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DETAILS OF PEOPLE OF COLOR & PLACES OF INTEREST

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Barton

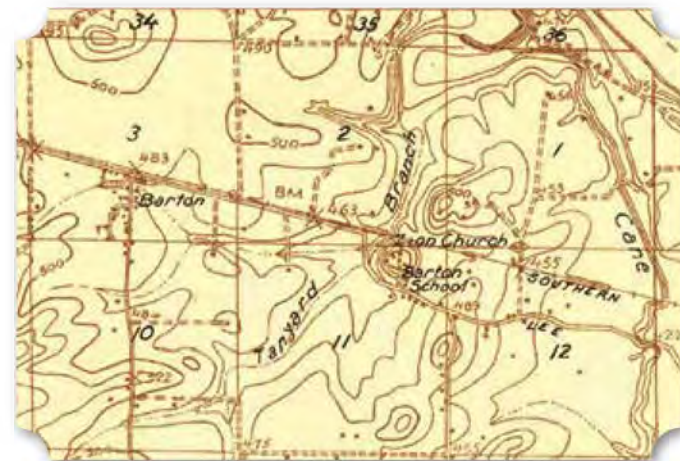
The African American community of Barton was located near the intersection of US 72 and Red Rock Road. Originally settled as “Barton Station” or “Barton Depot” along the Memphis & Charleston Railroad, the area got its name from Armistead Barton and his family who came in the 1820s and constructed Barton Hall nearby by 1840. Due to the railroad and the prominent plantation economy, the area was the site of several skirmishes during the Civil War. Barton became a main stop on the railroad and had its own post office by 1859, however, the area never developed much beyond a community.

In the early 20th century, the census district of Barton was sparsely populated, much like today. The total number of households never exceeded more than 234 individual families. In 1900, Barton possessed 54% African American households. This number steadily declined to 31% in 1940 but was still higher than many districts in North Alabama. Although Barton’s African American population held fairly steady from 1900 to 1940, the number of those households that owned a farm fluctuated in the first half of the 20th century. In 1900, there were only seven African American-owned farms in Barton, representing about 7% of the African American households. In 1910, there were twice as many farms owned by African American families – one out of every five African

American households. In the decade when most other areas of North Alabama were experiencing the highest rate of African American-owned farms, there were only 12 farms owned by African American families in Barton in 1920. By 1930, the number of farms in the African American community peaked at 20 farms, or 22% of the African American households. This trend held through 1940.

Most of the African American-owned farms in Barton were owned by separate families of which only one family member owned a farm. There were a few common surnames that had two members who owned a farm – usually a father and son – as well as one family who owned four farms in 1930. The Garner family owned two farms from 1900 to 1920. In 1910, the Watkins and Harden families also owned two farms. The Watkins family was the only African American family in Barton to have four members own farms – which they did in 1930. That year the Pride and Oates families also owned two farms in the area. In 1940, the Watkins still owned two farms, as did the Morris and Goodloe families, while the Pride family had three members who owned farms in Barton.

The Barton School was located on the northeast side of Church Loop where it met Cheyenne Drive. It was one of seven Rosenwald schools in Colbert County. When exactly it was built is not mentioned in the Fisk-Rosenwald database because it was built under the direction of Tuskegee Institute. Other



(Above) 1926 USGS Topographic Map of Barton, Barton, Alabama Quadrangle

Tuskegee Rosenwald schools in North Alabama were constructed in the late 1910s and early 1920s, which may be true for this one as well.



(Above) 1936 USGS/TVA Topographic Map of Barton, Pride, Alabama Quadrangle

The Barton School was a two-teacher, two-room schoolhouse. It cost a total of \$2,484 - \$1,084 from the African American community, \$700 from public donations, and \$700 from the Rosenwald Fund. The school is labeled on a 1936 topographic map. It is also depicted on the 1954 (updated in 1958) topographic map but is not included on the 1971 topographic map. In 1970, integration meant the closing of schools for children of color, particularly of the small, rural schoolhouses. Additionally, the Barton School may have been associated with a church in the beginning. On the 1936 topographic map, there is an unlabeled church directly adjacent to the school. However, this church was not present on the 1954 topographic map.

Two African American churches are located in close proximity to Barton. The multiple churches most likely gave the road its name – Church Loop. Church Loop is located to the east of Barton where Red Rock Road meets with Old Lee Highway and US 72. Nazareth Primitive Baptist Church is located on the south side of Church Loop. According to the Alabama Atlas, the church was first established in 1876, although it does not appear on an 1896 map of Colbert County. The church first appears on topographic maps in 1926, however it is not labeled until the 1936 TVA topographic map – which labeled it “Nazare”

Church. This was corrected to Nazareth Church by 1954.

The Nazareth Primitive Baptist Church is associated with the Nazareth Cemetery located across the road to the north of the church. According to the *Alabama Historical Atlas*, there were at least 50 graves as of 2008, but only nine graves are recorded on Findagrave.com and seven of these postdate the publication of the Atlas. The earliest interment is said to be Winne Pride, who died in 1912.

Located on the west end of Church Loop between Old Lee Highway and US 72 is Zion No. 1 Missionary Baptist Church. The Zion Church was a white Baptist church before the Civil War and was used by Union troops as a hospital. After the war, the church was sold and became the home to the African American congregation, which used to meet on the other side of the railroad tracks. The original building still stands with additions over the decades. The Zion Church is noted on an 1896 land map of Colbert County, but is first labeled on the 1926 topographic map.

The Zion Missionary Baptist Church is associated with a cemetery that dates to when the African American congregation purchased the church. In some records, the adjacent cemetery is noted as having exclusively African American members of the church. However, according to Findagrave.com, two of the earliest recorded burials are those of Lemuel Dillard Thomas (1843-1882) and his wife, Elizabeth Rutland Thomas (1845-1881) – white resident of Barton and a Confederate veteran. Thomas’ father, Isaac Henry Thomas (born 1811) owned land adjacent to where the church and cemetery are located. Perhaps the Thomas’ made arrangements to be buried on their former land. The next oldest burial is that of Stephen Morris (1876-1899), who was a person of color.

The large cemetery has over 300 graves, many belonging to the Brown, Darby, Garner, Goodloe, Hodges, Johnson, Loveless, Oates, Pride, and Thompson families. Several members of the Garner family buried here were landowning farmers including Richard Garner (1843-1924) who owned a farm in Barton from at least 1900 to 1920 and most likely

KEY

- COMMUNITIES
- CEMETERIES
- CHURCHES
- PLANTATIONS
- SCHOOLS
- OTHER

* Indicates a Historical - Non-Extant Resource