



THE CONNA/BARNETT/SMITH FAMILIES

JOHN N. CONNA was born a "free Black man" in the Republic of St. Augustine, Texas in 1842. He served as a Captain for the Union army during the Civil War. In 1868 in Hartford, Connecticut, he met and married MARY DAVIS, born in Hartford in 1840. Their union produced 14 children: 7 boys and 7 girls, including CATHERINE VEILE CONNA. Migrating westward, they eventually settled in Tacoma, Washington. Mr. Conna had a long, varied career which included the following:

- 1- Ass't Sergeant-At-Arms for the 1st Washington State Territorial Legislature
- 2- Deputy U.S. Marshall for Western Washington
- 3- A practicing attorney in the State of Washington
- 4- Established his own real estate and insurance company.

Upon the death of his wife, Mary, he migrated to Fairbanks, Alaska in the early 1900s. There he worked at the U.S. courthouse and also as an attorney for the Northern Pacific Railroad. In time, he developed another real estate company specializing in mining interests. Mr. Conna died in Fairbanks in 1922.



Catherine Conna Barnett and Powell Samuel Barnett on their 50th Wedding Anniversary

POWELL S. BARNETT was born in 1883 in Brazil, Indiana, the son of POWELL and SADE BARNETT. The Barnett family took part in the first large scale migration of Blacks to the Northwest recruited to work in the mines of Roslyn, Washington in 1888. In 1906 he met and married CATHERINE VEILE CONNA. Moving to Seattle, the Barnett/Conna union produced 8 children. Mr. Barnett was a firm believer in the betterment of his community, and worked diligently to that end. A partial list of his accomplishments follows:

- 1- Founded his own transfer company
- 2- Established one of the first radio repair shops in the area
- 3- First Black member of Musicians Local #76-1908
- 4- Chairman of the committee to establish East Madison Y.M.C.A.
- 5- Founder/Manager of Royal Giants baseball team
- 6- Seattle/King County "Citizen of the Year" in 1968
- 7- Prime architect of merger between Local 76 (white) and Local 483 (Black) Musicians Union 1956
- 8- Past President, Seattle Urban League
- 9- Founding President, Leschi Improvement Council
- 10- Recipient, Seattle Urban League Annual Award
- 11- Founder, Pacific Northwest Baseball Umpires Association
- 12- Gold Card Member, N.A.A.C.P.
- 13- Lifetime Member, Mt. Zion Baptist Church

The Barnetts lived a full, rich, long life. Mr. Barnett and his wife Catherine died within a few months of each other in 1971.