

How It All Began

Every other Saturday Daddy would take me by the hand, and we would walk to Mr. Eugene Nesbitt's Barber Shop at 23rd and Cherry in Seattle's Madronna District... This was in the early 50's and Daddy and Mr. Nesbitt and Mr. Nesbitt's assistant, Mr. Fleeks, and the men who were in the chairs along the wall talked about what life had been like in the segregated South and what they did in the segregated Army in France. They talked about how the Germans suddenly appeared in the Belgian forests at Christmas time and about the nice English people who had no prejudice at all but would invite the colored G.I.s to dinner. Daddy told them about how he delivered packages for Katz & Besthoff's in segregated New Orleans and about the little jazz band called the E.T.O. Swingers at the P.O.W. compound ... and about Pig Alley, where he and his friends

had three days to kill and could ride for free on the Paris Metro because they were in uniform, and about how he got drunk and tried to kill the colored lieutenant because the war was over.

In the summer of 1991 I flew to Baton Rouge to attend the wedding of my cousin... I rented a car . . . and drove down the Airline Highway toward New Orleans. At Kenner I turned onto the Great River Road and followed the levee up the east bank of the Mississippi River. . . . I asked directions at the Destrehan Plantation, and a few minutes later I drove onto the grounds of Ormond Plantation. On the porch was a young woman in a Civil War era dress. I asked if they were doing tours.

"Yes," she said. "I'm the tour guide."

I paid five dollars at the desk in the foyer and my guide and I walked through the house.... In one of the bedrooms some old

keys were hanging in a cabinet. My tour guide said that those keys had been used to lock the slave quarters at night.

"As a matter of fact," I said, "the reason why I'm so interested in this house is because my great grandfather was a slave here."

And so what follows starts out with the story of the Ormond Plantation and how a slave named . . .

But let me begin at the beginning.

Among other sources, Mr. Smith used NARA Census microfilm, Civil War records, Military Service and Pension records, and assistance from the Old Military and Civilian Records unit in Washington, D.C. during his research.

The above is an excerpt from the introduction to *The Big Picture*, the family history of Henry Smith. Mr. Smith is an Archives Technician in the National Archives Southeast Region.

Friends of the National Archives
Southeast Region
5780 Jonesboro Road
Morrow, GA 30260



THE CIVIL HISTORY

The Regional Newsletter of
The Friends of the National Archives and
National Archives Southeast Region

Summer, 2007

Volume 6, Number 2

THIS GREAT NATION WILL ENDURE

COMING EVENTS

◆ Searching for Your Immigrant Ancestors Online

August 9, 2007
1:00–2:30
Free

◆ Footnote.com

August 16, 2007
1:00–2:30
Free

◆ Searching for Your Native American Ancestors Online

August 30, 2007
1:00–2:30
Free

◆ To register for the above workshops call 770-968-2500

◆ Regional In-Depth Genealogical Studies Alliance

October 1-5, 2007
For more information see www.rigsalliance.org/

Friends of the National Archives
Southeast Region

George Jacobs, President
Linda Geiger, Vice President
Helen Lissimore, Secretary
Salina Pavlovick, Treasurer
Mary Evelyn, Editor



"Migrant Mother" Dorothea Lange, Feb. 1936

For those born after the 1930s, the Great Depression is something that can be visualized only through photography and film. Certain images have come to define our view of that uncertain time: an anxious migrant mother with her three small children; a farmer and his struggling through a dust storm; a family of sharecroppers gathered outside their Spartan home.

Remarkably, many of these familiar images were created by one small government agency established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of the New Deal: the Farm Security Administration (FSA).

Between 1935 and 1943, FSA photographers produced nearly 80,000 pictures of life in Depression-era America, capturing the lives and struggles of school children, tenement dwellers, church members, factory workers, and small merchants.

"This Great Nation Will Endure" features

over 150 FSA photographs. Together, they affirm FDR's determined words in his First Inaugural Address: "This great nation will endure as it has endured. . . . the only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

The exhibition was created by the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park, New York.

The photographs are drawn from the massive Farm Security Administration photography collection at the Library of Congress. Their work includes some of the most familiar and powerful images of the nation to emerge from those difficult years. Many have reached iconic status in American culture.



Cotton Sharecroppers. Greene County, Georgia. They produce little, sell little, buy little. Dorothea Lange, June 1937.

"This Great Nation Will Endure: Photographs of the Great Depression" runs through November 17, 2007. For information about tours or to schedule a group viewing or a tour for students and educators, please contact Mary Evelyn Tomlin, Public Programs Specialist at mary.tomlin@nara.gov.

Exhibition Location Information:

Tuesday - Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
National Archives Southeast Region—Exhibit Gallery
5780 Jonesboro Road
Morrow, GA 30260

"I would not have missed this exhibit for the world."

Comment by visitor on "This Great Nation Will Endure"

NIXON LIBRARY OPENS

On July 11th the National Archives and Records Administration opened the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum in Yorba Linda, California. The new Library joins eleven other federally-operated libraries for Presidents from Herbert Hoover onward.

By agreement between the private Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace Foundation and the National Archives, control over the bulk of the facilities of the private Richard Nixon Library & Birthplace were

transferred over to the Federal government for use by the new Library. In addition, the transfer agreement gave to the Federal government presidential materials previously returned to President Nixon and his estate in the 1980s and 1990s.

The National Archives also opened 11 1/2 hours of tape-recorded conversations revealing his thoughts on the

1972 Presidential and Congressional elections and his plans for the reorganization of his administration in its second term.

The transfer of the facility makes possible the consolidation of Nixon's pre-Presidential and post-Presidential materials, which have been housed in the private facility since 1990, with Nixon's official records.



Listen to the audio and access the transcripts to the excerpted Nixon White House taped conversations that were introduced as evidence in trials.

Selected documents and conversations for released tapes are available at: www.nixonlibrary.gov

JIMMY HOFFA VANISHES

The small southern city of Chattanooga, Tennessee, is not usually associated with the animosity that existed between the political titans Jimmy Hoffa and Bobby Kennedy.

Those men are most commonly associated with places like Detroit, Michigan, or Washington, D.C. and tied to mammoth issues like Big Labor and The Mob. However, in 1964, the United States District Courthouse in Chattanooga hosted the final clash between these famous foes.

Two Tennessee men would play a significant part in the outcome of the case. The verdict would be Hoffa's Waterloo.

The controversial leader of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters was pursued relentlessly by Robert Kennedy for about seven years. As chief council of the Senate Rackets Committee in the 1950's, Kennedy faced off with Hoffa during gritty nationally televised hearings. When he became U.S. Attorney General, Kennedy continued to haunt Hoffa. From 1957 to 1964, Hoffa faced four Federal trials without being convicted of a crime.

Kennedy created a special investigative unit within the Department of Justice to focus specifically on putting Hoffa in prison. This law enforcement team was successful in obtaining a conviction against Hoffa in Chattanooga by using one of his Teamster confidants as an informant.

The conviction on two counts of jury tampering arose from Hoffa's rather flagrant efforts to bribe jurors in a criminal case (#13383) that had taken place a year earlier in the Nashville District Court.

The venue for the case *United States v. James R. Hoffa* was moved from Nashville to Chattanooga because Hoffa's lawyers were able to get the influential editor of Nashville's main daily newspaper to admit that he personally wanted to see Hoffa convicted. The editor was John Seigenthaler, a Nashville native, who had been Robert Kennedy's administrative assistant in 1961.

James F. Neal, another Tennessee native, was a special assistant to RFK who served as chief prosecutor for the

special anti-Hoffa unit. His high-profile legal career began when he helped put Hoffa away. He would go on to be the lead counsel who prosecuted several senior officials involved in the Watergate scandal. As a defense attorney he has represented Dr. George Nichopoulos (Elvis Presley's physician), Louisiana Governor Edwin Edwards, Ford Motor Company in the Pinto case, and Exxon in conjunction with the Valdez oil spill.

After an unsuccessful appeal of the Chattanooga decision, Hoffa spent four years in federal prison. He did not relinquish the presidency of the Teamsters Union until he was pardoned and released from prison by Richard Nixon in 1971.

Hoffa vanished in 1975 after meeting with reputed mobsters and is presumed dead. Robert Kennedy was assassinated in 1968, and John Seigenthaler was a pallbearer at his funeral.

An aside: When John Seigenthaler was publisher of *The Tennessean* in the 1970's he employed Al Gore as a reporter.

—Guy Hall

Case # 13383

United States v. Hoffa, et al

United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee

THE BARQUE (BARK) AZOR

The Barque (Bark) Azor is most famously known for her maiden voyage when she carried 260 African American emigrants to Monrovia, Liberia, from Charleston, South Carolina, for resettlement. The Azor's home port was in Boston, and she was originally owned by Dabney & Cunningham—a prominent shipping company started about 1849.

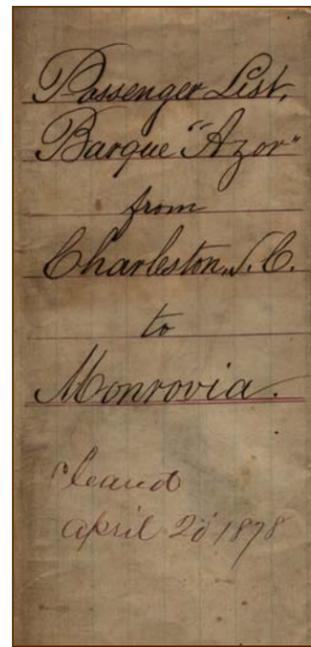
The Azor was purchased in 1878 by the Liberian Exodus Joint Stock Steamship Company. She left Boston for Charleston, South Carolina with provisions where she would then take a group of emigrants to Monrovia, Liberia for relo-

cation. The Liberian Exodus Association had big plans for the mass emigration to Africa, hoping that after this first voyage, they could sell more shares in the company to buy a steamship. With this steamship, the Joint Stock Company would establish a port in Monrovia where groups of emigrants would be taken once a month for the next forty-seven years. During that time, over 160,000 emigrants would leave the United States to go to Africa. However, the Liberian Exodus Association soon went out of business, and this dream was never realized.

The Maiden Voyage

The Bark Azor left Charleston on April 21st 1878 with a crew of fourteen men and women and 260 passengers under the direction of Captain Edmund W.

Holmes. They had some unexpected trouble, as many stowaways could not pay for passage or could not wait for the next trip and had to be escorted off the Azor. When the Azor was finally able to begin her voyage to Monrovia, the passage took a total of 42 days. The Azor was forced to make an unexpected stop in Sierra Leone before landing in Monrovia as the passengers had run out of provisions, and measles and fever were rampant on the ship. As many as 24 people died on the journey before the ship made port in Monrovia because of these outbreaks.



When the Azor did finally make port on June 3rd in Monrovia, the emigrants were not greeted with the celebration they had been promised. The Monrovia government seemed unaware that the emi-

grants were coming, so many found themselves without shelter or food, until they could purchase such themselves. The new emigrants only had enough provisions for about three weeks. They

had been originally promised enough for six months, but as the voyage of the Azor continued, the supplies of the passengers were severely depleted. According to the receipt of an emigrant's purchased shares from the Joint Stock Company, he was given the same amount of supplies for his family of six, as another emigrant who had only a spouse to support. Some people actually started out worse than before, because of the Joint Stock's carelessness in the appropriation of funds.

The natives of Monrovia were welcoming to the emigrants, offering to temporarily provide food and a place to live until the emigrants could establish a home in this new place. The emigrants spoke with the natives on farming and the possibilities of crops in Monrovia. They were soon surprised to learn

that most of the crops they had grown in the United States—such as beets and corn—had never been planted in Liberia. Many emigrants claimed the crops would be successful with the right leadership and ambition, and many dreamed of prosperous farms in their new home.

On June 17th the Azor embarked from Monrovia for its return trip back to Charleston, leaving the emigrants behind to start a new life in Monrovia, all the while clinging to the dream that was Africa. The Azor ended her maiden voyage to Africa on July 24th landing once again in Charleston.

The images on this page are from the Records of the U. S. Customs Office, National Archives—Southeast Region (Atlanta).

For more information, see <http://docsouth.unc.edu/church/williams/menu.html>

—Samantha Boden
Brigham Young University