Tracing Back to Slavery?

It is much easier than you think!

Evelyn A. McDowell, Ph.D. March 29, 2022

What is SDUSMP?

- First lineage society sole membership based on US enslavement
- Founded in 2013; incorporated in DC in 2014
- 501(c)3 organization.
- Approaching 100 members.
- Over 100 identified ancestors (enslaved people in the United States).
- Hold Annual Conferences, Issue Book and Service Awards, Support other organizations.
- Mission–To <u>Connect Members</u>, <u>Commemorate Ancestors</u>, and <u>Educate the world about the horrors of US slavery.
 </u>
- We do not have an official stance of reparations.



Eligibility Requirements

"Any person is eligible for legatee membership in the National Society of the Sons and Daughters of the United States Middle Passage (SDUSMP) who is not less than eighteen years of age and who can prove lineal descent from a man, woman, or child who is of African descent and was forced into slavery, including indentured servitude, in the United States of America, including its colonial days, before the end of slavery as marked by the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, effective December 1865 and the Indian Treaties of 1866."



Purpose

- 1. Assure the committee of the absolute possibility for the vast majority of descendants of individuals enslaved under the horrors of U.S. chattel slavery institution to connect themselves to their aggrieved, but triumphant ancestors.
- 2. Propose ideas for more efficient ways to accomplish this task of identifying enslaved ancestors.

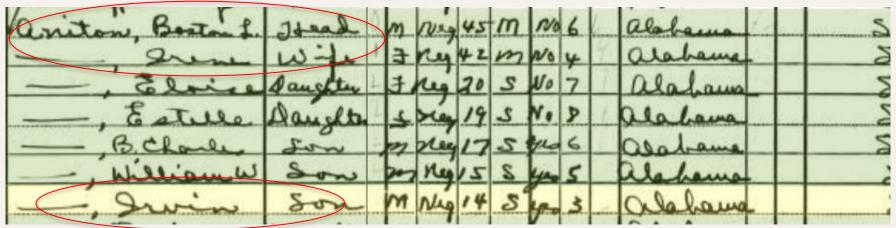
Negative Evidence

"An inference one can draw from the absence of what should exist under given circumstances..."

Step 1: Find Parents with Their Parents on Latest Census



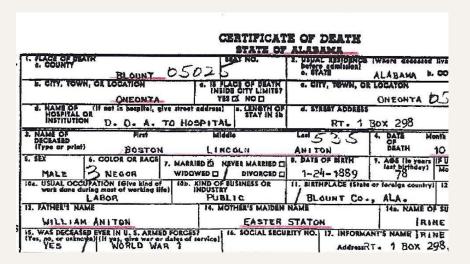
- Determine your parent's and grandparent's names and places and dates of birth and death.
- Starting at the most recent published census, find your parents living with their parents. The 1940 census is published; however, 1950 census will be available in April 2022.
- Keep going back until you find parent with their parent(s). For my parent (father), Ervin Aniton, I located him in Oneonta, Alabama living with his parents, Boston and Irene Aniton in 1940. Confirm details.

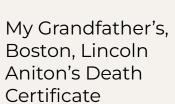


Screenshot from ancestry.com

Step 2: Find Grandparents Living with Their Parents

Obtain the names and places and dates of birth and death of your parents' grandparents.
 Try to get birth or death certificates. My father told me his grandparents name were Easter and William Aniton. Confirmed this information on my grandfather's death certificate.



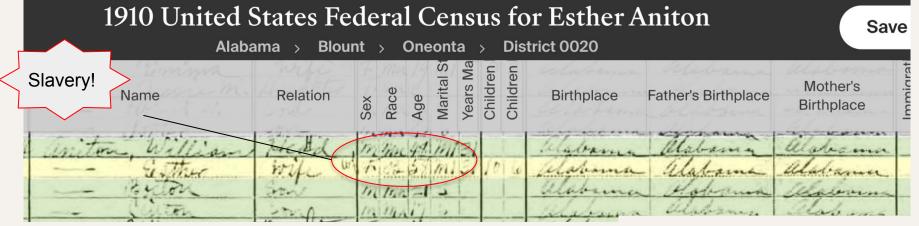




Step 2: Find Grandparents with Parents

- Obtain the names and places and dates of birth and death of your parents' grandparents.
 Try to get birth or death certificates. My father told me his grandparents name were
 Easter and William Aniton. Confirmed this information on my grandfather's death certificate.
- Find grandparent with their parent on the census. I found them on the 1910 census, living in Blount County, Alabama.





Establish Negative Evidence

- The Alabama State Legislature passed Act 44 (Slavery Code), effectively eliminating its free people of color population by threatening to torture and re-enslave them.
- Consequently, any black or mulatto person born in Alabama after 2-1-1833 but before December 1865 (passage of 13th Amendment), was most likely enslaved.
- "Free" individuals are enumerated on the non slave census; look on 1860 and 1850 censuses.

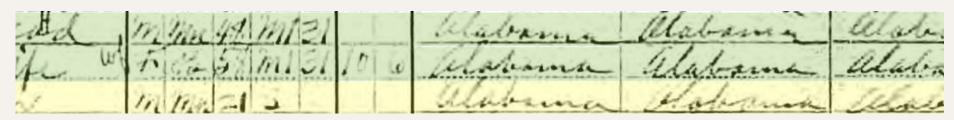
§ 30. From and after the first day of February next, it shall not be 1832 - (8)Sec. 9. lawful for any free person of color to settle within the limits of this Free persons state; and should any free person of color, after that time, settle in this of color for settling in state, he, she, or they shall, on notice of this act, depart within thirty the state, to receive thir- days, or shall be liable, on conviction before any justice of the peace, ty-nine lashto receive thirty-nine lashes; and any person may arrest any such free person of color, and take him or her before any justice of the peace for trial; and if any such free person of color shall not depart this Not departstate within twenty days after the infliction of the punishment last ing within twenty days after punish mentioned, he or she shall be liable to be arrested by any person, and ment, to be be taken before a justice of the peace for trial, and on conviction by sold as a slave for one such justice, shall be ordered to be sold as a slave for the term of one year. year for ready money, ten days' notice being given of the time of sale,

Proof of Enslavement

Easter Staton Aniton (Anderton)

Census Year= 1910-58 = Calculated year of birth 1852

Excerpts from 1910 Census for William and Easter Aniton



- Easter Staton Aniton was born in Alabama in 1852, between 1833-1865 and identified as "Black".
- Her mother was born in Alabama, establishing long roots in slave state and a mother who would have been enslaved.
- Easter Staton (nee) and parents were not enumerated on the 1850 and 1860 non slave census.

For SDUSMP, we request more details of the experience of enslavement–who, when, what, where, how? Lest We Forget! Remember Slavery!

Negative Evidence-A Database Proposal

- According to the 1850 and 1860 censuses, fewer than 10,000 individuals immigrated to the United States as "Free people of color" with most coming from the West Indies.
- Developing a database of individuals and their descendants who immigrated to the United States as "Free" would help to generate a key source of negative evidence. We may also add free individuals who were living in the Spanish colonies and unclaimed territories (Naturalized) before they became a part of the United States prior to 1865. If an ancestor was born before the end of slavery, living in the United States, and not on the *Free People of Color Immigration and Naturalization List*, the ancestor would be considered enslaved or coming from a lineage of slavery.
- In addition, to honor the millions and millions of individuals who lost their freedom, families, lives, and fruit of their labor, our government could help to create a vast database of enslaved individuals, using negative evidence and help descendants connect to them.

Thank You!

Do you have any questions?

mcdowelle@sdusmp.org





@SDUSMP