



The Search for
Rachael Carew

by
Mary Warner

The Search for Rachael Carew
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A Story Waiting to Be Told

The search for Rachael Carew began with a handful of local items in the Lincoln column of the *Little Falls Herald*.

“May 8. – Two families of negroes came here Friday and have settled on land in section 15-132-32, Fawn Lake township. There were eleven of them and two more are coming with car. They seem to be intelligent and look as if they might be workers and they to be religious. Their names is Carew [sic].” (1)

“May 15. – Messrs. Schwab, who sold the land to Mr. Carew, the colored man, sent a man up to show him his land or such other land in that vicinity that he owned and they called on S.L. Staples to show him the lines. He rather surprised them with his pocket compass as he found the quarter stake a half mile from the corner and when he run south a quarter of a mile he told them he did not need a compass and called their attention to a hill three miles away and told them that the hill was where this same line run. Mr. Carew was perfectly satisfied and took the land that was described in his original contract.” (2)

“Mrs. Carew, who lives with her son’s family in section 15, Fawn Lake, died last Friday and is to be buried at Lake Alexander. Mr. Carew is the colored man that moved here

last spring.” (3)

“Some of the good citizens of Fawn Lake, Todd county [sic], passed through town on their way to Lake Alexander to dig a grave in the Scandia Valley burying ground to bury Mrs. Carew, a resident of that township.” (4)

Because land in central Minnesota was first home to the Dacotah, then the Ojibwe, followed by predominantly settlers of European origin, with a majority of the area’s population having been white since Morrison County’s founding in 1856, I was curious as to what the Carew family’s experience was like as one of the few black families in the area. Where had they come from? What drew them to central Minnesota? Living as they did in Todd County, how did Mrs. Carew come to be buried in Morrison County? So many questions from these few brief articles.

As with much of local history, it takes time, often years, to fully develop a story. I set these items aside, periodically taking them out over the years to reread them. I had not come across any other items on the Carew family in my decades of research at the Morrison County Historical Society (MCHS).

Following the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020, I reread the Carew articles again, wondering how I could highlight their lives and the lives of other black residents in Morrison County. (5)

A Fortunate Break in the Carew Research

Another curious feature of history research is the amount of serendipity involved. Around the time I was trying to figure out how to tell the story of the Carews, I got an email from Dan Dobrick, one of our past researchers and a

contributor to the Find A Grave website. Via email, he asked if we were aware that “there is a person who was born into slavery buried up at the Scandia Valley Cemetery (Ogema Point), old part” and provided a link to the Find A Grave information he had entered. (6)

The Find A Grave entry was for Rachael K. Tynes Carew, born 1844 in Alabama, died March 9, 1919 in Todd County, with burial in Scandia Valley Cemetery West, Cushing, Morrison County, Minnesota. (7)

Over the course of seven emails, Dan revealed the information he had uncovered about Rachael, including a copy of her death certificate, and launched me on a fascinating search to discover more about her and her family. That death certificate contains key information, including the fact that she was “Born in Slavery” in Alabama in 1844, with the month and day of birth unknown. Her father was Samuel Tyons, who was born in Virginia. Her mother’s name and place of birth were unknown. She was a widow at the time of her death. Her son, Robert Abraham Carew, attested to the truth of the provided information. Rachael’s death was caused when her “clothes took fire” and she “died from effect of burns.” She was buried in Lincoln, Minnesota, on March 13, 1919. (8)

When I searched for Rachael’s death date on the Minnesota Historical Society’s People Search database online, I couldn’t find her. Dan informed me that it’s because her name is spelled “Garew” in the database. When looking carefully at the death certificate, Rachael’s name is handwritten and, indeed, her last name appears to be “Garew” on the document. It’s a good reminder that when conducting research, being open to alternate name spellings is important.

TEAR CAREFULLY ALONG PERFORATED LINE
MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING
WRITE PLAINLY, WITH UNFADING INK—THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD

READ INSTRUCTIONS ON BACK CAREFULLY
REGISTRARS should attach CLIP OF DEATH in plain form, so that it may be properly indexed. See instructions on back of certificate.

PLACE OF DEATH
STATE OF MINNESOTA
Division of Vital Statistics

County Todd 15033
Township Fawn Lake
Village or City or (No. St. Ward)
Reg. District No. 3645 No. in Registration Book 22
(Above numbers to be filled in only by local registrar or his deputy.)

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

2 FULL NAME Rachael K. Carew (If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number.)

Sub-Registrar
Staples 1317

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS			MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH		
3 SEX <u>Female</u>	4 Color or Race <u>Caucasian</u>	5 Single, Married, Widowed, or Divorced. <u>Widow</u>	16 DATE OF DEATH <u>3 9 1919</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)		
6 DATE OF BIRTH <u>210 + 2 day unknown 1844</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)			17. I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I attended deceased from 191..... to..... 191..... that I last saw h..... alive on..... 191..... and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at..... The CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows: <u>Accident of this</u> <u>took place died from</u> <u>falling from</u> (Duration)..... yrs..... mos..... ds.		
7 AGE <u>75</u> yrs..... mos..... hrs..... If LESS than 1 day..... hrs..... or..... mins.?			Contributory Secondary (Duration)..... yrs..... mos..... ds.		
8 OCCUPATION (a) Trade, Profession, or particular kind of work. <u>Book Binder</u> (b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which employed (or employer). <u>associated with</u> <u>House work</u>			(Signed) <u>Alvaug Sep. Crow</u> <u>3/10</u> , 191.9 (Address) <u>Staples</u> M. D.		
9 BIRTHPLACE (State or Country) <u>Iatama</u>			*State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH, or, in deaths from VIOLENT CAUSES, state (1) MEANS OF INJURY; and (2) whether ACCIDENTAL, SUICIDAL, or HOMICIDAL; and (3) Where was injury sustained if not at place of death?		
10 Name of Father <u>Samuel Lyons</u>			13 LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (For Hospitals, Institutions, Transients, or Recent Residents) In the district where death occurred..... yrs..... mos..... ds. State..... yrs..... mos..... ds.		
11 Birthplace of Father (State or Country) <u>Virginia</u>			Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? Forme or usual residence.....		
12 Maiden Name of Mother <u>Unknown</u>			19 PLACE OF BURIAL OR CREMATION <u>Lincoln</u>		
13 Birthplace of Mother (State or Country) <u>Unknown</u>			DATE OF BURIAL <u>3/13 1919</u>		
14 The above is true to the best of my knowledge. (Informant) <u>Robert Abraham Carew</u> (Address) <u>Lincoln Minn</u>			20 UNDERTAKER <u>Alvaug</u> ADDRESS <u>Staples</u>		
15 Filed <u>Sept 10 1919</u> <u>Frank Lindgren</u> Registrar. Address <u>Phillbrook Minn</u>					

RECEIVED SEP 8 1919

Rachael Carew's death certificate, provided by researcher Dan Dobrick to the Morrison County Historical Society.

Field Trip to the Ogema Point Cemetery

In trying to find Rachael, my husband and I visited Ogema Point Cemetery located on the north shore of Lake Alexander in Morrison County. It's a gorgeous spot for a cemetery, shaded with tall pines. The cemetery is split by a road, with the lakeside portion being the oldest. This part of the cemetery, which has a fairly large fenced-in area, has very few grave markers in it. The portion of the cemetery across the road is also fenced and has many markers that appear to be much newer than the few we found in the old section. What's delightful and curious about the new section

of Ogema Point Cemetery is that so many of the grave markers are shrines to those buried in it. There's not just a standard headstone; loved ones have added knickknacks,



**Levi Michael and Lars Mathew Newman grave, east side of Ogema Point Cemetery, Scandia Valley Township, Morrison County, MN.
Photo by Mary Warner, July 24, 2020.**

artwork, statues, planters, flags, windchimes, birdfeeders, photos, and other assorted items that indicate the personality of the individual being memorialized.

My husband and I walked both sides of the cemetery, searching in vain for a marker for Rachael.

A little research in the cemetery files at the Morrison County Historical Society showed that Ogema Point Cemetery was established on the lakeside or west side of the road in 1907. The east side portion was established in 1939. A



West or lake side of the Ogema Point Cemetery, Scandia Valley Township, Morrison County, MN. This section of the cemetery is largely unmarked, but based on Rachael Carew's date of death and when this portion of the cemetery was established, Rachael's grave should be in this section. Photo by Mary Warner, July 24, 2020.

call to the cemetery recordkeeper, Judy Altrichter, revealed that many of the graves on the west side never had markers. Around twenty years ago the cemetery tried to have graves identified using wooden crosses and Sharpie markers. A few were identified during this effort, but the location of Rachael's grave, which ought to be on the west side of the road based on the date of death, remains unknown.

Because locating Rachael's grave hadn't panned out, it was time to see if I could discover where she and her family had come from. Serendipity from two different sources played a role in this portion of the search as well. The first came from attending the Rethos/MCHS class *Slaveholders and Real Estate in Minnesota* taught by Dr. Christopher P. Lehman. Dr. Lehman is a Professor of Ethnic Studies at St.

Cloud State University and has written numerous books on African American history. His most recent book is “Slavery’s Reach: Southern Slaveholders in the North Star State,” which examines the investments in organizations and property that southern slaveholders made in Minnesota.

My other serendipitous resource was the book, “The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration,” by Isabel Wilkerson. It tells the story of the decades-long migration of black people out of the South and into the North and West in order to escape their treatment under Jim Crow laws and other forms of oppression. I had picked up a copy earlier in the summer in order to learn more about this major long-term event in American history, not realizing it was going to provide valuable information related to my search for Rachael Carew.

Process for Finding Owners of Enslaved People from the American South

During Dr. Lehman’s *Slaveholders and Real Estate* class, he explained a process for figuring out who had owned specific enslaved people. The Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which formally abolished slavery, was passed January 31, 1865, and ratified December 6 the same year. (9) In census documents prior to 1870, enslaved people were not named, though Slave Schedules showed the names of slaveholders and the gender and age of the people they enslaved. Many formerly enslaved people first appear by name in the 1870 census. Because the 1870 census was taken not too long after the abolition of slavery and enumerators went door-to-door for the count, Dr. Lehman indicated that formerly enslaved people might appear on the 1870 census nearest to the white person or family who owned them.

Using Rachael’s birth state of Alabama, I logged into

37	9	Carver Robert	30	M	B	Carmer																37
38		Carver Elizabeth	28	F	B	Carmer																38
39		Carver Elizabeth	10	M	B	Carmer																39
40		Carver Elizabeth	7	M	B	Carmer																40
		No. of dwellings, 9		No. of white females, 4		No. of males, foreign born, —		No. of insane, —														
		" " families, 4		" " " colored males, 17		" " " females, " "																
		" " white males, 1		" " " females, 18		" " " blind, —				4000		300		9		8						

Page No. 33 } **Inquiries numbered 7, 16, and 17 are not to be asked in respect to idiots. Inquiries numbered 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 20 are to be answered (if at all) merely by an affirmative mark, as 1.**

SCHEDULE 1.—Inhabitants in Post-Office, **in the County of** Autauga, **State** Alabama, **enumerated by me on the** 14th **day of** July, **1870.**

Post Office: Autauga, **Ass't Marshal.**

Dwelling-house, numbered in the order of valuation	Family, numbered in the order of valuation	Age at last birthday, if under 21 years, give months			Sex—Males (M) Females (F)			Color—White (W) Black (B) Indian (I) Chinese (C) Mulatto (M) Other (O)			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male or female	VALUE OF REAL ESTATE OWNED		Place of Birth, naming State or Territory of U. S.; or the Country, if of foreign birth	PARENTAGE			It born within the year, state (month (Jan., Feb., &c.))	It married within the year, state (month (Jan., Feb., &c.))	Attended school within the year	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, or idiotic	CONSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS
		Years	Months	Days	M	F	W	B	I	C		M	O		Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Estate	Father of foreign birth					
1	1	4	5	6	7		8	9	10			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
3	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
4	4	4	5	6	7		8	9	10			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	

Ancestry's web databases using my library card from Great River Regional Library and did a search for her in the 1870 census. There she was at the age of 28, listed with her husband Robert, age 30, and her children Gustavus (10), Ebenezer (7), Abraham (5), and Babe (2). The family was living in Autaugaville, Autauga County, Alabama. Robert's occupation was listed as Farmer and Rachael's as Farm Laborer. (10)

With Dr. Lehman's advice to look for the white family listed in the census nearest to the Carews, I found Sarah Warren, age 47. To determine whether Sarah Warren had owned slaves, I had to look at a variety of sources on Ancestry, including the 1860 and 1880 censuses, marriage and military records, and the Slave Schedules of the 1860 census. This was necessary in order to uncover more of the Warren family story and to pinpoint them on the Slave Schedules. Sarah Avery married Jacob H. Warren on November 25, 1855. Jacob enlisted to serve in the 5th Alabama Infantry Regiment in 1861 in the Civil War. Could this explain why Jacob doesn't appear on the 1870 census with Sarah? Might he have died in the war? More digging, this time in the 1880 census, uncovered that Jacob was divorced. I went back to the 1870 census to find that he is listed separately from Sarah. (11, 12, 13)

Opposite: 1870 U.S. Census, Autauga County, Alabama

Entries for the Robert & Rachael Carew family

Carew, Robert, 30, Male, Black, Farmer, Born in Alabama

Carew, Rachael, 28, Female, Black, Farm Laborer, Born in Alabama

Carew, Gustavus, 10, Male, Black, Without Occupation, Born in Alabama

Carew, Ebenezer, 7, Male, Black, Without Occupation, Born in Alabama

Carew, Abraham, 5, Male, Black, at Home, Born in Alabama

Carew, Babe, 2, Black, Male, at Home, Born in Alabama

The 1870 Census is the first United States Census after the Civil War in which enslaved people are enumerated under their own names rather than the names of the people who enslaved them.

The purpose of finding Jacob's name, or J.H. as he often appears in the records, was to be able to search the Slave Schedules of 1860. Sarah's name does not appear in the schedules, but J.H. Warren does. In 1860, he owned 12 enslaved people, including a female 15 years of age and one who was 18. Both of them would have been in the age range of Rachael Carew, whose birth year is listed as 1844 on her death certificate, but not the day or month, which makes her birthday uncertain. By doing a bit of math with her listed age of 28 on the 1870 census, her birth year would have been around 1842, the right age for the 18-year-old female listed as enslaved by the Warrens. (14)

I wanted to confirm that I had understood this process correctly, so I contacted Dr. Lehman.

An Alternative Source of the Carew Name

Through a series of emails, Dr. Lehman indicated that I had followed this process correctly, but also suggested I look at the Slave Schedules for someone in Autauga County, Alabama, who had the same last name as the Carews. He said that enslaved people had a number of ways of adopting surnames, including "[taking] the names of the last people who held them," "[taking] the names of the enslavers they got along best with," "[taking] the names of people they knew to be their fathers," or "[taking] on names of "Founding Fathers" like Washington, Jefferson or Lincoln." (15)

I found a couple of these naming conventions reiterated in Isabel Wilkerson's "The Warmth of Other Suns":

"A name change would have had no effect in masking the ethnicity of black migrants It would have been superfluous, given that their surnames, often inherited from the masters of their forebears, were already Anglo-

Saxon.”(16)

“Sometimes parents tried to superimpose glory on their offspring with the grandest title they could think of, or, if they were feeling especially militant, the name of a senator or president from the North. It was a way of affixing acceptability if not greatness. It forced everyone, colored or white, to call their janitor sons Admiral or General or John Quincy Adams, whether anybody, including the recipient, liked it or not. White southerners who would not call colored people Mr. or Mrs. were made to sputter out Colonel or Queen instead.” (17)

Turning back to the Slave Schedules for Autauga County in 1850 and 1860, I searched for the last name Carew and discovered E.G. Carew, who had seven enslaved people in 1850 and 32 enslaved people in 1860. Of the people enslaved by E.G. Carew in 1860, a couple of them were around the right ages to be Robert and Rachael Carew, but this opened more questions for me. Robert and Rachael were married and had several children by the time of the 1870 census. When did they get married? Where did they meet? Was it possible they were enslaved by the same owner or was it more likely that they lived on separate plantations or properties? (18, 19)

More enlightenment came from Dr. Lehman. He said that they could well have been enslaved by the same people or they could have been on neighboring properties. Because the Slave Schedules do not include names, this remains an open question. (20)

Dr. Lehman’s curiosity was piqued by my research and he did a little digging on E.G. Carew himself. He discovered that E.G. Carew and his parents were from Connecticut. Because Connecticut was a free state by the time E.G.’s

parents died, E.G. could not have inherited slaves from them. Instead, E.G.'s wife was the likely link to the enslaved people listed under E.G.'s name on the Slave Schedules. (21)

E.G. Carew was Ebenezer (also spelled Ebonezar) Goddard Carew. He was married to Rebecca Elizabeth Ann Shackelford, who was the daughter of Edmund Meredith Shackelford.

Finding Robert in the Shackelford Will

Edmund M. Shackelford was born in Georgia, served in the Georgia militia, was a 2nd lieutenant in the War of 1812, and "served under General Andrew Jackson, later 7th President of the United States, at the Battle of New Orleans in January 1815. He continued serving with Jackson in the Indian wars in what was then America's frontier, now Alabama and Florida." (22)

By 1828, he had moved to Alabama and was serving as a general in the Alabama militia. He was one of the early settlers of Autauga County and was sheriff there from 1831 to 1837. (23, 24) In other words, he's just the kind of person that history tends to concentrate on based on his military service, being an early settler on lands opened up by the Indian wars he fought in, and having held public office as a sheriff.

He was also wealthy. "After leaving active service, General Edmund SHACKELFORD, [sic] settled on his plantation near Kingston., [sic] an extinct town near Autaugaville, Autauga County, Alabama. He had 26 slaves, valued from \$200 to \$1100 each and 280 acres of land. In 1859 his estate was valued at \$21,325.66." (25)

While Dr. Lehman was researching Shackelford history

on Ancestry.com, he found Edmund's will dated 1857, the year Edmund died. He provided me a direct link, but try as I might, I could not access this will through the library version of Ancestry. Camille Warzecha, MCHS board president, came to my rescue by tracking down the will through her Ancestry subscription, printing out a clear copy and transcribing it for me (a much more difficult process than it sounds here).

Dr. Lehman had spotted something critical to my search for the Carews in the will. The bulk of Edmund Shackelford's will is dedicated to bequeathing the people he enslaved to family members, particularly to his daughter Rebecca and her husband E.G., which explains how E.G. came to own slaves. In the first section of the will, Edmund lists a number of enslaved people by first name, willing them to E.G. Carew and James L.F. Cottrell, and directing them to free these slaves.

In the fifth section of the will, he bequeaths several named enslaved people to his daughter Rebecca, stipulating "that she shall not under any circumstances part with the possessions [ever?] of the following named property, [?] Elbert a man slave, Minny a woman slave, Martha a woman slave, Ebenezer a boy slave, Robert a boy slave, Augustus a boy slave, Jim Henry, a boy slave, Joseph a man slave, Mary a woman slave, Hilliano a boy slave, Peter a boy slave, [Jolpie/Jopie?] a boy slave, William a man slave, Julia a young woman slave, Joseph [Waldinglove/Waldingrove?], my gold watch and fine [breast?] pin." (26)

Could the Robert listed here be Robert Carew? I'd say it's very likely. Robert would have been about 17 years old in 1857, the year of the will. An intriguing clue in this research is how often the name Ebenezer, not the commonest name, crops up. E.G. Carew is Ebenezer. "Ebenezer a boy slave"

Edmund pro Straps - and it is my wife wish and
desire that my da's daughter shall not dispose
of her life estate or interest under any
thing my last will in and to my estate as is herein
shown above and that she shall not under any
circumstances part with the possession even of
the ^{the} ~~following~~ named property, Robert a man slave
Mary a woman slave Margtha a woman slave, George a
boy slave, Robert a boy slave, Augustus a boy slave, John
Mary a boy slave, Joseph a man slave Mary a woman slave
Hilliard a boy slave, Peter a boy slave, John a boy slave

Edmund Shackelford will, State of Florida, April 29, 1857, Ancestry.com.
Highlighted section: "Robert a boy slave". Could this be Robert Carew?

is named in Edmund Shackelford's will. And, Robert and Rachael Carew have a son named Ebenezer, who is seven years old on the 1870 census.

Picking Up the Threads of Rachael's Life

While we may have discovered which family had enslaved Robert Carew, we still don't know where Rachael was before the 1870 census. There were no Rachael's named within Edmund Shackelford's will, so she likely was not enslaved with Robert. This leaves a gap in their story, wherein we don't know how they met or when they got married.

In the 13 years between 1857 and 1870, we do know they survived the Civil War, were emancipated, married and had four children, the oldest of whom was 10 and the youngest 2. Robert Carew is listed in the 1870 schedule of Productions of Agriculture in Autauga County, Alabama, as owning 16 acres with a cash value of his farm at \$160 and the value of livestock at \$125. (27) These were seismic changes in their lives.

Robert and Rachael are not listed in the 1880 census, but by examining their son Robert's (R.A.) obituary we can pick up a thread of their lives. R.A. was born on December 7, 1869, in Prattville, Alabama, which means he wasn't counted in the 1870 census (not uncommon for infants). His obituary also says that "he moved with his parents to Aplica, Ala., and from there to Birmingham." (28)

Jump ahead to the 1900 census and Rachael appears again, this time as a widow with only one daughter, Martha Bufort, at home in Pratt City, Alabama. The census reveals she owned a house at 409 Fourth Avenue and worked as a washerwoman. Rachael gave her year of birth as 1847 in this census, which doesn't match the other birth years appearing in the research. The birth place of her parents was listed as Virginia; she was born in Alabama. (29)

This reveals that Rachael's husband, Robert, died sometime between 1870 and 1900, though I could not find an obituary for him. Alabama began filing death certificates in 1908, after the period in which Robert must have died.

R.A. shows up again in the 1910 census in Birmingham, Alabama. He is 40 years old and has been married to Gertrude (Flahes) Carew since 1891. They have 6 children in 1910. (30, 31) If his mother is not yet in Birmingham by this time, she will be soon.

Rachael next appears at "405 4th" in Birmingham City Directories in 1914, 1916, and 1917. In 1914, she is living at the same address with Salome Carew, a "miner." Salome was at this address in 1913, but Rachael doesn't appear there then. In 1916, Salome is no longer living with Rachael, who is listed in the directory as a "Indrs," short for laundress. I can't be sure who Salome is in relation to Rachael. (32, 33, 34, 35)

Back Where This Began

Timewise, this brings us to the point at which this story began, with the local items in the 1918 Little Falls Herald reporting that the R.A. Carew family, including R.A.'s mother Rachael, had moved to Todd County.

What's interesting about this date is where it falls within the context of the larger story of the migration of black people out of the South. According to Isabel Wilkerson in "The Warmth of Other Suns," this Great Migration occurred between 1915 and 1970. That means the Carew family left Alabama near the beginning of this migration, at the forefront of a movement that would see millions of black people leave their southern homes. (36)

Why did the Carews pick central Minnesota? Wilkerson says, "[t]he Great Migration ran along three main tributaries and emptied into reservoirs all over the North and West. One stream ... carried people from the coastal states of Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia up the eastern seaboard to Washington, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and their satellites. A second current ... traced the central spine of the continent, paralleling the Father of Waters, from Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, and Arkansas to the industrial cities of Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh. A third and later stream carried people ... from Louisiana and Texas to the entire West Coast, with some black southerners traveling farther than many modern-day migrants." (37)

The Carew family, in moving from Alabama to central Minnesota, followed the path of the Father of Waters, settling on farmland not too far from the Mississippi River.

With Rachael Carew's death occurring less than a year after moving to Minnesota, it would seem that her burial

beside Lake Alexander in Morrison County is the end of the story. But, it's not; her family continued on.

According to the 1900 census, Rachael was the mother of 10 children, 3 of them living.

We know that her son, R.A. (Robert Abraham), was one of the living. He and his wife, Gertrude, had nine children, seven of who were listed on the 1920 census, when they were living in Todd County. Their children were Sirlonley, Ruth, Samuel, Gertrude, Ellen, Roosevelt, Coppins, Teressia, and Benjamin. (38)

R.A. was a minister in the Methodist church. He and Gertrude moved to Muskegon, Michigan, in 1928, continuing in the migration movement. (39)

Their oldest son, Sirlonley, had gotten married in Iowa in 1914 and was listed as living in Des Moines during the 1915 Iowa State Census. On Sirlonley's death certificate in 1945, his usual occupation was listed as "Miner." Could Sirlonley have been the Salome listed as living with Rachael Carew in the Birmingham City Directories? (40, 41, 42)

Benjamin Carew, youngest son of R.A. and Gertrude, was born in Knoxville, Iowa, in 1913, suggesting that Iowa was a stopping off place for the Carew family when they migrated north. (43) By the 1930s, he had become a well-known jazz musician in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, music scene, forming the Bennie Carew Band. (44)

Nowadays, with as well-documented as our lives are, it should be relatively easy to trace the movement of people across the country. Pre-1900 records by their nature tend to be incomplete, but the difficulty in tracing people who were enslaved, who don't have birth certificates, have uncertain

last names and birth dates, appear only by age and gender on Slave Schedules, often weren't counted in later censuses, and don't have obituaries or grave markers, is particularly acute.

We are also missing the emotional essence of the Carew family's story, what they endured while enslaved, their experience of the Civil War, emancipation, and Jim Crow laws. We don't know what drove them to leave the South or how they were treated during their ten years in central Minnesota. Because of their race, they stood out among the largely white population, so much so that they were mentioned in the local newspaper.

A little piece of their history, part of a much larger American story, is here in Minnesota, with Rachael Carew's final resting place in Morrison County, under pines far from her original home.



The pine trees in the west section of Ogema Point Cemetery, Scandia Valley Township, Morrison County, Minnesota, the final resting place of Rachael Carew.

End Notes

1. Little Falls Herald, May 10, 1918
2. Little Falls Herald, May 17, 1918
3. Little Falls Herald, March 14, 1919
4. Little Falls Herald, March 14, 1919
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