

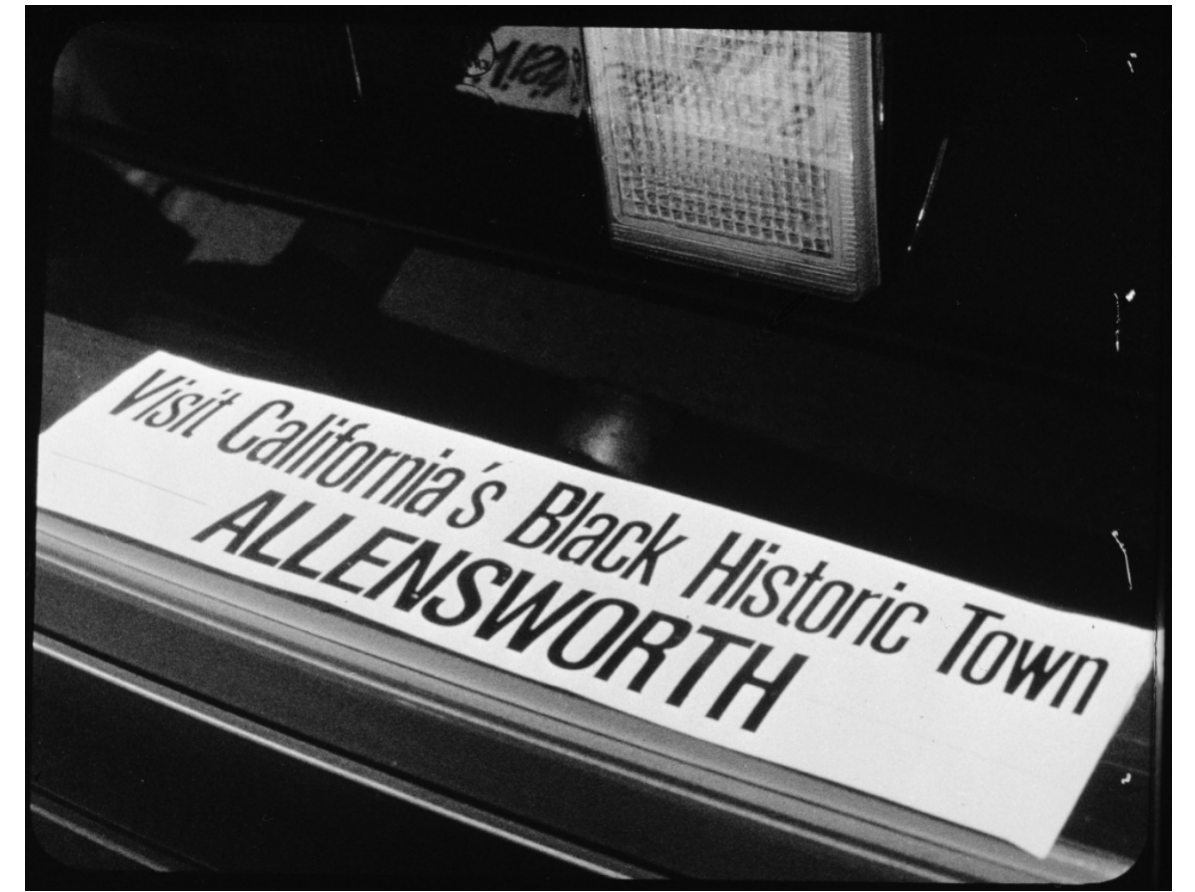
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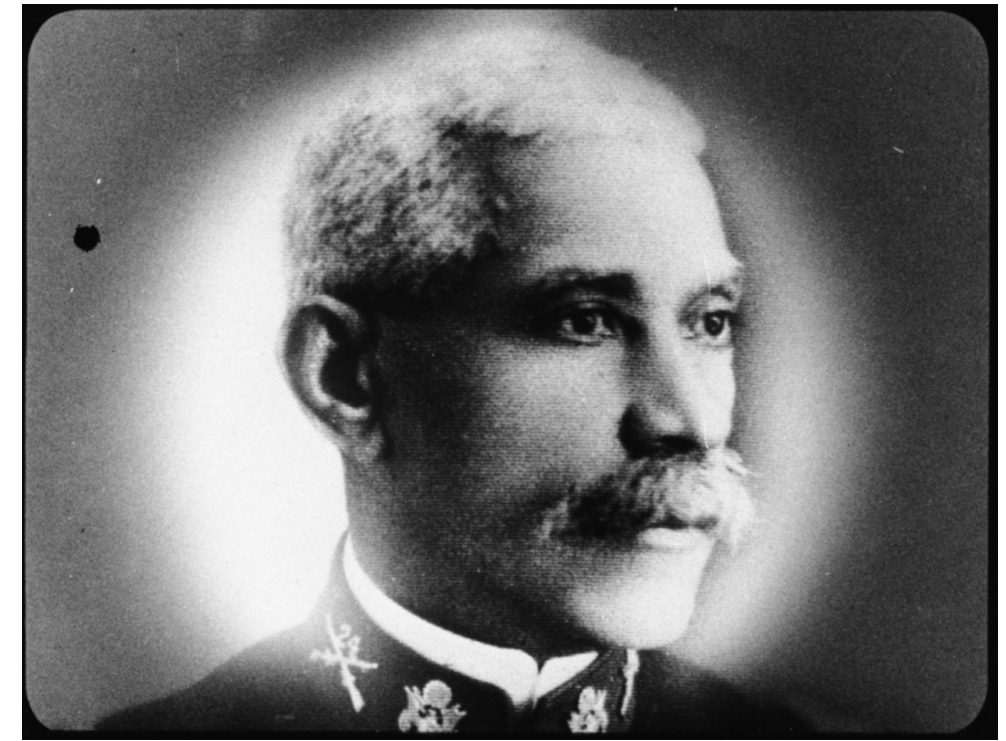
Allensworth was founded in 1908 as a symbol of freedom in the West. It follows in the long history of independent and autonomous cooperative communities created by escaped slaves and revolutionaries that dates back centuries. After the Civil War some newly freed slaves opted to leave the South for a new life and a taste of liberation resulting in an uprising of Black autonomous towns across the country. Allensworth was the first in California to be founded, financed and governed exclusively by Blacks.

Allensworth was founded by Allen Allensworth who was born a slave in Kentucky in 1842 but decided to move West to escape discrimination as well as prove to the world that Black people were capable of self-sustaining and managing their lives on every level. Prior to relocation Allensworth escaped slavery as a young man to be in the war serving as a civilian nursing aide. He went on to teach at a school for freedmen during Reconstruction and in 1886 was appointed as chaplain in the US Army. Being one of the few Black chaplains in the army he was assigned to the Buffalo Soldiers out West which got him familiar with the territory. After leaving the army he settled his family in Los Angeles. Soon after Allensworth and four others then purchased the land from a white landowner who was surprised that African Americans were interested and able to buy the land charging them an increased rate.

The early years of the town saw a lot of successes such as California's first African American school district, judicial district and the Tulare County free library. There was also access to inexpensive land, natural resources and artesian wells and in addition to the practice of collective economies and cooperative economics. It didn't take long before the hardships began to sever the advances the people of the town had been working towards. In 1914 Allensworth himself was run down and killed during a racially motivated car attack in Monrovia, California and then in 1917 a drought hit the entire Central Valley. By 1930 the railroad station had closed and moved to a white town nearby taking with it all of the local business. It was during this time that the Great Depression was also pushing people out and into cities for work. On top of all of this, due to a variety of environmental traumas high levels of arsenic were found in the water essentially affecting the most crucial pillar of sustaining life in Allensworth.

In 1974 Allensworth became a state park in an attempt to preserve the unique history and territory. Since then the demographics have evolved and today the town is majority Latinx. Tulare County continues to be one of the poorest counties in the state and to this day still does not have safe drinking water making it yet another case study of environmental racism that has been ignored and neglected for decades. Despite it all, the town has been a resilient relic in the history of American freedom and still finds reasons to celebrate its legacy and influence every year on days such as Juneteenth and Founder's Day.



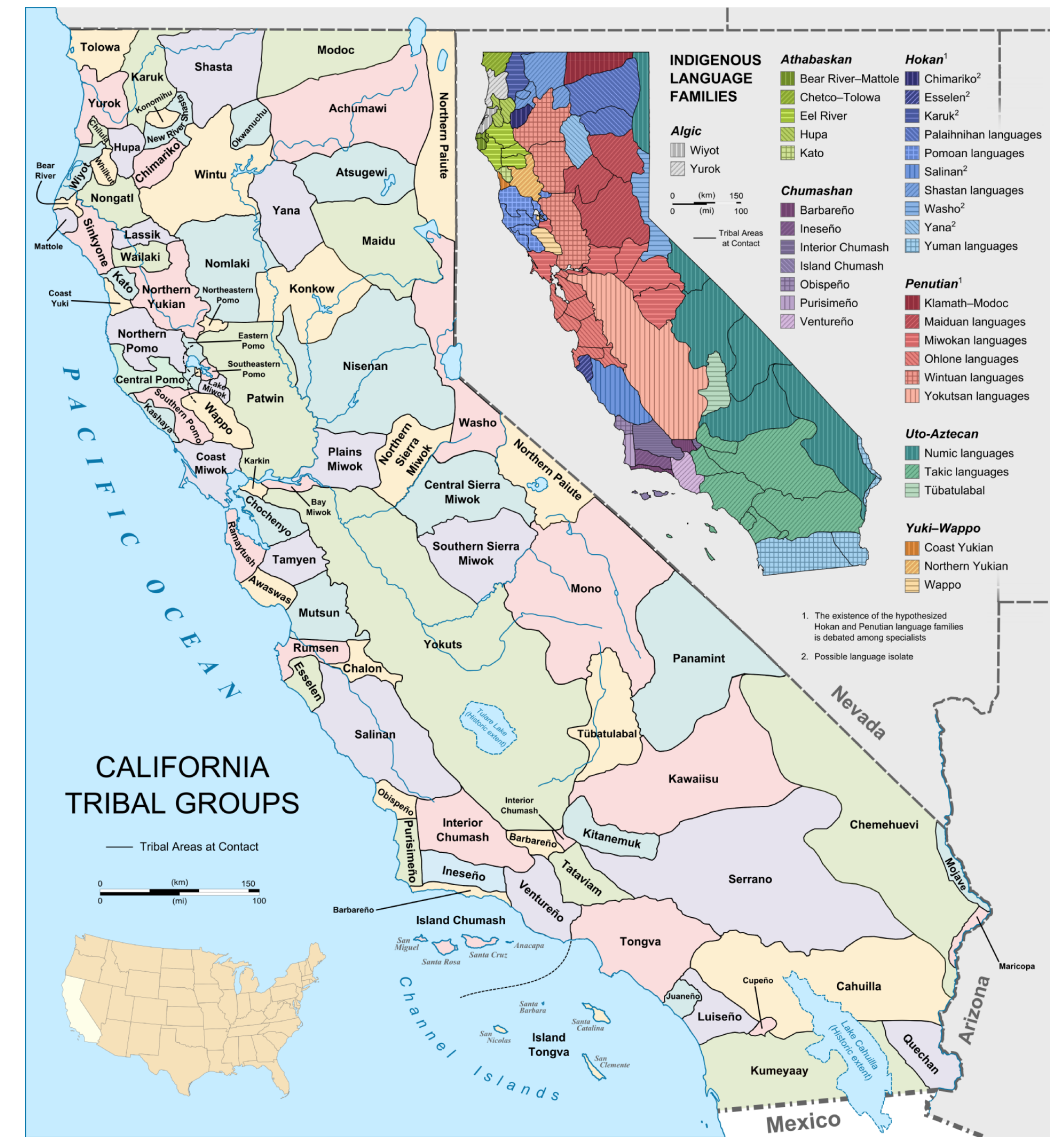


Lt. Col. Allen Allensworth, 1842-1914



Yokut Indian wife and children of the chief near present day Porterville, CA, 1900

Prior to Allensworth and any European exploration indigenous people have occupied the land of what is today known as the San Joaquin Valley for over 10,000 years. This area historically belongs to the Yokut which is an umbrella term for the 60 sub tribes that each had their own name, language and territory. The Yokut lived off of the land as hunter gatherers utilizing cooperative economics and the rich habitat of the natural features, specifically acorns, to generate a population reaching 70,000. In 1542 the Spanish began exploring this part of California and by 1769 the colonization process had been well underway. The colonizers introduced agriculture to the region which utilized farming land that was forcibly taken from the native people. The ones who were removed were then enslaved or died due to a wave of invasive diseases. Those who were left saw their culture and language suppressed leaving an influence of white society with little to no ties to the past. By 1871 the Yokut population had decreased by 93% with the remaining people placed in a series of reservations.





Tachi Yokut picking berries, nd





Allensworth rancher with prize cow, nd



<p>ALLENSWORTH</p> <p>WATER Our Colony is situated in the famous artesian belt of California. All of the water for irrigation and domestic purposes comes from deep flowing artesian wells. The water is pure and possesses health-giving qualities.</p> <p>SCHOOLS Our schools are equal to any in the State of California. Professor W.A. Payne is the only colored teacher in California. He is a graduate of Dennison University, of Ohio.</p> <p>PRODUCTS The principal agricultural products of Allensworth are wheat, barley, alfalfa, rye, sugar beets, corn of all kinds, sweet and Irish potatoes, vegetables of all kinds, and all sorts of fruit.</p> <p>DAIRYING A large percentage of the Colonists are engaged in dairying. Three cows can be fed on two acres of alfalfa, and a good cow will make her owner \$8.00 a month, selling the butter fat to the creamery. There are now over 300 cows in the Colony. The local creamery supplies the Colonists with cows and permits them to pay for cows by monthly instalments from the sale of the cream.</p> <p>CALIFORNIA</p>	<p>Allensworth California</p>  <p>For further details write to Pacific Farming Co. 908 Security Bldg. Los Angeles, California</p>	<p>Allensworth California</p> <p>No Snow! No Ice! No Winter! Delightful and Healthy Sun Shines 300 Days in the Year!</p>
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Teachers at Allensworth school, 1915





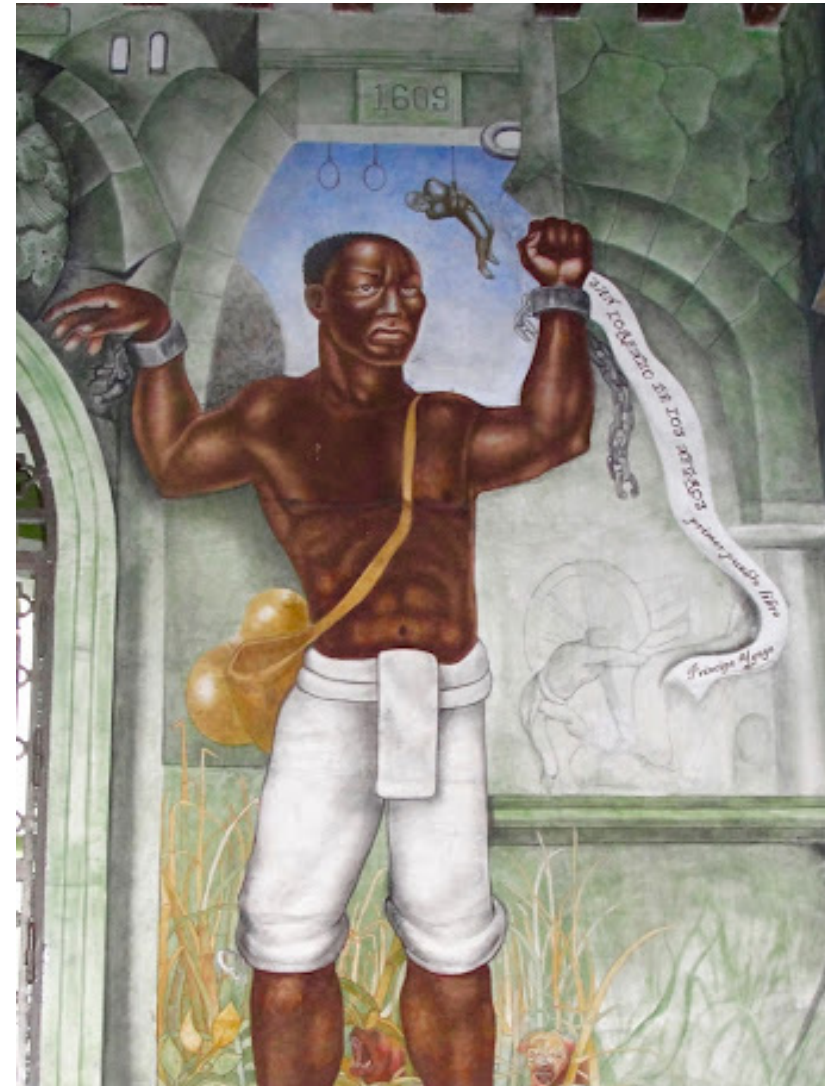


YANGA, Veracruz, granted independence in 1618



Gaspar Yanga, 1545-?

Yanga, formerly known as San Lorenzo de los Negros, was founded by Gaspar Yanga who was sold into slavery in Gabon and brought to New Spain, Mexico. He managed to escape with a group of others to the highlands of what is present day Veracruz and went on to create one of the first free towns for Black people in all of the Americas in 1570. These maroon colonies are also referred to as palenques and are said to be some of the original sites of creole culture due the integration of Africans and Indigenous people. Although the Spanish tried to take back the land in 1609 Yanga and the others in the community were able to fend off the Spanish negotiating freedom for the fugitive slaves and independence for the village. Today Yanga is one of the few remaining maroon towns and continues to celebrate their iconic leader and revolutionary every August with a carnival in his honor.





Irene Phillips, 1918



Jefferson Pierro and grandson Leo Tompkin, 1953







Quilt by Hazel Kennedy



Quilt by Myrtle Hackett Tibbs



Quilted jacket by Gemelia Hall Herring

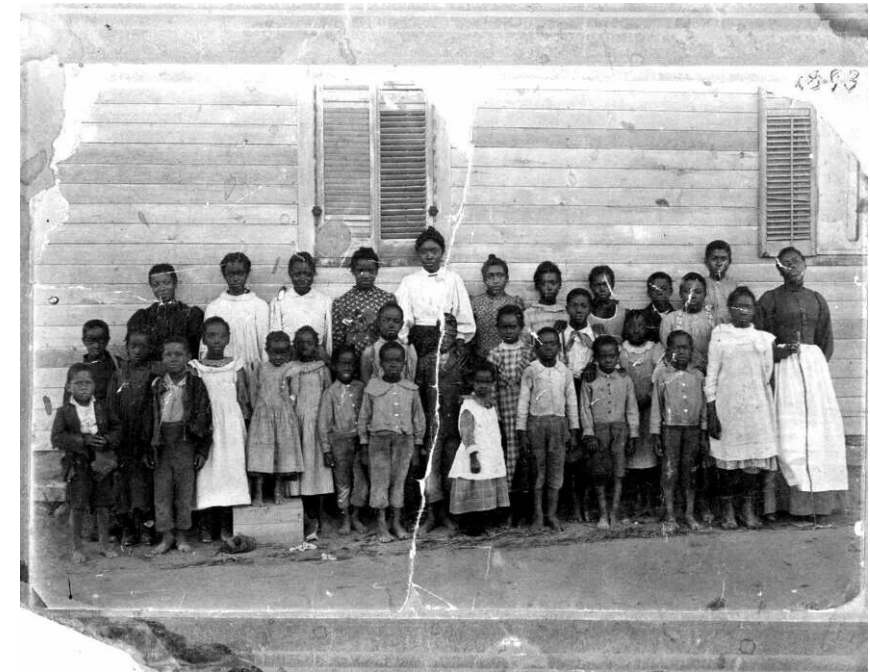




NICODEMUS, Kansas, founded in 1877



Nicodemus settlers, 1885



Nicodemus school, 1890



Nicodemus is one of the oldest Black settlements west of the Mississippi River. It was founded in 1877 during the Reconstruction period by six Black men and one white man as a free and hopeful new beginning. The idea of an all Black town appealed to many newly freed slaves and because of the westward expansion of the railroad and the Homestead Act by 1880 the town had a population of 700 people. Today the town has been recognized as a national historic site although due to a lack of funding the public buildings have not been maintained and are largely closed to the public while the Black population continues to decrease.

16

All Colored People

THAT WANT TO

GO TO KANSAS,

On September 5th, 1877,

Can do so for \$5.00

IMMIGRATION.

WHEREAS, We, the colored people of Lexington, Ky., knowing that there is an abundance of choice lands now belonging to the Government, have assembled ourselves together for the purpose of locating on said lands. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we do now organize ourselves into a Colony, as follows:— Any person wishing to become a member of this Colony can do so by paying the sum of one dollar (\$1.00), and this money is to be paid by the first of September, 1877, in instalments of twenty-five cents at a time, or otherwise as may be desired.

RESOLVED, That this Colony has agreed to consolidate itself with the Nicodemus Towns, Solomon Valley, Graham County, Kansas, and can only do so by entering the vacant lands now in their midst, which costs \$5.00.

RESOLVED, That this Colony shall consist of seven officers—President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Trustees. President—M. M. Bell; Vice-President—James Talbott; Secretary—W. I. Niles; Treasurer—Daniel Clarke; Trustees—Jerry

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Ho for Kansas!

Brethren, Friends, & Fellow Citizens:

I feel thankful to inform you that the

REAL ESTATE

AND

Homestead Association,

Will Leave Here the

15th of April, 1878,

In pursuit of Homes in the Southwestern Lands of America, at Transportation Rates, cheaper than ever was known before.

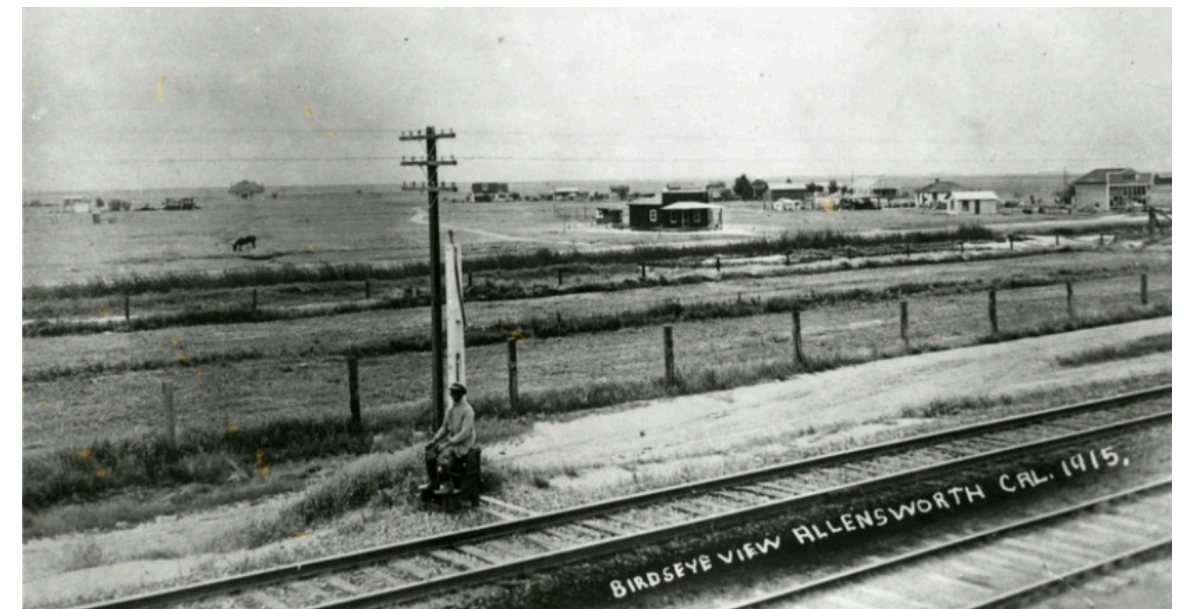
For full information inquire of

Benj. Singleton, better known as old Pap,
NO. 5 NORTH FRONT STREET.

Beware of Speculators and Adventurers, as it is a dangerous thing to fall in their hands.

Nashville, Tenn., March 18, 1878.





Allensworth train stop, 1915

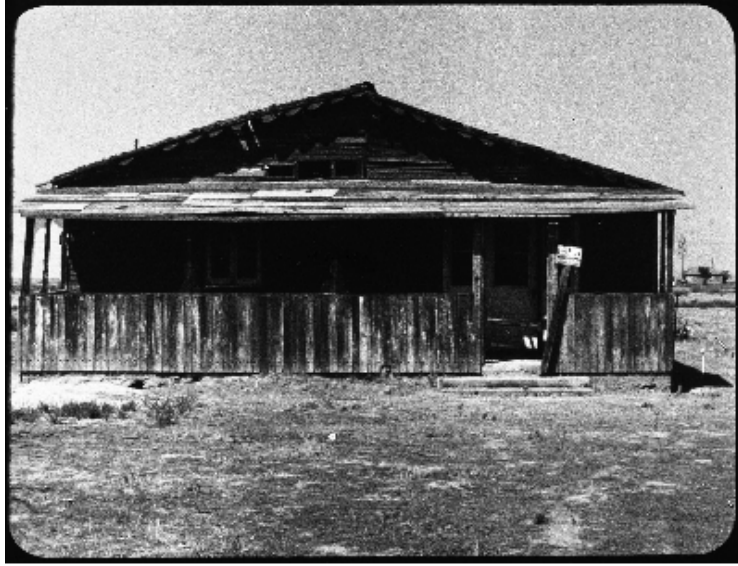


Archer sisters, 1878



Lucy Jane Archer and her sisters, 1890







Mary Dickerson Memorial Library, 1918





Home in Mound Bayou, 1939



MOUND BAYOU, Mississippi, founded in 1887

EX-SLAVES DREAM OF A MODEL NEGRO COLONY COMES TRUE

Mound Bayou, Mississippi, in the Heart of the Fertile "Delta" Is a Community of 8,000 Where No White Man Can Own a Square Foot of Property.

Isalah T. Montgomery, Founder of Mound Bayou.

U. S. Agricultural Department Agent Lecturing to Crowd in Front of Bank of Mound Bayou.

The Georgeigo Library. A Typical Residence in the Town. (Picture Above).

J. T. Montgomery's Home. Two other examples of the stables, in town. (Picture Above).

STUDY IN black and white—preparing to have some black and white pictures taken. There are ways, many of them, in which one group could be self-sufficient on a place...

perform the same jobs as for preparing to have some black and white pictures taken. There are ways, many of them, in which one group could be self-sufficient on a place...

Mound Bayou was founded in Mississippi as an independent Black community in 1887 by freedmen led by Isalah Montgomery. Montgomery cites taking inspiration from Davis Bend, Mississippi and Robert Owen's ideas of utopia and the cooperative movement. With the intentions of being self reliant and autonomous this community was able to empower its people by allowing them to earn money working the land and purchase their own property. Today Mound Bayou continues to pursue fostering a Black community with one of the highest concentrations in the country, however because of a lack of industry and business a lot of people have moved away.






Hackett sisters, 1920's



Monrovia, California

COMPLIMENTARY COPY



MONROVIA WEEKLY

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Pg 9

Thursday, January 25 - January 31, 2018
Local. Relevant. Trusted.
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VOLUME 22, NO. 3

MONROVIA APPROVES \$15,000 PUBLIC ART FUNDS FOR ALLEN ALLENSWORTH MONUMENT

Terry MILLER
tmiller@beaconmedianews.com

“It’s a long time coming...” Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Grudginton declared at the conclusion of last week’s Monrovia City Council meeting when council approved \$15,000 for a public art monument to honor the late Allen Allensworth outside the Second Baptist Church in Monrovia. “This is really cool Stuff,” Mayor Tom Adams said.

While there were no objections to the project, long-time resident Gwendolyn Jones spoke up and said the council needs to approve considerably more to honor a man of Allensworth’s stature.

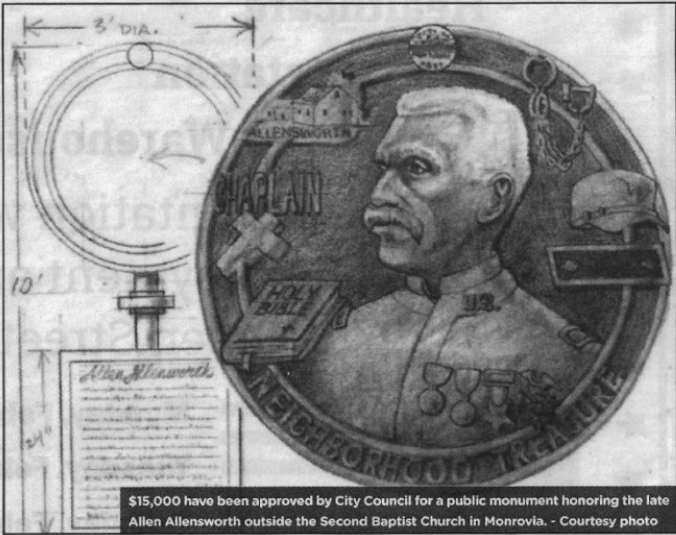
“I think you’re not giving this project enough money...this is a man who came here and was killed in Monrovia. It’s embarrassing to me. He founded the town of Allensworth. I’d like them to consider getting more money for this important cultural project.”

Mayor Adams said the council will look into her request at a later date.

In addition to his work in developing churches, he was notable for founding the township of Allensworth, California in 1908; intended as an all-black community. Environmental conditions inhibited its success as farming community and the residents abandoned, much of the former town has been preserved as the Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. It marks the founders’ dream and the thriving community that developed for some time.

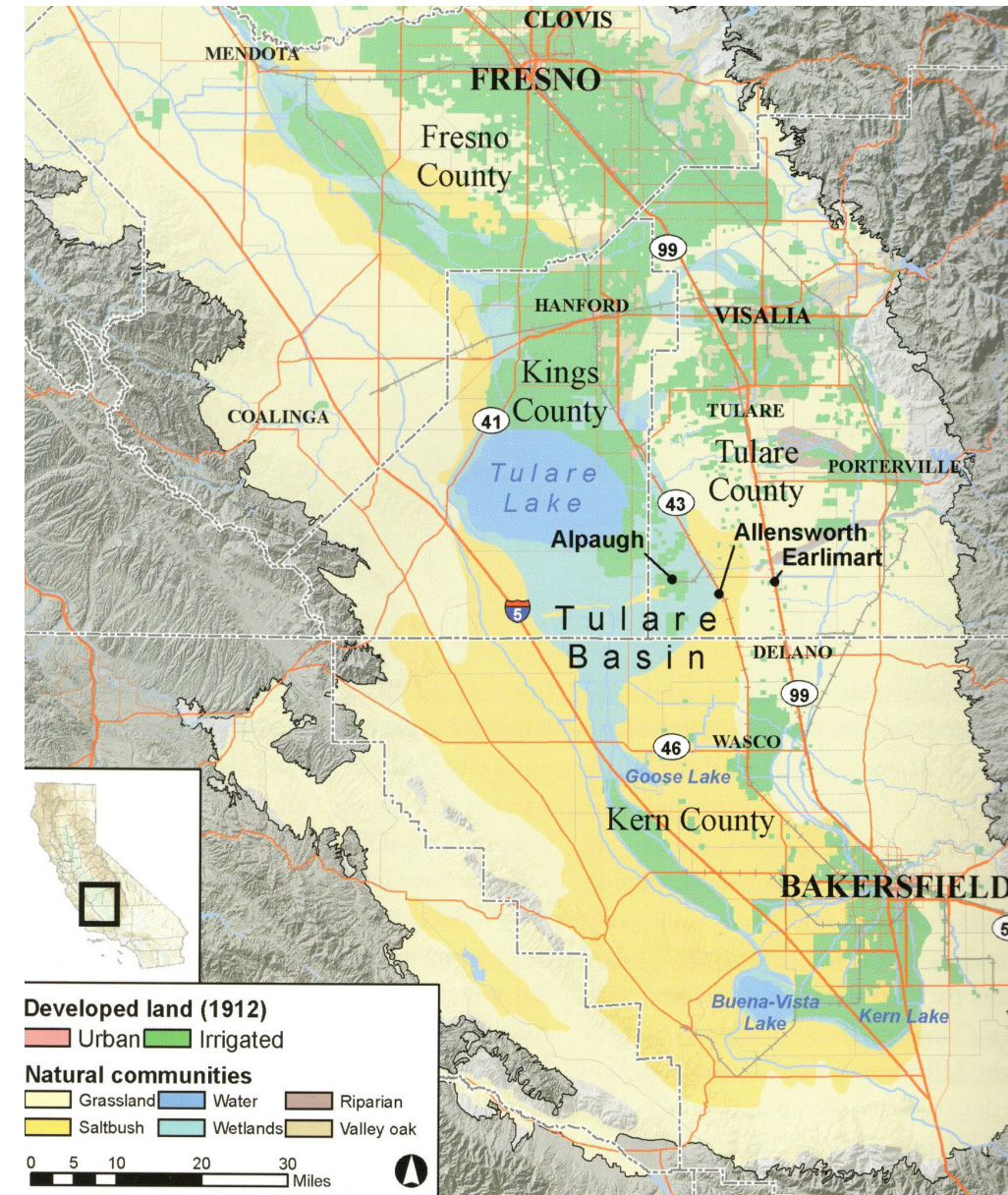
Allensworth was a member of Los Angeles Second Baptist Church (SBC), established in 1885. SBC helped establish Friendship Baptist Church in Pasadena in 1893 and Reverend Allen Allensworth became the first pastor for Monrovia’s Second Baptist Church, established in 1902. Both remain thriving African American congregations today. Monrovia’s Second Baptist Church received a generous five hundred dollars from the First Baptist Church of Monrovia, then pastored by Dr. Russell Greaves. In fact, the First Baptist Church intended to donate some pews to the Baptist Church in Allensworth. Unfortunately, Allen Allensworth died unexpectedly and the pews still remain at the First Baptist Church in Monrovia.

Allensworth died on Sept. 14, 1914 from injuries acquired in a motorcycle incident on Myrtle Avenue in Monrovia. He was walking from the train station to Second Baptist Church.

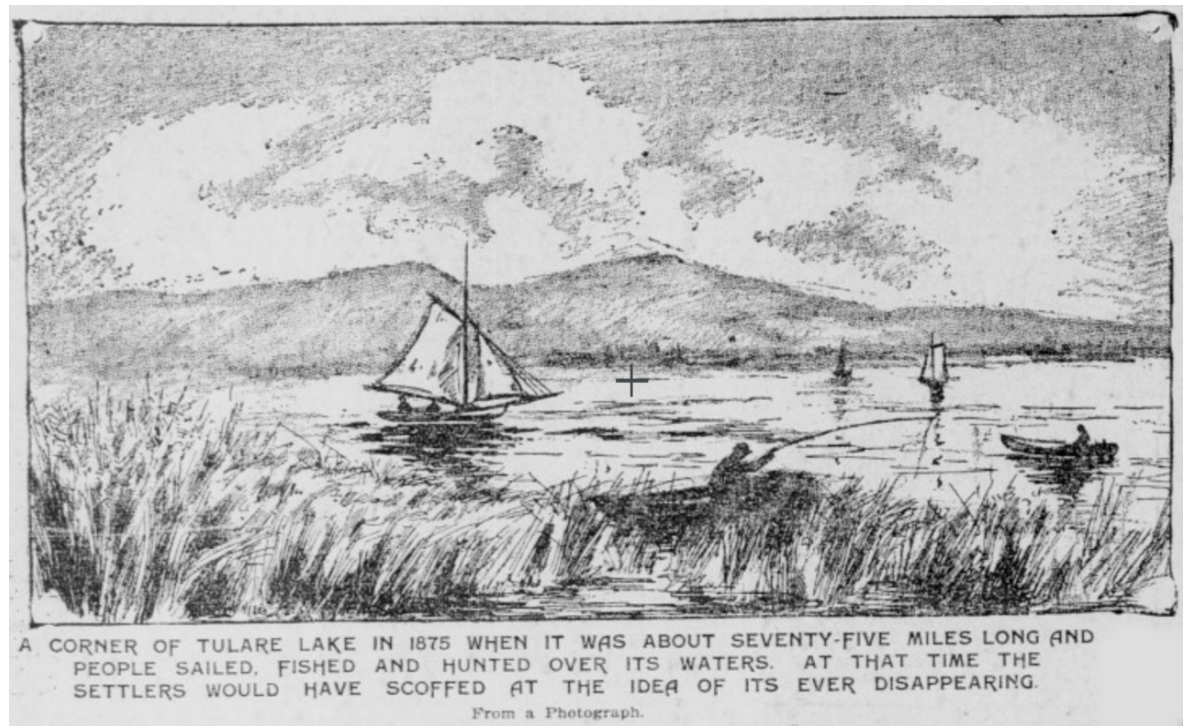
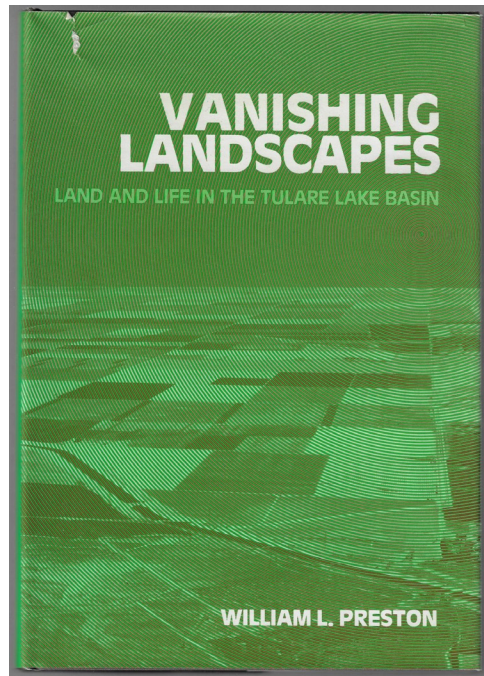


\$15,000 have been approved by City Council for a public monument honoring the late Allen Allensworth outside the Second Baptist Church in Monrovia. - Courtesy photo





San Joaquin Valley, California







Water flows from a new 1300-foot deep well in Allensworth. Grants paid for materials, and residents laid five miles of pipe from the well to their homes. For sixty-six years the town's water has been arsenic-tainted. 1968



AN ELEMENTAL CONCERN: ARSENIC IN DRINKING WATER

