

Transcript of Interview with Dr. Phylcia Fauntleroy Bowman

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Biographical Note: Dr. Phylcia Fauntleroy Bowman (b. 1947) is a native of Washington, DC. Bowman attended Oberlin College and later received her PhD in economics from American University. Bowman spent most of her career at the DC Public Service Commission where she served as executive director from 1991-2015. Now retired, Bowman has conducted extensive genealogical research into the Gibbs family history. This transcript draws primarily on a recording of an interview with Bowman at her residence in Washington, DC, and includes some interpolations in brackets added by Bowman and transcribers for clarity.

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[00:00:00 of first recording: Phylcia Bowman Part 1]

Phylcia Bowman (PB): ...Sarah [Schmalenberger] was getting me started on all of this—

Maeve Nagel-Frazel (MNF): Yeah, she was very nice...to connect us with you, and also she's been very helpful with our project.

PB: [*Rustles papers*] Shall I start?

MNF: Sure.

PB: Ok. When I was your age, I had no interest in my family history, I must confess. I first began thinking about it in 1997-98 when I was battling breast cancer...Before surgery (my mastectomy), I just was thinking about writing my will and [*laughs*] dying. When I woke up, I was a gleeful person but then I said, "Oh my gosh, I've got to live with this, how am I going to face my own mortality?" I was 49. Our family minister read me some bible verses and my husband said, "you've got to be strong," but none of that was comforting. As I reflected on my

life, which something like that causes you to do, I began to appreciate all those that came before me, and particularly, those who survived the Middle Passages. August Wilson has the play *Gems of the Ocean*, are you familiar with that? The gems are the people who died along the way. But for Black people, it's the people who survived—whose blood [still is] in our veins. I discovered Adam Copanka, from the Congo, in some article my mother had. My mother had written this history book in 1995 entitled *Linking the Gibbs Chain*. I started reading that, and I said, “if anybody can survive that—the mental and physical fortitude it must take—then I guess I can [laughs] deal with whatever.” That's been the foundation of my life since then. My birthday is no longer a time for celebrating me, but a gratitude for another year of life. I'm 74 and this year I will be 75 in October. I became really interested in those who went before me and what each of their challenges were. With that little introduction, the story of the Gibbs family really starts, I believe, with the Alexanders, which is at the very end there [pointing to the family tree she had made].

MNF: Mmhmm.

PB:— That's the area of research I'm currently concentrating on. Sarah first introduced me to them, Lucy and Henry Alexander. Henry bought Lucy's freedom and the freedom of her first five children. You can see the children listed there [pointing to the family tree.]. Lucy and Henry had four more children together. Maria Alexander is one of those first five children. There's a question as to whether Henry is her biological father, or Richard Mentor Johnson, who later became the 9th Vice President of the United States. If she is his offspring—I can't use the word father— as perhaps the others, then Lucy was raped—and that's a non-consensual relationship so I bluntly use the word rape. He was old enough to be her father, which is why he's above that line [on the family tree].

[00:05:10]

MNF: Mmhmm.

PB: The question is, what's Maria's paternity, Henry or Richard? There's evidence that it's Richard [which] includes an interview that my mother made of her Aunt Grace, Grace Gibbs Brown. My Aunt Grace was 86 on August 7, 1979 [when my mother interviewed her]. Here [pointing to the family tree], I highlighted in green where she is.

Louis Epstein (LE): [*To the others*] She's right here.

PB: She knew all [Maria's] sisters and brothers because her parents had died eight days apart and Harriet Gibbs Marshall was her father's first cousin.

LE: Harriet's over here.

PB: Yes, Cousin Ida, Mifflin...here's Aunt Grace, Jonathan is [the] brother of Mifflin... Her cousin was Harriet Gibbs Marshall and she adopted her and raised her. During the summers, she [Grace Gibbs] would go to Oberlin and visit Harriet's aunts, Rachel, Louisa, Elizabeth, etc. She

didn't know Lucy—Lucy died in 1885—but she knew some of those sisters, so I find that evidence extremely credible. There's also a book called *Parallel Worlds*—did you all come across this? There's a chapter on the Vice President's daughter [referring to Maria as being Henry's daughter.] The third piece of evidence is that Ida Gibbs Hunt—this is Richard Mentor Johnson, a photo of him, and Cousin Ida looks just like him! [*all laugh*]. One night when I couldn't sleep, I got up and googled Richard Mentor Johnson. I saw the picture and I went, “oooooh,” oh my gosh, it was freaky. The question is how did that happen; did he own Lucy? Who owned Lucy, etc. It was Sarah [Schmalenberger] who told me that the practice was for visiting businessmen to sleep with the enslaved women, and that's probably what happened.

On the other hand, there is evidence showing that Henry purchased Lucy Alexander with his last name and all five of those children...from Sanford Mitchell in Mays Lick, Kentucky, in 1832. So, how long had he (Sanford Mitchell) owned Lucy and the children? Was there a business relationship between Sanford and Johnson? That's what I'm trying to flesh out. But in any event, what [I believe] is most meaningful for my family, is that Henry bought their freedom, and that made all the difference in the world. In Adele Logan Alexander's book [*Parallel Worlds*]—and by the way, I saw in the Post that her husband Clifford Alexander died Sunday—but in her book, she has photos. Those are two things about the book that upset my mother and me immensely.

[00:10:09]

She puts Richard Mentor Johnson after Maria's parents. [Pointing to the pictures in Adele Logan Alexander's book] this is Maria, Cousin Ida's parents, Maria and Mifflin, when it should be Lucy and Henry after Maria's parents. In making that link with Johnson and in her “enduring insignificance of melanin,” she suggests that her (Cousin Ida's) light skin contributed to her success. And you know *that* is not true, especially when you consider her sister Harriet's accomplishments and she was not light-skinned.

LE: Sure.

PB: This is [the] Oberlin calendar from just about a year ago. This is Ida and this is Harriet. [See how different they look.]

LE: Oh my gosh.

PB: She [Ida] looks like the recessive gene [*light laughing*]. I would like to believe it [Maria's father] is Henry. I also discovered that Henry was born in Virginia and bought his own freedom at the age of 21. He had siblings who apparently were not free, and one of those siblings' grandson[s] became the second Black graduate of West Point, John Hanks Alexander. You can Google him. He went to Oberlin for two years, and then to West Point and was an outstanding student. There could be another [page on the family tree] now of the Alexanders. In any event, these sisters, many of Lucy's nine children went to Oberlin - the public schools, the Oberlin prep department and then the college. The first one to graduate from the college is Louisa Lydia. She graduated from the Lady's Literary Course which is where almost all of the women went in 1856. I call her the first female college graduate in [the family]. Because of her, we have seven generations of Black female college graduates, which is astounding. But Lucy and Henry had

two priorities: freedom and education, with education being the ladder to success, particularly for the girls. The boys could learn a trade, but for the girls, there weren't many options, even if you were white. I think Lucy's life as being enslaved made her extremely protective of her daughters, and she wanted to get them out of Kentucky and in[to] a safe place. It's also interesting that Lucy did ultimately join her children in Oberlin, and she ran a boarding house for Black students. When she died, the president of Oberlin (Fairchild) officiated at her funeral—which is also amazing—and she was a member of First Congregational Church, which is right next to Tappan Square. In my years at Oberlin as a student, I never went in that church [*group laughs*].

[00:14:59]

Lucy is buried at a cemetery just a few blocks from my dorm, [and] I never [*laughing*] went to that cemetery. In 2018, John—my husband and I—went to the cemetery and I have a picture somewhere which I'll show you. The headstone, which Mifflin probably paid for, is about five feet tall... Maria's name is on one side, and Lucy and Louisa's and Rachel's names are on the other side. The youngest one, Elizabeth, and her husband, are buried next to her mother and sisters. So, they are... home in Oberlin.

Now from there, let's see... [*pauses for several seconds*] Ok, so we've got Lucy, Henry, we've got Maria [who] marries Mifflin Gibbs. Maria—I don't know if she graduated but she was at Oberlin in the Literary Course for two years, enough to be a teacher. There's a question [of] how they met, we don't quite know. One theory is that a mutual friend introduced them. Another possibility is that Henry—and this is something I'm also exploring—I believe Henry was part of the Underground Railroad Network in Mays Lick and Maysville, [Kentucky] where they lived. [There was a] free black community there, but it was also a depot for the Underground Railroad. Henry owned three dry goods stores and he went to Philadelphia to buy his supplies. I think that put him in touch with abolitionists in Philadelphia, which could have included Mifflin. Mifflin and Jonathan were abolitionists. Their father, Jonathan Clarkson Gibbs I, was a Wesleyan minister, but he was also a carpenter. He was born in 1796, Mifflin was born in 1823 and I think Jonathan [was born] in 1821. I just learned two days ago after finishing reading this interview from my Aunt Grace—she says that they built one of the first A. M. E. Zion churches in Philadelphia. I am planning to go to Philadelphia at some point and look at records to try to find out who were the parents of Jonathan Clarkson Gibbs I and Maria Jackson. They may well be in the records of the church (the black church, well the churches that early they [*inaudible*] were probably “black only” churches. There is a white Jonathan Gibbs that I located, who was a trader and a Quaker. The name Clarkson—Matthew Clarkson was mayor of Philadelphia just around the time that Jonathan [Clarkson Gibbs I] was born. There's a John Clarkson and a Thomas Clarkson who were British abolitionists. I found at Costco, of all places, a book called *Rough Crossings*, and it made me wonder if in fact my ancestors had worked with the British [*light laughing*] during the Revolutionary War, because they had these ties and allegiances to British abolitionists who, you probably know, promised Blacks freedom if they participated. No one in the family has talked about participating in the Revolutionary War. Or were the parents enslaved? Jonathan... was born free but... who were his parents?

[00:20:01]

[inaudible]...That's another area of research. But in any event, Jonathan Clarkson Gibbs I [and Maria Jackson Gibbs] had five children. Mifflin and Jonathan CG number II are two of the five. I'm a direct descendant of Jonathan [Clarkson Gibbs II]. Now let's see. Jonathan II's first wife was Anna Amelia Harris. Her parents were Nathaniel Harris and Julia Rugg. They are direct descendants of Adam Copanka. [*rustles papers*]. There's a family bible that has this information, and my cousin—this is a typed [*turns page*]—

MNF: Mmhmm.

PB: —page of it. You've seen this?

MNF: No, I haven't seen this.

PB: Ok. This is a typed page from the [Gibbs family] bible. My Cousin Julian brought it to my mother's funeral last July. [*murmur*] [where I put] my hands on it for the first time. It's about that [demonstrated] tall. It says Nathaniel Harris was born in Virginia some [time] between 1768 and 1770 [and] died February 1851 in New Haven, Connecticut. Now, since he was born in Virginia, I'm assuming he was born enslaved. So how did he become free? We don't know; the story is lost. His wife, Julia Rugg, though, was born in Long Island, New York, in 1797, so she could've been born free. She died in 1883. They had four children, one of whom is Anna Amelia Harris. The marriage didn't last, I'm told, because Jonathan CG II could not keep her in the manner in which she was accustomed, because her father was a very successful businessman in New Haven. [He had gone to New York and then settled in New Haven, Connecticut]. [*rustles papers*] A friend printed out his will for me in Ancestry. It's eighteen pages.

LE: Wow.

PB: Yet, the census—he died in 1851—the 1850 Census says he was an illiterate laborer. When you think about it, the census takers fill in the information, so somebody may have just seen he's a black man [and checked laborer and illiterate but] he was not. This is a picture of [Anna Amelia] Harris, because she and her husband founded Emmanuel Baptist church in New Haven, and this is a history of the church that contains her picture. The minister was Adam Clayton Powell number one [the one we all know about is the son]. [Anna] is the earliest ancestor that I have a picture of.

MNF: Mmhmm.

PB:—Anna Amelia Harris and Jonathan Clarkson Gibbs II divorced, but before divorcing, they had three children: Thomas Van Rensselaer Gibbs, Josephine Haywood Gibbs (who never had any children, and [Julia Pennington Gibbs Muse]).

MNF: Mmhmm.

[00:24:59]

PB: I'm descended from Thomas. Thomas was the co-founder of Florida A & M University in Tallahassee, Florida. His father, Jonathan CG II, had been Secretary of State of Florida during Reconstruction and superintendent of [public] schools in Florida, not just for Blacks but for everyone. Thomas' wife was Alice Isabelle Menard, and her father was John Willis Menard, who was the first Black elected to the U.S. Congress. But he was not allowed to be seated [they said it was too early to have a Black seated, but they paid him]. Apparently, the opponent was wealthy—I just read that somewhere—and so he gave the salary to John Willis Menard, and he took the position. John Willis Menard was born free in Kaskaskia, Illinois, which is in Menard County [*laughs*]. It was...settled by the French. John Willis Menard's parents were free Creoles from New Orleans. There was a French relationship in [New Orleans]. But he was born in Kaskaskia, where Pierre Menard lived. He was the first Lieutenant Governor of Illinois. There's also a Michel [Branamour] Menard who founded Galveston, Texas, so [John Willis] from that family. Aunt Grace, in her interview, says that [her mother] Alice was teaching at Florida A & M College—I think it was called that—as was Thomas, and that's where they met and married. They had eight children, two of whom died [early] so when they died eight days apart, they left six orphaned children. Harriet Gibbs Marshall adopted my grandfather's sister Grace. I think my Cousin Ida paid for [the education of] my grandfather, Jonathan C. Gibbs III. They sent my grandfather to St. Paul's Institute which was a boarding school in Lawrenceville, Virginia. JCG II's second wife, Elizabeth Mays, raised some of the other children (they were her stepchildren and she raised them).

MNF: And how did her [Aunt Grace's and your grandfather JCGB III] parents die?

LE: How did Grace's parents die—

MNF: Yes.

LE: Thomas and Alice?

PB: Just some illness. It is said that JCG II died at a Republican meeting [he was poisoned by the KKK]. And from time to time there have been talks of reparations, I'm not holding my breath on that [*laughs*]; but in any event, his death was not natural, but I think the parents' were.

LE: Do you have any idea why Harriet adopted Grace and not one of the other children?

PB: No.

[00:29:58]

I think the youngest one (Mifflin) was...an infant. Mifflin Tucker was an infant, Aunt Grace was 6, I think my grandfather was 8—Aunt Connie, I don't know who—I guess Elizabeth Mays took her...You know, I don't know how they decided, but the family stepped in [to help the children.]

LE: Amazing.

PB: —and took care of them. Now, when we get to my grandfather, he went to St. Paul's [Normal and Industrial School], and then he went to Howard University [as an] undergraduate. I think he came back to St. Paul's and taught for two years [when he left to go] to medical school. [He graduated from Howard medical school]. Aunt Connie—I have on there—was she a—[*shifting items around*]...here they are up here.

MNF: Mmhhh.

PB: Aunt Connie was a teacher. (pointing to the family tree). this one [Harriet P Gibbs died]. Mifflin had several private [sector] and government jobs. My mother was very close to him. Alice Menard [Gibbs Miller-Lamar], was a teacher. She was raised in Tallahassee by Elizabeth Mayes Gibbs [their step grandmother]. Pointing to the family tree, she [Alice Elizabeth Gibbs] died at one year old. Thomas Van Rensselaer [Jr.] was an insurance agent.

We're now down to my grandparents' generation. Jonathan Clarkson Gibbs III had three children—my mother, her sister [Harriet Catholine Gibbs Russell] who was a year older, and her brother, [JCGIV who] was two years younger. Alice Menard Gibbs had one son, [Aldee Miller] so most of them—and throughout, a lot of the women didn't have children. In my family, my mother married my father, John [Douglass] Fauntleroy. My father was a lawyer, and they met at a Howard alumni dinner in New Jersey My father didn't go to Howard, but he took a date [to the dinner] who did. [*laughs*]—

LE: Ha!

PB:—and he left with my mother's phone number! [*laughing*] Ok, and there are four children in my family. I'm the oldest, my sister is four years younger than I am, [my] brother is eight years younger, and this one is eighteen years younger. He was born when I was a freshman in college. He has down syndrome and he lives with my sister. My Aunt Harriet married late and did not have children, and my Uncle Buddy had four children. They are Jonny...he's JCG V. He has a BA from Princeton and an MA from Westminster Seminary. He was an army chaplain (he's retired now). My cousin, Cindy [Verna Catholine Gibbs Patti], has a BA from Harvard and an MD from Duke. She's a surgeon in San Francisco. She married a Sicilian surgeon, Marco Patti. [They have one daughter, Verna "Mini" Patti. Laurie Gibbs]. Harris has a BA from Columbia and MBA from Wharton. She retired from Verizon and she married a lawyer, Bill Harris (no children). Meredith Gibbs Kington—we call her Diffy— has a BA from Rice and a JD from Columbia (lawyer). She married Douglas Kington [who] is a commercial real estate [agent]. They have a daughter, Alexis [*movement*]. Let me come back up here.—

MNF: Mmhhh.

PB:— We are all descendants of Thomas [Van Renssalaer Gibbs]. Josephine [Haywood Gibbs] didn't have children. The third sibling was Julia Pennington [Muse]. She married Richard Muse, and they had four children, one of whom is Victoria Josephine Muse. I called her Cousin Josie. She ran the Washington Conservatory of Music after Harriet Gibbs Marshall died.

[00:35:06]

She was running it when I was a child there. She had a BA from Yale [in] 1912, and then she went to Oberlin Conservatory and got another one in '36. I need to find out—I think the one in Yale is in music, too, so why two [undergraduate music degrees]? I don't know if one was [in] performance and one was education, or what, but you wouldn't think you needed another one after Yale, right, but of course she grew up in New Haven!

LE: Sure.

PB: This one [Jesse Estelle Muse] didn't live really at all. [*Referencing ancestors*]...She Victoria Josephine Muse didn't [marry and] have children. He [Richard Irving Muse] didn't [marry and] have children. Florence [Anna Muse]—she was a beautician -- married George Laws, and they had two children (Enola and Gerald). I knew Enola [and she married Cecil Phillips]. I didn't really know Gerald, but he was [the] first Black stage manager in New York on Broadway. I remember Cecil—he was the first Black air traffic controller at Kennedy. They lived in St. Albans [Queens, NY] right near the [airport]. Enola and Cecil had two children, Cecile and Julian. Julian is the one who brought the bible to my mother's funeral. He's now—I just talked to him two days ago—he used to have a show on Saturdays on Fox News [he's a journalist]. He told me he's just been appointed deputy commissioner for the New York Metropolitan Police Department, so he's going to be the spokesman for that.

LE: Good luck to him.

PB: Good luck—that's what I said! [*others laugh*] You sure you want that? [*laughing*]...I'm awaiting Cecile's information on her daughters (two of the three daughters are married and have children) [*tapping*]. Over here, back to my family. I married late; I don't have children. My sister, Jacqueline, has one son, Herman Wendell Barber, and he has six children by four different mothers. [*Group giggles*] So that's what all that is—and I'm losing count!

LE: [*sarcastically*] He's just trying to make this job a little more difficult for you—

PB:—yes, yes—

LE:—he knows you're at it.

PB: My brother, [John D Fauntleroy Jr.] was a lawyer. He and his wife, [Cynthia,] have one daughter, [Cynthia Anika Fauntleroy whom we call Cindy]. She and her husband, [DeVonte Ores], just moved to Jacksonville, Florida and they have a gorgeous little girl [named] Jayla who just turned 4. Cousin Jonny and his wife Marion—his wife is white - have two children: Jessica, and JC Gibbs number 6! But JC Gibbs number 6 doesn't want anyone to know he's Black, so we're sad about that.

MNF: Yeah.

PB: ...He's carrying this name—

LE: Yeah, rich history.

PB—but looking at him, you wouldn't know. He's married and has two children. Cindy, the surgeon, has a daughter, Mini, who finished Barnard, and Diffy's daughter, Alexis, finished University of Penn.

LE: Not bad.

MNF: So, who is the oldest relative that you knew—

PB: That I knew?

MNF:—on this [family] tree?

PB: [Before answering that,]I forgot to mention John Willis Menard's progeny other than my Great Grandmother, Alice Menard Gibbs, Thomas's wife. Edith Menard was one of JWM's great granddaughters as was my mother. Edith carried the last name so my mother thought Edith thought she was a more significant descendant than my mother so my mother didn't like her. Perhaps that is why my mother left her out of the book, *Linking the Gibbs Chain*. But I knew Cousin Alaveta, JWM's granddaughter, really well, and I never understood how she was related.

[00:40:05]

It just made sense two days ago, but she's a Menard. She is the granddaughter of John Willis Menard. That's the family. I have some pictures [*moving pages*] I can show you, or I can—

MNF: And you knew—

PB: I knew—

MNF:—Ida Gibbs too, right?

PB: Oh yes! I didn't keep going...We lived with her when I was born and I lived with her the first ten years of my life. She lived in Foggy Bottom, 1115 New Hampshire Avenue, at New Hampshire and L [Street] (between L and M [streets])...in a big—I call it—graystone. In 1947 when I was born, she [Ida Gibbs] was 85 [she turned 86 a month later]. She and her husband, [William Henry Hunt], were up in age and kind of feeble, and they had this big house with all these stairs. My parents rented the top floor [it had a third floor above the basement]. They rented the top floor when they got married in '46. They also were able to help so it was a mutually good arrangement. When I was born, I just had full run [*others laugh*] of the whole house. I have some pictures [*rustles papers*]. My sister's middle name is Ida (she was named after Cousin Ida). [*looks for pictures*]...[*Referencing pictures*] This is Cousin Billy pushing me in a stroller and you see he's dressed in a suit.

MNF: Mmhmm.

PB: [Pointing to pictures,] this is Cousin Billy in the—and this is the house. This is me, my cousins Gretchen, Sonya, and Stephanye. [These are cousins on my father's side]. This is my mother and my father's mother—this is sort of the front of the house. Cousin Ida and Cousin Billy were very formal, because he was the third Black in the foreign service, and they lived in France for twenty years. They got up in the morning and dressed in case somebody came by.

MNF: Mmhmm.

PB:...I was very, very, very close to them, Cousin Ida and Cousin Billy. My mother had an enormous number of photos that I am trying to get rid of [*light laugh*]. I put together this book for my mother in 2014 (she turned 90 in 2012). I thought by doing this, I would be able to get her to eliminate some photos. It didn't work. [*others laugh*] And it [the Powerpoint book] grew and grew. [*Flipping pages*] this is the story of her [my mother's] life that's now almost 400 pages. You can see some of these people. This is my mother's birth...there she is. This is my grandfather, this is JCG III, and my grandmother, [Catholine Allen Gibbs]. My mother was named after Phillis Wheatley. this is my mother's maternal grandmother. This is my mother and her sister Harriet in [the] 1920s, and this is another picture of the two of them. I [even] have my mother's baby book. This is my mother, her sister, and Uncle Buddy (her brother), and this is them as teenagers.

[00:44:58]

This is a picture, I think, from...Carter G Woodson...This is my mother here, Aunt Harriet, Uncle Buddy, my grandparents. This is Aunt Harriet's wedding, in 1973 [She was in her early 50s; I was 46 when I married, so I followed in her footsteps]. Cousin Ida married in her 40s. This is my Uncle Buddy's wife Verna [Thomas Gibbs]. She's Black even though she may not look like it. This is Aunt Grace, and this is the story of when my grandfather— when my mother was 9, in 1931 [in the midst of the Depression], [my] grandfather's patients couldn't afford to pay him, so the family split up. My Uncle Buddy stayed with my grandfather in New Jersey and my grandmother and Aunt Harriet came to D.C. and lived with Harriet Gibbs Marshall. My mother went to Greensboro and lived with my Aunt Grace for two years. Did I mention that I just discovered this a week ago that my mother wrote an autobiography in 1937, at the age of 14 or 15, for a class project [and] got an A+ on it. [*group laughs*]

LE: Of course, she did.

PB: In it, she says that the summer between those two years when she was in Greensboro, she came to D.C. and stayed with her mother and Cousin Hattie at the Washington Conservatory of Music, while Aunt Harriet went to Greensboro. I didn't know she [my mother] had spent any time living with them there at the conservatory. Aunt Grace [inaudible] it for—[*turns page*] this is on another trip, Aunt Grace—this is her 100th birthday.

LE: Goodness gracious.

PB: And this is Aunt Selma and Aunt Peggy. Remember I told you there were two girls that Aunt Grace raised and educated. Those are the ones [Selma Fisher and Margaret Hill]. They

were both my godmothers [*rustles papers*]. This is also in Greensboro - my mother, her sister, brother, and Aunt Selma. [Inaudible] This is my mother and Aunt Selma—my mother [*laughs*] was not a shy woman [*group laughs*]. She had a fantastic figure that none of her children inherited [*laughs*]—

MNF: Oh.

PB:—...this is my mother and Aunt Selma again—and my mother was an excellent swimmer. That's Aunt Peggy, and that's Aunt Peggy... That's Aldee, Cousin Aldee .([He's] the son of my grandfather's sister, Alice Gibbs Miller-Lamar right here).

LE: Ok.

PB:...[We] put some faces with—

LE: Yeah, that's great—

PB:—with some names.

LE: [Inaudible] to see... Grace... [Inaudible]

PB: Hmm?

LE: Just amazing to see Grace, who... we've been studying, right?

PB: Right! And then she—I have... let's see...

[00:49:10]

PB: I have stuff on Grace. Aunt Grace was a very lively lady. There's a picture of her with my grandfather and his second wife. After my grandmother died in '73, my grandfather remarried two years later. That's his second wife. He was really looking for somebody to take care of, [*laughs from interviewers*] and she died before he did. Here's a picture of Aunt Grace.

MNF: And what is that for?

PB: No clue. I don't know! It's in here somewhere. This is her house in Greensboro. I visited her house. Here she is sitting on her porch. Teachers at that time were well off and better paid than today. This is her will. She left the house to my mother, Aunt Harriet, and to a neighbor. This is her funeral program. This is her church, Saint James Church, that she was very, very active in. [*paper shuffling*]

MNF: And she taught high school?

PB: She taught first grade and she was a music teacher. Here's her with a music student.

MNF: So, did she teach her music students privately?

PB: Privately, yes. My mother wrote a poem about her.

LE: This is a parody of Amazing Grace, huh?

PB: Mhm! [*all laugh*] My mother was a writer. Here's her (Aunt Grace's husband), Chase. I have some more pictures.

LE: [*inaudible*]...32 years, huh?

MNF: Wow.

PB: He owned a grocery store.

MNF: Did she have any of her own kids?

PB: No, she had no kids. But she paid it forward. These are more pictures of my mother, Aunt Selma, and then pictures of Aunt Peggy. This is my father and my brother Freddy, the one with Down Syndrome. These are Selma and these are Margaret. You can pass me those back and put that back.

[*lots of shuffling pages*]

I have one more. Oh, here's Aunt Selma's obituary, an old program.

[*more page shuffling*]

[00:54:43]

PB: See, if you'd come a month ago I wouldn't have had all this. You came at the right time because I just got through all these 17 boxes of my mother's stuff.

MNF: Did your aunt really speak of her time at the Washington Conservatory or about Harriet Gibbs Marshall much?

PB: No. I can make a copy of [my mother's interview of her], but not a lot. [*Referencing photos*] Aunt Grace treated my mother and Aunt Selma to a Caribbean cruise. And this is Aunt Grace, my mother... is that Aunt Selma? There are their pictures from that [trip].

LE: Wow.

PB: My mother and Aunt Selma went to California.

LE: That's a nice little full circle back to Katie.

MNF and JS: Yeah.

PB: My mother has pictures in this book. My mother did a drawing of Jonathan number two, J.C.

LE: That's good.

Jack Slavik (JS): Yeah.

Ariana Raduege (AR): Oh wow.

PB: And there's also this, from something. Jonathan and Mifflin.

LE: I was wondering about the name Mifflin. Yesterday, I happened to be at Valley Forge with my family, and saw that there was a General Mifflin during the Revolutionary War and so I wondered if that's where the first name comes from.

PB: There is a Thomas Mifflin who was prominent in Philadelphia. Mifflin is a Philadelphia name. I don't believe we're really related to these Clarkson's or—

LE: No, but that's just a popular name.

PB: Yes. For example, on my father's side, my grandfather, whom I never met because he died in 1930 when my father was nine, was named Frederick Douglass Fauntleroy. I know we're not descended from Frederick Douglass [*laughs*] but the parents named him in honor of Frederick Douglass so I think there's a lot of that.

LE: I noticed you have a piano upstairs, do you play?

PB: Not well anymore. I'm about to get rid of it—the piano's in horrible, horrible shape. I'll probably replace it with something. My husband keeps saying, “That's what you should be doing, you're retired.” [*laughs*]

LE: Did you study as a child?

PB: Mhm. Actually, I had an aunt on my father's side that was a music teacher. I was very close to my cousins on my father's side because they lived here and we grew up like sisters. There were five girl cousins close in age, so we first started taking piano lessons with Aunt Grace—there's an Aunt Grace but on my father's side (paternal grandmother's sister). We went to the Washington Conservatory of Music for many years but I hated recitals. I really wasn't particularly good at it and so I stopped.

MNF: So what years did you study at the Conservatory?

PB: I don't remember what years. I have a folder and I have that recital program but I don't think it had a year on it.

MNF: Was it [the] 1950s?

PB: Yes 1950s, it'd be [the] 1950s.

LE: Because you were born in 47?

PB: It was '47, yes, so [the] 1950s. Yes, and it closed in 1960 [because] Cousin Josie died in 1960.

MNF: How much of the school do you remember, when you started there?

PB: It was an old, creepy building. [*all laugh*]

LE: Was this on T street?

PB: Yes, yes but that building was old and Cousin Josie lived upstairs. There were rooms with pianos. Cousin Josie might have been my teacher, but there were others that I think taught me. Sonya, Gretchen, Stephanie, Jiffy and I - all of us took piano lessons. And for a short while I took violin lessons, and by short I mean very short. [The reason I took violin lessons was] because Mifflin Tucker Gibbs apparently died and left a violin.

[1:00:01]

My mother said "I'll take it! And Phylicia will." I'm left-handed and I couldn't hold that thing. [*laughs*] It was tiresome, so I didn't stick with that at all. I didn't like recitals. You know I didn't mind learning to play, but my Aunt Harriet (my mother's sister) played. She played at churches. She played the organ and the piano. I never heard my mother play the piano, but my mother did know how to play. In fact, she told me she played Scarf Dance. Are you familiar with Scarf Dance [by Cecile Chaminade]? That's a hard [piece] that's got a lot of flats. She said she played that! "Oh, then you really could play!" But I never heard her play and I think I followed in her footsteps [*laughs*].

LE: Do you think that you took lessons at the Washington Conservatory in part because of the family relationships? Was that why?

PB: Mhm. I think they wanted us to take piano lessons. We took dance lessons— tap, ballet— and music lessons, and so it made sense to take it there. I was taking lessons after the Conservatory closed because we did have music teachers that we went to after that.

MNF: When you studied there, were most of the other students children like you or were there older students?

PB: Mhm, different ages. I'll show you— I'll get that program.

PB: Oh it is a year! Friday, June 1960.

MNF: Right at the end.

JS: Yes, close.

AR: Wow, yeah.

JS: The last one.

LE: The last one!

MNF: I cannot believe... One of the last recitals.

LE: Mount Carmel Baptist Church, Third and R Streets.

JS: Wow.

PB: Now here's National Piano Playing Auditions, 1962. Usually they go from simplest to [hardest], so you see where I am [*laughs*]

MNF: Do you remember the school being busy when you started there?

PB: Yes, there were plenty of students.

LE: Did any of your other friends from school or anyone from the neighborhood study there?

PB: No because it wasn't in our neighborhood. If I could see the program I could see if I remember any of those other names... Gail Starks, I knew her. I don't remember any of these others. Stephanye, the Fauntleroy's are all my cousins. I don't remember any of these...

MNF: Well I guess one question I have is do you know about Harriet Gibbs Marshall's National Negro Music Center that she was trying to create from the 1920s all the way until her death? She had a long campaign to create a National Negro Music Center and was trying to raise \$100,000 endowment for that and a lot of the recitals [had] music by black composers and she was building a sheet music library and a research library... Was there any aspect of that when you studied at the school?

[01:05:03]

PB: No. But there may be something in this. I have not read it at all, I just picked it up. In Sarah Schmalenberger's piece—do you all have that? [Holds photocopy of Doris McGinty, "The Washington Conservatory of Music and School of Expression," *Black Perspective in Music*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (1979), 59-74.]

MNF: Oh yes.

LE: Yes.

PB: Okay but then the other two?

MNF: We have seen those.

LE: Yeah, we've seen these as well. Doris McGinty's sort of, the person who got the conversation started with her about the Washington Conservatory.

PB: Right, and then there's another one behind that.

LE: Yeah, this is the one that's in Ralph Locke and Cyrilla Barr's book [*Cultivating Music in America: Women Patrons and Activists Since 1860*, (University of California Press, 1997)].

PB: Irene V. Jackson, who was cited in Sarah's piece, is a good friend of mine. She has a different career now, and she gave me this. [I picked it up from her house Sunday]. She said [that] she didn't know if that was at the Moorland Library, but I think there were two articles.

LE: Two drafts. Yeah, that's great.

PB: That's a second [inaudible], have you seen that one too?

MNF: Yes, I believe so.

LE: It's nice to see a scholar's drafts. So, I guess this is sort of a zoom out question. Your family is so accomplished in so many generations in different fields. Did people talk about Harriet starting this Conservatory as a big deal or did it kind of pale in comparison to the other accomplishments?

PB: I think it was equal. And that's important because [of] the men! You know, Jonathan C. Gibbs I and II and Mifflin and John Willis Menard, they stand out. But Ida and Harriet are up there with them. And then in my mind, I place Lucy and Henry [*laughs*] up there, so I think everybody is very much aware of them. And since Cousin Josie kept the conservatory going, the Muse part of the family... I understand them through her (and that goes back to Harriet Gibbs Marshall whom I obviously didn't know). So, when I look at this family history, I think back (as I was talking to Maeve) [to] the Smithsonian African American Museum that starts with the Middle Passages and then—as Maya Angelou said “and then we rise”—and the top floor of that is the music, and the arts, and the sports, and the culture—and that's what [my family history] is to me. I don't know that I view it as being that exceptional? I keep thinking “there's a story here like this for everybody, we just often don't know it.” The amount of college education going back, that does stand out in my mind. I went to Oberlin because my mother wanted me to go there, and I wanted a small school. I wanted to go away to school, but I didn't give much more thought than that. I don't think the school knew who I was because my last name was Fauntleroy not Gibbs, and I didn't take any interest in it [my family history] until years later. But I know when my parents took me to Oberlin (because I didn't go there first before I started school; I didn't interview there), my mother spent time at the library in the archives, and started asking questions, pulling information together. One of the people interested in my research now is Carol

Lasser who's a history professor emerita at Oberlin, and she's written an excellent book called *Elusive Utopia* (I mentioned it to Maeve), and it's the story of Oberlin [Carol Lasser and Gary Kornblith, *Elusive Utopia: The Struggle for Racial Equality in Oberlin, Ohio*, (Louisiana State University Press, 2018).]

[01:10:01]

The takeaway from that [book] is that being anti-slavery didn't mean you thought blacks were equal, and so although the town was very anti-slavery, once the Civil War ended, Oberlin started to look like every other place in many respects. I was shocked to learn that it (the College) didn't hire its first black professor until 1948. It didn't hire all these [prominent figures like] Mary Church Terrell and Ida Gibbs, it didn't hire any of them, and so they had to leave little old Oberlin and many ended up in D.C. where there were more opportunities. That made sense and I just hadn't even thought about that.

MNF: So, when you lived with your aunt Ida—

PB: Cousin Ida.

MNF: —Cousin Ida, did she speak about her sister Harriet at all? If so, what did she say?

PB: Yes, they were close and had mutual respect for their professions and each other. But again when I came along, Cousin Hattie had died, so she wasn't a presence. Cousin Ida and Cousin Billy just doted on all of us so, for me, I felt like that was just part of the Gibbs female aura. I think also she [Cousin Ida] wanted me to be bilingual. She tried to teach me French. My parents didn't speak French, nobody else around me spoke French, and the first word that I remember quote unquote “reading” was the word oiseaux, for bird, because she had an embroidered handkerchief with pictures; she had a bird and other things on it, and then the words embroidered. I connected the word with the picture. Of course, I have regrets [*laughs*] that I didn't really become fluent in French until years and years later. When I was at Oberlin I majored in government and international relations and all of that came from her. My interest in International Affairs came from her [and] my interest in African studies came from her. So, I had a very, very close relationship with her. I would even say- my hobby is research, it's like doing puzzles, you know, trying to find all the pieces and putting them together. Cousin Ida loved crossword puzzles and she would do the puzzles in the newspaper and send them in and maybe win \$100 or something. I used to do them with her, and so to me this is sort of the same thing, I'm still doing it. She had a major impact on me.

LE: You wrote in an addendum to the oral history you did a couple years ago that you don't want to be seen as exceptional, or you don't want to suggest that your path through life is so distinct from many other people's paths through life especially in DC, especially among black women, and I think that it just resonates really strongly with our project because what we're trying to understand is how this Washington Conservatory was both unique. I think I read Harriet Gibbs Marshall today writing something like it it's the first Negro Conservatory in the world you know it was a really big deal, but it also just produced probably thousands of musicians over the course of 57 years. In music history, much like in history more broadly, we tend to focus on the

exceptional figures: Marian Anderson, Paul Robeson, Roland Hayes, Harry Burleigh, and they're really important, but also there are all of these other people doing amazing work as musicians. It's been really gratifying to trace some of their paths including several associated with your family and just see how they connect to all these other people and institutions and histories.

PB: Yes, it's very humbling. Again, I'm stuck in the Middle Passages but, getting a Ph.D. with all the wonderful things I'm proud of [including] my career, I still can't equate that to surviving the Middle Passages. I'm sorry, I just [can't] because that is just something I can't imagine any human-being being able to do. Once you understand that about black people then we're no longer viewed as quote-unquote "inferior." There's so much evidence and yet we're still grappling with it. I grappled with it in my career: I was in utility regulation and I was executive director for 25 years,

[01:16:00]

and there was no other black executive director with my span of control in the United States. And I retired in 2015. 1990 to 2015, so I walked in a room and people were like, "what's she doing here?"

Or... do you want to turn that off, this off? I'll tell you one story—

[recording ends at 1:16:25]

[New recording picks up with Phylicia Bowman Part 2 (H4n recording) at 00:00:00]

LE: —then click it twice.

MNF: Although, as I think I said to you, we're looking at the classes of 1910 through 1914, so it's close to 5 classes of the school, and it's 30 graduates total. So, we're looking at only students that graduated rather than those that were enrolled because it was just too much to keep track of everyone that was enrolled. Some students enrolled and didn't graduate, so of 30 students I'd say it's probably close to 2/3 or 3/4 that are women. Most were born between 1885 and 1895 and then most lived until the 1950s, 60s some like Grace Gibbs lived quite a bit longer.

PB: Did most stay in D.C.?

JS: Yes, probably two-thirds of them or more came from DC and a lot of them stayed in DC. The ones of those that weren't from DC tended to go back to where they were from after they graduated from the Conservatory. I think that is the general trend.

MNF: We have students from Columbus, Ohio; from Texas; one was from Jacksonville, Florida; New Haven, Connecticut; Hampton, Virginia; and Kansas. Most were from the South, East Coast, and Midwest.

PB: And did they go to teach?

LE: Yes, they did. Yes, they had remarkable careers in lots of different areas especially teaching music and performing as well to some extent.

MNF: One graduate, Henry Grant, started the National Association of Negro Musicians. He was the first president of that organization and he taught at Dunbar High School for...

PB: Here?

MNF: Yes, here! From 1918 until 1952.

LE: He was Duke Ellington's teacher at one point.

PB: Oh yes, I think I read that. Cousin Ida taught at Dunbar High School for twenty years, and my mother graduated from Dunbar when it was in its heyday.

MNF: Yes, he taught music there and ran the choir. He also directed a church choir. Some graduates taught at other HBCUs including Prairie View A&M, Hampton—

LE: Bordentown [Manual Training School in Bordentown, NJ] which is pretty close to where your mom grew up.

PB: My mother attended an integrated high school in New Jersey and moved to DC to go to Dunbar. Dunbar was producing Ivy Leaguers right and left, but my mother wanted to be a teacher. My grandmother graduated from Miner Teachers College and you had to be a DC resident to go there, so they sent her here to go to high school so she would be eligible to go to Miner. But, by the time she was a senior in high school she decided she wanted to go to Howard, so she went to Howard and then her sister and her brother went to Howard. Having three children in college at the same time was a financial challenge so my grandmother ended up going back to work. It made enough of an impression on my mother that she made sure her children were spaced at least four years apart, *[laughs]* so no two would be in college at the same time. And when I went to college, I knew, I had to be—*[laughs]*

LE: You get four years and that's it, right?

PB: —Yes, none of this five years, six; oh, I had to be out in four years when it would be my sister's turn.

MNF: I think you said, was your mother musical?

PB: Yes! She played the piano but she also sang. She and her friend Theo had a radio program and they sang on the radio program. She had her own radio program. Here it is (pointing to page in PowerPoint book I prepared for my Mother in 2014).

MNF: She would have been in the choir when Henry Grant was the director. [Editor's note: Grant directed the Dunbar orchestra, not Dunbar choir]

[00:05:04]

PB: Yes, she very well might have been.

LE: So, one of the arguments that we're making through this project is that we're trying to do this kind of research on these 30 graduates of the Washington Conservatory, obviously not to the depth that you've done, but what we can get from census records, ancestry, historical newspapers in particular are really rich for us. What we want to understand, similar to what you've done with your family history, is how can this relatively small number of people touch thousands of lives and change the stories that we tell about black musicianship and accomplishment. Most people recognize that segregation was terrible, that lynching was a horrible threat, but what I've found in my students, no offense, but also in my colleagues is that sometimes we don't go beyond those stories of oppression. We're not celebrating achievement and we're not celebrating normalcy, to the extent normalcy could exist in a white supremacist society. This is all evidence of that, right?

PB: Yes! You know my mother in Greensboro- this is the height of segregation- had a wonderful time. [She mentions this] in her autobiography. It's just this idyllic [view] and [you] don't get any sense of this oppression. It's stuck with me because [of] my first impression in going to Greensboro when I was 11 or 12. The clothing store where we shopped, looked like a warehouse. It was a retail store [with] clothes, racks and racks of clothes, but it was like a warehouse, it wasn't like a fancy department store. They had segregated bathrooms. I had to go to the bathroom [and there was a sign on the door saying whites only] but I just went on in. I came out and Aunt Grace or somebody said where did you go. I said "I went to the bathroom!" She said "where did you go" and I said "right over there." She said "oh we'd better get her out of here." I couldn't operate in that milieu. All those negatives, it doesn't necessarily mean life is horrible on a day-to-day basis. On the other hand, I am very sensitive to people who romanticize slavery, but yet I'm sure there were times when they found time to come together and enjoy themselves. I mean, the music, the art, the church, the religion, were ways to free themselves from all of that. You can't ignore that, that is an important part of the picture. So, the fact that you understand that and are trying to bring that out is really really important.

LE: I'm hoping that we can tell some really compelling stories that can represent them in a way that's respectful and that really makes a case for what you said earlier, right? That part of the problem that we see right now has to do with how people perceive each other separate from the facts of their lives. So, telling these stories of these accomplished musicians who went on to have productive careers and touch other people's lives, and telling it not as any kind of special story at all, actually, but a very representative story.

PB: Exactly.

LE: We'll make that [the focus]. That will maybe change some things in music history to try to understand black contributions to American musical life.

PB: You're on the right path.

LE: Thanks. [laughs]

PB: You're on the right track, and I'm really pleased to hear that because I think we need a lot more of that, and that will go a long way. And as your students are [learning]... you're creating a legacy as well.

LE: I don't know which legacy you're referring to, I mean, they may even be regretting that they agreed to work on this project with me— *[all laugh]*

PB: No! You're creating a legacy, so one day there'll be some folks getting together and they'll be talking about what you have done, and how you have paved the way.

LE: You know we've already had quite a bit of success. I think Maeve and I had been talking about this project for a couple months before Ariana, Jack, and two other students got involved.

[00:10:05]

MNF: Yes. We've been talking about this project for 6+ months?

LE: 6+ months, yes, and we just didn't know how it would go. I mean we had this idea, logically there must have been these musicians and they must have had careers and we must be able to know things about them. And then we started looking into it, and it was so rich.

PB: Wow. How did you get interested?

LE: Oh, my goodness. So, do you know who Harry Burleigh is? Have you heard that name before? He's one of these figures who we, we meaning musicologists, consider to be an exceptional black classical musician. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1866 and I want to say, died in New York in 1949. He had an unbelievable career as a performer; he was a baritone, he was a composer, he was an arranger. And he became best known as an arranger of spirituals. He turned spirituals into a solo concert genre. Before that it had been mostly choirs and quartets in the history of these singers with the Hampton quartet. But he made it a solo genre. He is thought to have elevated it to have combined a sort of the European art music tradition with the spiritual. And I got interested in him a couple years ago because I met the musicologist who later became the executive director of the Harry Burleigh Society. Her name is Marty Slaton (she was Marty Newlon at the time). She's an Oberlin graduate, no surprise there! As an Oberlin undergraduate, she spent a year at Fisk studying music there. [She] went on to write a dissertation about music at Fisk now. Not the Fisk Jubilee Singers of 1867, but the Fisk Jubilee Singers right now. She sang with the Fisk Singers, she toured with them, and she wanted to know what it meant to be a black undergraduate studying music, singing in this historic ensemble in 2010 with the weight of history on your shoulders, the responsibility of representing Blackness and musical excellence. Really fascinating work. I heard a paper of hers at a conference and was like, "I need to know this person." So, I got in touch with her, I brought her to St. Olaf, she worked with students, she worked with the St. Olaf choir which is our big choral ensemble, and she changed the way I thought about spirituals. She was Executive Director of the Burleigh Society, and I said "we should do something together. I work with students on research projects, maybe we could do research with you." So, we ended up making a big project with Burleigh, and she was the one

that first got me thinking about [the positive], not the false narratives of exceptionalism, they're just overly emphasized narratives of exceptionalism, and overly emphasized narratives of oppression.

Having worked on Burleigh, I was thinking "I'd like to do some other projects but I'd like to move away from these better traveled paths. Last fall, at the National Conference of American Musicological Society, I heard a keynote address by a scholar named Tammy Kernodle, who's at the University of Ohio, She is working on the-are you ready for this? It's a bit of a mouthful-the institutionalization of Black music in the second half of the twentieth century at places like Harvard and there's a black music research center in Chicago which started around then. Now, I was listening to her talk and thinking well, surely this history stretches back farther if you look at HBCUs. There must be something to the music history of HBCUs that's not about these choirs. Not about these exceptional, single figures, but that's about networks of people working together. And you know, working in the archives, reading Harriet Gibbs Marshall's papers, gosh the number of times I read today, "what we are doing for the race". Or, "we are making the race proud with this work, and your support makes it possible for us to continue to..."

MNF: "Can you please write us a check?" *[laughs]*

LE: Yes, and mostly asking people for money, but!

PB: She had to raise a lot of money!

LE: She had to write a lot of letters, but she's also making this argument that, there are all these people just living their lives, but also working with an eye towards what scholars call racial uplift. All these things kind of clicked, right, like Harry Burleigh's career, Tammy Kernodle's talk, interest in HBCUs as sites for racial uplift, and as sites for [inaudible]. Yes, I think Maeve and I, our conversation eventually wound its way-

MNF: Yes, we started exploring how can we-because our larger project is about mapping-So we were thinking how can we have a project that involves HBCUs and is about mapping, but is also small enough that one team of students can take [it] on? We started looking at different schools; we started looking at Hampton; we started looking at Fisk, we looked at Tuskegee; and then we found the Washington Conservatory and, [thought] "this is really interesting, there's a lot of stuff in D.C."

[00:15:05]

LE: And also is less well-known.

MNF: And is less well-known. I then said, you know. What if we looked at graduates? That might be a new way to approach this, and think about the influence of these schools. And then we've just kind of taken it from there.

PB: Now where are you all from?

JS: I'm from a suburb of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

PB: Okay.

AR: I'm from about 90 minutes north of Seattle, Washington.

PB: Okay, near Oregon? Or, Washington—goodness, I'm...

LE: *[laughs]* Ah, the coasts.

PB: And you're from?

LE: Southern New Jersey, originally.

PB: Southern, yes. Okay. Interesting. Well I'm excited! I want to see what you put together.

MNF: Absolutely, yes.

LE: We were wondering if we could get copies of *[inaudible]*

PB: Yes, *[inaudible]*, what would you like?

MNF: Could we have a copy of the interview *[my Mother's interview of Aunt Grace]*?

PB: The interview, yes.

LE: Yes, that would be great...Where's the...

MNF: The obituary program *[of Aunt Grace]*, could we...?

PB: Yes.

AR: Thank you.

PB: I might have more than one, let me...

LE: I would also love a copy of this

PB: Oh this? Okay.

MNF: I think you also said, a copy of your family tree?

PB: Yes, what I did, I typed and printed the tree across 10 pages and taped the pages together. You have to piece it together! *[laughs]*

LE: Well, that'll be a good exercise. We can see whether we learned anything today!

PB: I numbered the pages.

LE and MNF: Okay.

PB: You've got to cut, though, this one there, okay.

MNF: That's fine.

LE: You know what we might do is, I might take a picture of this one, and then we can sort of match up the numbers

PB: Yes, yes, because the lines aren't the same across all of the pages. So, I'll take these up and make copies of them.

LE and MNF: Thank you.

PB: So, you have these, alright. I'm going to take the time to read.

LE: Silver Springs Dentistry, I don't recall having gone there! *[laughs]*

MNF: These are your photos too, I don't know what folder they go into.

PB: Yes, I'll take care of it. Okay so you want these. I could do one of the pages from the family bible.

LE: Sure, that would be great.

MNF: I love that your mother wrote the book, *Linking the Gibbs Chain*.

PB: Yes, I think you should take some time to look at that because there are some pages there. This is the one that mentions Adam Copanka.

MNF: Were there a lot of copies printed?

PB: My mother made about 100. There's one at the Moorland-Spingarn Library, there's one at the Library of Congress, but most were for family members. That's my mother's book; I gave my book to my great-niece. But I can make copies of pages.

MNF: Why don't we just look at it at Howard?

PB: So, I will make copies of these while you look at that.

LE: Yes, we should get one of that.

[00:25:44]

PB: Anything else?

LE: I think we need to get your signature on these two copies.

PB: Okay.

LE: We're indicating that--The interviewer (that's us) may use the interview in any way, and/or supplementary materials identified above as described in the project information statement with the following exceptions or restrictions. And then restrictions are we need to clear the use of any audio recording with you prior to publication, and publication includes things like playing it at conferences.

PB: Right. And editing transcripts.

LE: And sending a written transcript with an opportunity for you to edit it. That's what we've got written there.

PB: Perfect.

LE: It's good to be clear about these things. So, do we present hard copies?

MNF: No, she just needs to sign it.

LE: Alright, so the two copies and a pen. Oh, and this one too.

[general signing chatter]

[00:30:10]

PB: Here's the original.

LE: Thank you.

PB: There might've been something in my mother's files. I also have this.

JS: I don't know that we do have that.

PB: This is the 1947 [Carter G Woodson] article on the Gibbs. It's at the Moorland-Spingarn Library.

JS: Oh, it is!

LE: Nice.

[more page chatter, looking at documents]

PB: I can make a copy of my mother's interview of Aunt Grace from her autobiography. It's a chapter on her two years with Aunt Grace.

MNF: Oh sure!

AR: Yes! That would be amazing.

PB: Days in the Sunny South. Shall I make a copy for you of that?

MNF: Sure!

PB: My mother's book should be available at Moorland-Spingarn Library. Ask for the full Gibbs Fauntleroy collection.

[00:35:36]

PB: I got this from the Moorland-Spingarn Library, but I added this back part. So, I'll give you a copy.

LE: Thank you. The fact that there's like a family profile in this? The family's like royalty or something. It's incredible, their prominence.

[general chatter]

[00:37:44]

JS: I did see that Ruth Weatherless' father was a frequent donator to the National Negro Music Center Campaign fund, so shoutout to Lizzie for confirming who that was. I didn't write it down.

PB: And I have more than one of these.

[chatter]

[00:39:42]

PB: So, what's the rest of your schedule?

LE: I head back to New Jersey tonight, but they're sticking around for another couple more days.

MNF: We're going to head back to Howard, and then we're going to the Anacostia family museum tomorrow. And then the Library of Congress.

LE: And then we have another, what, four weeks left of the summer? To wrap up the research that we're doing at the moment, and then package it into a sort of exhibit and hopefully some other things too.

PB: Are you going to Oberlin?

LE: We are not.

MNF: No, because we're mostly focused on graduates and not Harriet.

LE: We're lucky because Sarah Schmalenberger has already done so much of that work, so we can draw on her dissertation and articles. Doris McGinty as well.

PB: Okay well I didn't know if any of her [Harriet Gibbs Marshall's] students, did they go to Oberlin?

MNF: One of her students did study at Oberlin, for one year.

LE: There's a lot of correspondence between Harriet Gibbs Marshall and I think successive presidents of Oberlin. There was a lot of support from Oberlin for the Washington Conservatory

MNF: And they funded some scholarships for students.

PB: Oh good. Okay, that's good to know. Well, I'm all ears and eyes!

LE: Okay, well thank you again so much for your time and for your generosity.

[recording ends]

Postscript:

This interview was transcribed by Lizzie Gray and Davis Moore in July 2022. Further edits were made by Jack Slavik, Ariana Raduege, and Maeve Nagel-Frazel. Dr. Phyllicia Fauntleroy Bowman reviewed this transcript and requested her family tree be added as an appendix. Final edits and copy-editing were conducted by Maeve Nagel-Frazel and Dr. Louis Epstein in August 2022.

Appendix A: Gibbs Family Tree as Compiled by Phylcia Fauntleroy Bowman

Note images correspond horizontally from left to right

**Richard Mentor
Johnson**
1780-1850
Lexington College
Lawyer, 9th VP of US

<p>Lucy Wheatley Alexander 1802-1885 B-Ob</p>		<p>or Henry* Alexander 1802-186? Owned 3 dry goods stores</p>		<p>Lucy Wheatley Alexander 1802-1885 B-Ob</p>		<p>Henry* Alexander 1802-186? Owned 3 dry goods stores</p>		
<p>Horace Alexander 1822-1848 B- Mays Lick</p>	<p>Louisa Alexander 1824-1833 B-ML</p>	<p>Rachel Alexander 1829-1909 Teacher Oberlin Lit. 1862-64</p>	<p>William Henry Alexander I 1830-1878</p>	<p>I I I</p>	<p>Lavisa Alexander 1833- ?</p>	<p>Louisa Lydia Alexander B-Ob 1836-1911 Teacher Oberlin Lit. 1850-1856</p>	<p>Lemira Alexander Butler-M-James Butler 1838-1853 B - ML Oberlin Lit.</p>	<p>Elizabeth Alexander 1844/45-1910 1842-1907 B-Ob - both</p>

1872-
Walter Butler

Key – Green - White; Purple - Black

*Henry bought his own freedom in 1823 and he bought the freedom of Lucy and her first 5 children in 1832.

Maria Jackson
Gibbs
1780-1868

Jonathan Clarkson
Gibbs
1796-1831
Wesleyan Minister
Carpenter Built 1st AME Zion church in Philadelphia

William
Gibbs
1824-1828

Edward
Gibbs
1826-1826

M Rebecca

Isaiah Price
Gibbs
1831-1868

Mildin Wistar
Gibbs
1823-1915

1st Black municipal Judge/Entrepreneur
Oberlin Commercial Col – Law

Maria Alexander
Gibbs
1826-1904

Teacher
Oberlin Lit. 1852-53

Frances
Gibbs
1860-1872

Donald
Gibbs
1861-1906

M - 1904

William H. Hunt
1863-1951

Machinist
Oberlin
1875-79

Oberlin Conserv. 1884-85

Ida Alexander
Gibbs Hunt
1862-1957

M

Teacher/Diplomat
BA 1885 & MA 1892
Oberlin Prep. 1879-80

Horace
Gibbs
1863-1949

Capitola

Printer
Oberlin Prep.
1879-1882

Wendell
Gibbs
1865-1885

M - 1906

Napoleon Bonaparte Marshall
1870/73-1933

Music Educator/Lawyer - Harvard
BA – Music 1889
Oberlin
Founder, Washington Conserv. of Music

Harriet Aletha
Gibbs Marshall
1868-1941

Adam Copanka Congo – survived the Middle Passages
 Bought his freedom; Married an Indian Princess; sold hay for a living
 Don't know how many generations between Harris's and Copanka

Pierre Menard
 1766-1844
 1st Lt. Gov. IL

Nathaniel Harris 1768/70-1851 Businessman & Founders of Immanuel Baptist Church New Haven, Conn.	Julia Rugg Harris 1797-1883	Jonathan Clarkson Gibbs I 1796-1831 Wesleyan Minister	M - 1823	Maria Jackson 1780-1868	Free Creole Parents from New Orleans
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Matilda Lucy Harris 1836-1852 1839-?	William Spencer Harris 1828-1850 Died at Oberlin	Anna Amelia Harris 1831-1916 Divorced	M - 5/10/1852	Jonathan Clarkson Gibbs II 1821-1874 Dartmouth – 1852 Princeton Theolog. Seminary Presbyterian Minister	M	Elizabeth Mayes ? - 1922	John Willis Menard 1838-1893	M
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Mary Jane Harris 1833-35		Thomas Van Renssalaer Gibbs 1855-1898 Co-founder FAMU Howard, West Point Oberlin Prep.1874-1875	M in Boston	Alice Isabelle Menard Gibbs 1861-1898 Music Teacher
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Thomas V. Renssalaer Gibbs, Jr.	Alice Elizabeth Gibbs	Alice Menard Gibbs	Jonathan Clarkson Gibbs III	Grace Evangelina Gibbs	Ida Constance Gibbs	Harriet P. Gibbs	Mifflin Tucker Gibbs
1883-1933 1892-1969 M	1886-1887	Miller-Lamar 1887-1975	1890-1982 <u>M</u> - 1917	<u>Brown</u> Lytle 1892-1993	1895-1972	1894-1894	
<u>M</u> Edna Stewart Gibbs		<u>M</u> Dee Miller	Catholine Ethel	Chase K. Brown	<u>M</u>		Florence E.
Insurance Agent		Allen Gibbs Teacher BA FAMU	Physician/Educator Howard BA & MD	1880-1961 <u>M</u> 1918 Teacher/Grocer BA FAMU & NC A&T	Teacher		Employee
Aldee Miller 1919-2017 BA Monmouth; MA Pepperdine Army Officer <u>M</u> Helen Youngblood- 1944		<u>Harriet C. Gibbs Russell</u> 1921-2004 BA – Howard; MA Will-Pat. Educator <u>M</u> Harold Russell- 1973 192? - 2005		<u>Phyllis Gibbs Fautleroy</u> 1922-2020 BA – Howard; MA Columbia Professor/Librarian/Shellartist <u>M</u> John D. Fautleroy - 1946 1920-1989; Lawyer & Judge		Jonathan C. Gibbs IV 1924-2011 BA & MD Howard Surgeon <u>M</u> Verna Thomas - 1949 1926-2004; Teacher	
Beverly Miller Meredith Mobley (Adopted)	<u>Phylcia</u> <u>Fauntleroy</u> <u>Bowman</u> <u>Long -</u>	<u>Jacqueline</u> <u>Fauntleroy</u> <u>Barber</u>	John D. Fauntleroy	Frederick Fauntleroy	Jonathan C. Gibbs V Patti	Verna Catholine Gibbs Hoes Harris	Laurie Gibbs Kington
195? 1958- BA Univ. of MD JD Georgetown JD-Columbia	1947- BA Oberlin MA/Ph.D.	1951- BA DC Teachers 2 MAs Howard	1956- BA/JD-Howard	1966- Clerk	1952- BA Princeton MA-Westminster MD – Duke	1954- Surgeon	1957- BA -Columbia BA-Rice MBA Wharton
Lawyer Lawyer <u>M</u> Ezekiel Douglas Mobley Kington; RE	American Economist <u>M</u> John Bowman 1947	& GWU Teacher <u>M</u> H Wendell Barber	Lawyer <u>M</u> Cynthia Fox - 1956	Clerk	Seminary Chaplain <u>M</u> Marion xxxx	Surgeon <u>M</u> Marco Patti	Telco Exec. <u>M</u> Bill Harris

1986	1993	1971	1990; Secretary	xxxx	xxxx; Surgeon	1994; Lawyer		
	William Long 1989					Armin Hoes		
Kington	H Wendell Barber III	Cynthia Anika Fauntleroy	Jessica	JC Gibbs	Mini Gibbs VI	Patti		Alexis
Univ. of	1971- Grinnell/Howard	1991- PG Cmty. College	1980- Swarthmore/	1982- BA Cal State	1989- BA Barnard	1990 BA		
	SBO M Samantha Hayes; teacher Asha Baker M Natasha Sweeny Daisha	Insurance M DeVonte Ores		Scientist M Corey	Store owner		Penn.	
James Douglass Hayes-Barber 1994- BA – Elec. Eng. Morgan State U	Cheyenne Barber 1998- BA - Business UDC	Summer Barber 2008-	Jacob Barber 2010-	Lily Barber 2014-	Baillee Barber 2017-	Jayla Ores 2018-	Kylie Gibbs 2009-	Kennedy Gibbs 2011-

	Gibbs	Julia Pennington <u>M</u> Muse 1854-1934	Richard Muse Gibbs	Josephine Haywood 1858-1879
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Jesse Estelle Muse 1886	Victoria Josephine Muse 1887-1960 Musician/Music Teacher Washington Conservatory of Music Yale – 1912; Oberlin Conserv. 1936	Florence Anna Muse 1889 - ? M – George Laws Beautician	Richard Irving Muse
		Enola Estelle Laws 1915 - 1996 <u>M</u> – Cecil Phillips Secretary/ Air Traffic Controller	Gerald Laws, Sr. 1 st Black stage manager in NY <u>M</u> Louise Butler McCullom

	Cecile Phillips 1954- BA – Adelphi Restaurant owner <u>M</u> – 1987	Julian Phillips 1955- BA - Purdue Journalist <u>M</u> -1983	Gerald Laws Jr.	Barbara McCollum
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Hollis Grimshaw - 1958

Barbara King – 1956
Jazz Singer

Ashley

Hollie

Emily

Debbie McCollum

Adam McCollum

Kimberly McCollum

M Elizabeth Mary

Willis Monroe Menard
M Rebecca

Alaveta Menard
M Boyd Clarke

Willis Monroe Menard Jr.
M ?

Edith Menard
Teacher