

Annie Ethel Jones

Classroom Resource Packet

1. Student Biography of Annie Ethel Jones
2. Vocabulary List
 - a. Vocabulary words are pulled from the student biography, the actors' scripts, and the Character Information portion of our Guide Script. Words are organized alphabetically.
3. Supplemental Resources
 - a. "AME Church historically vital resource for Bloomington's Black community" by Emily McCusker
 - b. "Poor Farm home to society's friendless and forlorn" by Bill Kemp

Vocabulary

Arrangement (noun): plans or preparations.

Apparent (adjective): visible or obvious.

Aspirations (noun): a strong desire to achieve something high or great, or the achievements themselves.

Authority (noun): a person with the power to make decisions and override others.

Avid (adjective): characterized by enthusiasm and vigorous pursuit; very eager and enthusiastic.

Carpentry (noun): the art of shaping and assembling structural woodwork.

Charitable (adjective): relating to the assistance of those in need.

Colored School (noun): in the time of legal segregation, a school specifically for Black children or children of color.

Compensated (verb): to be given payment or goods in return for a service you perform.

Consented (verb): allowed to or said yes to of one's own will.

Correspondence Course (noun): courses that could be taken from a distance by sending letters and other mail back and forth between academic institutions and students.

Cremains (noun): cremated remains.

Cremation (noun): the process of taking the remains of the deceased and turning them to ash using high heat and fire.

Critically (adverb): to think in depth about the purpose, meaning, and possibilities of something.

Crossroads (noun): a point at which one must make a decision that will have a major impact on the future.

Day Work (noun): work paid for on a daily basis.

Deliberation (noun): consideration and discussion.

Drape (noun): a fabric hung or stretched out loosely or carelessly.

Drastic (adjective): radical or extreme.

Enormous (adjective): very large in size.

Enslaved (adjective): a word to describe someone who is being held in captivity and forced to do unpaid labor. At the time, the enslaved people in the U.S. South were considered property of the person who "owned" them.

Entail (verb): what something could involve or mean.

Entertain (verb): to consider or think about allowing something.

Evident (adjective): obvious and easy to see.

Fraternal (adjective): of or like a brotherhood.

“Free-Born” (adjective): a term used to describe Black people and African Americans in the 19th century who were not born into slavery.

Great Depression (noun): the period of severe worldwide economic decline that began in 1929 and lasted throughout the 1930s; marked by deflation and widespread unemployment.

Grippe (noun): a viral disease, especially influenza.

Handyman (noun): one competent in a variety of small skills or inventive or ingenious in repair or maintenance work.

Hoeing (verb): to work with a tool with a thin flat blade on a long handle to cultivate, weed, or loosen the earth around plants.

Hot Toddy (noun): a warm drink typically made with whiskey, honey, lemon, and spices.

Impenetrable (adjective): incapable of being penetrated or pierced.

Influenza (noun): an acute, highly contagious respiratory disease.

Ironically (adverb): in a manner that is surprising or unexpected given the circumstances.

Licensed Practical Nurse (noun): a nurse that performs basic but important medical tasks like checking vital signs, as well as communicating between patients, families, and doctors.

Luxurious (adjective): high-quality and fancy.

McLean County Poor Farm (noun): a space for those who could not care for themselves (such as the elderly, ill, and destitute) to find medical aid and shelter.

NAACP (noun): the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. A civil rights organization that has advocated for the rights of people of color since its founding in 1909.

Obelisk (noun): an upright 4-sided usually monolithic pillar that gradually tapers as it rises and terminates in a pyramid.

One-Room Schoolhouse (noun): a school with a single room and one teacher in which every grade level learns in the same space.

Order of the Eastern Star (noun): a group of men and women related to the Freemasons that is open to people of all religious beliefs. The group believes in a variety of personal traits that are pulled from stories in the Bible.

Ornery (adjective): irritable; difficult to deal with or control.

Outhouse (noun): an outdoor shelter (built with seats over dug-out pits) that serves as a toilet.

Pastor (noun): a minister in charge of a Christian church or congregation.

Pillars (noun): an upright ornamental column, especially for support in a structure or standing alone as a monument.

Prejudice (noun): an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge.

Pursuits (noun): a goal or endpoint which one is trying to achieve.

Rambling (verb): lengthy, repetitive, unfocused writing or speaking.

Racial Prejudice/Discrimination (noun): prejudice against somebody based on their real or perceived racial identity and the mistreatment of them that follows.

Racism (noun): the individual mistreatment or systemic oppression of a group due to their actual or perceived race.

Relief Office (noun): hubs for financial and personal aid during the Great Depression; often where New Deal organizations carried out their responsibilities.

Resurrection (noun): the rising again to life of all the human dead before the final judgment.

Segregated (adjective): dividing or separating people based on certain attributes or labels, especially race.

Sole Provider (noun): the single person responsible for caring for, funding, and feeding a person or group of people.

State Board (noun): in nursing, the state-specific licensing that sets standards for safe nursing practices and decides whether someone is qualified to practice nursing.

Testament (noun): proof or a tribute to something.

Urn (noun): a vessel that is typically an ornamental vase on a pedestal and that is used for various purposes.

Veil (noun): a concealing curtain or cover of cloth.

Vitality (adverb): in a very important or necessary manner.

AME church historically vital resource for Bloomington's Black community

By Emily McCusker; March 19, 2023



Caribel Washington stands at the original site of the Wayman African Methodist Episcopal Church, 806 N. Center St., Bloomington, in 1992.

MCLEAN COUNTY MUSEUM OF HISTORY

For a long time, the site of Bloomington's [Wayman African Methodist Episcopal \(AME\) Church](#) was the oldest continually used church in McLean County. The church has since moved to a larger location, but the original site at 806 N. Center St. was home to the congregation for over 150 years.

To learn more about the [church's history and Bloomington's Black history in general](#), the church and Illinois State University conducted an [archaeological excavation](#) of this original location.

In 1992, five units were opened around the building's fence line, and by the end of the process, hundreds of artifacts were found. For \$60, anyone from the area could be taught the basics of archaeology and given equipment to participate in the excavation.

But perhaps more exciting than the objects themselves are the culture and stories that archaeologists excavated with them.

Churches have been important cultural sites for Black communities for hundreds of years. They have acted as safe, welcoming meeting places, often offering social, educational, and vocational opportunities to members.

One example of this is the AME church, which began in Philadelphia around 1794. Black members of St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church, tired of the poor treatment and segregation they faced, made plans to form their own church. Although it was under the direction of St. George's, the Bethel AME Church was a space for Black worshippers to meet without feeling unsafe or disrespected.

The AME church network officially organized in 1816, and as members moved west, the church did too. Wayman AME was founded in 1843 by [the Rev. William Paul Quinn, an AME circuit rider tasked with organizing congregations.](#)

Their numbers grew, and over time the group expanded their church, eventually adding a belltower and an addition on the back of the building. This building was used as a place of worship, community center, and school for generations of Black families, but much of its history was not recorded.

The archaeological excavation gave researchers a better understanding of the roles the church played within Bloomington's Black community over the years.

Something that became obvious was the church's connection with food. Over 46% of the items found were related to foodways. Most of these artifacts were serving utensils, suggesting that the food was likely made elsewhere and later brought to the church.

Members of the church could have had potlucks after services or held community events on the church grounds. Either way, the space offered a place to gather and connect with others.

Archaeologists also found evidence that children spent time at Wayman. They recovered dolls, toy figurines and marbles, as well as ink bottles and pencils that could have been used at the church's school, which educated Black children before [Bloomington's first public school for Black children opened in 1860.](#)

Over the course of the excavation, archaeologists also found 584 medical artifacts, mostly [medicine bottles from the late 1800s.](#) These medical artifacts made up 6% of the objects uncovered. This is a significant portion of the findings, and it prompted the team to look further into the church's medical connections.

Of the medicine bottles recovered, most were for prescription medicines and not patent, which were often sold by salespeople with no medical experience. This suggests that the church's medical distribution was done by trained pharmacists such as Dr. Charles Smith and Dr. [Eugene Covington](#), both members of the congregation.

Many of the prescription bottles were embossed with the names of drugstores, several of them local Bloomington establishments, and were taken for anything from coughs to constipation. No matter their ailment, members of Wayman AME knew they would get help from their congregation.

Throughout Bloomington's history, there are records of other historically Black churches filling a similar role.

In 1931, Black churches in the area met at Wayman to create a Relief League and raise funds for a welfare drive. This would have been especially important because state and national relief efforts during the [Great Depression](#) were not typically designed to benefit people of color.

In 1934, speakers met at Union Baptist Church to discuss a "Health Committee for Colored People." As part of Booker T. Washington's national movement to improve the health of the Black community, local leaders and medical professionals met to discuss sanitation, diet, and the importance of finding medical aid for more severe ailments.

This was especially important in the 1930s, when many families could not afford to eat well-balanced meals or see a doctor.

Wayman AME, as well as other Black churches in McLean County, became medical, educational, and social resources for the area's Black communities, and they serve many of the same purposes now. To learn more about Wayman AME, its excavation, and its history as a Black community resource, visit wayman-amec.com, where you can read the article "Healthcare and the Wayman AME Church." You can also find out more about the excavation using resources from the [**McLean County Museum of History's archives**](#).

Poor Farm home to society's friendless and forlorn

By Bill Kemp; September 8, 2019



The view of this undated aerial of the McLean County Poor Farm is to the northwest. The superintendent's house on the left and one of the barns on the right still stand. Today, this site is private property.

COURTESY, MCLEAN COUNTY MUSEUM OF HISTORY

Editor's note: *This is a revised and enlarged version of a "Page from Our Past" column that first ran Jan. 25, 2009.*

“Be careful or you'll end up at the poor farm” was a popular admonition well into the mid-20th century.

From the early 1860s until the 1950s, the McLean County Poor Farm, located about five miles south of downtown Bloomington, was home to many misfortunate souls.

Those welcomed to the Farm, according to an early account, included the “infirm, the aged, the sick, the idiotic, the insane, and those who may be temporarily, through accident or misfortune, thrown upon the common charity.”

In 1859-1860, the McLean County Board of Supervisors purchased 220 acres from John Grove Myers and established the county's first permanent poor farm. Additions were made in 1888 (80 acres) and 1904 (62 acres). The buildings, which eventually included a superintendent's house, residential quarters, washhouse, stables and various outbuildings, were situated on a 20-acre site just west of U.S. Route 51.

In December 1864, there were 32 "inmates" (as the residents were called into the 1940s) at the Farm. The "hopelessly insane and idiotic," numbering about a half dozen, were kept in unheated cells. "To our mind," The Pantagraph remarked, "it is sheer brutality and cruelty to keep these unfortunate persons in cold rooms when the thermometer is twenty degrees below zero, but we may be mistaken."

In June 1877, The Pantagraph described the pitiful state of many of Poor Farm's 50 some residents: Formerly "strong men and women from whom the light of reason has been taken away by its Giver ... fragments of once prosperous and gleeful families, the wrecks of blasted hopes and ruined lives, young women at whose breasts suckle babes brought unto the world in shame, and young men whom dissipation and sinful practices have brought from the glory of manhood to the level of the most groveling beasts." The McLean County Poor Farm, simply put, presented "one of the saddest sights that mortal eyes can view."

For all of its manifold miseries, the Poor Farm was reliably productive for much of its history. In the summer of 1897, for example, there were about 90 acres in corn, 45 in oats and 10 in millet. There were also 90 acres in pasture and a 10-acre truck garden. By 1924 the Poor Farm's orchard was one of the finest in the county, enabling Callie M. Jones, wife of Superintendent Arthur Jones, to can 700 quarts of peaches. There were also 300 chickens producing a daily average of 200 eggs. In the 1950s, if not earlier, a local sportsmen's club arranged for the Poor Farm to raise pheasants.

When livestock and grain prices were high, such as the first world war, the Poor Farm earned more money for the county than it cost to operate it. Residents performed work if they were willing and able, such as cleaning, tailoring, cooking, canning and field chores. Yet given

the age and physical and/or mental condition of many residents, paid staff handled the bulk of day-to-day work.

State inspector Anna Hinrichsen visited the Farm in October 1915, issuing a scathing report the following January. In it, she criticized the lack of support staff to care for the 91 residents, 16 of whom were women. “This institution,” Hinrichsen added, “employs the smallest amount of help in proportion to the population of any almshouse in Illinois.” The report noted the peeling exteriors and grimy interiors of the residential buildings. “More attention is given to the domestic animals than to inmates, and they are better housed,” was one typically blunt assessment.

Yet 10 years later, The Pantagraph called the Poor Farm a “snug haven for human derelicts” and a “model public farm of the United States.”

Over the years, the Poor Farm was home to profoundly troubled individuals. In 1894, there was the “Electric Man” William Woodard, a former Danvers resident known for his “lectures” on the electrical currents he believed permeated his body. And then there was “John the Baptist,” a resident whose name and personal history were a complete mystery. “He is a religious maniac, but will only talk when spoken to,” noted The Pantagraph. “He is a German but speaks fairly good English.” John the Baptist died in March 1900 having spent most of his final four decades under the care of the county.

“They would send all kinds of people out there, old people, drunks, people in trouble of some kind, even prostitutes,” remembered Geneva Smith, wife of Poor Farm foreman Elbert “Pete” Smith. “Sometimes we’d have whole families out there.” The Smiths, interviewed in 1980, worked under Superintendent George Kent, who ran the place from the late 1940s to the early 1950s.

In 1953-1954, the county converted the Poor Farm into the Maple Grove Nursing Home. Twenty years later the McLean County Nursing Home in Normal opened and the land comprising the old Poor Farm was put on the auction block. Russell O. Shirk, a founder of Beer Nuts Inc., purchased 320 of the 360 acres, including the collection of buildings. Today, the old Poor Farm site is private property and not open to the public.

The Poor Farm was also home to a pauper's cemetery, or "potter's field." The first recorded burials date to spring 1860. The dead were buried in plain caskets in graves often dug by fellow residents. The headstones were plain concrete slabs upon which was inscribed not a name but a number.

County residents unable to pay for their burial were also laid to rest at the Poor Farm, as were transients and other assorted nameless, lost, neglected and forgotten souls. The last recorded burial occurred in September 1930 when the cemetery became the final resting place for an unidentified newborn found dead at the city dump. The grave marker read "165."

Today the cemetery sits south of the McLean County Animal Control Center, though it's not accessible to the public. Mused a Pantagraph reporter in 1897: "Here are buried God's poor — the unfortunates who will be better off in the beyond, where the crooked ways are made straight and the wrongs of this world righted."