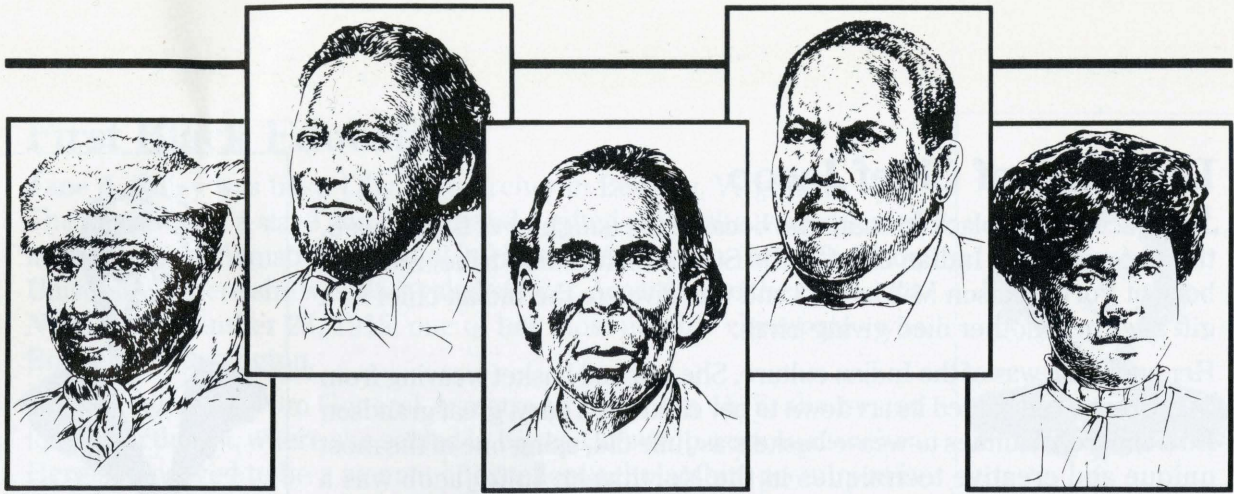




NORTHWEST BLACK PIONEERS

First Black Pioneer

John Garrison was one of the first black pioneers in Kitsap County to show up on the census, in 1857. He was perhaps born in Jamaica in 1818. It has been said that he jumped an English ship in 1853 and worked as a fisherman, and at William Renton's Sawmill as a logger. He married a young Indian girl, Piapach (also called Jane), and the couple had ten children: John, Robert, Joseph, Kitty, Betsy, Lydia, Henry, Samuel, Benjamin and Kate.

Records show that by 1872, he had purchased one of the largest oyster farms at Dye's Inlet for \$50. He and Jane operated that business until 1887. Much of Kitsap County's unsettled land was improved and developed by the Garrisons.

John's wife Jane Garrison, a Puget Sounder since 1851 and the niece of Chief Seattle, has her own place in Kitsap County history. She was the first person to ride over the Manette Bridge when it opened on June 30, 1930. When she died the following year (January 16, 1931), the hearse carried her body over the same bridge. Although she was said to be 106 when she died, census records indicate she was born in 1838.

Two of the Garrisons' sons, John and Robert, worked for the Sackman Operation. At one time, Robert Garrison's time sheet at the logging company showed that he was the highest paid employee, at \$2 per day. Annie Kate Garrison, the youngest daughter, was listed as one of the first pupils to attend the Tracyton School in the 1800s.

John Garrison died on October 23, 1908.



Kate Garrison