chattanooga, which had a population of about 500 in 1920. The family worked as farm laborers.

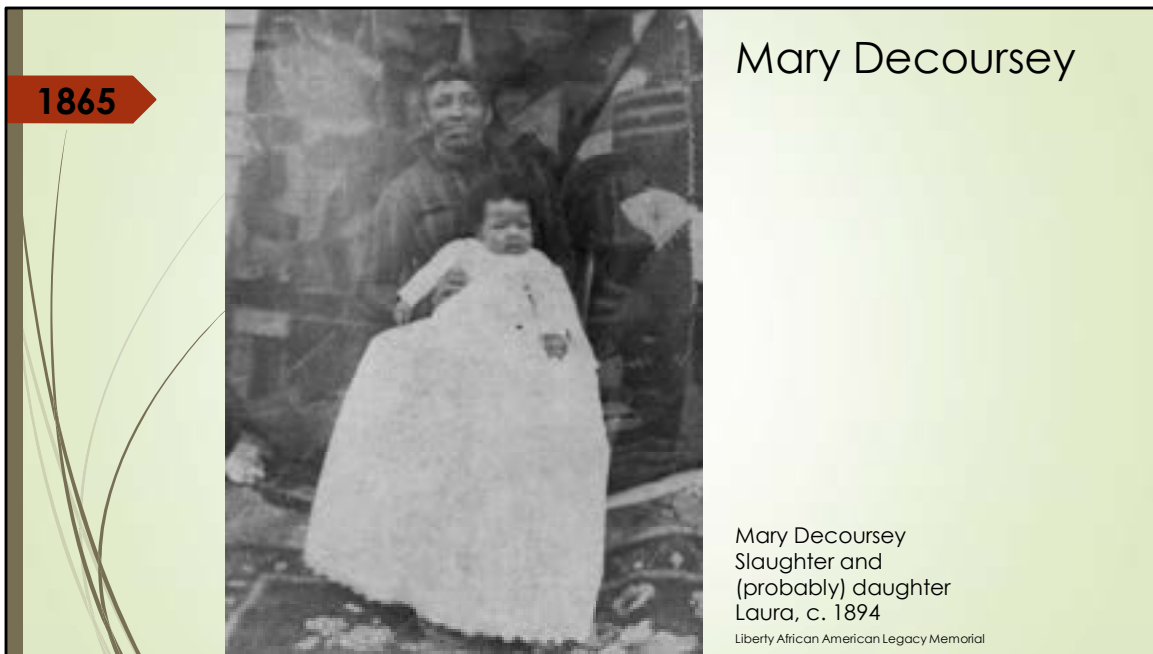
Lawson is pictured here in his World War I uniform, with his draft registration card and transport record overseas. He served as a Private in Company B of the 368th Infantry, 92nd Division - one of America's all-Black divisions in the war. After their arrival in France, these soldiers were deployed to the front lines in August 1918. The division saw action primarily in one of the last Allied operations of the war—the Meuse-Argonne Offensive that began in September and ended with the Armistice.



Shortly before departing for Europe, William Lawson married fellow Pikeville resident Sarah Leticia Spring. In late December 1918, their son William Jr. was born, after the Armistice but very possibly before his father was able to make the journey back overseas.

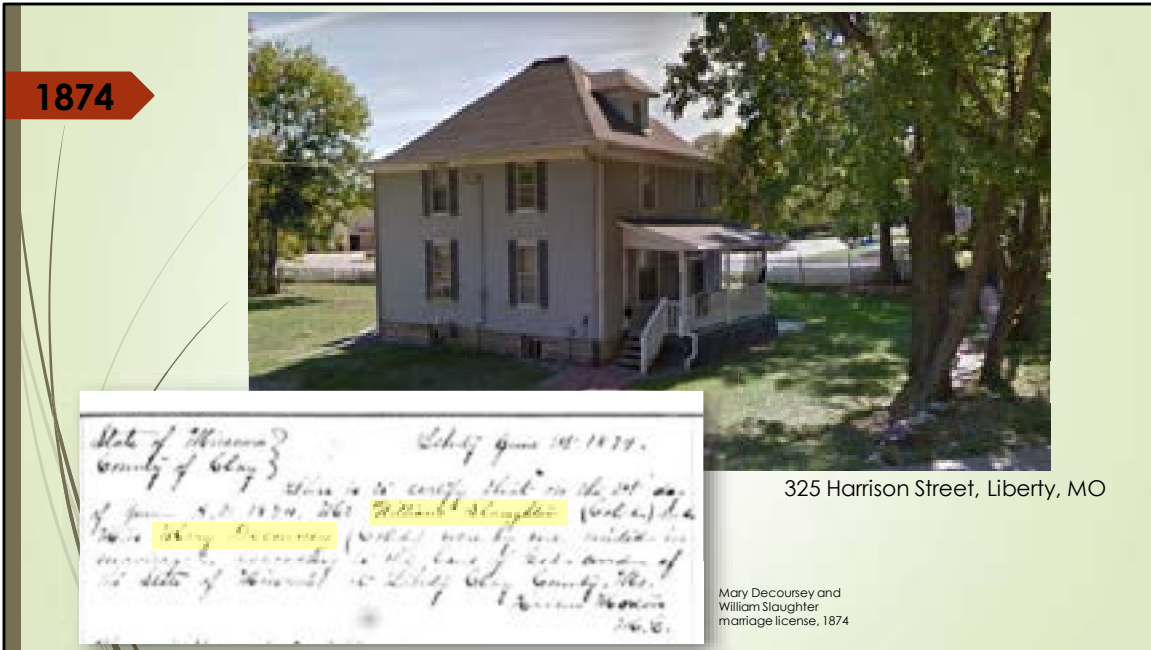


By the mid-1920s, the Lawson family had made their way to Lake Forest where Aunt America Bridgeman helped them get settled. William Jr. attended elementary school in Lake Forest. By 1930, the census shows the family running a grocery store in Chicago.



Here we will leave this side of the family briefly and track back in time to meet the other side. In 1850, Mary Decoursey was born into slavery in Liberty, Missouri, located northeast of Kansas City in one of the Missouri counties most closely aligned with the Confederacy. Her parents Joe and Maria were enslaved by wealthy landowner JTV Thompson; he later gave Joe and Maria as a wedding gift to his daughter upon her marriage to T.W. Decoursey. On January 11, 1865, following Missouri's Proclamation of Freedom, Joe, Maria and their daughter Mary were freed. Joe and Maria were finally legally able to marry and begin a life and Mary

was permitted to learn and go to school.



In 1874, Mary Decoursey married William Slaughter - their marriage record is shown below. Over the course of nearly 25 years, they had eleven children.

Pictured here is the Google Maps view of 325 Harrison Street in Liberty, Missouri, a home built by William Slaughter around 1880 and where he and Mary raised their family. According to a web memorial dedicated to Liberty's African-American history, it is located right across the road from the property line of the land where Mary Decoursey's parents were originally enslaved.

1917



William Slaughter

Mr. W. M. Slaughter, age 78 years, departed this life Monday, September 17, after an illness of several months. He was a faithful Christian and well respected citizen. He was one of the oldest deacons in the Baptist church of Liberty, Mo. The funeral services were held Wednesday from the church of which he had been a member. He is survived by a wife and eleven children and a host of relatives and friends. Mr. Slaughter is the father of Mr. Charles Slaughter who has one of the most up-to-date confectionary stores at 1315 North 9th street. The Sun extends its deepest sympathy to the bereaved relatives.

September 22, 1917

Mary's husband William Slaughter served in the Union Army in the Civil War, as a teamster in the 13th Missouri Cavalry, Company C. He worked as a farmer and a butcher, along with serving as a deacon in the Liberty Baptist Church.

Slaughter family

c. 1900s



Standing: Lizzie Slaughter, Bettie Slaughter, Anna Slaughter; Sitting: Laura Slaughter



Charles Slaughter, William Slaughter, Edgar Slaughter, Robert Slaughter

Pictured here are 8 of the 11 children of the Slaughter family - all four daughters and four of the seven sons. I love the photograph of the sisters in particular, with the quilt in the backdrop, taken outside the Harrison Street house in Liberty. The photo of their mother Mary, a few slides back, was also taken in front of a quilt – possibly the same one. There are always more stories to uncover!

In the early years of the 20th century, six of these Slaughter siblings – more than half – would end up migrating to Lake Forest.

William Slaughter

1907



The marriage in Milwaukee of Mr. William Slaughter and Lutie McIntosh, both of this city, is announced.

Lake Forester,
April 20, 1907



Lake Forester, January 29, 1910

One of the earliest was William Slaughter Jr, who was born in 1883. He was living in town by 1907, when the newspaper noted his marriage to Lutie McIntosh. By 1910, he was advertising a vacuum-cleaning business in the Lake Forester newspaper.

Elizabeth Slaughter Coleman

1910



LAKE FOREST, ILL.
By JERRY COLEMAN, JR.
 LAKE FOREST, Ill., May 31.—The recently organized Current Event club of First Baptist church, gave a tea and program at the church last Sunday afternoon.
 Before a capacity house members of the Keep Tryst Girls' Reserve Club, sponsored by Mrs. Irene Cobble McLaughlin, gave a unique program last Thursday evening at the Y. W. C. A. The program varied with many individual members and several short plays. The J. O. Y. Glee club of First Baptist church, sponsored by Mrs. Willis Ward and directed by Mrs. Helen Corbett of Racine, Wis., appeared in the program and rendered several groups of songs, most of which were Negro spirituals. Mrs. McLaughlin, with her charming personality, was the mistress of ceremonies during the evening performance.

On Friday evening, May 31, the J. O. Y. Glee club will give a musical program at First Baptist church. On the same evening following the musical the Men's Church Relief club will serve refreshments.
 The George Alexander McKimlock, Jr., Post, American Legion, invited members of the Keep Tryst Girls Reserve to march in the parade and participate in dedication ceremonies of the new Legion hall, last Sunday afternoon.
 Monday night at the remodeled Pietz's Sittles, popular road house, west of Lake Forest, the sophisticated ladies of the Gnostic Bridge club gave their spring formal dance. Over 100 guests from four or five states assembled for this gala annual affair given by the popular club.
 For your Defender and to report news call Jerry Coleman, Jr., 1388 Edgewood road, Lake Forest, Ill.

Chicago Defender, June 1, 1935

Slaughter, Elizabeth
 Lake Forest, Ill.
 1910
 Married
 1388 Edgewood Road
 Lake Forest, Ill.

U.S. Census, 1910

Also in Lake Forest by 1910 was Elizabeth Slaughter, born in 1889, then listed in the census as working as a domestic servant in a private home. She later married Jerry Burris Coleman; the pair first lived on Spruce and then later at 1388 Edgewood, where their four children grew up. (This home no longer stands - the back parking lot for the high school is located there today.)

The oldest Coleman child, Jerry Jr., was a budding journalist - by the mid-1930s, he was reporting about local happenings for the Chicago Defender, the

renowned Black newspaper.

Jerry and William Coleman

1939

Jerry Coleman Dies at St. Therese

Jerry Burris Coleman Jr., colored, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Burris Coleman of 1388 North Edgewood Road, died at the St. Therese Hospital, Waukegan, on Friday, January 20. He was 18 years old at the time of his death.

Funeral services were held at the First Baptist Church of Lake Forest on Monday, January 23. Burial was in Lake Forest Cemetery.

Surviving are his parents, two brothers, William and Robert, and a sister, Frances.

Lake Forester, January 26, 1939



William Coleman Will Be Buried Here Today

William Coleman, colored, 16-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Coleman of 1388 North Edgewood Road, Lake Forest, died in St. Therese Hospital, Waukegan, on Tuesday, February 14.

Born in Lake Forest, William attended the Lake Forest Public Schools, and prior to his illness was a student at the Lake Forest High School.

Surviving are his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Burris Coleman; a brother, Robert; and a sister, Frances. Another brother, Jerry Coleman Jr., died on January 20, 1939.

Lake Forester, February 16, 1939

Unfortunately, Jerry was not strong in health - an enlarged heart - and was hospitalized and ultimately died in early 1939. His brother Bill, two years younger, fell ill and died less than a month later; family lore is that the brothers were so close, Bill died of a broken heart.



Frances Coleman

Pictured here is their younger sister Frances Coleman, who graduated from Lake Forest High School in 1945 and went on to study at Lake Forest College. As a young woman, she decided to make a change and see more of the world - she bought a Chevy Impala Super Sport yellow convertible with a black top, drove out to California, and looked for a job. Later, when asked how old she was when she went to California, she responded that she was “quite young... but old enough to vote.” She continued: “I had never been anywhere, and that made me quite mad... always in the same place. So I just decided that I would go to California, so I bought a car... I bought maps and put them all around my living room wall so I would know where I was going to stop first and where I was going next. ... I went out there and I was hired the same day because there was a young woman who worked in one of the offices that I worked at, and she recommended me to these lawyers in Beverly Hills and so when I got up there, they hired me.” Following that job, she worked at Paramount Pictures as a legal secretary. Then she worked for TV writers and producers Norman Lear and Bud Yorkin when they were starting out.

Bealy Slaughter

1913

Mr. B. Slaughter and Miss Minnie Waters were united in the holy bonds of matrimony last week.

Chicago Defender, April 26, 1913

In Lake Forest: Bealy Slaughter and wife bought a 50-foot lot on south side Spruce avenue, west of Sheridan Road, from Wm. Knist for \$800.

February 23, 1918



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1929

ANNOUNCEMENT

I wish to announce that I have just purchased a Ford truck and will do any kind of general hauling and garbage collecting. Your patronage will be greatly appreciated.

BEALY SLAUGHTER
Telephone 750 Lake Forest

Lake Forester, March 23, 1923

Bealy Slaughter, born in 1880, had joined his siblings in Lake Forest by 1913, when he and Minnie Waters were married. He had a young son, Carl, from a previous marriage. In 1920, he was working as a handyman over at Great Lakes. He launched his own garbage hauling business in the 1920s after purchasing a Ford truck, going on to work for the City in that capacity as well. Around that time, Bealy and Minnie Slaughter moved to 1359 Edgewood, one of four homes on lots long owned by the Shepard family, as you can see on this map.

1937

Edwina Jennings




Lake Forester, April 8, 1937

Living with Bealy and Minnie Slaughter was a relative of Minnie's, Edwina Jennings, who you can see pictured here doing some acrobatics in gym class at Gorton School. She went on to marry Mitchell Whittingham and lived at 1359 Edgewood for many years.

Edgar Lawrence Slaughter

1913



If you care to go somewhere in an automobile, be sure to call on Mr. Edgar Slaughter.

Chicago Defender, April 4, 1914

Notice! Mr. Edgar L. Slaughter opens his confectionery Sunday, June 8, in his former place, Oakwood avenue, and will be ready to serve you with all kinds of cool drinks and delicious ice cream, sundaes and sodas. Come and give him a call Sunday, June 8.

Chicago Defender, June 12, 1913

E. L. Slaughter has been successful in securing the agency for the Crisis. If you are interested in Negro literature let him call and see you or phone him.

Chicago Defender, October 4, 1913

Bealy's younger brother Edgar Lawrence Slaughter, born in 1884, had also relocated to Lake Forest around 1910, living on Oakwood Avenue, where in 1913 he opened a confectionery. There he served "all kinds of cool drinks and delicious ice cream, sundaes, and soda." Likely he had undergone training in this line back in his hometown of Liberty, Missouri, where his oldest brother Charles ran a well-known confectionery.

This could have been the precursor to another sort of beverage business. Family lore has it that during Prohibition, at least one of the Slaughter brothers, on the down low, sold bootleg alcohol at 41 and Deerpath, helping to supply the local demand, which I can imagine, once private stocks ran out, was considerable.

Edgar Slaughter also worked as a driver and as the local seller for the NAACP's publication, *The Crisis*.

1925

AMATEUR ROBBERS ARE EASILY SCARED AWAY

The home of E. J. Learned at 500 Deerpath East was entered by would-be burglars on last Friday night; but when they discovered nothing of value and tried to get into the garage, they were frightened away by Mrs. Slaughter, wife of the caretaker, who called the Lake Forest police. In their haste, the men left some groceries and two dresses, their loot, on the window sill of the house. They were evidently acquainted with the fact that the Learneds were in Florida.

Lake Forester, November 13, 1925

By the 1920s, Edgar was working as a caretaker and gardener at the Learned estate at 780 Deerpath and living in one of the estate outbuildings. On one occasion, his wife Deborah frightened away attempted burglars by interrupting their search for valuables and calling the police.

1929



Girl Reserves Give Play This Evening at Y. W.; Features

The Y.W.C.A. will be the scene of an interesting entertainment this evening the occasion being the presentation of a play, "Brownie and the Law," by the Keep Tryst Girl Reserves. The members of the club have been working strenuously in preparation for this play under the supervision of their adviser, Mrs. Frederic McLaughlin. The club is composed of some of the younger colored girls of Lake Forest.

The program will be as follows:
Waltz Club
Mollie Ross
Play

"BROWNIE AND THE LAW"
Prologue read by Josephine Washington

Julius
Nortia
Lester
Miss Holden Mildred Slaughter

Wilmont - Ruth Ryan, Laura Cooper
Irene, Louise Jordan, Roy Ryan, Marie, Mary Street, and Josephine
Lester

Director - "Waltz Club" - Mildred Slaughter and Mollie Ross
Dance - "Soft Shoe Club"

Exit - Ruth Ryan, Edna Davis, Marjorie
Grove of Mount Carmel by the club

"In Honor, Mollie"

"Somebody's Favorite"

"Lutes de de Lander"

"Waltz Away"

Miss Maryonette Cooper is the solo

The proceeds of this entertainment

will be used to pay the pledge club to the Y.W.C.A. Tickets

for sale at the "U" and any one interested in work

is welcome.

Lake Forester, April 11, 1930

Mildred Slaughter



Eleven members of the Keep Tryst club were present at a party on Tuesday afternoon. This club is composed of young colored girls and has just completed its first successful year under the presidency of Miss Mildred Slaughter.

Lake Forester, October 11, 1929

Edgar and Deborah Slaughter's daughter, Mildred Slaughter, was born in 1916. Like other women in her family, Mildred Slaughter was involved in the local YWCA - Young Women's Christian Association - which met on the second floor of the Marshall Field building in Market Square. She became the president of the Keep Tryst Girl Reserves, precursor of the Girl Scouts - leading the troop of local African-American girls. The group's adviser was the famed flapper, dancer and performer Irene Castle McLaughlin, who had settled in Lake Forest after marriage and semi-retirement.

1938

Miss Mildred Slaughter has accepted the position of Business and Industrial Secretary in the Phyllis Wheatley Association in Cleveland, Ohio. Miss Slaughter has been very active in the Association since she was a High School Girl Reserve. The last few years she has been acting as the Adviser for the Negro Girl Reserve clubs, has helped formulate the Mothers' Council, and has been interested in a literary group which is composed of young men and women of Lake Forest. Miss Slaughter will be leaving on Monday, May 30.

Lake Forester, May 26, 1938



Top Row - David Dwyer, Mildred Slaughter, Arnold Hart, Lois Wilson, Alice Long, Florence Yell, Fred Burr - Nancy Galt, Cameron Cross, Helene McGinn, Betty Swickard, Stephen Gray

Forester yearbook, 1938

Graduating from high school as an honor student, Mildred Slaughter went on to attend college at the Hampton Institute for a few years before returning to Lake Forest College, where she wrote for the literary magazine. After graduation, she took on an advisory role with the Lake Forest YWCA and taught classes in Waukegan, before taking a paid position at the Phyllis Wheatley Association of Cleveland, then referred to as the "Black YWCA." She later studied social science at Northwestern and went on to live in Connecticut, working for the YWCA in Hartford and marrying Gibson Young.

c. 1950



Standing (left to right): Porter Ponder, Jerry Coleman, William Slaughter, Bettie (Slaughter) Jordan, Annette (Slaughter) Gray, Joe Landry. Seated (left to right): Mary Ponder (with Laura Elizabeth in her lap), Laura Slaughter, Robert Slaughter, Henry Slaughter, Mary Slaughter, Colleen (Byrd) Myers

I love this photo, which shows an extended Slaughter family reunion around 1950 - both siblings who relocated to Lake Forest, like William, Bettie, and Anna (all standing, middle), and Laura, Robert, and Henry, who stayed local to the Liberty area (all seated, middle).



The last Slaughter sibling to come to Lake Forest in the early 1900s was Bettie, born in 1887. In her early 20s, she traveled to Lake Forest to visit her older sister Anna Gray and attend a church picnic. The visit extended from days to weeks to months - and she never really left after that.

1911

Washington Jordan



However beautiful and charming the city of Lake Forest can claim to be, this was not the only attraction for Bettie Slaughter. She also met the man who would shortly become her husband. Washington Jordan was born in 1885 in Nashville, Tennessee. By 1910, he is listed in the census as living in Lake Forest, lodging with Chauncey Tibbetts, the superintendent of Mellody Farm, the J. Ogden Armour estate, and perhaps working there as well. The inspiration for this photograph was perhaps that he went on to work as a chauffeur, for the mayor of Lake Forest, Keene H. Addington. Son Alphonso Jordan recalled how when the Northwestern train came in at 5:55 p.m., all the chauffeurs would arrive at the station, backing their cars into the same spots every night.

1912

Jordan Family



LAKE FOREST.
(Special to The Chicago Defender.)
Lake Forest, Oct. 14.—The proudest man in Lake Forest at this writing, and the man who wears a smile that won't come off, is Mr. Washington Jordan, who was greeted at a very early hour Saturday morning from the Stork Limited, a fine baby girl. Mother and daughter are doing nicely.

Chicago Defender, October 25, 1913

**Mr. and Mrs. Washington Jordan
are the proud parents of a son, LeRoy
Jordan, born Monday, Nov. 24.**

Lake Forester, December 5, 1924

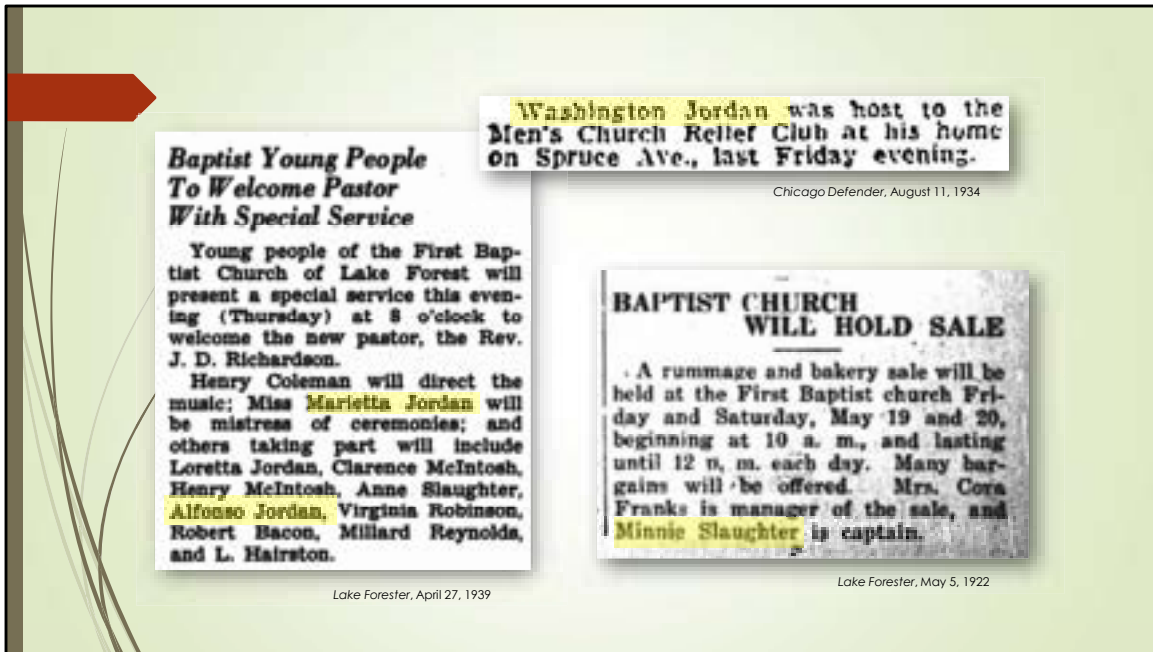
Bettie Slaughter Jordan and Washington Jordan married and soon started a family, as you can see from these newspaper notices. The one on the left from the Chicago Defender, announcing the birth of first daughter Eloise in 1913, reads, “The proudest man in Lake Forest at this writing, and the man who wears a smile that won’t come off, is Mr. Washington Jordan, who was greeted at a very early hour Saturday morning from the Stork Limited, with a fine baby girl.”

Bettie and Washington Jordan went on to have eight children, though three sadly died as infants or in early childhood. Five grew up in Lake Forest and we will meet them shortly.

First Baptist Church of Lake Forest



As befits a couple who met at a church picnic, Washington and Bettie Jordan were very involved at First Baptist Church, pictured here in the 1960s and again more recently. Washington Jordan is one of the early church deacons referenced in the cornerstone, erected as the church building underwent numerous physical improvements in the early 1900s.



The Jordan family was involved in all aspects of church activities and events - book clubs, social clubs, the J.O.Y. club for young people, bake sales, welcoming ceremonies for new pastors, the Men's Church Relief Club during the Great Depression...you name it.

1931

Troop 58 Organized at Lake Forest Baptist Ch.

Troop 58 is composed of all Negro boys and leaders. Its leader, Mr. Washington Jordon is doing a good steady job in helping the boys in their scouting ranks. The troop is necessarily small but the boys like scouting very much and are getting along fine. This troop was organized in June, 1930. Mr. Jordon and his son Alfonso Jordon, assistant scoutmaster, are taking the scoutmaster's training course. Following is their roster:

Troop committee: J. B. Slaughter and Rev. R. S. Johnson; scouts: Allen Casselberry, Arthur Davis, and Alphonso Jordon.

Lake Forester, February 6, 1931

Washington Jordan also served as the troop leader for the Boy Scout troop organized at First Baptist Church and which included his son, Alphonso.

1925

441 Spruce



In the early 1920s, the growing Jordan family was living in a home on Bank Lane; Washington Jordan worked as a janitor and laborer at private homes; he would go from estate to estate lighting fires and cleaning flues, for example. With commercial development along Bank Lane and Oakwood in the 1910s, 20s and 30s, including the new bank and the Deerpath Inn south of Deerpath and Market Square and the post office north of Deerpath, most of the African-American residences and businesses that had been located in these areas had to relocate. Washington Jordan built a new home for the family at 441 Spruce Avenue in 1925, right in the midst of the growing Black neighborhood at Spruce and Edgewood. Sided with stucco, the home always stayed very cool in the summer.

Even with a family of seven, the Jordan family stayed solid through the Great Depression, = maintaining their two-car household. Bettie Jordan was also employed, taking in laundry and doing other day work around the community. She kept meticulous account books; one of those passed down to her descendants even indicates that entertainer Jack Benny, whose father Mayer Kubelsky had a tailor shop in Market Square, still owes her a few dollars – not sure what that translates to with inflation, but could be worth checking into...

The Spruce Avenue neighborhood helped prop each other up, trading goods grown in gardens, keeping chickens. The Jordans had a peach tree and their neighbors the Saddlers had a plum tree, and everyone would exchange fruit for preserves.

The house still stands on Spruce although much of the surrounding neighborhood has changed, and has remained in the same family for nearly 100 years.



1929

Sport Writer Loses Life in Flaming Home

Fred A. Hayner, sports writer for the Chicago Daily News and one of the most brilliant players and authors, perished last night in a magnificent fire that destroyed his \$24,000 home at 1008 Sheridan road, Lake Forest. His wife thought her was out of the flames was found wandering in the street of a nearby road, located dead only in a night dress with temperature all over. The boys, Francis and James, 12 and 14 years old, were rescued by doctors.

Mrs. Hayner, in last coherent words at a neighbor's home where she was found, mentioned about about an explosion. Neighbors stated, however, that they had heard, and Washington Jordan, a gro living in a nearby street, turned to the street, was pushed down the street.

Spies beside the street.

All was quiet at the Hayner residence, a large two-story colonial structure of wood, whose two Lake Forest neighbors passed in on their last at 11:00 p. m. The women take the colored man saw smoke coming from the basement windows and retreated the street. Within minutes the flames the fire engulfed the roof of the village were at the scene with their own papers and books and other valuables were drifting in their own direction, which was by the falling of the bed in the tower of the village hall.

Washington Jordan; a colored man living back of the Hayner house saw the flames through a window and called the fire department at 10:45.

Lake Forester, January 18, 1929

Chicago Tribune, January 15, 1929

The Jordan home is located just around the corner from where Sheridan School is today, but back in the 1920s, a large residence was located there, inhabited at the time by former Lake Forest College football star and Major League baseball player Fred Hayner and his family. Hayner had gone on to work as a sportswriter for the Chicago Daily News, and is one of those credited with coining the name “Cubs” for the Chicago baseball team.

In January, 1929, the Hayner house suffered a devastating fire. Their neighbor Washington Jordan was first to spot the smoke and flames; his quick call of the fire department very possibly is what allowed the firefighters to rescue Mrs. Hayner and the two boys. Sadly Fred Hayner perished in the blaze, having earlier gone down to the basement, the source of the fire, to investigate why the home’s electric lights had gone out.

1942



Lake Forester, October 5, 1978

Alphonso Jordan

The Gold Coasters softball team met Friday night at the home of Alfonso Williams on Spruce Ave. and elected officers for the coming season. Carl Slaughter was elected manager. Alfonso Williams was made assistant manager and Charles Stewart was named captain of the team. Among those who reported for the team's initial practice were **Alfonso Jordan**, Arthur Davis, Walter Matthews, Dubois Pearson, Albert Warren, John Fowler, Napoleon Gregory, Francis Collins and Lewis Carter, a newcomer from Galesburg, and Capt. Charles Stewart. Send all news to Jerry Coleman Jr., 1345 Edgewood road, or phone L. F. 332.

Chicago Defender, April 21, 1934

Mrs. Lily Jones of Waukegan announces the approaching marriage of her daughter, Beulah, to **Alfonso Jordan** on Tuesday, June 30, at 8 p.m. at the Shiloh Baptist Church in Waukegan. Mr. Jordan is the son of Mrs. J. W. Jordan of East Illinois Road, Lake Forest.

Lake Forester, June 18, 1942

Alphonso Jordan was the oldest of the Jordan children, born in 1912. He was involved with Boy Scouts, sports, and worked as a caddy at the Onwentsia Club, getting up early to arrive by 6 a.m. and be one of the first caddies out on Sunday mornings. After high school, he played for the Gold Coasters softball team, made up of local Black players, which competed against various community teams from around the area. In 1942 he married Beulah Jones of Waukegan - they lived at 1373 Edgewood.

Community Service Grocery

1978



Lake Forester, October 5, 1978



As a young man, Alphonso Jordan got a job stocking shelves at a local grocery store, Consumers Grocery. He moved on to Community Service Grocery, located where Starbucks is today, for 13 years doing everything from delivering and burning the trash down in the basement (where the heating plant for Market Square was located), to becoming shipping clerk and waiting on customers, according to a 1978 newspaper feature article. Then, for 34 years, he worked for Janowitz's Finest Foods, then located at 293 Illinois, where Francesca's is today. There he waited on the trade and filled orders - children called him "the Cookie Man" in honor of the treats he could always be counted on to supply them with.

Even in retirement he continued to work, selling newspapers in front of Walgreen's and greeting customers at the Lake Forest Winery.

Eloise Jordan Pearson

1950s



The oldest Jordan daughter, Eloise, is pictured here. Family members aren't sure exactly what dish was on display in this wonderful photo, but are certain it was delicious.

Saddler Family

c. 1960



Chris and
Debbie Saddler

Standing: Michael Saddler, Eloise (Jordan) Pearson; Eddie McCampbell;
Bud Slaughter, Gregory Saddler, Loretta (Jordan) Saddler; Seated: Annette
(Slaughter) Jordan, Bettie (Slaughter) Jordan, Christopher Saddler



In this multi-generational photo, Eloise Jordan Pearson is surrounded by her family: son Eddie McCampbell and daughter Loretta Jordan, who married Fred Saddler, with their children Gregory, Michael and Christopher; along with the elder generation, her mother and aunt and uncle.

Eddie McCampbell

1955



Eddie McCampbell, pictured here, grew up on Spruce Avenue. In school, he was involved in band, as you can see from this great photo in Market Square, as well as football, track and wrestling. He had jobs growing up at Hahn Brothers and Janowitz groceries - possibly with his uncle Alphonso nearby to keep him on the straight and narrow. He went on to marry Veronica Landry and reside in Evanston.

Zenobia Jordan



Alfonso and Eloise's sister, Zenobia Jordan, called Tobe by the family, married Clifford Logan in 1935. She later followed in the footsteps of her cousin Frances Coleman and went out to California, where she worked for the actor Raymond Burr (best known for Perry Mason and Rear Window).

Calvin Charles Leroy Jordan

1942



**HIGH SCHOOL DANCES
AT ANNUAL PROM**
Last Saturday night the Lake Forest High School held its annual Junior prom, known this year, as the "Festival of Flowers." The young people danced to the music of Roy Wilson's 10-piece orchestra in an auditorium decorated with cherry trees, garden furniture and colorful streamers.
Included in the floor show were Maurice Hesterman, who gave a humorous reading; Clarence McIntosh and Leroy Jordan, piano and drum team; Arthur Lundgren and Douglas Albert, drum duo; and Ruth Ebbesen, vocal solo.

Lake Forester, May 29, 1941

Born in 1924, Leroy was the youngest of the five Jordan siblings. He ran track in high school and was in the orchestra like his nephew Eddie. According to this article, he and Clarence McIntosh played drum and piano at the junior prom in 1941. He served as a Private in the U.S. Army in World War II.



Like their many local cousins, the Jordans attended Lake Forest public schools - Halsey and Gorton, and then Deerfield-Shields or Lake Forest High School. Here you can see a photo of Mary Etta Jordan - at top left, in braids - with one of her classes at Halsey, probably 4th or 5th grade, around 1929. You can see the boys in the front row displaying some truly impressive socks. From the expressions of most of the students, including Mary Etta, it looks like it was a hot day and this was perhaps not the first take.



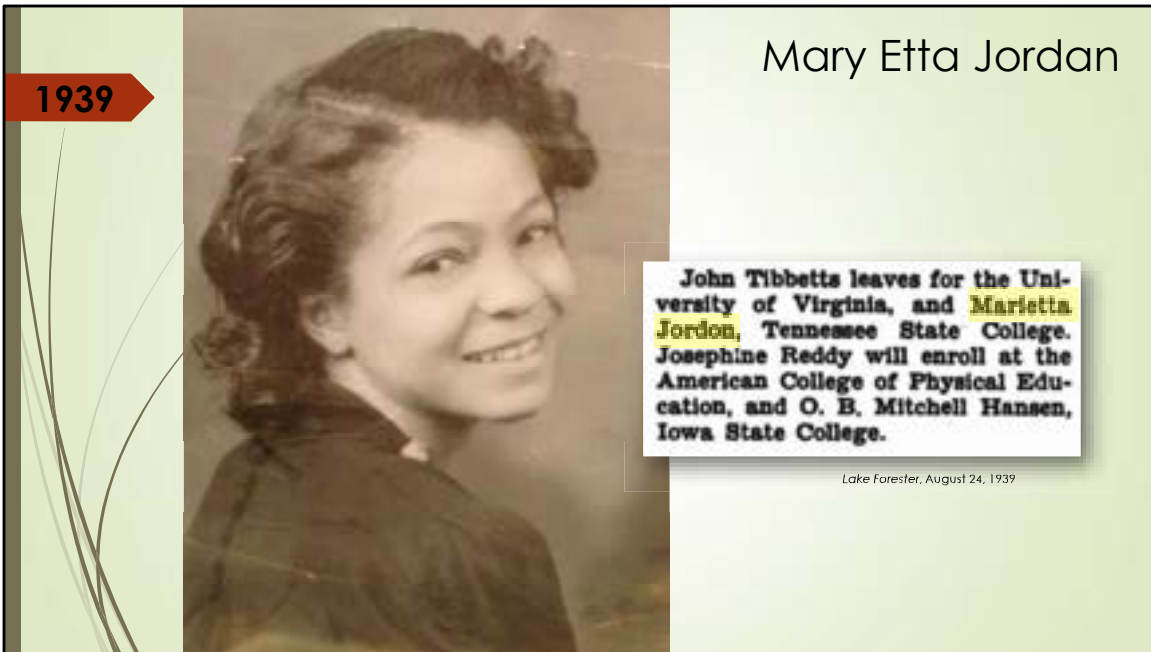
While at Halsey, Mary Etta and her sister Zenobia both were listed in the newspaper on the “thrift honor roll,” which recognized students who had made deposits in their school savings accounts every week over the summer.

Gorton School

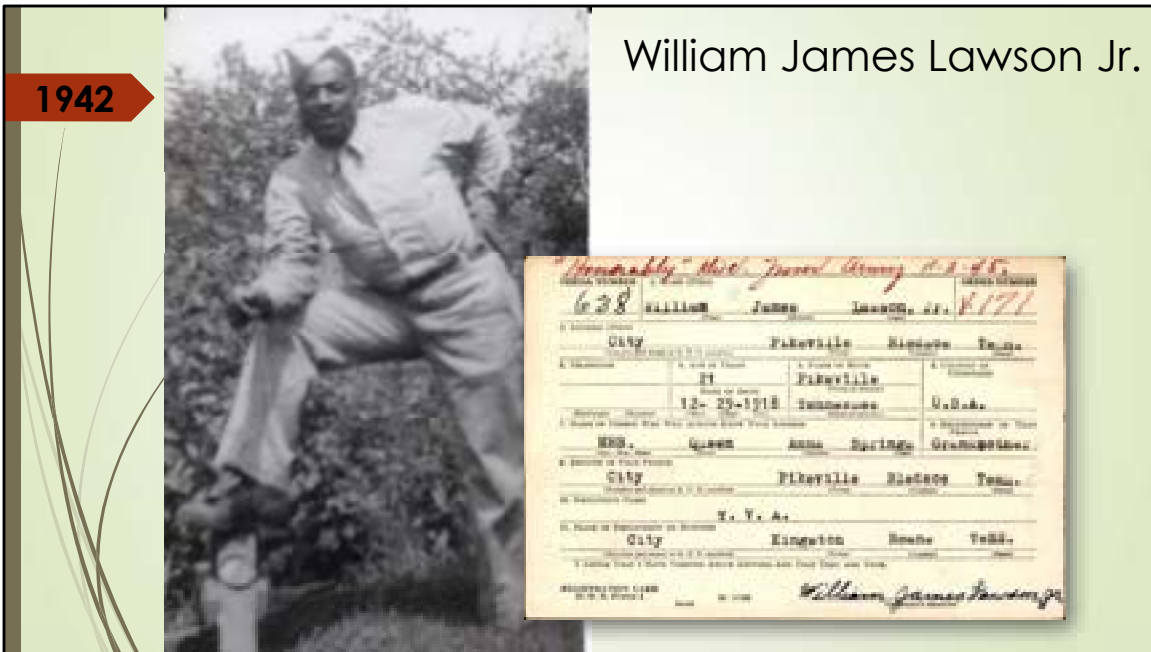
1933-34



This picture shows Gorton School students, around 1933 or 1934, when Mary Etta Jordan graduated from 8th grade. You can see her pictured again at the top left, again in braids.



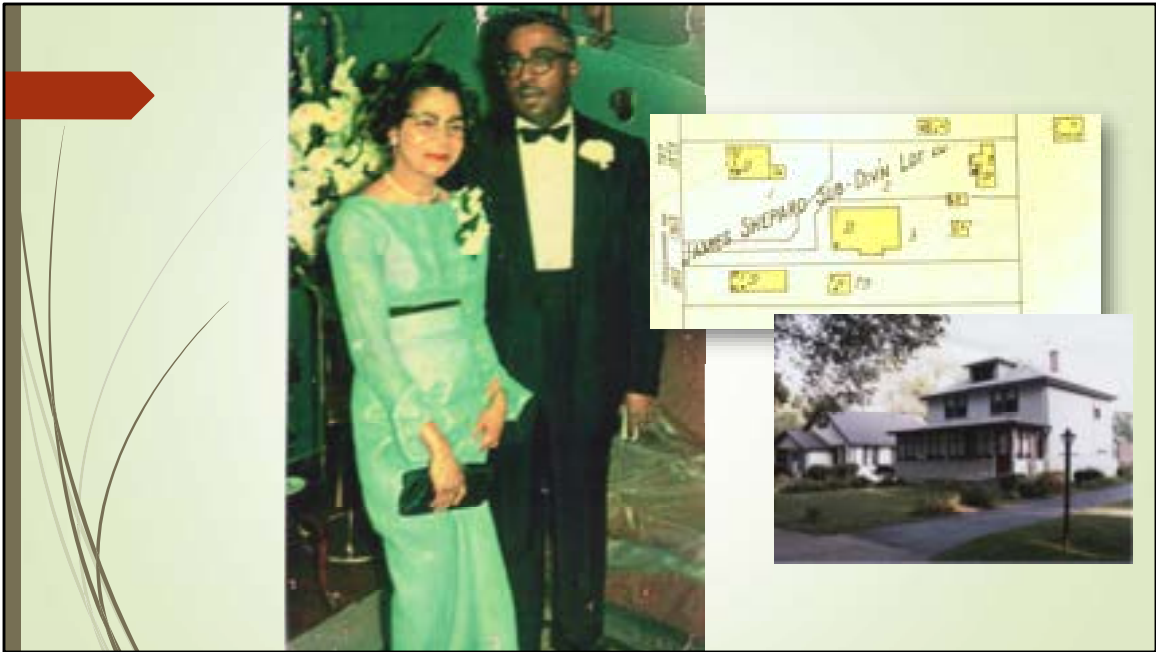
Mary Etta Jordan was the youngest of the three Jordan girls, born in 1920. She graduated from high school in 1938, one of the first few graduating classes at the new Lake Forest High School building. She went on to enroll at Tennessee State College.



William James Lawson Jr.

Now we'll pick up a thread we dropped awhile ago, and return to the Lawson family. You'll remember that William Lawson, Jr. was the great-nephew of America Bridgeman Sales, the redoubtable woman who supported herself and introduced so many relatives from Pikeville, Tennessee to Lake Forest, including the Lawsons. But Sarah Lawson's death in 1934 prompted transition, with William Sr. and Jr. returning to their hometown of Pikeville. When he registered for the draft in 1942, William Lawson Jr. was working for the Tennessee Valley Authority, a New Deal program that brought electrification and economic development to the region. He was living with his grandmother, Queen Anne Spring, in Pikeville.

During World War II, William Lawson served as a sergeant, training soldiers for combat at a camp in the southern U.S.



Mary Etta Jordan and William Lawson had met back in the 1920s when she was in kindergarten at Halsey - he was living on Granby Road at the time and attending Lake Forest schools as well. They continued to keep in touch even after he left town. When Mary Etta's first marriage broke up in the 1940s, her cousin Frances Coleman-Tate wrote to William Lawson, telling him to "come back quick" because Mary Etta was available. So he did - and Frances took credit for getting them back together.

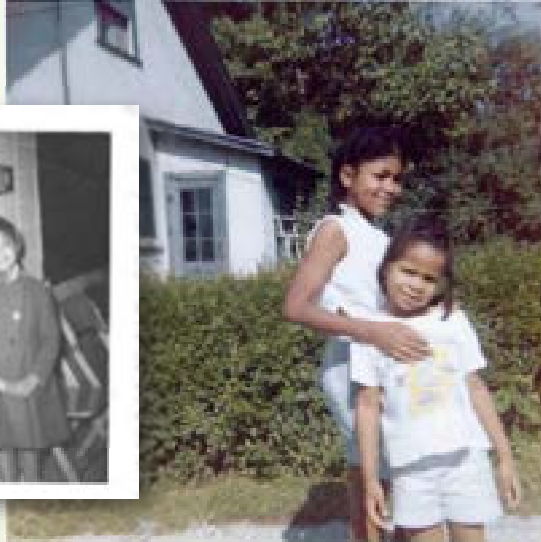
After they married, Mary Etta and William Lawson, along with Mary Etta's young daughter from her first marriage, Mary Agnes Maxwell, lived for a time at 1371 Edgewood, in one of the houses on the lots owned by the Shepard family we mentioned earlier. William had a job as the custodian at the post office, where he would work for 25 years. By the 1960s, the family was living in the home Mary Etta's father Washington Jordan had built, 441 Spruce.

Lawson Family

1960s



Greg Saddler and
Debby Lawson



Debby and
Susie Lawson

Their children grew up in this house, which you can see in the background of the photo on the right – William and Mary Etta had two more daughters in the 1950s, Deborah Leticia, called Debby, and Phyllis Elizabeth, called Sue or Susie.

Sheridan School

1959



They lived right around the corner from the new Sheridan Elementary School, which was built in 1957. Here you can see a photo of Debby's kindergarten class, taught by Mrs. Larsen - some of the students look a little skeptical, but she is clearly all about it.

Lake Forest High School

1976



Debbie Elizabeth Lewis
"There are many things more peaceful than the trails... but I can't think of any."
CLAY 4; GAA 1,2,3; GSC 4; Girls' Club 1,2; Makeup Crew 2



Mary Agnes Maxwell

1961

1972



Deborah Letitia Lewann
"Mother - I enjoy being a girl!"
F.T.A. 1,2,3,4; Secretary 2; Parliamentarian 4;
Future Teachers 1,2,3,4; Girls' Club 1; Program 2;
Senior Class 4; Pep Club 1,2; G.O.S. 4; Home A to
Club 1; G.A.A. 2; Talent Show 2; C.L.A.W. 1,2,3,4

All three attended Lake Forest High School. We dug up senior photos from the Forest Trails yearbooks - you can see some of the many things they were involved with as students, some of which, like Future Teachers of America for Debby and Telecom and Crew for Sue, prefigured future careers. Mary's senior yearbook did not include lists of activities but hers was also extensive, including National Honor Society, Music Club, a cappella choir, orchestra, Latin Club, and more. All three were involved in the Girls Athletic Association. This on top of part-time and summer jobs - Mary at a laundromat and as a shampoo girl at Terry's Beauty Shop; Debby at the Lake Bluff Children's Center, and Sue at Gorton Community Center and Fort Sheridan.

1970s



Debby Lawson



Sue Lawson

Here also are two high school dance photos - Debby's is prom and Sue's is from homecoming.



A rare photo of all three together in the 1970s - Sue, Mary and her son Owen Thomas, and Debby.



Mary Maxwell Thomas went on to graduate from University of Chicago Law School. She was later the first African American assistant city attorney at the city of Evanston and served as Assistant US Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois. In 1987, she was appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to fill a vacancy as a circuit judge of Cook County in 1987, where she served until 2006.

The photo on the right shows Mary Maxwell Thomas with Nelson Mandela in 1993 at an event for Operation

PUSH - People United To Save Humanity.



Debby Lawson attended Illinois State and became a teacher, working for years at Forrestal School in North Chicago. She has long been involved with the Lake County Federation of Teachers, including as President – she continues to live at 441 Spruce.



Here we have a wedding photo - Sue married Bruce Himmelblau in 1986.



Sue attended Drake University and went on to a career as a film editor and director. Here you can see her pictured in 2005 at the Women in Film and Television International "Women of Achievement Awards," with the actress Doris Roberts.



Here you can see a 1990s family photo of the whole crew, with Mary Etta Lawson second from left. She passed away in 1996 - both she and William Lawson are buried at Lake Forest Cemetery.



This 1970s-era photo - with some truly excellent plaid and striped pants - shows the family's newer generation: several of the great-grandchildren of Washington and Bettie Jordan: Christopher Saddler, Stacy Thomas, Gregg McCampbell, Stephanie McCampbell, and Michael Saddler.



Stacy L. Thomas

Owen L. Thomas

Thomas Nathaniel Mosley

Here we see Stacy Thomas again, receiving her doctorate from National Louis University; her brother Owen, graduating from Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, and Stacy's son Nate Mosley, running track here for the Waukegan Invaders, but he also ran at Tennessee State and North Carolina AT&T. He's also recently completed two Congressional internships.



One thing that came up a few times was the family tradition of gathering for Christmas - whether at 441 Spruce, the home that has been in the family for nearly 100 years, or elsewhere, it has been a way to maintain connections through the decades.