

**BLACK SETTLERS
OF THE
PIKES PEAK REGION
1850-1899**

A Special Publication
of



NEGRO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
OF COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

FOR THE SPIRIT OF PALMER FESTIVAL
1986

BLACK SETTLERS OF THE PIKES PEAK REGION 1850 - 1899

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THE MOVEMENT OF BLACK PEOPLE
TO THE PIKES PEAK REGION

"Stolen or sold in Africa
Imported to America
Like hogs and sheep in market sold,
To stem the heat and brook the cold.
To work all day and half the night
And rise before the morning light,
Sustain the lash, endure the pain,
Expos'd to storm of snow and rain."

So the black slave felt when he composed the above, "A Negro's Prayer", in the southern part of Virginia in 1790. Since the beginning of black slavery in America, Negroes sought in flight and other means the freedom denied them by the courts of the land.¹

Although the actual number of black slaves escaping slavery by running away is unknown, it is widely recorded that from the very beginning of African slavery in the United States, one of the methods slaves used to escape bondage was to run away. They fled on foot and continued to run and to walk, moving north and west. Several, after crossing the Mississippi river, continued to walk further west into the Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado territories. Others escaping from slavery in Texas moved north into the same territories of Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado.

Freedmen (former slaves who had been set free by their masters) and Freeman (those black people

¹Lu Lu Johnson (Pollard) "He Fought and Died for Freedom", A Study in American Negro History, Republished in the Colorado Voice Newspaper for Black History Month, 1949.

who, neither they nor their ancestors, had ever been held as slaves) also moved west. Some of these early black settlers became Fur Trappers and some became a part of the many Mountain Men who went deep into the heart of the unexplored mountains, including those in Colorado.

Several of these early black settlers of the west acted as interpreters and also negotiators since they were very adept at dealing with the Indians. In fact, many writers hold that the fur trading industry owed most of its prosperity and glory to the blacks because of their ability to deal with the Indians.

Many escaped slaves and other blacks joined various Indian nations (tribes), marrying and being accepted as full members of the nations.

It is recorded that black men traveled through what is now known as the Pikes Peak region during the 16th century with the Spanish explorers. These men were not slaves or servants but black Spanish explorers. Next came freed and escaped slaves. With the discovery of gold in 1858 black prospectors and miners moved into the region.

The black historian, John Hope Franklin notes that for thirty years before the civil war black escaped slaves as well as free and freed blacks were migrating west. An example of the great movement is the 10-year period between 1850 and 1860 when California's black population increased from 962 to 4,086.¹

During the movement west to California several black families stopped in Colorado and some decided to settle in the Pikes Peak Region.

After the civil war came black servants from the south with their former masters. Several other black families moved to the Pikes Peak area because

it was known as a place devoid of racial segregation and discrimination. Later, as the area became known as a health resort, many other blacks moved in for health reasons.

These were the types of people who composed the black population of Colorado Springs until World II, the building of Fort Carson, and the influx of black military personnel from all parts of the country.

In the winter of 1869 General William Jackson Palmer, a Quaker who had emerged from the civil war as brigadier-general with the 15th Pennsylvania Calvary, instructed Governor C. A. Hunt to buy a tract of land of about 10,500 acres. On the morning of July 31, 1871 the first stake for the city of Colorado Springs was driven at what is now the south-east corner of Pikes Peak and Cascade Avenues.¹

It is estimated by early black settlers, whose relatives were members of the Pikes Peak region before 1871, that there were at least 500 black people living in the Colorado Springs area before July 31, 1871. They were laborers, servants, miners, farmers, ranchers and businessmen. George Motley, a black man accompanied General Palmer to the region and he and his family made Colorado Springs their home. However, a continuing research of the many histories and books about the "pioneers" of the region has yet to reveal the names of any identifiable blacks listed as "Pioneers" of the Pikes Peak Region. It is well to remember that during the early days of Colorado Springs racial discrimination was nonexistent and this might be a reason why pioneers were not identified as being either black or white.

¹The Pikes Peak Region, A Sesquicentennial History, The Historical Society of the Pikes Peak Region, 1956.

¹John Hope Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom. Vintage Books, New York. 1969.

OCCUPATIONS OF BLACK PEOPLE

From the time the U. S. Government established the Territory of Colorado in 1861 to the early 1930's black people in the Pikes Peak Region owned and operated a variety of businesses. Blacks were an integral part of the community and the type of businesses they engaged in were patronized by people of all races. Among the many businesses owned were livery stables, tonsorial parlors, newspapers, grocery stores, fuel and hauling services, tailoring and dressmaking shops, and a publishing company. Several blacks were self-employed in the occupations of construction, catering, laundry services household maintenance, custodial work, landscaping, gardening, horse-breaking and blacksmithing.

Charles Collins, a farmer and rancher was one of the better known livery stable owners. He kept horses and carriages for rent and also had a very successful riding academy.

There were four black owned tonsorial parlors in the 1890's. In addition to cutting hair, shaving faces and offering baths, clothes were dusted and shoes shined as a regular part of the service. One of the best known was the Dobbs Tonsorial Parlor located at 104 South Cascade Avenue.

Prior to 1900 there were two black owned weekly newspapers. The first newspaper, "The Enterprise" was edited by P. S. Simpson and the second, the "Colorado Springs Sun" was edited by Z. M. Booker with W. H. Duncan as City Editor. Both newspapers were published at the same time providing readers with two weekly newspapers.

The Antlers Publishing Company was organized

in April 1897 by a group of black waiters employed at the Antlers Hotel. The publishing company was located at 4 West Cucharas Street and T. J. Loper was the first president of the company. One year after its start the publishing company had to find larger quarters and in 1898 moved its operations into two upstairs rooms located at 102 South Tejon Street.

Among the black owners of food stores were the grocery stores of Adam Jones and his brother. Adam's store was located on the southwest corner of Weber and Costilla Streets and his brother's on the corner of Weber and Cimarron Streets.

The Groves of Manitou owned a fuel and hauling company and also raised hogs for sale. Their business became known as Groves Bros. Fuel and Hauling Company. Later it was expanded to include construction - and tractors, road graders and one of the first gasoline shovels seen in El Paso County belonged to their company.

The Sadler brothers were well known as builders and remodelers of homes and Ed Beckwith was known as an expert Caterer.

The father of Eva Taylor McAdams helped build the old Antlers Hotel, the old courthouse (currently the Pioneers' Museum) and the first part of the Post Office building located on Pikes Peak and Nevada Avenues.

Several blacks were successful as farmers and ranchers. Some of the more prosperous during the 1890's were C. W. Collins, W. H. Hopper, H. Clay, R. Steele, Henry Hurley, Isaac McPherson, Mack Scoot, Rev. John Anderson, John Crump, Henry Litter and Rev. S. Rice.

Among the large farms and ranches was that of the William Seymours located in the Black Forest area. They raised dairy cattle and supplied milk to the dairy outlets in Colorado Springs.

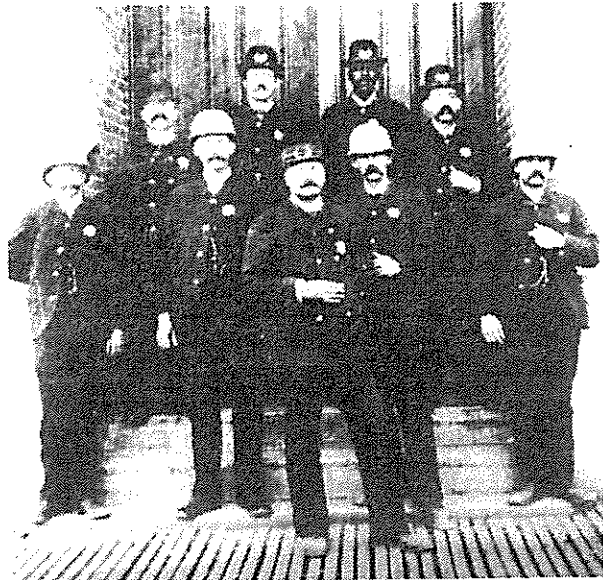
The Gaines family owned a ranch covering several

acres in the Eastonville area, a small town east of Monument and north of Peyton. Two of the Gaines' sons were well known as "cowboys".

Most of the hotels of Colorado Springs and Manitou were manned entirely by blacks and some early settlers estimate that at least 75% of the estates in the "old north end" of town were operated and maintained by black cooks, laundresses, maids, chauffeurs, butlers, gardeners and nurses for the children.

The job of horse-breaking was performed by several black men and many blacks were employed as blacksmiths.

Horace Shelby was a member of the first police force and George Hackley served as Constable from 1898 to 1902.



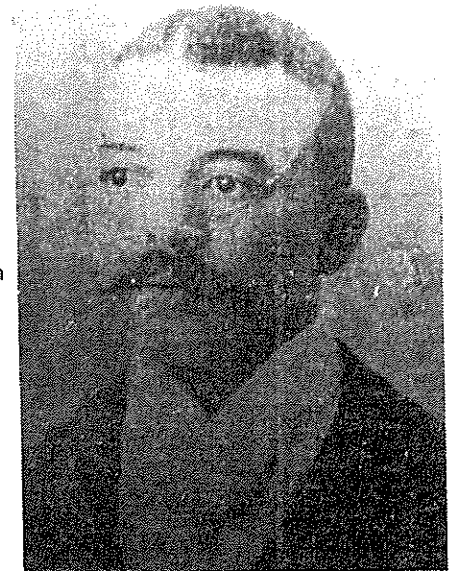
THE FIRST POLICE FORCE

HORACE SHELBY is shown standing in the back row.



CHARLES COLLINS
Livery Stable Owner

GEORGE HACKLEY
Republican Politician
Served as Constable
from 1898 to 1902





LOUISA GROVES
Wife of John Groves
who was the Founder of
Groves Bros. Fuel &
Hauling Company

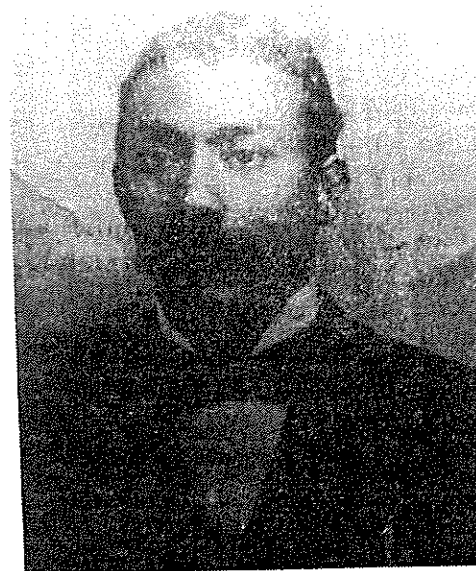


W. H. DUNCAN
City Editor of the
Colorado Springs Sun
Newspaper

HARVEY GROVES
Trick Riding Horseman
and one of the sons
of John Groves.



P. J. BERNARD, Writer
and Charter Member of
St. John's Baptist
Church





JOSEPH HARRIS
Businessman and
Trustee of Payne
Chapel AME Church
in 1898.



SEDLEY B. JONES
Early Settler

BLACK PIONEERS

Black members of NHACS who are currently living in Colorado and who are listed in the records of the organization as having had at least one relative living in Colorado Springs in the 1850's are:

Roberta Colbert Wilson and Edward Colbert, Sr. Their mother, Etta Martin Colbert was born in Colorado Springs and her father, Robert Martin came to the area in the early 1850's.

Gladys Martin Mitchell and Mary Martin Murphy. Their father, Bijou Martin was born in the Pikes Peak Region. He was the brother of Etta Martin Colbert and his father was the Robert Martin who came to the area in the early 1850's.

Effie Stroud Frazier, Lu Lu Stroud Pollard, Juanita Stroud Martin, Sharon Martin and William Goffman and Carl Bourgeois of Denver. Their grand-uncle, William Magee came to the area in 1858 and his niece, Jennie Magee Mitcheltree moved to the area in the 1890's. She was the sister of Lulu Magee Stroud who was the mother of Effie Frazier and Lu Lu Pollard, the grandmother of Juanita Martin, William Goffman and Carl Bourgeois and the great-grandmother of Sharon Martin.

Stanley Moss of Colorado Springs, Myrtle (Peggy) French Underwood of Denver and Janette French Colbert (deceased). Their grandmother, Julia Reed was the daughter of Ilmusha, a full-blooded Cherokee Indian who lived in Cripple Creek, Colorado. Their grandfather, Frank Reed was one of the first two Negro males to be born in Colorado Springs. Their mothers were natives of the area, attended Bristol

and graduated from the Colorado Springs High School.

Many other members of NHACS who are currently residing in other states had relatives living in the Pikes Peak region in the 1850's.

Other local members of NHACS who are listed as having had relatives living in the area before 1900 are:

Gerri King Patterson whose great-grandparents (the Carters) were founders of Payne Chapel AME Church.

Franklin Macon whose granduncle, Frank Loper, a charter member of Peoples ME Church (currently Peoples United Methodist Church) came to the region with the relatives of Jefferson Davis, who was the President of the Confederacy during the civil war.

Alice McAdams Morgan of Colorado Springs and Marjorie McAdams Anderson of Denver, the daughters of Earl and Eva Taylor McAdams. Their grandfather (Mr. Taylor) helped with the construction of Payne Chapel AME Church as well as several other buildings in Colorado Springs.

Lulu Tompkins McDowell who was born in Colorado Springs in 1897. Her parents came to the region about 1876 to prospect for gold in Cripple Creek. She is the oldest black native currently living in Colorado Springs. She and Swede Motley, the son of George Motley, the black man who accompanied General Palmer to Colorado Springs were the first black children to attend the old Liller school.

Claudia Jones Morgan whose mother, Dorothy Duncan Jones was born in Colorado Springs. Her grandparents, the Duncans moved to the area in the 1890's.

Winnora Carter and Esther Carter Sparks whose father, G. C. Carter migrated to Colorado Springs from Arkansas City, Kansas about 1885. Their mother, Mary Birch (Carter) moved to the area from Glasgow, Missouri around 1890. She married G. C. Carter

in Colorado Springs. Their grandmother, Mary Givens migrated to Colorado Springs in the late 1870's or early 1880's.

Erna May Marshall McDonald whose grandaunt, Fredonia Piper Rogers migrated to the area in the 1890's. She, along with her adopted son, J. C. owned a large ranch on the Mesa north of West Uintah Street. Fredonia Rogers was the sister of Mary Piper Marshall who was the grandmother of Erna May McDonald and the great-grandmother of Sharon McDonald Tunson.

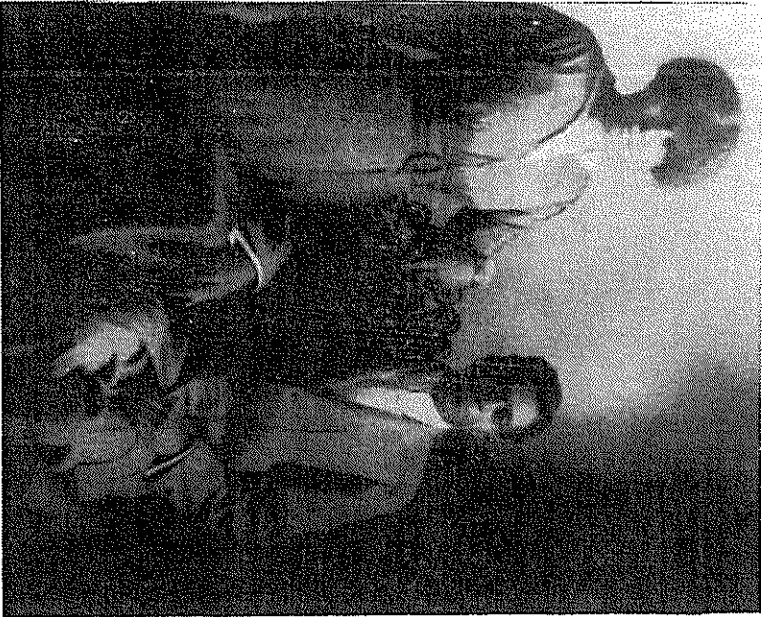
An interesting historical fact about this family is that four generations have attended Bristol school: Eugene and James (the sons of Mary Piper Marshall), their children and several of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Lonnie Seymour whose grandparents, the William Seymours migrated to the area in the 1890's and settled on a large ranch in the Black Forest area.

This special booklet for "The Spirit of Palmer Festival" would be incomplete without including the names of Dorothy Bass Spann, Elsie Bass Lewis, Jessie Bass Jones and Marjorie Bass Byrd. Their mother, Mozie Robinson (Bass) was born in Colorado in the 1880's and their father came to the region in the 1890's. He was the Trainer for General Palmer's show horses and the family lived at Glen Eyrie.¹

Many, many members of NHACS who are now living in other states are descendants of BLACK PIONEERS. Also, there are many other black people in Colorado and other states who are descendants of black people who were in the area before 1900. Because this is a special booklet, only Colorado members of NHACS who are descendants of black pioneers are included.

¹Dorothy Bass Spann, Black Pioneers, A History of a Pioneer Family in Colorado Springs. Little London Press. 1978.



ETTA MARTIN COLBERT SHOWN WITH HER HUSBAND
JESSE COLBERT SHORTLY AFTER THEIR MARRIAGE
IN 1914



BIJOU MARTIN WITH HIS WIFE, MARTHA
Circa 1925



LULU TOMPKINS MCDOWELL
WITH HER HUSBAND,
GEORGE Circa 1930



JENNIE MAGEE MITCHELTREE
Circa 1899



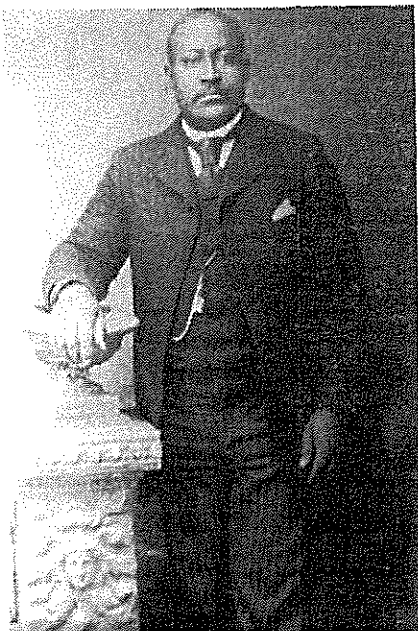
FIRST FOUR GENERATIONS OF THE PIPER
FAMILY IN COLORADO SPRINGS

Seated: Jane and Logan Piper. Back Row: Mary Piper Marshall, Dicie Piper Fisher, Margaret Piper Jones and Fredonia Piper Rogers. Front Row: James Marshall (son of Mary Piper Marshall) with Erna May Marshall (McDonald), Founder and current Chairman of the Board of Directors of NHACS. Marjorie Lee Marshall (Mascotti), the daughter of James Marshall, Mary Lee Morris with Eugene Marshall, Jr., Charter Member of NHACS and Eugene Marshall (son of Mary Piper Marshall and father of Erna May McDonald and Eugene Marshall, Jr.)



JULIA MACON REED
Circa 1920

G. C. CARTER, Circa 1890's



FIRST FOUR GENERATIONS OF CARTERS IN COLORADO SPRINGS

Left - Arabella Carter, mother of the founders of Payne Chapel AME Church. Right - Dora Carter Curtis, daughter of Arabella and Standing - Ada Curtis King, daughter of Dora with her baby Gerald King.



MARY BIRCH CARTER
Circa 1890's

Library of
Marguerite S. Morris



THE WILLIAM SEYMOUR FAMILY ON THEIR RANCH IN BLACK FOREST

Library of
Marguerite S. Morris



AMONG THE FIRST LEADERS OF PAYNE CHAPEL AME CHURCH

LEFT TO RIGHT: Della Carter, "Grandmother" Ridgeway, Willis Ridgeway, Laura Carter Ridgeway and Belle Carter. The child in front is Gerald King at age three.

PAYNE CHAPEL AME CHURCH

Payne Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church was the first church built for black people in Colorado Springs. The land on which it stands, on the northwest corner of Pueblo Avenue and Weber Street, was given to the church by The Colorado Springs Company during the time that the Founder of Colorado Springs, General William Jackson Palmer was President of the company.

In 1872 four brothers and their families arrived in Colorado Springs. The names of the brothers were Laurence, Isaiah, Oliphant and A. W. Carter. These brothers and their families formed the nucleus for the beginning of Payne Chapel AME Church. The first church services were held in 1873 at the home of the Isaiah Carters who lived on Weber Street just off Kiowa.

In August 1875 Isaiah Carter selected a lot for a church building site. As mentioned above, the lot was given to the church by the Colorado Springs Company. Almost immediately after the site was secured the members started erecting a temporary frame building to be used for the church.

When the temporary building was completed a formal church was started by Rev. J. L. Hadden, with Isaiah Carter, Washington Turner, Bert Carter, John Griffin and George Rollins as trustees. George Rollins was the first class leader and he held that office until declining health forced him to resign.

Rev. Rice was appointed as pastor of the church in 1891. He found the people still worshipping in the temporary frame building and upon receiving his appointment again in 1892 he found his congrega-

tion growing so rapidly that he saw the need for a larger church. He immediately started to raise the means to erect a new church. He was successful to the extent that at the end of the year he had \$275.00 to the church's credit deposited in the Exchange National Bank. He had the frame building moved off the lot and the foundation for a new structure started. The following year he was transferred to Cheyenne, Wyoming and the Rev. T. I. Weston was appointed in 1893 as pastor.

After looking over the plans for the church, Rev. Watson decided a stone church building could be built by expending only about \$250.00 more. M. M. Ritter was the architect and builder of the church and members of the congregation were the craftsmen who donated their services and did most of the laying of the foundation and construction of the building.

The stones used to build the church were from the Bear Creek canyon area and members drove their horses and wagons to the site, loaded the stones and returned to the church site.

The stone church building was completed in 1897. It was sixty feet long and forty feet wide and cost \$6,000.00 to build.

The windows of the church bore the names of their donors and a church auxiliary under the leadership of Julia Embry raised sufficient funds to purchase pews for the church.

Rev. J. W. Braxton is credited with organizing the church and Rev. Hadden and Rev. Friston kept it alive from 1875 to 1877. The first marriage solemnized in the church was that of Rev. F. Curtis (one of the pastors) and Eudora Carter (a member of the founding family).

The only other church built for black people before 1900 was the first St. John's Baptist Church which was located at the south end of Pueblo Avenue.

Although, currently "For Sale", Payne Chapel

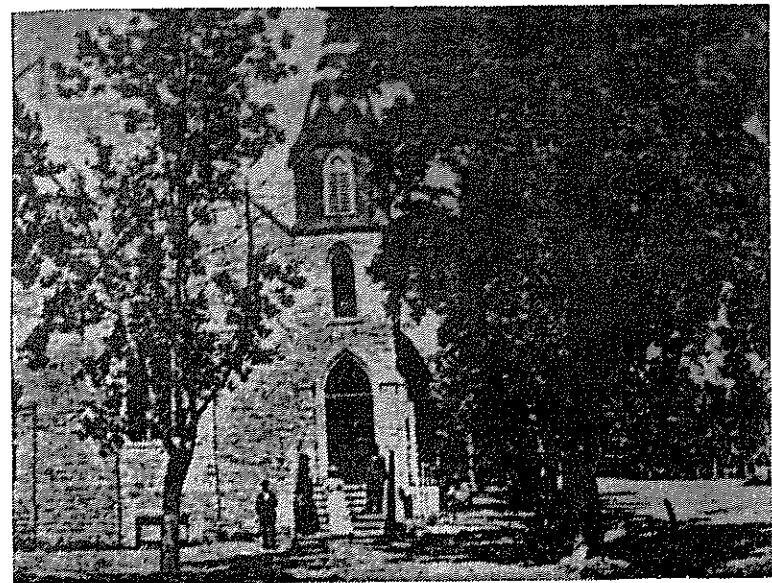
AME Church still stands on the corner of Pueblo Avenue and Weber Streets, a symbol of the spirit of those black pioneers who by labor and faith accomplished their goal to build the first church for black people in Colorado Springs.



REV. J. W. BRAXTON
Organizer of Payne Chapel



FOUNDERS OF PAYNE CHAPEL AME CHURCH
Front Row - Belle, Tom and Dora Carter, Back
Row - Arabella and Gene Carter and Laura Carter
Ridgeway.



PAYNE CHAPEL in 1898



BERTHA MCDONALD CUNNINGHAM who served as Pianist/
Organist of Payne Chapel AME Church for more than
forty years during the 1900's.



WILLIAM GUDGELL in 1971 at age 95. His
father helped with the construction of
Payne Chapel AME Church.



BILLY KING, Boxer during the 1890's
and member of Payne Chapel Church

ABOUT NHACS

The Negro Historical Association of Colorado Springs (NHACS) was chartered by the State of Colorado as a Nonprofit organization on September 21, 1981 and on February 1, 1982 membership with NHACS was opened to the public. On February 26, 1982 NHACS received notice that its Tax Exempt Status had been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

PURPOSE. The purpose of NHACS is to research and record data about Afro-Americans, Negroes and Black People of the Pikes Peak region and to make such information available to the public.

TYPE OF ORGANIZATION. NHACS is a Permanent, Nonprofit, Tax Exempt, Membership organization. It is managed by a Board of Directors and operated by its officers.

MEMBERSHIP. Membership with NHACS is open to everyone who is interested in its purpose, irrespective of current or former residence, place of birth, race, religion, sex, age, etc.

PROJECTS OF NHACS. The projects of NHACS are to hold exhibits, publish monthly "News Bulletins", and periodically publish pamphlets, yearbooks, etc. It plans to establish a permanent Speakers' Bureau during 1986 if possible.

MEMBERSHIP FEES. Currently, annual membership fees are \$5.00 for associate members and \$10.00 for regular members. All members (associate and regular) receive the monthly news bulletins which are about matters of interest to its members.

OTHER. NHACS published its first yearbook, "The 1982 Yearbook About Black People of the Pikes Region" in 1983. Its next yearbook - the 1983/1984 Yearbook - is scheduled for publication about August 1986.

Its first exhibit about local black people was held in February 1983 at the Penrose Library and its exhibit in February 1984 was held at the Pioneers' Museum. Unfortunately NHACS was unable to hold an exhibit in 1985. However, it held its first Homecoming in 1985, from August 2nd through the 4th. Members with their relatives and friends came to Colorado Springs from all over the country to enjoy Homecoming festivities.

FOUNDERS OF NHACS

Eula Andrews

Charlotte Collins

Andrew Darden

Shirlee Darden

Minnie Ray Hunter

Samuel C. Hunter, Jr.

Genolda Jones

Erna May McDonald

John M. McDonald

Leonard M. Pollard

Lu Lu Pollard

Lonnie N. Seymour

Vivian Seymour

Brenette Washington

Lucius L. Washington