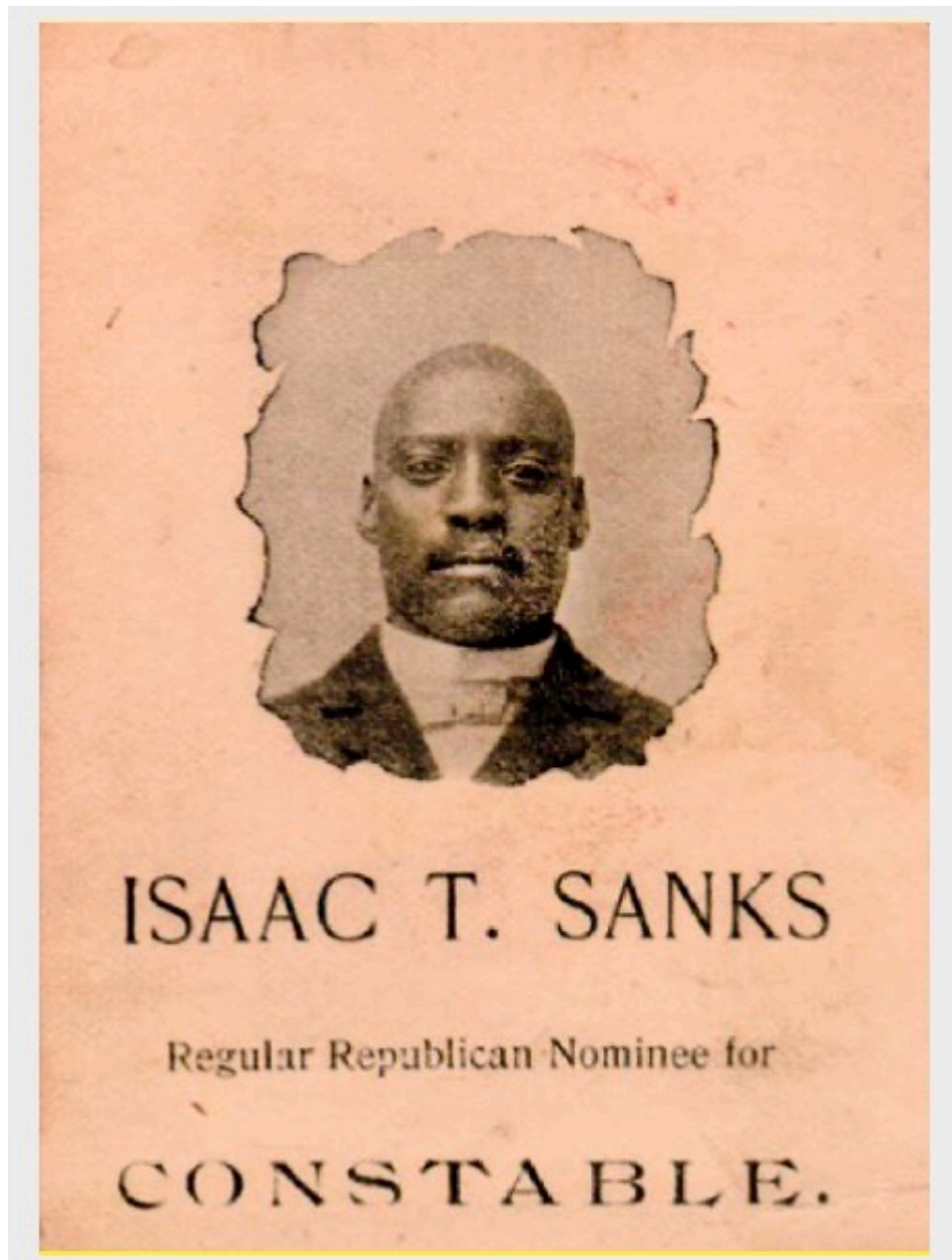


Historical Landmarks Commemorating Nevada County's Black Pioneers

Bernard Zimmerman, Chair,
Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission



INTRODUCTION

This brochure is a guide to the Nevada County historical landmarks which commemorate sites and people significant to the history of the black pioneers of Nevada County. It is derived from Exploring Nevada County, a publication of the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission. The number just above the landmark's address corresponds to the site number assigned in the publication. The publication is available in paperback from local bookstores or from Amazon. The publication is also available in electronic format from IBooks and Amazon.

The Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission was created by the Nevada County Board of Supervisors in 1969 to promote the general welfare of Nevada County and its citizens through official recognition, recording, marking, preserving and promoting the historical resources of Nevada County. For those interested in learning more about the work of the Landmarks Commission, please visit our website <https://www.nevadacountylandmarks.com/>

Current Commission members:

Bernard Zimmerman: Chair [District 5]
Barbara Czerwinski: Vice Chair [District 5]
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Felicia Tracy [District 2]
Barb Carman [District 3]
Jerry Martini [District 3]
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Preston and Louisa Alexander Homesite

No 221

330 Alexander St, Nevada City



Landmark registered Oct. 13, 2020 by Nevada County, NEV 20-04. Plaque dedicated 2021 by The NC Historical Society: "THE PRESTON AND LOUISA ALEXANDER HOMESITE. Preston Alexander, one of Nevada City's earliest African American settlers, purchased this property along Buckeye Ravine on May 19, 1859. The property was occupied by Preston (1834-1889), his wife, Louisa (1838-1902), and their five children, John, Mary Amelia, Horatio Henry, Louisa, and Rosella Elizabeth, until 1902. The Alexander family was well respected and highly regarded in the community. They were members of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Churches in Nevada City and Grass Valley. Preston Alexander was active in the major civil rights movements of the mid-19th century: abolishing slavery nationally, winning the franchise for African American men, gaining the right for African Americans to testify in court, and securing their access to public accommodations. Alexander Street is named in their honor."

Nevada City AME Church Site

No 231

549 N. Pine St, Nevada City



Landmark registered June 14, 2022 by Nevada County, NEV 22-02. Plaque dedicated 2023 by the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission in cooperation with property owner Edward J. Hicks, the Nevada County Historical Society, Desmond Gallagher and Linda Jack: "On this site in 1864, the African Methodist Episcopal Church was dedicated by Bishop T.M.D. Ward to serve Nevada City's Black community, many of whom lived nearby and had been attending services in Grass Valley at the AME church established there in 1854. The church's founders were Dennis Drummond Carter, Samuel Rodgers, Elijah Booth, John Hamilton, and James Jenkins. The original building was destroyed in a storm in 1865, but was soon rebuilt by the community. In addition to holding religious services, the church was a center for social, cultural, political and civil rights events, such as the "festivals of freedom" that commemorated the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. The building also housed a "Sabbath School" established in 1867. The church was used until 1894, by which time the membership had dwindled and the property was sold and became a series of private residences. The proceeds from the sale of the property were returned to the AME Church."

Jennie and Dennis Drummond Carter Homesite

No 234

City parklet across from 302 Drummond St at intersection with American Hill Rd, Nevada City



Landmark registered December 5, 2023 by Nevada County, NEV 23-03. Plaque dedicated 2024 by the Landmarks Commission: "Jennie Correll Carter and Dennis Drummond Carter, prominent Black pioneers, married in Nevada City in 1866. From 1867 to 1873 they lived across Drummond Street from this plaque. Dennis Carter had bought the property years earlier and Drummond Street is believed to have been named after his mother's family. The couple later moved to what is now Grove Street. Dennis Carter was an accomplished musician, music teacher and civil rights advocate. Jennie Carter was an accomplished writer and journalist who was the local correspondent for The Elevator, a San Francisco newspaper serving the Black community in northern California. Jennie Carter died in 1881 and is buried in Pine Grove Cemetery. Dennis Carter died in 1894 and is likely buried in the adjacent unmarked grave."

Kentucky Ridge Mine Site

No. 223

10615 Lone Lobo Trail, Nevada City



Landmark registered and plaque dedicated 2021 by Nevada County, NEV 21-01. "During gold rush days, Nevada County had a significant Black population. Most were free, but even though California had entered the Union as a free state, some were enslaved before the Civil War. From 1851-1852, the Kentucky Ridge Mine was the largest enterprise in California operated by slave labor. Gold was first discovered on this property in early 1851. By October of 1851, Colonel William F. English brought with him from Florida and South Carolina about 40 slaves to operate the gold mine. He was one of over a dozen slave owners in Nevada County. The mine failed after English died in a gun accident on August 27, 1852, and the Black mine workers gradually moved into the towns. One of them, Isaac Sanks, the husband of Chasey, one of the slaves, became a religious leader, businessman and political figure who helped gain Blacks the right to serve on juries and the right to vote by 1870. He died at his home in Grass Valley on May 9, 1894."

Grass Valley AME Church and School Site

No. 224

315-323 S. Church Street, Grass Valley. Plaque located across the street in front of 328 S. Church.



Landmark registered June 22, 2021 by Nevada County, NEV 21-02. Plaque dedicated 2022 by City of Grass Valley Historical Commission: "Across the street, on lots 315, 317, 319 and 323 S. Church Street, the Grass Valley African Methodist Episcopal Church and School were erected in 1854 and 1865 respectively by the local African American community. Reverend Peter Green and Church trustee and former slave Isaac Sanks, along with the other members of the congregation, worked to abolish slavery, secure voting rights for African American men, eliminate the ban on testimony of African Americans in court, and gain access to public accommodations and education. The AME Church was known for its exceptional choir and accomplished musicians. It was the site for fundraising events, literary readings, and the celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation. African American parents, whose children were denied entry into white schools, built their own schoolhouse next to the Church. Both the Church and School were sold in 1893 at public auction to Charles Clinch and the funds returned to the AME Church. Shortly thereafter, the new owners built the four Victorian homes that still stand on the property today."