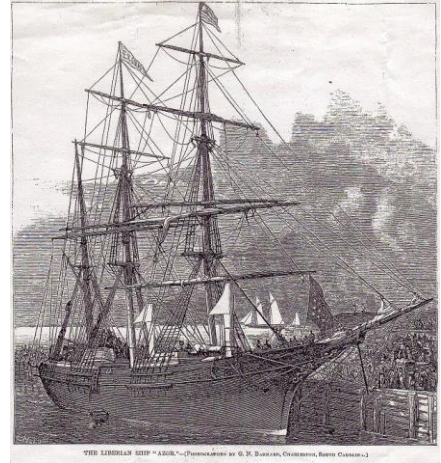


## Tolbert Family History (1849 – 2021)

1849 Daniel Frank Tolbert was born in Ninety Six, Greenwood County, South Carolina, U.S.A.

1869 Daniel Frank (a Union soldier in the American Civil War) and his wife, Sarah Ann Watson, had their first child named William Richard Tolbert.

1878 Daniel Frank (age 29), Sarah Ann (age 25) and four children (William Richard (age 9), Daniel Frank Jr., Rose and Magdalene) arrived in Liberia, West Africa aboard the Azor (pictured at right with the Lone Star atop). He and his family settled in the township of Bensonville.



1889 At the early age of 40 and after only 11 years in Liberia, Daniel Frank Tolbert died from fever, leaving William Richard in charge of the family which now included three more children, Maria, Arthur and Newton.

1890 At the age of 21, William Richard married his first wife, Kortu Gormah (age 19), a resident of Bensonville and member of the Kpelle tribe. He also learned to speak the Kpelle dialect fluently and became one of the first descendants of settlers to become a member of the traditional Poro Society.

1896 William Richard married his second wife, Rhoda Nance Smith (from Millsburg), an immigrant who died in the second year of their marriage during childbirth.

1908 Now a successful farmer and businessman, William Richard (age 39) married for the third time to Charlotte Augusta Hoff (a matron at Bromley Mission) of Grand Cape Mount County, Liberia. The union was blessed with five children: Frank Emmanuel, Florence Aurelia, William Richard Jr., Sara-Ann Elfrieda and Stephen Allen.



1900's

Daniel Frank Jr., also a successful businessman, married Melinda Graham and had six children: Adelaide, Daniel Franklin Clement, Wilmot, Williette, John Harold and Christian.

Both brothers had additional children: William Richard had 34 more children (17 boys and 17 girls) and Daniel Frank Jr. had 13 more.

Amongst his many civic duties, William Richard served as Constable, Justice of the Peace, County Inspector and Member of the House of Representatives (1915 - 1919) for Montserrado County.

William Richard also served in the militia, rising to the rank of 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. Likewise, many of his descendants have served in the military. Some of whom have served in the U.S. military include Benedict A. Tolbert (son of the late Newton A. Tolbert, Jr.), Edward B. Tolbert, Jr. (son of Briggs Tolbert), the late Felix Tolbert (son of William R. Tolbert III), Gabriel Potter, Jr. (son of A.C. Slobert), Gregory F. Clements (son of Henry Clements III), Isabella Tolbert-Baker (daughter of Isaac E. Tolbert), Joyce McClain-Shelton (daughter of Weseh McClain), Rita Tolbert (daughter of Richard V. Tolbert, Sr.), S. Allen Tolbert III (son of the late Stephen A. Tolbert) and Victoria Wallace (daughter of Thomas Jehu Tolbert). And amongst those who have served in the Liberian army, we have Sgt. Melvin K. Tolbert (son of Johnetta Tolbert-Gbehan) who is currently serving.

- 1931 Florence Aurelia Tolbert, commonly known as Flossie, married Edward Benjamin Worjolah McClain who hailed from the Kru tribe in Picnicess, Maryland County, Liberia; they were successfully married for 48 years and together spearheaded one of the two largest branches (William R. Tolbert, Jr. branch is the other) in the Tolbert family.



- 1933 Sara-Ann Elfrieda Tolbert married Willie Albert Dennis, a twin from Careysburg (township where her father also served as Superintendent); interestingly, Willie's twin brother, Joseph Dennis, also married Adelaide Tolbert, the 1<sup>st</sup> child of Daniel Frank and Melinda Tolbert, Jr.



William Richard (age 64), recognized as a resourceful and outstanding citizen of Liberia, was elected National Chairman of the True Whig Party (only political party at the time), a position he held until his demise.

- 1935 Young Willie, who graduated Summa Cum Laude from Liberia College the year before, is promoted to Disbursing Officer (Paymaster of the Republic) at the Department of the Treasury.
- 1943 Like his father, William R. Tolbert, Jr. (age 30) was elected to the House of Representatives and eventually became a successful businessman as well. He owned large farms in Gbalatuah and Jorwah, Bong County and was involved in rice, rubber, palm oil, cocoa, coffee and citrus.

1948 William Richard Tolbert, a devout Baptist and Deacon at Zion Praise Baptist Church of Bensonville, died at his home at the age of 78; his wife, Charlotte Augusta, died 15 years later (February 1963).

Stephen Allen Tolbert, a young employee at the Department of Agriculture and Commerce with his M.A. in Forestry, organized and became the first Director of the National Forest Service. That same year, he also founded the School of Forestry at the University of Liberia and became its first Dean. By 1960, he was appointed Secretary of Agriculture & Commerce by President William V. S. Tubman.

1952 William R. Tolbert, Jr. elected Vice President of Liberia, a position he held for 19 years; his elder brother, Frank Emmanuel Tolbert, was also elected to the Liberian Senate (Montserrado County) where he served faithfully for 28 years. At the time of his death in 1980, Frank Emmanuel was also President Pro-Tempore of the Liberian Senate.



1953 William R. Tolbert, Jr. became Pastor of the Zion Praise Baptist, a position he held until his assassination in 1980. Today, his son, William R. Tolbert III, is the current Pastor (since 1998).

1954



Senator Frank E. Tolbert led the first Liberian delegation to the meetings of the Worldwide Inter-Parliamentary Union held in Helsinki and was elected Vice President.

1955 With a small loan from his older brother (William R. Tolbert, Jr.), Stephen Allen Tolbert, youngest child of William R. & Charlotte Tolbert, started the Mesurado Fishing Company which developed into the most dominant force in Liberian fisheries and the largest fishing enterprise in West Africa. It soon became part of the Mesurado Group of Companies, the first Liberian-owned multimillion-dollar conglomerate with interests that included frozen food, detergent, animal feed and commercial agriculture as well. At its peak in the 1970s, the company owned and operated more than 25 vessels, as well as its own harbor and processing facilities. Prior to 1980, it also employed over 5,000 people, including many family members.

1958 Pastor William R. Tolbert, Jr. is unanimously elected President of the Liberian Baptist Missionary & Educational Convention at its 44<sup>th</sup> session held at the Mt. Galilee Baptist Church in Careysburg; he served in this capacity till his death.

Senator Frank E. Tolbert, traveling in the U.S. after attending the Inter-Parliamentary Union conference held in Brazil, is introduced on the floor of the U.S. Senate by Senator Almer Stillwater “Mike” Monroney of Oklahoma.

1962 Edna Bailey, daughter of William R. Tolbert, had the first set of twins (Miatta Freeman and Siatta Freeman) in the Tolbert family; since then, the family has had 20 more sets of twins, spanning 11 branches (Adelaide, Daniel Francis, Emma Lee, Florence Aurelia, Frank Emmanuel, Hawa, Robert Lee, Stephen Allen, Tete, Thomas Jehu and William Richard Jr.). A big gold star goes to Jeffery A. Tolbert, Jr. of Philly, USA for being the only family member so blessed to have two sets of twins.

1963 Daniel Francis Tolbert opened the Liberian Supply Corporation, an import/export company specializing in building materials. Together with his tax and accounting business, Uncle Daniel successfully provided other services such as public relations, business registration and transportation (owned 17 taxis and 2 trucks) up until the 1980 coup d'état in Liberia. He has since owned a Baskin Robbins franchise in New Rochelle (USA), operated a cold storage business in Banjul, Gambia and imported rice to both Senegal and Gambia. Upon his return to Liberia, Uncle Daniel focused his energy on business and real estate management.



Vice President William R. Tolbert, Jr., along with Secretary of State J. Rudolph Grimes, attended the funeral of President John F. Kennedy in Washington, DC:



- 1965 William R. Tolbert, Jr. elected President of the Baptist World Alliance in Florida, leading over 29 million Baptists around the world for five years.
- 1971 President William V. S. Tubman died in London after surgery and Vice President William R. Tolbert, Jr. succeeded him as the 20<sup>th</sup> President of the Republic of Liberia. Shortly thereafter (November), his daughter, Victoria Tolbert-Yancy, died from illness at the age of 30.
- 1973 Wilmot A. Tolbert, son of Daniel Frank Tolbert, Jr., becomes the first Mayor of the city of Bentol.

The Mesurado Group of Companies makes a donation of \$80,000 to the National Fundraising Rally (for developmental projects) initiated by President Tolbert.

Upon a State visit to the U.S., President William R. Tolbert, Jr. made the following remark at the White House dinner held in his honor: “As I propose a toast to the President of these great United States, I wonder if my grandfather, D. Frank Tolbert – freed over a century ago by the signature of a man who occupied the seat that Richard Nixon, the noble architect of peace, now occupies – I wonder if D. Frank Tolbert could have dreamed that his grandson would ever have had



the honor of being toasted in this place by so great a personality as you, Mr. President??"

1974 President Tolbert becomes the first African to receive the Family of Man Gold Medallion Award presented by the New York City Council of Churches. In November of that same year, his eldest sister, Maria Tolbert-Dewalt (2<sup>nd</sup> child of William R. Tolbert, Sr.), died in Bentol at the age of 68.

1975



Stephen Allen Tolbert, then Minister of Finance at age 53, died in a crash of his private twin-engine Cessna 401 aircraft which was in route to Monrovia from his Sinoe Rubber Plantation. His nephew, Jesse James Tolbert, Jr. (age 21) also died later that year.

1980 Senator Frank E. Tolbert, President William R. Tolbert, Jr., Representative A. B. Tolbert, Leona Tolbert-Edris (daughter of Robert Lee Tolbert) and Momo Tolbert (age 7) tragically lost their lives, along with many others, as a result of the April 12 coup d'état. Shortly thereafter (May 6), Florence A. McClain went to glory as well.

1987 The first set of triplets (identical girls) was born in the family by Queeta E. Harris (daughter of Wilmot A. Tolbert and granddaughter of Daniel Frank Tolbert, Jr.).

We were blessed again with the second and only other set in 2003 when A. J. Hoff (son of Esther Bailey and grandson of Edna Bailey) had three more girls.



1992 Richelieu W. Dennis, Jr. (son of Richelieu W. Dennis and grandson of Sara-Ann Elfrieda Tolbert) and his childhood friend, Nyema Tubman, started the Nubian Heritage business in NY. It eventually became the cornerstone of the Sundial Group of Companies, a 100% black-owned manufacturer, wholesaler and retailer of traditional personal care products, flavors and fragrances. Sundial was also the name of the shoe store his grandmother originally opened in Liberia.

2000 Richard V. Tolbert, son of Frank E. Tolbert, established The Clara Tay Orphan Foundation (in honor of his late mother) at the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp in Ghana.

2006 President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the 1<sup>st</sup> female elected president in Africa, named Richard V. Tolbert as the Chairman of the National Investment Commission of Liberia. After working 25 years on Wall St and with a great desire to help rebuild his war-ravaged homeland, Richard packed his bags and returned to his beloved Liberia. He proudly and diligently served in that capacity until 2010 and was instrumental in approximately \$17 billion of investment initiatives for Liberia.

Other family members who joined the new government included Elfrieda Stewart-Tamba, Deputy Minister of Finance for Revenue; Dr. Edward B. W. “Bobbin” McClain, Jr., Minister of State for Presidential Affairs (Chief of Staff); Charles McClain, Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Administration; and Dr. Randolph A. K. W. McClain, President/CEO of the National Oil Company of Liberia (NOCAL).

2008 At a roundtable on education at the University of Liberia, Edna Tolbert (age 14), daughter of the late Roland Tolbert and granddaughter of Frank E. Tolbert, met and was hugged by President George W. Bush who was in Liberia for a 5-hour State visit. Edna spoke at the roundtable as a beneficiary of the Ambassador’s Girls Scholarship Program (funded by a U.S. NGO).

2009 On October 13, the beloved matriarch of the Tolbert Family at the time, Edna Tolbert Bailey, reached the tender age of 90. She might be the first person in the history of our family who has been so blessed. The occasion was celebrated in grand style at a fabulous dinner ceremony organized by her children in Landover, MD, USA.

2011 On September 12, Jangy Addy, son of Mietta Smallwood and grandson of Kula Tolbert, made history when he clinched the decathlon gold medal at the 10<sup>th</sup> All-African Games held in Maputo, Mozambique. Jangy, who made his first appearance for Liberia at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, became the country first ever gold medal winner in its athletic history. He also led the Liberian team at the 2012 London Olympics.



On November 24 (Thanksgiving Day), Myrtle Tolbert-Dennis happily received news of her second grandchild, Jachin Lee Lasana, born in Texas. Two days later, on the 26<sup>th</sup>, the eldest child (Julia E. Tolbert) of Isaac E. Tolbert passed away unexpectedly in Monrovia. And the next day, November 27, which happened to be exactly 40 years after the death of Baby Vic (daughter of WRT Jr.), Charlotte Dennis-Stewart (eldest child of Elfrieda Tolbert) also went home to glory.

2012 On March 12, Rosemarie Tolbert-Clinton, daughter of Daniel F. Tolbert, became the first twin in the family to deliver a set of twins (girls). Jayden Rose and

Zahari Anne happily joined the great Tolbert Clan on that faithful day in GA, USA.

On April 8, Edna Bailey, then matriarch of the Tolbert Family of Liberia, joyfully returned to her beloved Bentol after approximately 22 years in the USA. She passed away in Liberia on November 13, 2013, exactly one month after celebrating her 94<sup>th</sup> birthday.



- 2013 Upon the celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of President William R. Tolbert, Jr., the Centenary Planning Committee of the Tolbert family, in collaboration with the Liberia Baptist Missionary & Educational Convention, established the Dr. William R. Tolbert, Jr. Foundation for Leadership and Development.

The Tolbert family bequeathed 30 acres of land in Bentol City to the Liberian Government for the establishment of the William R. Tolbert, Jr. and Victoria A. Tolbert Botanical & Zoological Gardens.

- 2014 On March 28, Daniel Francis Tolbert, our beloved clan leader, gentle giant, pillar of strength, gallant son of the soil and remarkable family man, took his final rest and went home to his Lord and Savior in his 80<sup>th</sup> year.
- 2016 We lost another great and much loved son of the family when Dr. Edward B. W. McClain, Jr. (commonly known as Bobbin), the 7<sup>th</sup> child of the late Florence Tolbert McClain and a trained psychiatrist, passed away while seeking medical treatment in South Africa. The mortal remains of the President's Chief of Staff was later received at Robertsfield by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and family and given a beautiful burial.
- 2018 Essence Ventures LLC, a venture capital firm established by Richelieu Dennis, Jr. a year earlier, acquires Essence Communications Inc. from Time Inc., re-establishing ESSENCE as a 100% black-owned independent company. Richelieu serves as Chairman of Essence Ventures LLC.
- 2021 Joseph Fahnbulleh, a sophomore at the University of Florida, captures the men's 200m title in 19.91 seconds at the 2021 NCAA Outdoor Track & Field Championships held in Eugene, Oregon; Joseph, commonly known as JB, is the grandson of Laurie Ola and the great grandson of the late Stephen Allen Tolbert.

All 59 known grandchildren of Daniel Frank and Sarah Ann Tolbert, all of whom make up the primary branches of the Tolbert family of Liberia, have now gone to glory.



143 years after Daniel Frank and Sarah Ann made the treacherous voyage from Charlotte, U.S.A. to the land of liberty and established the Tolberts of Liberia, approximately 40% of the Tolbert family remains in Liberia today. Ironically, majority of the family currently reside in the U.S.A. (primarily in GA, MD and MN), mainly as a result of the 1980 coup and the 1989 civil war. However, more and more family members have successfully returned home over the last few years. Tolberts of Liberia, roughly 1,500 strong today, can also be found in places like Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Ghana, Guinea, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania.