

Black and African American Resources at the Nebraska State Historical Society

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Government Records

[U.S. Works Project Administration Federal Writers Project-Nebraska State Historical Society, 1932-1942 \(RG515\)](#)

Interviews of Nebraskas conducted by WPA workers during the 1930's, The interviews are arranged by county, then by ancestry, including a large number of African Americans.

[Lincoln Commission On Human Rights \(Lincoln, Neb.\) \(RG301\)](#)

Report, 1972, written in response to the Cleveland Randolph charge of police brutality. 2 volumes. Includes transcripts of hearing proceedings, interviews, and summaries of findings.

[Douglas County \(Neb.\) \(RG230\)](#)

Subgroup 10, Series 7: Criminal docket case files, Omaha Race Riot of 1919. Relating to the lynching of Will Brown. See pg 456 of the finding aid
https://history.nebraska.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/doc_RG0230_Douglas_County_Nebraska.pdf

[Fort Robinson \(Neb.\) \(RG501\)](#)

Includes records about the 9th Cavalry aka Buffalo Soldiers, an all Black regiment which was posted at Fort Robinson from 1887-1898.

[United States. Federal Bureau Of Investigation Malcolm X surveillance files, 1953-1971 \(RG539\)](#)

Two reels of microfilm consisting of information on Malcolm X compiled by the FBI. Included is biographical information, excerpts of his speeches, reports on his activities and public appearances

Photograph Collections

Below is a sampling of Black and African American related photograph collections.

[Adams-Douglass-Vanderzee-Mcwilliams Families \(RG5440\)](#)

Photographs of Ruth Cox Adams and Frederick Douglass.

[African Americans \(RG2301\)](#)

Miscellaneous photographs of and relating to African Americans in Nebraska.

[Brown, Mildred \(RG5503\)](#)

Photographs of Mildred Brown, founder of the *Omaha Star* and a Civil Rights leader in Omaha.

[Burckhardt, O.J. \(Oliver J.\), 1868-1949 \(RG3248\)](#)

Six photographic prints, including portraits of Reverend and Mrs. O.J. Burckhardt and photographs relating to the African American settlement at Brownlee, Cherry County, Nebraska.

[Burden, Henry \(RG3249\)](#)

A former enslaved person and Civil War veteran who homesteaded in Saline County, Nebraska. The collection contains three photographs relating to his homestead and family.

[Folley, Ruth Greene \(RG5349\)](#)

Various portraits and snapshots of members of the Folley and Greene families.

[Fort Robinson \(Neb.\) \(RG1517\)](#)

Photographs of the 9th Cavalry aka Buffalo Soldiers, an all Black regiment which was posted at Fort Robinson from 1887-1898.

[MacDonald Studios \(Lincoln, Neb.\) \(RG2183\)](#)

Photographs of the 12th Street U.S.O. in Lincoln during World War II.

[Mowry, Claude R. \(RG2281\)](#)

Photographs relating to the Omaha Race Riot of 1919 and the lynching of Will Brown. **This collection contains graphic content.**

[Prince Hall Grand Lodge Of Nebraska \(Omaha, Neb.\) \(RG4244\)](#)

Photographs include 22 images of officers and activities, mainly from the 1980's.

[Williams, Frank L. Family \(RG5806\)](#)

Snapshots and portraits relating to the Frank L. Williams family.

Audiovisual Collections

Below is a sampling of Black and African American related audiovisual collections.

African Americans In Lincoln Oral History Project (RG5748)

[Bailey, Isaac, 1860-1947 \(RG4708\)](#)

Includes an oral history interview with Isaac's wife, Madge Bailey.

[KFMQ Radio \(Lincoln, Neb.\) \(RG4094\)](#)

Includes Dr. Martin Luther King's speech at the Pershing Auditorium, "Christian Responsibility in the Racial Revolution," from December 30, 1964.

Lutheran Film Associates (RG4669)

A Time for Burning, a 1966 award-winning documentary film about race relations in Omaha, Nebraska.

Nebraska Black Oral History Project (RG4795)

Interviews conducted over a two-year period, 1980-1982, chosen for four research areas: Outstate Nebraska, Lincoln, Older Omaha Residents, and Active members of the Omaha Black Community. Sound recordings and transcripts are available.

Prince Hall Grand Lodge Of Nebraska (Omaha, Neb.) (RG4244)

Audio cassettes that contain 15 oral interviews conducted in 1992 as part of the Prince Hall Masons Oral History Project.

Manuscript Collections

Below is a sampling of the Black and African American related material in the Manuscript collection.

[Adams-Douglass-Vanderzee-Mcwilliams Families \(RG5440.AM\)](#)

Papers relating to Alice Cox Adams, former enslaved person and adopted sister of Frederick Douglass, and to her descendants.

[Amaranthus Grand Chapter Of Nebraska Eastern Star \(Omaha, Neb.\) \(RG4250.AM\)](#)

Records of the Grand Chapter records and subordinate chapter. [microfilm only]

[Anderson, Robert Ball, 1843-1930 \(RG2973.AM\)](#)

Background information about the Box Butte County homesteader and former enslaved person, as well as an Historic Preservation report on the Robert Ball Anderson homestead by Judy Gasseling.

[Bailey, Isaac, 1860-1947 \(RG4708.AM\)](#)

Certificate of Honorable Discharge issued to Isaac Bailey, along with an oral history interview with Bailey's wife, Madge, She describes life in the military, with particular emphasis on service at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, during the period ca. 1902-1907.

[Brown, Mildred D. \(RG5503.AM\)](#)

A scrapbook with 26 letters of tribute, May-June 1984, written to Mildred D. Brown, along with images of Mildred Brown meeting politicians, in group photos, and in individual portraits. [Copies only]

[Burckhardt, O.J. \(Oliver J.\) 1868-1949 \(RG3248.AM\)](#)

Relates to African American settlers in Nebraska, and in particular, to their migration to Cherry County in 1908.

[Chambers, Ernie \(RG6239.AM\)](#)

This collection consists of a series of "Erniegram" newsletters produced by Senator Ernie Chambers from 2014 to 2021. Contains commentary about recent events and legislative topics, as well as political cartoons and copies of articles.

[Citizens Against Racism And Prejudice \(Lincoln, Neb.\) \(RG1583.AM\)](#)

Contains records, 1987-1995, including administrative and committee materials, correspondence, activity files, and publicity materials.

[Danner, Edward, 1901-1970 \(RG3697.AM\)](#)

Relates to Danner's career as a state senator in the Nebraska Legislature, 1961-1970, representing the near North Side district of Omaha (11th District).

[Day, Ava Geraldine \(Speese\), 1912-1988 \(RG093.AM\)](#)

Letters, 1964, written to the Nebraska State Historical Society by homesteader Ava Speese Day, describing the experiences of African American homesteaders in the

Nebraska Sandhills. Includes a map, hand-drawn by Ava, transcripts of the letters by NSHS staff, and clippings.

[Folley, Ruth \(Talbert\) Greene \(RG5349.AM\)](#)

Personal papers and photographs relating to Ruth Greene Folley and the Greene and Folley families. Includes some materials relating to the Malone Center. Most of the materials in the collection date from the 1940s-1960s.

[Hall, Norman C. \(RG1580.AM\)](#)

Notebooks, 1989-1991, containing Hall's records of Prince Hall Mason activities during his tenure as Worshipful Grand Master. [microfilm only]

[Malone, Robert Thomas, 1891-1963 \(RG2759.AM\)](#)

Papers, 1925-1963, relating to social and welfare legislation, race relations, and associated problems.

[Maston, George A., 1849-1912 \(RG3206.AM\)](#)

One poem written in 1904 by George Maston, minister, teacher, and barber.

[McIntosh, C. Barron, 1916-2007 \(RG5410.AM\)](#)

Research on the African American settlements of Cherry County, Nebraska, including maps, and information about filing dates.

[National Association For The Advancement Of Colored People \(Neb.\) \(RG1254.AM\)](#)

Records of the NAACP in Nebraska, including information relating to lynching in Nebraska.

[National Urban League \(Omaha And Lincoln, Neb.\) \(RG3957.AM\)](#)

Records and publications of the Lincoln and Omaha Urban Leagues. Mostly printed matter, such as reports, programs, newsletters, and special events files. [filmed together; microfilm only]

[Peterson, Harry W. "Pete", 1923-2006 \(RG1300.AM\)](#)

Scrapbook, 1969, of city council campaign materials including letters, buttons, clippings, news releases, position statements, and a petition. Peterson was the first African American elected to the Lincoln, Nebraska, City Council.

[Plummer, Henry Vinton, 1844-1905 \(RG3430.AM\)](#)

Records relating to the military career of Henry Vinton Plummer, who was born an enslaved person in Maryland, but became the first African American chaplain to serve in the post-Civil War United States Army.

[Prince Hall Grand Lodge Of Nebraska \(Omaha, Neb.\) \(RG4244.AM\)](#)

Records, 1912-1986, containing correspondence, financial records, Grand and Annual Communications, legal documents, committee and officer reports, agendas, minutes and historical materials.

[Roeser, Emil F., 1887-1982 \(RG0950.AM\)](#)

Reminiscences about Grand Island and Hall County written by Emil Roeser, the "unofficial historian of Hall County," Nebraska.

[Scrimsher, Lila Gravatt, 1898-1974 \(RG3718.AM\)](#)

Contains manuscripts and research files about Rev. George A. Maston.

[Social Settlement \(Omaha, Neb.\) \(RG5337.AM\)](#)

Records and photographs, 1924-1988, mostly 1924-1947, including bylaws and articles of incorporation; board of directors materials (minutes, monthly and annual reports, etc.); committee files; publications; Woodson Center files, 1932-1938; and scrapbooks.

[Urban League Of Nebraska \(Omaha, Neb.\) \(RG5335.AM\)](#)

Records, 1928-1994, including administrative and board of directors materials; constitution and bylaws; committee records; special project files; publications; and photographs.

[Vertical Files \(RG5000\)](#)

Miscellaneous materials about Blacks and African Americans in Nebraska.

Library Collection

Below is a sampling of the Black and African American related material in the Library Collection.

African Americans on the Western Frontier, edited and with an introduction by Monroe Lee Billington and Roger D. Hardaway, 1998.

Calloway, Bertha W. and Alonzo N. Smith, Alonzo N, ***Visions of Freedom on the Great Plains: An Illustrated History of African Americans in Nebraska***, 1998.

Johns, Brenda B. and Smith, Alonzo N, ***Black Oral History in Nebraska***, 1980.

Compiled by Smith, Alonzo N, ***Black Nebraskans: Interviews from the Nebraska Black Oral History Project II***, 1982.

Witcher, Curt Bryan, ***African American Genealogy: A Bibliography and Guide to Sources***, 2000.

Family Histories

The Nebraska State Historical Society library holds over 3000 genealogies. Search the [online library catalog](#) for specific surnames, counties, or towns.

Serials (Newspapers & Periodicals)

Below is a list of newspapers regarding Blacks and African Americans in Nebraska. Our newspapers are on microfilm and have been digitized on [Newspapers.com](#). Full access to these newspapers can be obtained on-site.

Lincoln

1933 ***Weekly Review***

1937 ***Review***

Omaha

1890 ***Progress***

1915 ***Omaha Monitor***

1922 ***New Era***

1932 ***Omaha Guide***
1938 ***Omaha Star***