

The Urban Pioneers

operating a Turkish bath and purchased a four-acre farm on which she raised chickens, ducks, geese, milk cows, fruits and vegetables for market.

Hesikiah S. Rice was born a slave in West Virginia in the 1850's. He came to Washington Territory in 1888 to work as a coal miner in Roslyn. Leaving the mines after about a year he became a cook at the McNeil Island Penitentiary. Mr. Rice remained there for two years, then worked as a street sweeper for the City of Tacoma for more than fifty years.

Martha Duckworth is the daughter of H.S. Rice. She became Tacoma's first Black nurse. Unable to attend the University of Washington because of the color line, Ms. Rice received her nursing education in Chicago at Providence Hospital. It was not until 1951 that she was hired by Pierce County Hospital where she worked for 17 years, retiring in 1971.

J.H. and Ella Ryan came to Tacoma around 1900 from Spokane where they had lived for eleven years. Shortly after arriving in Tacoma they began publishing the Forum, a weekly newspaper. Before this they published Tacoma's first Black newspaper, the Weekly. Both remained very active in church and social clubs in the city that is watched over by its namesake: Mount Tahoma (Rainier).

Four years into this century, William W. Arthur Dixon arrived in Tacoma and twelve years later he married Chong Ling. Within two years, he was managing the dining room at the Olympus Hotel, but prior to arriving in Tacoma, Mr. Dixon had attended the New England Conservatory of Music and had traveled with the William and Waker's Theatrical Company. Dixon put some of his previous experience to use while serving as the local editor of the Seattle *Searchlight* and the northwest *Enterprise*.

Mr. and Mrs. D.W. Gibson were late nineteenth century Tacoma residents. In 1892 Gibson operated a barber shop in Tacoma. He was a member of the African Methodist

Episcopal Church and the Mount Tacoma Lodge. Mrs. Gibson was active in the Ladies Aid Society of the Allen A.M.E. Church, the Colored Women's Republican Club and the Douglass Women's Voters League. The Gibsons had four children, three sons and a daughter. Two sons made Tacoma their home; another settled in Seattle. Their daughter, Viola, died at an early age.

Horace Prince Lawhorn was the first Black officer in the Tacoma Police Department. He drove a patrol wagon in 1899. An enterprising sort, Lawhorn owned a real estate business and worked as a laborer in Tacoma. He resided at 825 S. State since 1902 with his wife Anvalara and their foster daughter, Daisy Taylor. Lawhorn died in 1921 at the age of 59, having been a resident of Tacoma for 30 years.



Horace Prince Lawhorn