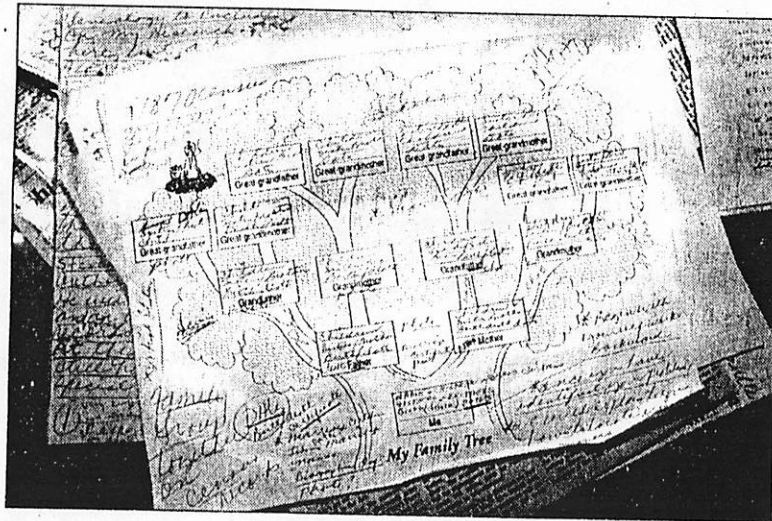
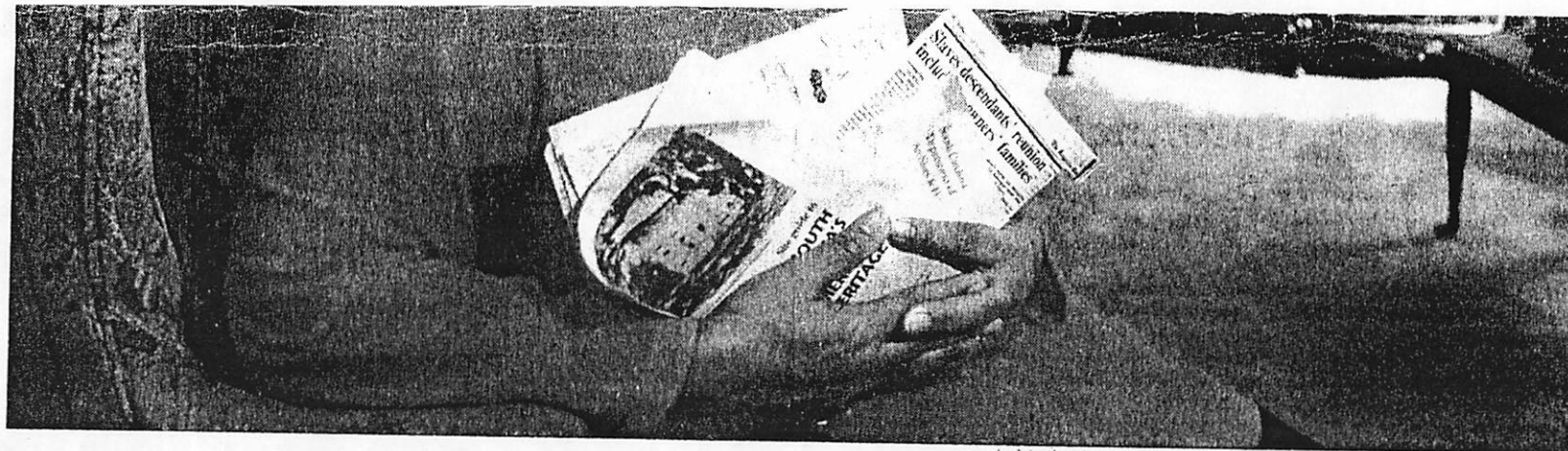




*"You can't
change the past.
And I want to
know my true
history. You
don't get angry.
You get busy."*

Tracing roots





PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM DOMINICK/ THE STATE

Nancy D. Sulton is excited about tracing her African-American roots and would like more people to focus on their origins.

Woman finds family tree blossoms with rich history

By PAT BERMAN
Staff Writer

In a South Carolina bill of sale recorded in the early 1800s, a mule fetched \$200 while in the same transaction, a young male slave brought \$5. In a petition written around the same time, a freed slave was "killed by the fate of a tree" while his white guardian conveniently collected the \$110 military pension owed to the freed slave.

Nancy D. Sulton knows about "the fate of the tree" expression that appeared in the post-Revolutionary War document. "It means he was hanged by the neck 'til he died," she says of her ancestor John Chavis. No cause was given. And she knows about the mule. Her son was so angered by that injustice, he stopped helping research their family history.

Sulton, 62, has become the unofficial South Carolina consultant for African-Americans who want to trace their family's roots. She shares

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her own experiences at African-American genealogy workshops held in the South Carolina Archives & History Department. Sulton combined her research ability as a retired school librarian with great personal warmth and charm to not only get what she needed on her family history but also made people pleased to be included in her efforts.

For many African-Americans nationwide, their research often leads to South Carolina and then to Sulton.

The port of Charleston was for African-Americans what Ellis Island in New York was for European-Americans, said S.C. Archives historian Alexia J. Helsley. In fact, African-Americans outnumbered whites in South Carolina until 1923 when hardships created by the boll weevil and Jim Crow laws caused

Despite strong 'Roots,' blacks have weak presence on TV

By GREG BRAXTON
Los Angeles Times

HOLLYWOOD — Tension filled the office of ABC-TV executive Lou Rudolph. Facing him were several black leaders less than pleased with his network. They wanted answers and satisfaction now.

Why in 1975 are black people invisible on ABC? The leaders from the Los Angeles Urban League, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and other groups demanded, echoing a grievance that Rudolph repeatedly was hearing from blacks. There seemed to be a deliberate attempt to keep blacks off TV, they said. And they were not going to stand for it anymore.

"It was very tense, very heated," remembered Gil Avila, ABC's former head of personnel, who attended the meeting.

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