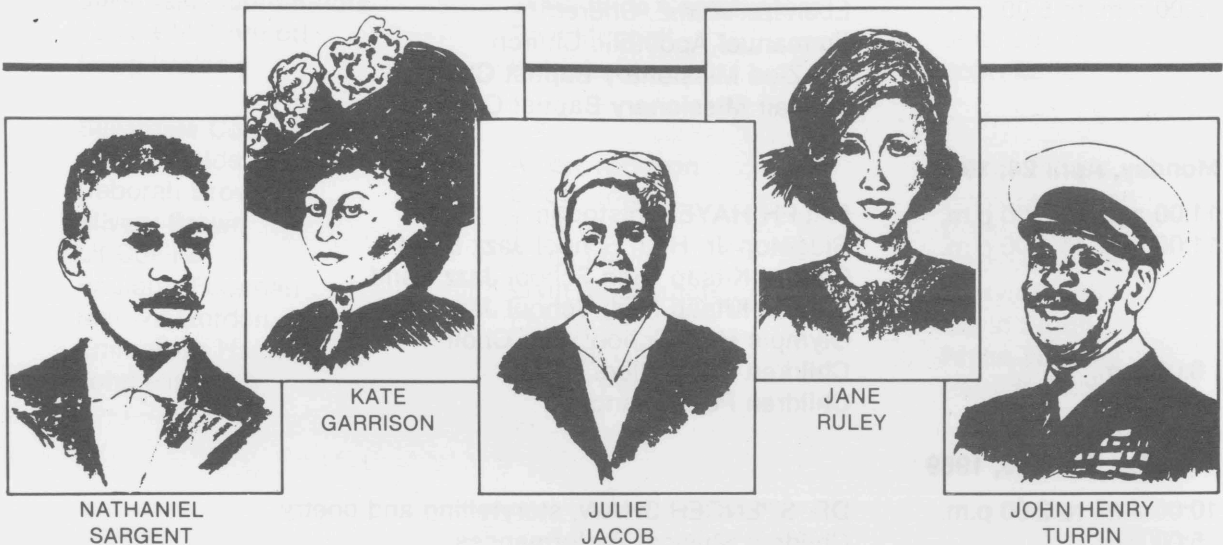

NORTHWEST BLACK PIONEERS OF KITSAP COUNTY



Drawings by: Augusta M. Asberry

BLACK LOGGERS AND MILL WORKERS

In 1854 The Kitsap Peninsula was the most populous in Washington Territory due to the logging and sawmill industries, although it was the smallest in the area. At one time, five of the world's largest sawmills were in operation in the Kitsap Peninsula. The Mills in operation were Port Gamble, Port Madison, Port Blakley, Seabeck and Enenti Beach Inlet. The Mills and Logging Operations caused many young blacks to come to the Kitsap area. Early records from the mills reported the following Black workers from 1870 to 1889: John Glomes, Contrero Frank, Gardner T., James Johnson, Charles Shoomaker, Thomas Webb, Green Sidney, Auquet Blake, Rockman, Dianalo Manuel.

BOOTBLACK

CHARLES AUSTIN was a well-known character around Bremerton for many years. He was known as "Shine". He could be found almost any evening along a downtown Bremerton Street corner with his shoe shine box. He was said to give the best shine in town.

Little is known about Charles before he came to Bremerton. He was, however, born a slave, and was the chattel for Old Ginril Austin and Young Ginril Austin of South Carolina.

Charles Austin's death was very untimely. According to the Bremerton News, he was found dead in bed on March 1, 1912. His wife had preceded him in death by only a few short months.

Charles received an impressive funeral, conducted by Black evangelist, Rev. George Richard Dayrell. Friends of Charles in Bremerton and Seattle attended in considerable numbers, and many floral offerings covered his grave. He was buried along side his wife, Sarah, who died October 25, 1911.