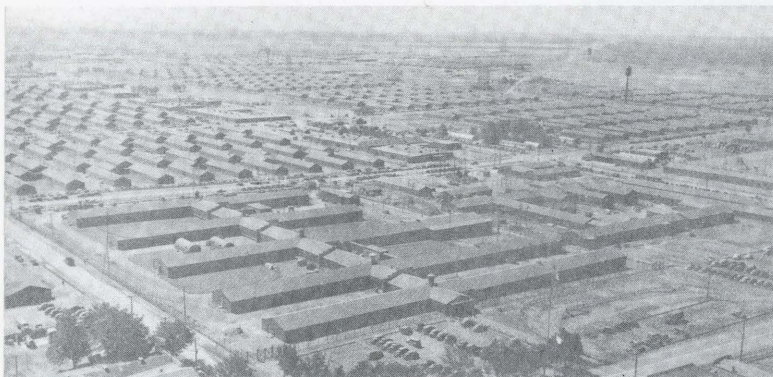


Suttons whose daughter, Gladys Sutton Coleman was the first black graduate of Pasco High, in 1924.



Benton County, the location of Kennewick and Richland had a black population of six in 1910 which declined to one by 1940. The first two black families moved into Richland in 1950. Franklin County, of which Pasco is the county seat, had a black population of 19 in 1910 and 28 in 1940.

Accompanying these first black Tri-City pioneers was the scourge of racism. In 1908, a chapter of the Ku Klux Klan began a short-lived life in Pasco, fizzing out a few years later. The new town of Kennewick was all-white at its birth and would remain a barrier to African Americans for almost sixty years.

The City of Pasco formed a Human Relations Committee in 1947, which expressed many concerns about life in East Pasco. A number of blacks were members of this committee, including Katie Barton, Joe Bush, Charles McClough, Lucinda Cloy, Vanis and William Daniels, Charles Evans, J.W. Fields, Thelmer Hawkins, Iola James, Leola Haythorne, Luzell Johnson, Rev. and Mrs. Bert Jackson, James Pruitt, Billy Williams, Rev. E. M. Howard, Thomas Jackson, Elzena Rollins and Napoleon Wilson.

During this same period, the East Pasco Improvement Association was formed. One of the groups' first priorities was to get water lines installed in the area, as East Pasco residents were hauling their water.

In the early 1950s, E.M. McGee formed a local chapter of the N.A.A.C.P. with thirteen charter members. Other leaders of the organization included Thomas Jackson, Rev. Bill Wilkins, Lloyd Pounds, Rev. H.P. Hawkins, Rev. Floyd Bullock, Edgar Hargrow, Norman Moorner, and Jackie Edmonds is the current President.