

Extended Walk

The blue marking on the prior map corresponds with a small flag placed in Hazelwood.

Find these flags to learn more about early Black Grinnellians!

Plot #317

Edith Renfrow Smith (1914-)
Henry T. Smith (1915-2013)
E. Virginia Smith (1940-1998)
Alice F. Smith (1946-)



Edith Renfrow Smith is the youngest daughter of Eva Pearl & Lee A. Renfrow. She grew up on 411 First Avenue in Grinnell and was the first Black woman to graduate from Grinnell College. After graduating, she moved to Chicago, where she worked as a teacher and volunteered for the community. Mrs. Smith celebrated her 109th birthday this summer.

Plot #216 is located right next to Eliza Jane and Mumford Holland. It houses one of Eliza's sisters, Anna Goode, and three children of the third Craig sister, Dora. Anna owned and operated a beauty shop in Grinnell for 25 years. She was first married to barber Edward Goode with whom she adopted a young orphaned boy, Frankie (both buried in Plot #217). Frankie passed away in 1895 and Edward in 1901. Following their deaths, Anna remarried twice while raising her and Edward's second son, William.

Plot #216

Anna Craig Goode Brown (1867-1946)
Aaron Jilbal Lucas (1899-1932)
Violet Lucas Mays (1887-1922)
Ruth Pugth Lucas & Infant (1883-1923)



James Spencer was one of the first Black residents of Grinnell. He lived on Pearl Street for many years with his wife, Francis. James was a veteran of the Civil War and worked as a laborer upon returning home. Little else is known about his life before coming to Grinnell. Following his death in 1887, Francis remained in Grinnell for many decades before moving to Newton in her sixties.

Plot #1

James Spencer (1851-1887)



Plot #521

Robert R. Redrick (1838-1913)
Mary Redrick (1855-1937)
Robert Redrick (1887-1945)
Carrie Redrick (1886-1969)
Harold Redrick (d. 1961)
Mamie Tibs (1892-1973)
Edward Tibbs (1933-2002)



Robert Redrick arrived in Grinnell in the 1880s and worked as a laborer and carpenter in town. He lived on Park Street with Mumford Holland for a time before getting married and buying a home with his wife Mary on Pearl Street. They had five children, who attended Grinnell schools and were very active in the Congregational Church. Robert and Mary are buried with their children Harold, Robert R., and Mamie. Robert R's wife Carrie and Mamie's son Edward are also buried with the family.

Plot #13

Patsy Blackwell (1830-1872)
Joseph Blackwell (1810-1873)



Patsy and Joseph Blackwell brought their family to Grinnell in the late 1860s. Together they bought property in town to reside in with their children and grandchildren. Joseph worked as a laborer in town and Patsy kept house. The Blackwells were one of the first Black families to move to Grinnell. Their children and grandchildren remained in Grinnell through the early 1900s, establishing the first multigenerational Black family presence in Grinnell.

Plot #629

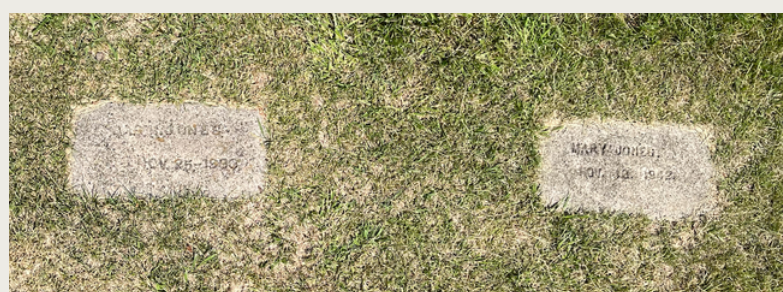
Mona Chie (1898-1922)



Mona Chie was a student at Grinnell in the 1920s. During his senior year, he tragically fell ill and passed away from Tuberculosis. Chie was born in Liberia and came to Grinnell College with the help of the First United Methodist Church missionary program. He was a well-liked student at the college, and many of his classmates helped take care of him when he fell ill. Upon his death, the town pooled together resources to have him buried in Hazelwood, loved by his community even thousands of miles away from home.

Plots #52 & 53

James Jones (1870-1933)
Mary Jones (1879-1942)



Mary Cunningham had been living in Grinnell for a few years before she met James Jones. They owned neighbor lots on Pearl Street and were in similar social circles before marrying one another. The Jones were well-connected with other Black families in town and in Newton, traveling there every year with the Lucas and Goode families for an Emancipation Celebration.

Plot #23-1

James Oscar Tibbs (1891-1941)



James Oscar Tibbs was married to Mamie Redrick. They lived with their children on Elm Street for many years. James was a veteran of World War I and is remembered for wearing his uniform every Memorial Day. Upon his return home, he worked as a shoeshiner in town for many years.