



## "The Hathaway Family: A Journey from Slavery to Civil Rights"

### The Hathaway Family

This profile of the Hathaway family offers a rare look into the lives of an African American family from the era of slavery, through the Civil War and Reconstruction to the initial struggle for civil rights in America. The information for this article was gathered from scholars and archives across the United States (see references and archive list), including Ms. Yvonne Giles, Director, The Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum, who has spent decades conducting detailed research and working with family members.

*Figure 1: The Hathaway family, ca 1890. Seated, Robert Elijah Hathaway (left), Isaac Scott Hathaway (right), standing, Fannie Hathaway (left), Eva Hathaway (right). Courtesy, Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, Little Rock, Arkansas.*



### Family Ancestry

The family's ancestry is presented from the perspective of Fannie, Isaac and Eva Hathaway who were born in Lexington, Kentucky during the 1870s.

#### Grandparents

##### *Isham Jackson (c. 1810 – 1891) and Esther (Easter) Hathaway (1825 – 1885)*

Esther Hathaway and Isham Jackson are the mother and stepfather of Robert Elijah Hathaway. Esther and Isham were married on May 30, 1847 in Nicholas County, Kentucky, according to an entry in the "Declaration of Slave Marriages," May 17, 1867 (Giles 2004). There are only a few records of Isham and Esther who were both born into slavery. Most of the information about their lives comes from Isham's bank records with The Freedmen's Savings and Trust Company, a private corporation chartered by the U.S. government, that operated from 1865 to 1874 (Giles 2011). Isham Jackson was born and reared in Bath County, Kentucky. His father, Moses, died on the Ohio River.

There are no records about how Robert and Esther met. Many enslaved African American couples lived on separate farms, according to Ms. Yvonne Giles, Director, The Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum. "They formed these bonds. They bore children and raised them with all of this uncertainty around," says Giles. "Yet, they emerged still intact; a family intact that wanted to remain intact." Isham is listed as a farmer in his Freedmen's Savings record. He was also listed as a "hod" carrier, a laborer who carried bricks or mortar, in his Federal Pension Record. In April of 1865, at the age of fifty-five, Isham enlisted with the 124<sup>th</sup> U.S. Colored Infantry in Covington, Kentucky. The 124th regiment performed garrison and guard duty in Kentucky. Isham enlisted with an injured foot and was on "sick" leave during his brief service. But, his Union Army pay would help the family purchase property on West Pine Street in Davis Bottom just south of downtown Lexington, Kentucky. Esther Hathaway's son, Robert Elijah Hathaway, was born in 1842 before she married Isham Jackson. Isham acknowledged Robert as his "stepson" in his will. The father of Robert Elijah Hathaway is unknown. Esther and Isham are buried in African Cemetery No. 2 in Lexington.

*Isaac Scott (c. 1811 – 1896) and Henrietta Johnson (1821 – unknown)*

Isaac Scott and Henrietta Johnson are the parents of Rachel Scott Hathaway. Isaac and Henrietta were married on March 7, 1847 in Clark County, Kentucky. They had ten children, including Rachel who was born on March 10, 1842. Isaac Scott Hathaway is named after his maternal grandfather. Much is known about the Scott family through the research and an unpublished family history compiled by Edna Shans Bailey. Isaac and Henrietta were raised in bondage in Clark County, Kentucky, according to records from their accounts with the Freedmen's Savings and Trust Company. Isaac was trained as a shoemaker. Henrietta was trained as a seamstress. It's unclear when the family moved to Lexington, but Isaac's occupation is listed as a laborer and shoemaker in several city directories.

Parents

*Robert Elijah Hathaway (1842 – 1923) and Rachel Scott Hathaway (1842 – 1874)*

Robert and Rachel Hathaway were married on December 30, 1869 in Lexington, Kentucky. They had four children. Jenny, their first born, died between 1870 and 1874. Fannie Fletcher was born on May 22, 1870. Isaac Scott was born on April 4, 1872. Eva was born on September 23, 1873. Tragically, Rachel Hathaway died on July 9, 1874, leaving behind three young children who were raised by their father and grandparents at the family homestead on West Pine Street.



*Figure 2: Inset, Robert Hathaway, ca 1890. Courtesy, Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, Little Rock, Arkansas.*

Robert Elijah Hathaway rose out of slavery to become a Union Army soldier, a community leader and an honored Christian preacher. He was born on June 25, 1842 in Nicholas County, Kentucky. From his military pension and related records, we know he had been a slave of Garrett Davis of Bourbon County. Garrett Davis was an attorney and landowner. He served in the Kentucky state legislature in the early 1830s, then as a member of the Whigs in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1839 to 1847 (American National Biography 1837). Davis opposed succession, but owned fifteen slaves according to the 1860 U.S. Census (Giles 2011). In 1861, he reentered politics, filling the U.S. Senate seat of John C. Breckenridge. Senator Davis was elected to a second term as a Democrat in 1867.

Robert Hathaway was a slender man no more than five feet two inches tall. His son, Isaac, who became a nationally recognized artist, provided rare descriptions of his father's life as a slave in Bourbon County during an interview for the Federal Writer's Project in 1939 (Perry 1939). "That dad of mine was great," said Isaac Hathaway. "Even though he was a slave, he managed to learn to read and write when a boy." During his youth, Robert would frequently fight with Garrett Davis, Jr., the son of Senator Davis. "One day dad gave Garrett Jr. a whipping which caused the boy's nose to bleed." Mrs. Davis told Robert he would be whipped for the fight, but "to avoid that whipping from Senator Davis, he decided to run away and join the army."

At the age of twenty two, Robert Hathaway enlisted with Union Army at Camp Nelson in Jessamine County. Camp Nelson was one the largest recruitment centers for African Americans in the United States. Robert used only his middle name, Elijah, (presumably to avoid confusion with three other Robert Hathaways in his regiment) when he enrolled as a private in Company B of

the 100th Regiment Infantry, Kentucky at Large, U.S Colored Troops on June 6, 1864 (Giles 2011; Soldiers and Sailors database 2012).

Camp Nelson was a sprawling supply depot, and recruitment and training center for the Union Army along the Kentucky River (Sears 2002). Congress passed a national Conscription Act in February of 1864, which allowed slaves and free blacks in Kentucky to enlist in the Union Army. Slave owners were compensated up to \$300 for their “property” loss. From the beginning of 1864 to the end of 1865, about 10,000 black men, 40% of Kentucky’s African American soldiers, had passed through Camp Nelson, according to Dr. Stephen McBride, archaeologist and historian, Camp Nelson Civil War Heritage Park (McBride 2012).



*Figure 3: U.S. Colored Troops at their barracks in one of a series of photographs taken at Camp Nelson in Jessamine County, Kentucky in 1865. Courtesy, Library of Congress.*

The 100th Regiment Infantry performed guard duty for The Nashville & Northwestern Railroad in Tennessee (Soldiers and Sailors database 2012). The regiment fought in several skirmishes, and saw action at Johnsonville (November 4-5); the Battle of Nashville, (December 15-16); Overton Hill (December 16), and the pursuit of Confederate General Hood to the Tennessee River (December 17-28).



*Figure 4: Guarding a railroad bridge across the Cumberland River, Nashville, 1864. Courtesy, Library of Congress.*



*Figure 5: U.S. Colored Troops, Camp of the Tennessee, Johnsonville, 1864. Courtesy, Library of Congress.*





Figure 6: "Battle of Nashville," December 15-16, 1864 by Kurz & Allison. This color lithograph depicts Union cavalry and U.S.C.T. infantry charging Confederate troops at either Shy's Hill or Overton's Hill. Courtesy, Library of Congress.

Private Robert Elijah Hathaway had a brief, but active tour of duty. His son Isaac relates that his father barely escaped with his life when "one of the men on the opposing side tried to take dad for a servant" (Perry 1939). During the Battle of Nashville, 128 soldiers from Hathaway's unit were either killed or wounded. Robert Elijah lost some of his hearing during a battle against the forces of Confederate General John Bell Hood. "His pension file shows that he had been hospitalized after that battle for a time period because of exposure, and because of the cannonade firing that had affected his hearing," according to Yvonne Giles, Director, Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum.

The 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry was mustered out in Nashville on December 26th, 1865. Robert Hathaway returned to Bourbon County for a period of time. He then moved to Lexington where he met his wife Rachel, and likely pooled his army pay with several relatives to establish a family homestead. Robert and Rachel Hathaway started their family in a small, frame house at 208 West Pine Street in Davis Bottom. Robert worked as a waiter, and co-owner of an "eating house," until he found his true calling as a Christian minister with the Disciples of Christ. The Disciples of Christ rose out of the Stone-Campbell Movement with origins in the great revivals held at the Cane Ridge Meeting House in Bourbon County (Foster 2004). Robert served as a traveling pastor in at least four Christian churches in Kentucky. Hathaway was a member and Elder, East Second Street Christian Church, Lexington; Senior Pastor, Little Rock Christian Church (39 years), and Pastor, Germantown Christian Church (27 years), and Pastor, Midway Christian Church.



Figure 7: Robert Elijah Hathaway (front row center) with Elders and Deacons, Little Rock Christian Church, ca 1900s. Courtesy, High Street Christian Church, Mt. Sterling, KY.; Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN.



*Figure 8: Robert Elijah Hathaway (seated front row, center between two men with hats) in a photograph of the congregation of Little Rock Christian Church, Bourbon County, Kentucky, ca 1900s. Courtesy, High Street Christian Church, Mt. Sterling, KY.; Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, TN.*

*Figure 9: Little Rock Christian Church is closed, but the structure still stands off Cane Ridge Road as seen in this photograph taken on April 4, 2012. Courtesy, Voyageur Media Group, Inc.*



Robert Elijah Hathaway was also a respected community leader. He attended the First Convention of Colored Men of Kentucky, which was held in Lexington from March 22 to the 26th, 1866. Those attending the convention drafted a constitution and formed an association to continue working on social and political issues. Elijah Hathaway was one of 47 founding members of The Kentucky State Benevolent Association (Proceedings 1866).

The Kentucky State Benevolent Association was one of many organizations that helped organize one of the largest civil rights gatherings ever held in Kentucky during the era of Reconstruction. On July 4, 1867, about ten thousand people, mostly African Americans, gathered for a parade through the streets of downtown Lexington, culminating in a day of picnics, music and speeches held in Gibson's Woods off of Harrodsburg Pike (Commercial 1867). Robert Elijah Hathaway was surely there as a respected civic leader and Union Army veteran. R.E. Hathaway was an active member of the Charles Sumner Post of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), a fraternal organization of Union Army veterans. He served as the post commander in 1913, 1914, and 1916. Willard Davis, a Republican attorney and the namesake of Davis Bottom, was one of the speakers that day. His speech, entitled "Colored Suffrage," decried state laws prohibiting black men from testifying in state courts and from voting. On July 8th, *The Cincinnati Commercial* published a two-page article of this "immense" gathering held in Lexington, including the text of all the speeches. This article was often cited by Senator Charles Sumner, a Republican from Massachusetts, during a heated debate with Senator Garrett Davis, a Democrat from Kentucky, over funding for the Third Reconstruction Act of 1867. In a twist of fitting irony, Robert Elijah Hathaway helped organize the gathering on the Fourth of July in Lexington, which produced civil rights speeches used against his former master on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

Robert Hathaway married Amanda Newman Jones in 1895. They lived on Pine Street in Lexington until Robert's death on March 1, 1923. Robert and Amanda are buried at Cove Haven Cemetery in Lexington. Elder C.H. Dickerson wrote this fond remembrance a few years before his fellow minister died (Dickerson 1921):

"Elder R.E. Hathaway, As I Remember Him."

*In a convention or in any ecclesiastical gathering, sitting near the front seat, with head inclined forward and perhaps one hand unnoticeably resting behind his ear, may be seen a man of more than three scores and ten years. Physically he is a small, even to the resemblance of Stephen A. Douglas, of whom he will remind you when you "wake him up." His appearance deceives you. He is not affable on slight acquaintance. Indeed some have often seen, but have never known my man. He is a pioneer minister of the Church of Christ in Kentucky. He was born for a purpose. He is petrified in the church work, for he knows where the first church was organized in the state. He was a friend of the man who organized it. He has a tar memory that holds. He is a loyal friend and no doubt would be an inveterate foe. He was a soldier in the Civil War. He carries some reminders of the Battle of Chickamauga about his body. He is now commander of Charles Sumner Post. If you want to see his leaded eyes sparkle, let him meet an old comrade of the days of yore.*

- C.H. Dickerson, 1921

### The Children

Jenny Hathaway (ca. 1870 – 1874)  
Fannie Fletcher Hathaway (1870 – 1958)  
Isaac Scott Hathaway (1872 – 1967)  
Eva Hathaway (1873 – 1960)

The three surviving children of Robert and Rachel Hathaway had extraordinary professional careers. Each was a pioneer in their chosen field. Their first child, Jenny, who is listed in the 1870 U.S. Federal census, seemed to have died sometime before 1874. Fannie was a teacher and principal during her long, distinguished career in education. Isaac Scott was an artist, sculptor and professor who created paintings, busts and designs for national institutions while establishing ceramics departments in colleges throughout the south. Eva became a nurse and raised a family. The Hathaway children attained incredible success during an era of Jim Crow laws and discrimination. Their accomplishments are even more remarkable considering that as young children they lost their mother. Rachel Hathaway died in 1874, leaving behind two girls and a boy between the ages of four and one.



Figure 10: The Hathaway family before it was demolished in the 1980s. Courtesy, Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum.

Robert, Fannie, Isaac and Eva lived in a small house at 208 West Pine Street in Lexington, Kentucky (Sanborn 1901). Combs Lumber Yard was located across the street. A freight railroad line ran directly behind the house. Isaac Hathaway recalled that when coal-fired steam locomotives passed by the family had to guard against fires started by embers pouring out of the smokestacks (Giles 2011). The Hathaway family co-owned an "eating house." Robert worked as a waiter, clerk and then became a respected minister. While the family was not well off financially, they did everything possible to ensure Fannie, Isaac and Eva received the best possible education.



## Fannie Fletcher Hathaway

Born: May 22, 1870

Died: November 10, 1958



Fannie Fletcher Hathaway was the oldest surviving child of Robert and Rachel Hathaway (Giles 2004/2011; UK Libraries 2013). Her sister Jenny died as an infant. Fannie was born on May 22, 1870 in the family's home at 208 West Pine Street in Lexington, Kentucky. Fannie attended Lexington Normal Institute (a.k.a. Chandler Normal School), a private school run by The American Missionary Association. She attended the Academic Department of Berea College from 1887-1890 (Giles 2011). Founded in 1855, Berea is the first interracial and coeducational college in the South. Many students from Berea College became teachers in African American schools during the late 1800s and early 1900s. She is also a graduate of State Normal School (now Kentucky State University) in Frankfort.

Fannie Hathaway served as a teacher for 32 years, and for 18 years as a principal at three different schools in Lexington. She taught at the Peach Orchard School, likely a school within the Colored Orphan Industrial Home, where she also served on the board of managers. Ms. Hathaway also served as a teacher and principal at Patterson Street School and The George Washington Carver Elementary School. Patterson and Carver were both located about 1,000 feet from her birthhome in Davis Bottom. In 1912, Fannie Hathaway was promoted to Principal at Patterson Street School, becoming the first African American female in Lexington to serve in that position.

In 1901, she married Dr. Randolph F. White, a Spanish-American War veteran and prominent pharmacist, in Owensboro, Kentucky. The couple did not have any children. Fannie Hathaway White was active in The Kentucky Negro Education Association, serving as second vice president in 1924-1925, and first vice president for at least four terms from 1925 to 1931. Randolph and Fannie retired in Louisville, where he died in 1943, and she died in 1958. They are buried in Zachary Taylor National Cemetery, Louisville.



*Figure 11: Fannie Hathaway, back row, third from right, in a group portrait from the Colored Orphan Home in Lexington, Kentucky. Courtesy, Colored Orphan Industrial Home.*



*Figure 12: Fannie Hathaway White (background right) with her brother Isaac (right) and Kentucky Governor Simeon Willis. Isaac Hathaway designed the first U.S. coin to depict an African American, which he is presenting to Governor Willis during a special recognition ceremony on December 16, 1946. Courtesy, Kentucky Historical Society.*

## Eva Hathaway

Born: September 23, 1873

Died: May 15, 1960

Note: Eva was the youngest of three surviving children. We present her profile second because of the large amount of the historical material about her brother, Isaac Scott Hathaway.



Eva Hathaway was born only ten months before her mother Rachel died. She graduated from Chandler Normal School (formerly Lexington Normal Institute) in 1894. Isaac witnessed her Christmas evening marriage to Charles Hansford of Keene, Kentucky in 1895 at East Second Street Christian Church, Lexington, Kentucky. The couple had two daughters, Nellie and Rachel. Eva worked as a nurse according to the 1900 U.S. Federal Census (Giles 2004). She and Charles divorced early in their marriage. Around 1903, Eva married Thomas A. Williams, a native of North Carolina, and moved to Indianapolis, Indiana. She married a third time in 1918 to Samuel R. Hulitt in Indianapolis where they lived until their deaths. Eva died in 1960, and is buried at Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.



*Figure 13: "The 4th Generation of the Hathaway family" shows R.E. Hathaway with his daughter Eva (left); Eva's daughter, Rachel Ratcliffe (right); and Rachel's son, Walter Ratcliffe, in a photograph dated 9/18/1920. Courtesy, Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum.*



*Figure 14: "Hathaway family" shows R.E. Hathaway with his great grandchildren: (l-r) John Wooten, Thomas Wooten and Walter Ratcliffe; and his daughter Eva (standing center); Rachel Ratcliffe (right); and Nellie Wooten (left), in a photograph dated 1923. Courtesy, Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum.*



## Isaac Scott Hathaway

Born: April 4, 1872

Died: March 12, 1967



Isaac Scott Hathaway was born in Davis Bottom on April 4, 1872. From humble beginnings, he became one of the most significant African American artists and ceramics professors of his era. Isaac Hathaway is best known for creating a series of plaster busts that memorialized great African American leaders, including Bishop Richard Allen, Frederick Douglass and George Washington Carver. He is also recognized as the "Dean of Negro Ceramicists" for establishing ceramics programs at colleges throughout the South. His pioneering work, long career and educational legacies provide a fascinating story of strength, perseverance and creative talent as part of the greater American experience.

This profile is based on historical documents, photographs and interviews conducted with scholars across the U.S., including: Yvonne Giles, Director, The Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum; Reinette Jones, Editor, "Notable Kentucky African Americans Database," University of Kentucky Libraries; Henri Linton, Director, University Museum and Cultural Center, The University of Arkansas Pine Bluff; Bryan McDade, Curator of Collections, The Mosaic Templars Cultural Center; Quantia "Key" M. Fletcher, Director of Education The Mosaic Templars Cultural Center and Mark Wilson, Director of Civic Learning Initiatives, Auburn University. See Archives and Educational Resources (end of article) for a list of scholars, resources and institutions related to Isaac Scott Hathaway.

### Childhood

Isaac Hathaway was the son of Rachel and Robert Hathaway who were both born into slavery in Kentucky. Rachel died when Isaac was only two years old. His father, Robert Elijah Hathaway, was a Union Army veteran and popular minister with the Christian Church. After the Civil War, Robert and several relatives established a household at 208 West Pine Street on the northern ridge of Davis Bottom just south of downtown Lexington, Kentucky.

Established in the 1860s, Davis Bottom was one of about a dozen enclaves for African American families who migrated to Lexington after the war in search of jobs, greater security and educational opportunities. From the outset, Davis Bottom was a diverse, tight-knit community as it was also home to many European immigrants and rural families from the Appalachian Mountains.

Figure 15: Isaac Scott Hathaway, ca 1910. Courtesy, Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, Little Rock, Arkansas.





Figure 16: Chandler Normal School, ca. 1900. Courtesy, American Missionary Archives, Amistad Research Center, Tulane University.

Isaac attended the Normal Institute in Lexington from about 1878 to 1890. The Lexington Normal Institute, later renamed Chandler Normal School, was one of the first schools for African American children in Lexington. Located in a series of buildings, the school and staff were funded by the Freedmen's Bureau, The American Missionary Association and Lexington's public school fund. Isaac displayed natural artistic talent as a child, according to Yvonne Giles, Director, Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum. "Robert Elijah, Isaac's father, recognized this and supported it," says Giles. Isaac excelled in a school where teacher's also encouraged his artistic development. "He was surrounded by people who understood the value of art education," adds Giles.

The Hathaway family didn't have money for advanced training. While attending grade school, Isaac earned the nickname "big boots" because he had to wear his father's old Union Army "brogan" boots to class (Giles 2011). In an interview for the Federal Writer's Project (Perry 1939), Isaac Hathaway described that as an "accident of poverty" he could "not afford to buy modeling clay, and had to use mud." Throughout his long career, Hathaway constantly experimented with clay to create a wide range of ceramics and sculptures. He also learned how to create natural colors when he accidentally broke the limb of his father's favorite peach tree.

*To my consternation the whole limb came down, peeling the bark for several inches. Knowing that my father would soon return from his church duties I hastily instructed my younger sister to gather all the peaches from the limb while I ran into the house, secured my box of paints and painted the scar a deep Van Dyke brown. It looked as if it were almost decayed. The scar was retouched with turpentine several times until it did not shine, and the detached limb was hastily deposited in a rock quarry several yards from the house. When dad came he missed the big limb from the tree but for his life could not account for it as he did not see any scar. To this day, although this incident helped me in coloring, I always feel guilty of having deceived my father.*

Isaac practiced with paints, mud and clays throughout his childhood. The pivotal moment in his artistic career came during a visit to Cincinnati in 1881. Isaac was nine years old (Giles 2011). Robert Hathaway took his family to an art exhibit featuring bronze and marble sculptures of great historical figures. While touring the exhibit, Isaac became separated. When found, Robert scolded his son for not keeping up with the family (Perry 1939):

*I told my father I was trying to find a bust of Douglass. Dad said, "Son, you will not find a bust of Douglass here. I said to my father, "Teacher says the truly great people are perpetuated in marble and bronze. And Douglass was truly great!" My dad replied, "Yes, son, I know, but we shall have to produce artists of our own race to portray our own great men." Drawing his shoulders up and with a determined look Mr. Hathaway continued, "Well, I made up my mind that day I was going to make busts and statues of our great Negroes and put them where people can see them."*

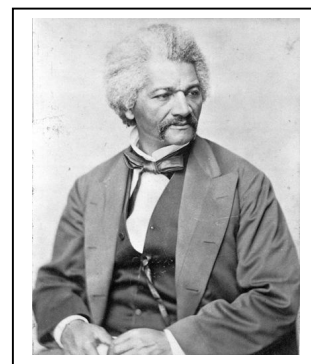


Figure 17: Frederick Douglass, ca. 1850s-1860s, Courtesy, Library of Congress.

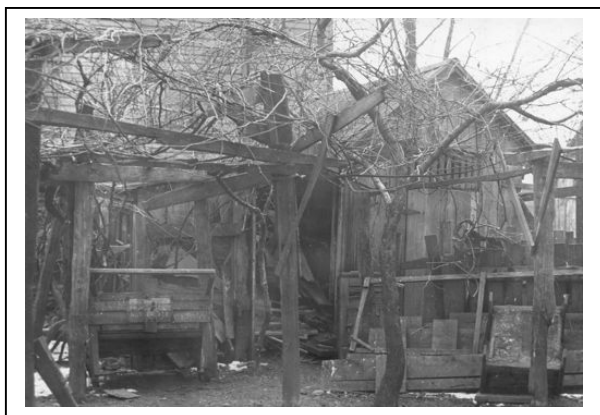
Hathaway would break new ground for African American artists, creating sculptures, masks and busts of hundreds of African American leaders. "At nine years of age, I can't imagine how many nine year olds I know that would make this statement and stick to it," wonders Ms. Giles, Director, The Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum. "Given the time frame of 1881," says Giles, "we're still dealing with Antebellum sentiment, Antebellum economics. Not having a role model to follow, not truly knowing what the economic situation of the family was. Not being able to afford art lessons. How was he going to do this? How did he do it?"

## Higher Education

Isaac Hathaway used his artistic talent to earn money for advanced training - not only for himself, but also for his sisters. After graduating from Chandler Normal Institute, Hathaway taught English at the Keene High School in Jessamine County. He also earned money for advanced education by creating promotional sketches of horses and jockeys at nearby racetracks. Hathaway painted about a dozen large, oil portraits of thoroughbreds and trotters such as Queen Ban, Lavina Belle and The Lioness. During summer breaks from teaching, Hathaway enrolled in advanced art courses at several institutions, including the New England Conservatory in Boston, and The Art Academy of Cincinnati.



*Figure 18: Isaac Hathaway's portrait of "Queen Ban," created in 1896, is the artists only horse paintings known to have survived. The oil painting, recently restored, is archived by the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. Courtesy, Mosaic Templars Cultural Center.*



*Figure 19: The chicken coop where Isaac Hathaway once had a studio behind his family home on West Pine Street in Lexington. Undated photograph. Courtesy, Dunn Collection, The Kentucky Historical Society.*

Hathaway returned to Lexington in 1900. He and his father cleaned out the chicken coop in the backyard of the family home to open Isaac's "Studio of Sculpture." He quickly secured commissions, including a model of Old Morrison Hall for Transylvania University, life masks for poet Paul Laurence Dunbar and congressman W.C.P. Breckinridge, a death mask for abolitionist Cassius M. Clay and a bust of journalist R.C.O. Benjamin. Hathaway gained national recognition when commissioned by The Smithsonian Institution to create a plaster cast of the Bath Furnace Meteorite. His artistic skill made national news when William M. Bullitt, an attorney in Louisville, hired Hathaway to make the plaster mold of a crime scene; the tree and surrounding ground where a man allegedly committed suicide. Hathaway colorized the plaster model so well the opposing attorney - thinking it was the actual tree - accused Hathaway of "mutilating" the crime scene.



In 1904, Hathaway was hired by Dr. J.W Pryor, Chair of the Department of Anatomy and Physiology, at the State University of Kentucky (now University of Kentucky) to create models of organs and illustrations for medical textbooks.

## Washington, D.C.

Isaac Hathaway moved to Washington, D.C. in 1907. There, he began to make his signature work - plaster busts of great African American leaders. Hathaway started with a series of 12" busts of Frederick Douglass, Paul Laurence Dunbar, George Washington Carver and Booker T. Washington. From molds, Hathaway used plaster of Paris to make the small busts, which were then painted to appear as if they were made of bronze. Hathaway's process was designed to make the busts affordable and transportable for African American families and schools. Each bust sold for a dollar. Hathaway even provided customers with an installment plan. "You have to understand, times were very difficult for most people," according to Henri Linton, Director, University Museum and Cultural Center, University of Arkansas Pine Bluff. "They didn't have money to 'waste' buying a statue, or buying a work of art. And, to make these affordable - and they were well crafted - and for people to own something even though they were plaster, they were painted bronze color and made to look like real bronze." Linton says the busts allowed working class people to feel like they owned something of value, adding, "It also gave them a chance to look at someone that they idolized."



Figure 20: Newspaper article on Isaac Hathaway who is described as a "rising young genius," by The Lexington Leader, January 12, 1902. Courtesy, Lexington Public Library.

**Isaac Hathaway's busts are shown courtesy of Henri Linton, Director, University Museum and Cultural Center, University of Arkansas Pine Bluff.**

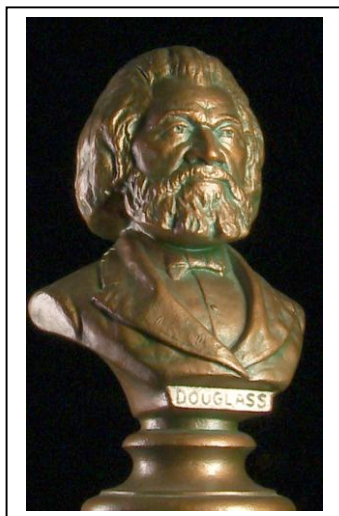


Figure 21: 12" bust of Frederick Douglass



Figure 22: 12" bust of Booker T. Washington



Figure 23: 12" bust of George Washington Carver



Figure 24: 12" bust of Paul Laurence Dunbar

Isaac Hathaway joined a group of professional men to establish the National Afro-Art Company in Washington, D.C. The company distributed sculptural products on a national scale (NHB 1958). Hathaway's miniature busts were so popular he hired additional artists to keep up with demand. Hathaway also began to create "heroic" sized sculptures for schools and institutions, including large busts of Frederick Douglass and George Washington Carver, as well as a marble profile of Abraham Lincoln for the National Training School of D.C. (Giles 2005).

Robert Elijah Hathaway visited his son in Washington, D.C. The visit was highlighted by a fascinating reunion. Robert Hathaway, now "a popular minister," learned that Garrett Davis, Jr. was chief clerk in the pension office in Washington, D.C. (Perry 1939). Robert Hathaway and Garrett Davis, Jr. grew up together when Robert was a slave owned by U.S. Senator Garrett Davis in Bourbon County, Kentucky. Robert and Garrett Davis, Jr. got into a fistfight when they were young. The fight, and the threat of severe punishment, prompted Robert to run off and enlist in the Union Army. In his 1939 biography, Isaac discussed his father's desire to visit Garrett Davis, Jr. Isaac asked his father, "Aren't you afraid you will get a cool reception?" Robert replied, "I can't help it. I want to see that boy." Isaac was concerned his father's feelings would be crushed when they finally called on Garrett Davis, Jr. in his office.

*He approached us, looked at each one of us with a stern but kind stare. Then my dad spoke. "You don't remember me, do you?" For a second he gazed in wonderment at dad. Then Garrett, Jr. grabbed him in a close embrace. There were tears in their eyes, and they were living boyhood days over again...We were both happy. Dad had lost and found again a friend.*

Hathaway's artistic career flourished in Washington, D.C., but his personal life was full of hardships. In 1912, Isaac Hathaway married Hattie Ettie Pamplin who died giving birth to their son, Elsmar who preceded his father in death on October 12, 1941 (Giles 2004). In 1915, Hathaway wed Mary Edmonds, but this marriage ended in divorce. His business dealings also went through substantial changes. The National Afro-Art Company began to fail. Hathaway's partners wanted him to raise the price for his popular series of 12" busts of African American leaders. Hathaway refused. He left the company and started his own studio (Linton 1996).



Hathaway was commissioned to create exhibit sculptures for the U.S. National Museum (now Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History). In 1914, he worked for seven months under the direction of sculptor Frank Misha (also Micka) to create models for Dr. Ales Hrdlicka, Curator of Physical Anthropology. Hathaway helped make numerous materials for the exhibit "The Story of Man through the Ages," which was displayed at The Panama-California Exposition in San Diego in 1915.

*Figure 25: The U.S. National Museum, Smithsonian Institution, ca. 1910. Courtesy, Library of Congress.*

The *Pathé American* newsreel company filmed Isaac Hathaway while he was creating the model of a human fetal brain for the U.S. National Museum. *Pathé* advertised the film as the "First Motion Picture of a Black Professional at Work," but its unclear if this film was used in the *Pathé Weekly* newsreel series or the company's educational series. Project scholars are continuing to research this film with the hope that an archival copy may be found in a *Pathé* film collection.

## Professor Hathaway

Isaac Hathaway made a bold decision that launched another career as a college professor. In 1915, he accepted an invitation to establish the ceramics department at Branch Normal College (now University of Arkansas Pine Bluff). "I think Isaac Hathaway was not only concerned about developing his own skills, but also furthering the information and knowledge among other blacks," says Henri Linton, Director, University Museum and Cultural Center, University of Arkansas Pine Bluff. "He found the college and university was a proving ground for a lot of information and research he had done in sculpture and in ceramics," adds Linton.

Hathaway continued to create artwork in his home studio. He taught English and oration at Merrill High School in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, which helped offset some financial setbacks during the 1920s. In 1926, Hathaway married Umer G. Porter who often worked with Isaac in their home studio and in the classroom. Hathaway left Pine Bluff in 1937 to establish the ceramics program at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

*Figure 26: Isaac Hathaway (right) with ceramics students at Branch Normal College, ca. 1915. Courtesy, University of Arkansas Pine Bluff.*



Hathaway would become known as the "Dean of Negro Ceramicists" for having either established the ceramics departments or taught at dozens of colleges throughout the South, including: University of Arkansas Pine Bluff, Georgia State Industrial College, Bishop College, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama Polytechnic Institute (now Auburn University) and Alabama State College. While at Tuskegee, Hathaway became friends with George Washington Carver. The two men shared an appreciation of science and art, including pioneering experiments with Alabama's fine Kaolin or "China" clay. Hathaway made Carver's life mask, as well as numerous plaques and sculptures of a man he idolized.

*Figure 27: Hathaway with a bust of George Washington Carver, ca. 1950s. Courtesy, Tuskegee University Archives.*

## U.S. Mint Commissions

Isaac Hathaway received further national recognition when commissioned by the U.S. Mint to design the Booker T. Washington Memorial Half Dollar (minted 1946 to 1951), which was the first U.S. coin to depict an African American. Hathaway designed a second commemorative coin, The Carver-Washington Half Dollar (minted 1951 to 1954), which featured images of both George Washington Carver and Booker T. Washington.

*Figures 28 & 29: Hathaway designed two commemorative coins for the U.S. Mint: The Booker T. Washington Memorial Half Dollar (left), and the Carver-Washington Half Dollar (right). Courtesy, Mosaic Templars Cultural Center.*

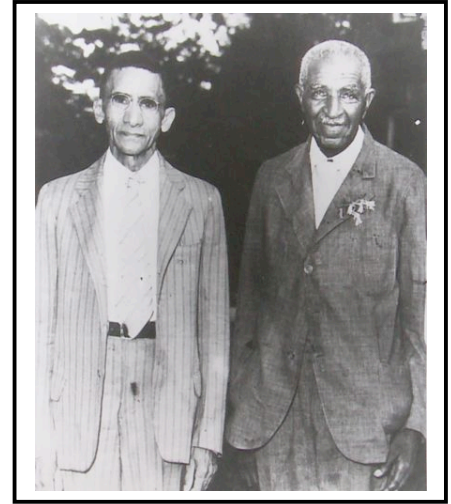




## Legacies

Isaac Hathaway would continue to teach, experiment with clays and create his own artwork throughout his long career. In 1963, Hathaway retired from his position as Director of Ceramics at Alabama State College. He returned to Tuskegee and maintained a home studio until his death at the age of ninety-four on March 12, 1967. Over the course of his long career, Hathaway memorialized over one hundred African American leaders. He broke numerous racial barriers, helped establish ceramics departments at six colleges, earned a host of national and international distinctions, and influenced countless students.

Henri Linton has gathered one of the most extensive collections of documents, photographs and busts of Isaac Hathaway, which are preserved within the University Museum and Cultural Center of the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff. "Hathaway had to be viewed on many planes," says Henri Linton. "He was an artist. He was a scientist. He was, I'd say, a chronicler of history. He was a historian that left for all to see what many of these people looked like," adding, "He inspired his students to understand they can be whatever they want to be."



*Figure 30: Isaac Hathaway and George Washington Carver, ca 1937-1943. Courtesy, Mosaic Templars Cultural Center.*



*Figure 31: Isaac Hathaway teaching pottery to young children at Tuskegee University. Courtesy, Mosaic Templars Cultural Center.*

The Mosaic Templars Cultural Center in Little Rock, Arkansas also has a substantial collection of Hathaway's documents and works. This collection has been used in a popular exhibit entitled *Capturing Greatness: The Life and Art of Isaac Scott Hathaway*. Brian McDade, Curator of Collections, Mosaic Templars Cultural Center calls Hathaway an unsung hero of African American history. "He is an undiscovered treasure," says McDade, "not just for African American history, not just Arkansas, Alabama or Kentucky history, but for the entire United States."

The Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum in Lexington, Kentucky, is also preserving the life and legacies of a favorite son. "No one ever thought anybody of importance could have ever come out of Davis Bottom, and he did," reflects Yvonne Giles, Director. "Very quiet, very assertive young man that rose out of a time period when this wasn't supposed to happen. He had no role models. Had none. His family, economically, wasn't of the upper, middle-class. It's just an amazing story."

## Archives and Educational Resources

Isaac Scott Hathaway is gaining greater recognition thanks to the research of scholars with several archives and institutions across the U.S. The following institutions have related archival materials, exhibits and educational programs.

### **Auburn University** (Auburn, Alabama)

Isaac Hathaway broke a racial barrier when he introduced ceramics to the all-white Auburn Polytechnical Institute (now Auburn University) in the summer of 1947. In 2012, Dr. Mark Wilson, Director of Civic Learning Initiatives, College of Liberal Arts, completed an Appalachian Teaching Project to "develop innovative ways for students and the public to discover the life and work of Isaac Scott Hathaway." Four regional institutions collaborated in the creation of a public website with biographical materials, a podcast, video, photos, pamphlet and classroom kit about Isaac Hathaway.

Link: <http://isaacscotthathaway.wordpress.com>

### **Alabama State University** (Montgomery, Alabama)

Isaac Hathaway served as the Director of Ceramics at Alabama State College (now Alabama State University) from 1947 until his retirement in 1963.

Link: <http://www.lib.alasu.edu>

### **Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum** (Lexington, Kentucky)

The Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum has exhibits and educational programs about distinguished African American artists, writers and community leaders in Lexington, Kentucky. The museum is located in the Robert H. Williams Cultural Center, 644 Georgetown Street. Ms. Yvonne Giles, Director, has compiled an extraordinary body of research about the Hathaway family, including interviews with Hathaway family descendants. The museum is open by appointment.

Address: The Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum, Robert H. Williams Cultural Center, 644 Georgetown Street, Lexington, Kentucky 40591-0036

### **Mosaic Templars Cultural Center** (Little Rock, Arkansas)

The Mosaic Templars Cultural Center has one of the most extensive Hathaway collections, including documents, personal papers, photographs and artwork. From this collection, the center created the popular exhibit, "Capturing Greatness: The Life and Art of Isaac Scott Hathaway." The staff has also developed related educational programs: "Meet the Artist: Isaac Scott Hathaway," (lesson plans, grades K-12), and "Exploring the Art of Isaac Hathaway (teacher workshop, all grades).

Link: <http://www.mosaictemplarscenter.com>

### **Tuskegee University Archives** (Tuskegee, Alabama)

Isaac Hathaway established the Ceramics Department at Tuskegee in 1937. The Tuskegee University Archives holds photographs of Isaac Hathaway teaching ceramics courses and working with busts of George Washington Carver.

Link: <http://www.tuskegee.edu/libraries.aspx>

### **University of Arkansas Pine Bluff** (Pine Bluff, Arkansas)

Henri Linton, Director, University Museum and Cultural Center, has gathered an extensive collection of Hathaway's works, documents and photographs. The museum displays numerous examples of Hathaway's masks and signature busts. In 1996, Linton supervised the development of an exhibit on Hathaway's work, and a companion catalogue, *Isaac Scott Hathaway, 1874-1967*.

Link: <http://www.uapb.edu/>

## Contributing Scholars

Yvonne Giles, Director, The Isaac Scott Hathaway Museum, Lexington, Kentucky.

Reinette Jones, Editor, "Notable Kentucky African Americans Database," University of Kentucky Libraries, Lexington, KY.

Henri Linton, Professor of Art, Department of Art, School of Arts and Sciences; and Director, University Museum and Cultural Center, The University of Arkansas Pine Bluff, Pine Bluff, Arkansas

Brian McDade, Curator of Collections, The Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, Little Rock, Arkansas

Quantia "Key" M. Fletcher, Director of Education, The Mosaic Templars Cultural Center, Little Rock, Arkansas

Mark Wilson, Ph.D., Director of Civic Learning Initiatives, College of Liberal Arts, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama.

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