

First Generation



1. **Ford Marvin MORTON**¹⁻¹⁷ was born on 13 Oct 1879 in Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri.¹⁸ He died on 16 Apr 1937 at the age of 57 at St. Joseph's Hospital in Minot, Ward County, North Dakota.¹⁹ He was a Janitor, Weslie Motel.

Ford died of Tertiary Syphilis, untreated, at 1:30 p.m. in St. Joseph's Hospital in Minot, North Dakota. Vivian Morgan, his companion, was listed as the informant. Ford was listed as a single person living at 318 Third Street in Minot and working as a janitor at the Weslie Motel. He was buried in the Black Section of Rosehill Cemetery in Minot, North Dakota. Frank Morton of Missouri and Palace Bergen (Annie Burton-Campbell) of Tennessee were listed as his parents*. Leo M. Finnegan was listed as the undertaker. (*According to the 1880 Federal Census, Rebecca Stanley Morton was Ford's mother. So the immediate family did not know who Ford's mother actually was.) (St. Joseph's Hospital became Uni-Med Medical Center, 407 3rd St. NE, Minot, North Dakota, 58701). In a Memorandum dated 31 May 2000, received 3 June 2000 from Health Information Services on the release of medical records on Ford Morton, I was informed: "I am sorry but we are unable to obtain records from the year 1937. By law, the state of North Dakota only requires record retention/reproduction for 10 years from the last date of service". The letter was unsigned.

"On Friday, 14 August 1896, the trial of Joe Wiley and Ford Morton, Colored, for assault with intent to kill passenger conductor Donohue of the Cotton Belt and Jeff Stone, a carpenter of Cairo and Samos, this county (Mississippi), last Sunday, 9 August 1896, was to have come up before Judge S.W. Rouse but owing to the condition of Stone...(news article not legible)".

"Yesterday evening as the Cotton Belt northbound passenger train was near Samos Crossing, 6 miles south of this city, Joe Wiley, a Negro, became offended at Conductor Donohue for some cause unknown, pulled his revolver and fired 3 shots at Mr. Donohue. The shots missed him and one shot struck Jeff Stone, a passenger, inflicting probably a fatal wound. The Negro left the train at Samos and made his escape. Sheriff Martin is upon his trail and will probably capture the Negro soon".

(Two things here are ironic: Edgar Edward Moton/ Morton was eventually arrested, tried and released for this crime and not Joe Wiley and a Martha A. Rouse paid the funeral bill for Edgar Moton/Morton when he died in Cairo, Illinois, 25 December 1915).

"Police Happenings: The case of State vs Ed and Ford Morton, Colored, was set for Thursday, 17 September 1896".

"Ed and Ford Morton, charged with assault with intent to kill, came up for trial before Judge Rouse yesterday (24 September 1896), but owing to the absence of the State's witnesses, the case was continued till the 7th and bond placed at \$500 and \$? respectively".

According to The Charleston Weekly Enterprise Newspaper, dated 9 October 1896, " on 7 October 1896, the grand jury returned the following true bills of indictment: State against Edward (Edgar)

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Morton, carrying concealed weapons. State against Ford Morton, carrying concealed weapons. State against Ford Morton and Edward Morton, assault and wounding with intent to kill; and having no further business retire again to consult thereof. Court takes recess until tomorrow at 8:30 o'clock".

According to The Charleston Weekly Enterprise Newspaper, dated 18 December 1896 " Conductor Donohue, of the Cotton Belt and Jeff Stone, a carpenter of Cairo, who were assaulted by Ed and 'Frank' Morton, colored boys of this county, several months ago with pistols while the train was at Samos, are in the city attending circuit court as prosecuting witnesses. Stone was dangerously wounded being shot three times" (see previous 'wounding' above).

On 7 October 1896, Ford was charged with carrying a concealed weapon and assault and wounding with intent to kill in the Circuit Court, Charleston, Mississippi County, Missouri. The victim was not identified in the court records. On 16 December 1896, Ford, age 17 years, was sentenced to two years in a Missouri State Reform School for Boys. According to the Charleston Weekly Enterprise, "Sheriff Martin left today (18 December 1896) for Booneville with Ed. Motten (Ford Morton), a 17 year old Colored boy, who was sentenced to two years in the reform school for shooting Jeff Stone at Samos a short time since". Ford later settled in Minot, North Dakota. The charge of carrying a concealed weapon was dismissed. His brother Edgar was also charged and tried on the same charges but Edgar was found not guilty of either crime.

According to the Boy's Commitment Book No. 2, Missouri Reform School, Ford was admitted to Booneville State Reform School as prisoner #737 on 17 December 1896. His commitment record read as follows: "Now on this 16th day of December 1896, in the Circuit Court of Mississippi County, accused Ford Morton charged with assault with intent to kill, through? a trial by a jury he was found guilty as charged and sentenced to imprisonment in the State Reform School for a period of two (2) years". Expense of Mississippi County. Signed, T.? Jacob? Ford's father's name was listed as Ford Morton (Frank Robert Morton) and his mother's name was listed as Ohusil? Morton (Rebecca Stanley Morton). Ford was released on 28 June 1897, after serving seven months, eleven days of his two year sentence in addition to being incarcerated from mid-August 1896 in the Charleston County Jail.

Sometime after Ford's release, he migrated to Minneapolis, Minnesota and later moved to Minot, Ward County, North Dakota, which was part of the Northwest Territory at the time. Ford is the Morton who left Southeast Missouri after his release from Booneville and never returned as a result of threats on his life for this crime. Ford died and is buried in Minot, North Dakota.

On 12 September 1918, Ford registered for the World War I Draft in Minneapolis, Hennepin Co., Minnesota. Ford was 38 years of age and lived at 211- 11th Ave. South. He listed his occupation as a laborer at the James E. Stewart Twin City Hotel, 246 4th Ave. South. Ford listed Ada Morton as his wife and was described as medium height and build with brown eyes and black hair. He listed a broken second toe on his left foot as a physical disqualification. William ? Vale signed Ford's registration card. There is no evidence that Ford actually served in the military service. World War I ended 11 November 1918.

In the Federal Census of January 1920, Ford, age 40 was listed as a resident of Minneapolis, Hennepin Co., Minnesota, living at 211 Eleventh Ave. South. He was living with his wife Edith, age 27. Both listed their places of birth and that of their parents as Missouri. Ford was employed as a porter; Edith was not employed. Both indicated they were able to read and write.

In the R. L. Polk and Company Ward County Directory of 1927-1928, Ford was listed as a helper at the Westlie Motor Company and he lived at 114 First Ave., Southwest in Minot, North Dakota.

In the Federal Census of April 1930, Ford, age 52 was listed as a resident of Minot, Ward Co., North Dakota, living at 311 Fourth Street on 7 April 1930. He was living with Vivian Morgan, age 40, a widow who was listed as Ford's servant. A Mickey W. O'Brien, age 41, Negro, widower, listed as a lodger was also a resident in the home. Ford's occupation was automobile car washer for the Westlie Motor Company, 113-119 Central Ave., West, Minot, North Dakota. O'Brien listed his occupation as an employee of the Turkish Bath. O'Brien and his mother were from California and his father was born in Ireland. Vivian listed her place of birth and that of her parents as Louisiana; Ford listed he and his parent's places of birth as Missouri. Ford did not have a radio.

In the R. L. Polk and Company City Ward County Directory of 1930-1931, Ford was listed as a janitor at the Westlie Motor Company and was living at 313 Fourth Southwest in Minot, North Dakota with Vivian Morgan.

In the R. L. Polk Company Ward County City Directory of 1933-1934, Ford was listed as a janitor at the Westlie Motor Company and resided at 318 Third Southwest with Vivian Morgan in Minot, North Dakota.

In the R. L. Polk and Company Ward County City Directory of 1938-1939, Ford was listed as deceased on 16 April 1937, age 57. Booker T. Morton, Ford's nephew was living at 307 Third Ave. Southwest and working as a porter at Reinarts and Mathison. Vivian Morgan was not listed in the City Directory. According to Lila Clark, she left Minot, North Dakota after Ford's death and came to Charleston, Missouri. for a few months before moving to Ohio. However, Vivian Morgan died in Minot, North Dakota on 18 April 1941. Her obituary appeared in the Minot Daily News on 19 and 21 April 1941.

Ford's obituary appeared in the Minot Daily News Newspaper on 19 April 1937 and read as follows: "Funeral Set Tuesday For Ford Morton, 58, Minot Negro Resident. Funeral services for Ford Morton, 58, Minot Negro resident, who died Friday afternoon at a local hospital after an illness of two years, will be held at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Finnegan Funeral Home, 217 Main South, Minot, North Dakota (later located at 102 Fourth Avenue Southeast, Minot, North Dakota.). The Reverend Henry Widen, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Minot will officiate. Burial will be in Rose Hill Cemetery. Morton was employed at the Westlie Motor Company before becoming ill two years ago. He lived at 318 Third Street Southwest. He is survived by a sister (Bertie) who had cared for him during his illness."

As of February 2018, I have been unable to locate a marriage record for Ford and Ada or Ford and Edith or Ford and Vivian. I do not know whether there were any children from either union.

Ford does not have a headstone on his burial plot according to Mr. Earl Killmer who was the superintendent of the cemetery in April 1983. Ford is buried in Lot 4, Block 252, Colored Section 7, at Rose Hill Cemetery in Minot Ward Co., North Dakota.

Booker apparently remained in Minot, North Dakota through 1941, as he was listed in the 1940-1941 R. L. Polk and Company Ward County City Directory. Booker worked at an unnamed company as a porter,

and lived at 307 Third Ave., Southwest. Booker did return to Toledo, Ohio as he enlisted in the Army there on 27 November 1942.

On 6 January 2006, I contacted the Westlie Ford Motor Company in Minot, Ward County, North Dakota. They had no employment records prior to 1950. I also contacted the Thomas Family Funeral Home and the Thompson-Larson Funeral Home in Minot, Ward County, North Dakota on 6 January 2006 but neither acknowledged purchasing the former Finnegan-Hurd Funeral Home or having the old funeral home records. I was hoping to positively identify the sister who went to Minot, North Dakota to care for Ford during his illness and close out his business affairs after his death. This un-named sister was mentioned in Ford's newspaper obituary. Booker Morton lived in Minot, North Dakota for about five years from 1936 to 1941. The only known sister of the Morton brothers was Bertie Cox Titsworth Swift who was their step-sister and the daughter of Frank Robert's second wife, Anna (Palace) Burton Campbell. Bertie Swift died on 25 October 1960 in Mount Vernon, Jefferson County, Illinois and is buried there in Oak Wood Cemetery.

The tone of race relations in Charleston, Missouri in the 1890's are reflected here:

An article which appeared on the front page of the Charleston Weekly Enterprise dated 1 January 1897, Volume 23, No. 29 read as follows: "The Cairo Telegram observes that it is a very peculiar fact that almost every (N)egro arrested and taken to police headquarters is found to have either a pistol, or a razor or a murderous knife on him, and in most cases it is a pistol. The police say that fully four-fifths of the (N)egroes here go armed constantly, and that a large number of them are ready to shoot or cut on the sligh(t)est provocation. When 'one' is arrested with dangerous weapons on him he should be punished to the full extent of the law. It is true that some white persons carry pistols, which is of course a violation of the law, but special mention is made of the (N)egro, for both city and county jails being crowded with the 'latter' constantly, shows that they break the laws more frequently than the other 'class', and the practice they have of going armed leads to the commission of many offenses".

Another article in the Charleston Weekly Enterprise dated 25 September 1896, Volume 23, No. 15 read as follows: "A big black (N)egro presided over the Cape Girardeau county Republican convention the other day, at the Cape. Still we have (a) lot of white Republicans in this county that will stay with them. We wonder if some of our Republican friends would (not) blush a little red, bolt the ticket, if such state of affairs existed in this county".

Ford Marvin MORTON and Ada Blanche SMITH were married. **Ada Blanche SMITH** was born on 18 Nov 1884 in Rochester, Minnesota.²⁰ She appeared in the census on 1 Apr 1950 at 4602 Jay Street in Duluth, St. Louis, Minnesota, United States.²¹

In the Census Of Population And Housing taken 1 April 1950, Duluth, St. Louis, Minnesota, United States, Ada Morton, White, age 65, widowed, born in Minnesota was keeping house. Ada died on 17

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November 1950 in Duluth. Ada's husband Ford Marvin Morton died 16 April 1937 in Minot, Ward, North Dakota.

Listed with Ada was her daughter Lorraine E. Morton, White, age 30, born in Minnesota, divorced, employed as a grocery clerk in retail groceries. Lorraine said she had worked 40 hours the previous week.

Also listed with Ada was her son Robert F. Morton, White, age 25, born in Minnesota, employed as a motor assembler for an electrical manufacturer who had not worked the previous week. She died on 17 Nov 1950 at the age of 65 in Duluth, Saint Louis County, Minnesota.²²

Causes of death for Ada Blanche Smith Morton, a white female born in Rochester, Minnesota: Mitral Stenosis; thrombosis; chronic pneumatic valvular heart disease; obstruction. Ada died at 2 p.m. at 4602 Jay Street in Duluth, Minnesota. Lorraine Morton of the same address was listed as the informant. Her father was listed as unknown Smith; her mother was unknown. Ada was listed as a widow. Ford died 16 April 1937 in Minot, North Dakota, but he was living with Vivian Morgan at the time of his death. Ada was buried on 20 Nov 1950 at Sunrise Memorial Park in Duluth, Saint Louis County, Minnesota.

Ford Marvin MORTON and Ada Blanche SMITH had the following children:

- 2 i. **Lorraine E. MORTON** was born in 1920 in Minnesota, United States. On 1 Apr 1950 she was at Grocery Clerk, Retail Grocery in Duluth, St. Louis, Minnesota, United States.
- 3 ii. **Robert F. MORTON** was born in 1925 in Minnesota, United States. On 1 Apr 1950 he was a Motor Assembler at Electrical Manufacturer in Duluth, St. Louis, Minnesota, United States.

Edith UNKNOWN (FORD MARVIN MORTON) was born about 1893 in Missouri.

Edith was listed as Ford's wife, age 27, in the 1920 Federal Census on the 12th of June, Minneapolis, Hennepin Co., Minnesota.



MORGAN^{12,15-16,23-24}, daughter of George MORGAN and Geneva TONY MORGAN, was born in 1899 in Louisiana. She died on 18 Apr 1941 at the age of 42 in Minot, Ward, North Dakota, United States.²⁵

As reported in the Minot Daily News Newspaper on 19 April 1941, Page 2: Vivian Morgan, age 51, resident of Minot since 1927, died Friday afternoon at her home, 317-3rd Street SW. No funeral arrangements have been made. The body is at the Finnegan Funeral Home. She was born in New Orleans, Louisiana and has relatives living in that state.

As reported in the Minot Daily News Newspaper on 21 April 1941, Page 2: Final rites for Vivian Morgan, 51 who died at her home in Minot, North Dakota Friday, will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday at the Finnegan Funeral Home. The Reverend **North E. West** will officiate and burial will be in Rose Hill Cemetery.

She was buried on 23 Apr 1941 at Rose Hill Cemetery in Minot, Ward, North Dakota, United States. Vivian may have been a Ross.

At the time of her death in 1941, Vivian had lived in Minot, North Dakota since 1927

On 18 May 1983, Lila Clark described Vivian Morgan as "a good woman". Lila said Vivian came to Mt. Vernon, Illinois after Ford died 16 April 1937 and stayed with the family for about three months. They became very fond of one another and Vivian did not want to return to North Dakota to live alone. Lila said she went to live in Cleveland, Ohio where she married but this proved to be untrue.

Vivian Morgan's obituary read as follows: Vivian Morgan dies. Vivian Morgan, 51, resident of Minot since 1927, died Friday at her home. Birth: Circa 1890, New Orleans, Louisiana, United States. Death: 18 April 1941 - 317 31st Street SW, Minot, Ward, North Dakota, United States (her home)
Obituary publication 24 April 1941, Minot, Ward, North Dakota, United States. Newspaper: Ward County Independent

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1. Family, Willie Miller Hudson, (West Side Baptist Church/Gates Funeral Home, 18 Sep 1962).
2. (State Health Dept., State of North Dakota, 6 May 1937).
3. (Mississippi County Missouri Circuit Court Records, LDS-FHC Microfilm 1977451), Page 623, Vol 17, 16 Dec 1896.
4. (Mississippi County Missouri Circuit Court Records, LDS-FHC Microfilm 1977451).
5. (John F. Martin, Proprietor, The Charleston Weekly Enterprise), Volume XXIII, No. 9, 14 Aug 1896.
6. (John F. Martin, Proprietor, The Charleston Weekly Enterprise), Volume XXIII, No. 14, 18 Sep 1896.
7. (John F. Martin, Proprietor, The Charleston Weekly Enterprise), Volume XXIII, No. 15, 25 Sep 1896.
8. (John F. Martin, Proprietor, The Charleston Weekly Enterprise), Volume XXIII, No. 17, 9 Oct 1896.
9. (John F. Martin, Proprietor, The Charleston Weekly Enterprise), Volume XXIII, No. 27, 18 Dec 1896.
10. (John F. Martin, Proprietor, The Weekly Charleston Enterprise), Volume XXIII, No. 27, 1 Jan 1897; No. 15, 25 Sep 1896.
11. (Postmaster, Minot, ND 58701, 11 May 2000), Rec'd 11 May 2000.
12. (Interview With Lila Morton Clark at Turah Jordan Morton's Home), 18 May 1983.
13. (Health Information Services, 407 3rd St. SE, Minot, ND 58701), 31 May 2000.
14. (Missouri State Archives, Oct 1896-Feb 1899), Book 2, Page 13.
15. GEDCOM file imported on 8 May 2001.
16. GEDCOM file imported on 13 Feb 2007.
17. (Certificate of Death, Minnesota Department of Health, #1151, 24 Nov 1950), Certificate of Death, 24 Nov 1950.
18. (State Health Dept., State of North Dakota, 6 May 1937), State of North Dakota Death Certificate # 4900, 6 May 1937.
19. Ford Marvin Morton, death certificate (Long) State File No. 4900 (16 April 1937), Certificate of Death, State Health Department, Ward County, Harrison Township, Ward County Clerk.
20. Ada Blanche Morton, death certificate (Long) 29496; Registerd #1151 (17 November 1950), Minnesota Department of Health, Division of Vital Statistics, St. Louis County Clerk, Duluth, Minnesota.
21. Census Of Population And Housing, 1 April 1950, E/D 88-42, (St. Louis, Duluth, Minnesota, United States); Sheet #2; Family #16; Lines18-20, NARA, Ancestry.com, On Line.
22. Ada Blanche Smith, Duluth, Minnesota death certificate State #29496; Registered #1151 (17 November 1950).
23. (The State of Ohio, Cuyahoga County, Probate Court), Page 260, Volume 211, License #97616.
24. (Minot Daily News Newspaper, 19 April 1941, Page 2.; State Historical Society of North Dakota, 612 East Boulevard Ave., Bismarck, ND 58505-0830), 19 and 21 April 1941, Page 2.
25. Death Notice, Vivian Morgan, Minot Daily News, 21 April 1941, Minot, Ward County North Dakota, No Page Number was given.

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