

# HISTORY OF BREWERVILLE

A BRIEF HISTORY  
OF THE  
FOUNDING  
OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF BREWERVILLE  
MONTERRADO COUNTY  
REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

— . 0 . —

1869 -- 1979

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FOUNDING  
OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BREWERVILLE  
BY  
MR. JESSE OLIVER HAYES  
CHAIRMAN OF THE HOSTIROCAL COMMITTEE**

GENESIS  
The inception  
The Remembrance  
The Journey  
Arrival  
Finds, m. 6/1

One hundred years ago, this community now known as Brewerville, was a dense forest, awaiting the arrival of a day when the establishment of a modern settlement would be ushered into existence. In the year 1879, in the month of March, the long expected idea became a reality - the founding of the Settlement of Brewerville.

Brewerville was settled March, 1870 under the able leadership of our sainted father and founder, John Butler Munden. Immediately upon the final conclusion of their establishment as a Settlement, they wasted no time in transferring their ideas into realities. After a period of years had elapsed, and nearly all of the original members of that expedition has expired by death with the exception of one Mr. Henry Clemens, it became necessary to have a written history of the founding and establishment of Brewerville; hence it was decided by the Community that Mr. Joseph W. Parker, Sr. should approach and request Mr. Clemens to perform this task. This request was made and the job done.

Long before the Civil War between the Northern and Southern States of America, there was a large timber company in Astoria, which produced shingles in very great quantities from a large, deep and muddy swamp about fifty of seventy-five miles square, that surrounded a small piece of highland. It was on this piece

of highland that houses were built to accommodate the employees engaged in the shingle industry on the Reanoke River. The woods from which the shingles were produced were cypress and juniper trees. These were found in abundance in this swampy area. The production of shingles grew and expanded and provided adequate employment of its inhabitants until the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. The business then closed down, and the laborers were scattered in the rebellious Southern States until the War came to an end on April 9, 1863, in favor of the North.

In 1866 a Company named Simon and Grady resumed business in shingle-making as it did before the War. Shingles then had a high price. The War destroyed nearly everything in the South. Houses were burned to ashes including large plantation houses. Everywhere throughout the South and North, shingles were exported to foreign countries. Shingles were even shipped to Liberia by the Ship "Colconda" along with some immigrants to Mr. H.W. Dennis who was then Agent for the American Colonization Society of Liberia. These shingles were used to repair the houses that were being used by members of the Society in Liberia.

The price of shingles fell drastically following the close of the War and consequently the pioneers faced great depression.

Early in 1869 Honorable William Carpenter and Rev. Thomas Malcum traveled in the part of the country where shingle-makers were working, canvassing to get five hundred immigrants to come

to Liberia and establish two villages, lay them out in town lots as a memorial to the names of two deceased philanthropists, Arthington of England and Brewer of America.

Hon. Carpenter, Agent of the American Colonization Society in Washington, D.C., USA and Rev. Thomas Malcum who had read the Repositories and other papers about Liberia published the good news of living there. This information about Liberia soon aroused the curiosity of all the hearers, and it was not long before enrollment began in the village of Jamesville, North Carolina, where more than fifty (50) persons enlisted. Hon. Carpenter, serving as Secretary, along with Rev. Thomas Malcum, decided to organize themselves into company. They chose as their leader John Butler Munden with the expressed understanding that wherever they went in Liberia, Brewerville would be established and cut off into town lots for the immigrants.

In November, 1869, was the Presidential Election in America, and General Grant was the Republican Candidate. The freed Negroes believed that the Republican Party was the means through which they <sup>would</sup> had gained their freedom and so they decided to stay and vote for General Grant. Such a boom <sup>?</sup> they wanted to enjoy before leaving America, and they did.

After voting in November, 1869, a few weeks later when they all took boats from Astoria and moved up the Reanoka River and landed at Bertee, Passquetank County, N.C., USA. From here they

went to Winsaw, spent a few days and then on to Norfolk, Virginia where they spent a week. Later they boarded the ship "Colcunda" which had anchored outside the Cheespeak Bay. It was here that the two leaders, Alan Hoggard of Arthington and John Butler Munden of Brewerville met for the first time. With Alan Hoggard of Arthington, John Butler Munden of Brewerville and their men all aboard, on the following morning the ship weighed anchor, and off to Liberia they came.

Thirty-two days they were out on the ocean sailing, and on the 20th of December, 1869, landed in Monrovia Harbour. Hon. Henry W. Dennis, the Agent then of Society in Liberia, along with such distinguished gentlemen as Dr. Dunbar; Dr. McGill; Dr. Johnson; Milton and many others, visited the immigrants, welcomed and congratulated the new-comers. That Sunday morning they all landed and went into the Receptacle and took Christmas in Monrovia.

In January the following year, 1870, they had the privilege of witnessing the inauguration in the Government Square of E. J. Roye as President of the Republic of Liberia. This was an occasion which they had never witnessed before (in all their lives), to see a black man inaugurated as President.

Early in February, 1870, they all got anxious to know about their next homes and locations. Agent Dennis spared no time in the business of finding a suitable location in Liberia for the

new-comers. He provided the leaders with two cargo boats manned by Kru men with instructions that they should take Munden up the St. Paul River as far as Millsburg to view the situation of unoccupied lands for the establishment of Arthington and Brewerville which were originally planned to be settled opposite each other. Unfortunately this could not be done.

The citizens of Millsburg who were directing them, conveyed them on through Meulenburg Mission, which was called Days Mission at that time, and carried them far beyond the limits of their community so as to enable them to secure a good location for a settlement. As a result of this effort, Arthington was located in the rear of Millsburg and this location was quite acceptable by their leader Hoggard.

Leader Munden viewing the right bank of the St. Paul River which was opposite Arthington and with a desire to have the settlers located opposite the Arthingtonians in keeping with instructions from their American Headquarters, found it quite difficult to accept this location since it was not reasonably possible. Munden reported that he came off a river called Reanoke River which was not a rapid river like the river he had found flowing by Millsburg, and that he could not settle down on that river. He said, "Agent Dennis, Liberia is before me, please allow me to look out for another location for Brewervillians?" This request was not quite satisfactory to Agent Dennis, but he agreed and reminded leader Munden to name the village Brewerville

wherever he secured a location and to have it cut up into town lots and laid off with streets according to previous instructions.

Agent Dennis still helped by sending Munden to Virginia. The citizens of Virginia told Munden they could show him Government land unoccupied and free to all citizens of America, people of Negro descent, if they would come and inhabit the land. It was Agent Dennis' wish that the Virginians shared with this new set of immigrants at least five (5) acres of land on the river front and joined with Brewervillians to make a village divided into town lots on the river side; but the Virginians flatly refused and said they could take them to a place where they would have no trouble in laying out the kind of town they wanted and be at ease. The time was appointed for them to secure this location. At the appointed time, the following citizens of Virginia were present: Oldman James Roots; Rev. C.H. Bailey; Rev. Starks; Rev. Miller, and others whose names have been forgotten. They brought leader Munden and his men right where Brewerville is now settled and declared that they were on Government land belonging to no one but the Government, so when Munden returned to the Waterside as it was then called, he rejoined his boat and went back to Monrovia and reported to Agent Dennis who was satisfied with the report.

Agent Dennis then instructed John Moore, a Government Surveyor, to go up the river in the rear of Virginia with leader

Munden and his party and survey off the town lots first, and then other places which leader Munden would show him. Both old and young people of Virginia accompanied leader Munden as he went along with Government Surveyor Moore each day performing the survey. The streets in Brewerville were laid off in a manner running east and west; and north and south with farm land on the north of Brewerville. The first street running east and west is Malcum Street; the second running east and west is Carpenter Street; the third running east and west is Dennis Street; the fourth street running east and west is Hardy Street. The cross streets run north and south. The first street is Bridge Street; the second is Logan Street; this street runs to the old landing wharf where all the motor launches and canoes landed to take on and discharge their cargoes. The third street is Upton Street which leads to the graveyard (cemetery). This street is so named to commemorate the death of the first person in Brewerville after its founding. The fourth street is Brown Street which runs by the Methodist Church. The fifth street is Cartwright Street; the sixth street is George Moore Street which runs to Lott Carey Mission and on to Free-Town (so called by the early settlers).

When all the immigrants had been apportioned their lots, they all got on a move their locations since farming time was rapidly approaching. They were anxious to find occupations to help themselves to live and support their families as the most of them had families with children. The first occupation they found was shingle making which was not strange to them. This proved



quite profitable since shingles were in great demand at this time when the immigrants were being located and settled down in their new homes.

In 1869 when the first set of immigrants landed in Monrovia to found Brewerville, there were only two (2) zinc houses in Monrovia. One was a store which was being operated by a white man named Yancy, a German by nationality. This store was on the waterside, and the other a School House where the A.M.E. Church was built on Broad Street. The President's Mansion at that time was covered with something called slate. Nevertheless shingles were in great demand.

Besides the town lots, in Brewerville there were three avenues known as the East, West and North-West Avenues. The immigrants who formed the Settlement of Brewerville were settled in the following manner:

1869

Nathan Diggs and family  
Silas McClain and family  
Oldman Griffin and family  
Augustus Freeman and family  
Gorman, a West Indian who  
went back to America  
George Moore (single)

Joseph Saunders and family  
Oldman Slight and family  
Henry Clemens and family  
John Butler Munden and family  
Mingo Alexander and family  
Wilson Slight and family

Richard Upton and family

Harmon Saunders and family

and many others whose names have been forgotten.

In 1870 <sup>12</sup> another set of immigrants came out. They were profound Christians, who sought fellowship under watch-care with Shiloh Baptist Church of Virginia until their own Church was organized. They were as follows:

Benjamin Newberry and family

Aaron Lewis and family

(Leader)

Jesse Newberry and family

Richard Norman and family

Warren Phelps and family

Joseph Phelps and family

Hudson Sheavers and family

Washington Terry and family

Wilson Frice (single)

Daniel and family

Alice Walker and family

Channie Norman (single)

and many others whose names cannot be remembered.

The above-mentioned immigrants settled on the various avenues. John Butler Munden and Henry W. Clemens were the first Justices of the Peace of Brewerville, and Munden the later was appointed Tax Collector for Brewerville.

The immigrants of 1874 were as follows:

J.C. Brown, Sr. and family

Silas Brown and family

Joshua Webb and family

Aaron Holmes and family

King John (single)

Isaac Woods and family

Sarah Brown

George Brown

Grandma Taylor

Hannah Williamson and family

Amanda Brown (single)

Amos Brown

Elijah Gordon

Mary Danelson and Peter Behare

The 1897 immigrants were as follows:

Benjamin McCheavers and family

Nathaniel Holt Sr. and family

William Bell and family

John Samson and family with William N. Lucas and family, one of the wealthiest families of Brewerville.

Parker Yancy and family

Moses Johnson and family

William Bennett and family

The immigrants of 1880 are as follows:

John Brown and family

William Hayes and family

Samuel Ash and family

Elijah Parker Jr. and family

William Bizzel and family

James McDonald and family with many others.

Norfelt Brown and family

Charles Wilson and family

Elijah Parker Sr. and family

William Facing and family

Still George and family

Immigrants for the year 1884 are as follows:

James H. Sears and family

Goerge Henry and family

Richard Booker and family

Abraham Powell and family

Allison Shaw and family  
Isaac Moorte  
Hannah Carter  
Augustus and family  
Ambus Shaw and family  
Nero Shaw and family  
June Freeman and family  
Moses Cresston and family  
McDouglas and family  
Jack Allison and family  
Washington Tucker and family

Grandson Miles and family  
Joseph Carter  
Peter Shaw and family  
Steven Shaw and family  
George and family  
One James and family  
Newton and family  
A.J. Matthews and family  
Rev. E. Holmes and family  
Thomas Lee and family  
Joseph W. Parker

Immigrants for 1889 are as follows:

William M. Coleman and family  
Fortes Jones and family  
Joe Jones and family  
Wade Hamilton and family  
Oldman Bryant and family  
Abraham Richardson and family  
Burn Anderson and family  
Erik Bouse and family  
one Shaw and family

Edy Small and family  
L.C. Greesey and family  
Prof. Smith and family  
Harvey Tyles (single)  
Tim. Colep and family  
John Cheeks, Sr. and family  
John Cheeks, Jr. and family  
Nemou's Burmees and family

Leader Munden was very honest as a Tax Collector and did all he could towards the advancement of his new home town. It was about the period of 1870 when the great educator and scholar, Dr.

Edward Wilmot Blyden visited Liberia and Brewerville in particular, to acquire firsthand information on the condition of the settlers. Being satisfied with what he saw, he promised that upon his return to America he would negotiate for additional help to be sent out in the educational field since he had already observed the shortage of teachers. This he did when Mrs. Barboza was sent along with her husband to help in the work. Mrs. Barboza was a college graduate who taught and lived in Brewerville until her death. Mrs. Eliza Brown; Mrs. Ada E. Merritt-Hayes; Rachel Leah Phelps and Ella Parker were few of her students.

Hon. Elijah Parker, Jr. was the first Representative from Brewerville. After serving in the House for a number of years, he was subsequently elected to the Liberian Senate where he served efficiently up to his death in 1924. The Hon. Joseph H. Davis was Chief Clerk of the Liberian Senate and exemplified himself by his efficient and dedicated services in such a manner, that won for him the confidence of his constituents which led him to be elected to the exalted position of Representative for Montserrado County hailing from Brewerville. The third was the Hon. James W.S. Bowens, who was fortunate in being elected to the House of Representatives where he served faithfully until his death. All these made their contribution to the development and peaceful existence of this community. Their passing left a void in Brewerville which seemed difficult to fill. The fourth Legislator was the Hon. H. Carey Thomas, who served in the House

of Representatives for a period of (12) twelve years. Prior to his ascendancy to this position, Hon. Thomas served his Government as Commissioner of the Bureau of Civil Service for a number of years.

Mr. A.J. Matthews was noted for his outstanding contributions in the educational field and served as the second Public School Teacher for quite a number of years. Having demonstrated such broad experiences in the teaching field, his sound sense of judgment won for him a position on the Legal Bench as Quarterly Judge, a position which he held with credit to himself and price to the settlement of Brewerville from which he sprang. Speaking of personalities, we dare omit the name of Andrew Matthews, who helped in spreading the Light of Salvation around our community as he served the Zion Grove Baptist Church as its third Pastor. It was said that his manner of oratory and the spirit which accompanied the messages which he so often brought to this congregation, won for him the love and confidence of his entire membership.

#### CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

The family of the late Rev. E. Holmes who lived far out on the outskirts of Brewerville town, found it inconvenient to travel this long distance for Worship Service, hence it was decided that a Church be organized, and same was done in the home of Samuel Ash and named the Salem Baptist Church of Brewerville.

The spot where the old church now stands is where the first Church was built in those ancient days.

The then Methodist Episcopal Church was organized by Rev. Daniel Ware with Jack Smith and his family and members. Although in there was the Rev. Andrew Cartwright who helped with the work of the Methodist Church, yet, it took some time for membership to increase. Through the evangelical works of Rev. Cartwright along the St. Paul River, the Methodist Church grew and prospered, increasing daily in number. Back in the United States Cartwright was called Zion War Horse because of his powerful messages and the influence they had on his hearers. His was the task of organizing the Zion Methodist Church, but for reasons best known to himself, upon arrival in Liberia Cartwright thought it best to connect himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church, thus losing the title of Zion War Horse. As the hands of Providence would have it, dissatisfaction arose in the Methodist compact and Rev. Cartwright became aggrieved, thus necessitating his return to the Church of his origin, the Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, where he soon organized the Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, now known as Cartwright Memorial AME Zion Church. Although this Church has had its trying times, yet its members have survived and under the able leadership of the Late Bishop S. Dorme Lartey of Liberia, this Church was re-built during the administration of our late beloved President Tubman and now stands in the heart of the city as one of our cherished shrines.

The Presbyterian Church was later established in Brewerville by Rev. H. Erskin of Clay-Ashland. Since there were members of so many denominations represented in Brewerville, each sought to organize and have its own Church of worship, thus we find that John Butler Munden and his family connected themselves with the Presbyterian Church which flourished for quite a number of years. The membership of this Church has all died out and today the Presbytery of Brewerville is extinct.

Because of the feelings that prompted the founding of the A.M.E. Church and the causes that led to the founding of the Republic of Liberia, the Rev. Flegner who came out from America as one of the immigrants, found some of his associates in the faith, and thus spared no time in organizing the AME Church and naming it to the memory of one of his most outstanding and reliable associates, T.R. Geda in the year 1891. This Church has had great Spiritual leaders, some of whom have made valuable contribution to both State and Church. Among the many stalwart sons we mention only a few: Abraham L. Brisbane, Sr.; Amos C. Slight and James T. Wilson.

A Financial Agent of the Baptist church in the Person of Dr. John T. Richardson of the Foreign Mission Board of the United States of America was sent out to Liberia to make negotiations for a suitable location for the establishment and erection of a mission school. Dr. Richardson wrote back to his parent board informing them of a location which he claimed to have made in



Brewerville. This sparked off great interest among the American Missionaries in the United States who were anxious to have a Mission field established in Liberia; the result of which necessitated the sending out to Liberia of a white representative of the Foreign Board to inspect the work of Dr. Richardson and report back.

Upon the arrival of his white counterpart it was discovered that Dr. Richardson was sick in bed and for well over two months unable to take his counterpart up to Brewerville where he could see for himself the location which he Dr. Richardson was supposed to have made in the interest of the Baptist Denomination. Quite discouraged after spending more than two months here without having a change to see for himself the location made by Rev. Dr. Richardson, the white representative returned to America and reported the situation just as it was. This did not sever the Liberian Baptist from the American Baptist by it served as a means of having the white American Baptist to drop Brewerville from their missionary program in Liberia.

Because of the growing interest and increasing membership of the Methodist Episcopal Denomination in Liberia, Rev. Saunders Washington of the Baptist Denomination launched a special campaign for the establishment of Missionary work in Montserrado County. Being well versed in several of our tribal dialects, he was able to persuade the Baptist Association in Montserrado County to lend a helping hand in an endeavor to establishing a

mission school in this county. His plans and objectives were discussed during several of their Baptist meetings and being persuasive and comprehensive, he won their overwhelming approval and thus his work commenced.

Under the guidance of Almighty God he was able to secure financial aid from such devoted men like Moses Ricks; John H. Ricks and Thomas Lomax. An appeal was made to the Government of Liberia for land grant, and this was done. It might be recalled that the government of Liberia realizing that its founding was based upon Christian principles, the authorities did not hesitate to grant Rev. Washington the land he requested for his worthy cause where future leaders of the nation would be trained. Next in order was the problem of securing materials for buildings. Since Mr. Henry W. Clemens who was requested to write the history of the founding of the Settlement of Brewerville was an expert Forester, this task was assigned to him, and he too in turn secured the help of March Carvey and William Y. Garder who were very skilled in the field of Forestry.

These men were very conscientious and enthusiastic in hewing out the lumber as well as shingles that were used for the construction of the first buildings to house Ricks Institute. As Providence would have it, there was no need to secure a carpenter outside of Brewerville, since there were several skilled men and among the many was Alexander Hayes who accepted the contract and erected the first set of buildings on the compound which was

named Ricks Institute.

Because of his outstanding ability in leadership, Dr. R. B. Richardson was appointed the first Principal of Ricks Institute and later made Superintendent. He was also a good teacher and could have raised the status of his school to that of a college but because of the limited amount of financial aid that was made available to him, his desire to raise the status of his school to college level was not accomplished; still, he could rightfully boast of having made valuable contributions to the State when from his tutelage emanated such personalities as Richard White of Millsburg; the Stubblefield Brothers of Monrovia; E.W. Wilson and A.B. Gant of Brewerville, to name a few, some of whom became judges, Legislators, Churchmen, etc. etc. Dr. R. B. Richardson could not do this alone, hence his appeal to the United States of America brought out the Rev. James Cole Hayes who taught for more than five years at that institute and Hon. J. C. Stevens who taught for about two years and was later requested by the Government of Liberia to serve as Attorney General.

In 1892 when President Joseph J. Cheeseman became President of Liberia, he received information that Ricks Institute had risen to prominence in the educational field. In order to investigate for himself he was escorted on a private visit to Ricks by Captain Wynn of Brewerville Militia. His observations were satisfactory and the mission received much help from Government during his presidency.

Following the resignation of Dr. R. B. Richardson as Superintendent of Ricks Institute, Rev. W. H. Johnson of Virginia succeeded him as Principal, a position he held until his death. Rev. U.H. Brooks of ClayAshland succeeded Rev. Johnson and during his time a Church was built on the mission compound and named to the sacred memory of Washington who pastored this Church for several years.

Notwithstanding the failure of Rev. Richardson to establish a mission school in Liberia, God still moved the hearts of those concerned with the foreign mission board of America and Dr. and Mrs. William H. Thomas were sent out to Liberia in 1909 to do Missionary work. They settled in Brewerville but Dr. Thomas returned to America after being well briefed on the existing conditions in Liberia, and after consultation with the Board returned to Liberia empowered to establish the Mission which Rev. Richardson failed to establish. At this time we find Dr. Thomas striving hard to re-locate a small school that was being operated by the then Pastor of Zion Grove Baptist Church, Rev. James O. Hayes. This effort resulted in the founding of the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission School in Brewerville. It is worthy of note that we mention here that it was through the instrumentality of Rev. James O. Hayes that both the Zion Grove Baptist Church and the Salem Baptist church of Brewerville raised sufficient funds with which they purchased a piece of land from Mr. Cooper. Having received from the Churches the deed for this piece of

land, Dr. Thomas commenced erecting buildings, and it is a pleasure to note that men of every walk of life were taught at this school. In 1915 the first set of buildings were dedicated to the use of the school by the President of its Foreign Mission Board, Rev. O. S. Brown, accompanied by Rev. A. A. Graham, Secretary of the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Board. This institution stands as a beacon light upon the hill top giving light to traveling men in darkness.

About 1875 to 1876 it became necessary that some navigable way be made possible to travel from Monrovia to Brewerville; hence, Agent Dennis employed the services of some Kru men to clear a portion of the Stockton and Logan Creeks to make it navigable for canoes and row-boats from Brewerville landing to the St. Paul River to facilitate smooth transportation for citizens to and from Monrovia. This was done and transportation commenced.

In 1920 when His Excellency Charles D. B. King became President of Liberia, the first motor road was opened between Brewerville and St. Paul River. This road was named King's Highway.

The first three children born in Brewerville were Selecter Slight; Freeman Bailey and John Alven Clemens. Unfortunately Bailey who was born an invalid, died afterwards. The other two grew to maturity.

Brewerville has progressed slowly but surely; and under the leadership of the present head of State where all citizens and foreign residents are being totally involved in the development of a Wholesome Functioning Society, together with our present young, strong, energetic and progressive Commissioner, the Honorable Alfred B. Curtis, Brewerville will in the not-too-distant future excel as a developed and influential entity in the communities of Liberia.

May God save our leaders and preserve the State.

**TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONERS 1870 – 1975**

1. Honorable J. B. Munden
2. Honorable J. H. Davis
3. " J. B. Hayes
4. " T. E. Davis
5. " Fedrick Eastman
6. " Henry Capps
7. " S. V. Parker
8. " Henry Phelps
9. " T. W. Hunter
10. " W.B. Gant
11. " H.B. Holland
12. " Edward Tower
13. " Albert Hayes
14. " A. C. Slight
15. " H.B. Chesson
16. " W.F. Chesson
17. " J.T. Banks
18. " A.G. Carter
19. " Allen Brisbane
20. " H.G. Hayes
21. " K.D. Clemens
22. " G.A. Curtis
23. " G.T. Wilson, Sr.
24. " S. B. Stubberfield
25. " S.D. Shaw
26. " J.B. Ash
27. " J.W. Parker
28. " J.H. Brown
29. " J.D. Jackson
30. " J.A. Parker
31. " James Sydney Newberry
32. " L.W. Flowers
33. " J. M. Bryant
34. " J.H. Banks
35. " R.B. Outland
36. " S.P. Wilson
37. " A. B. Curtis

**MAYORS 1975 – 2004**

38. Honorable Alfred B. Curtis
39. " Annie Banks-Williams
40. " Darlington Davis
41. " E. Sia Hayes-Sherman
42. " Julius S. Parker
43. " Lucinda Punni

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Genesis  
The inception  
The Recruitment  
The Journey  
Arrival  
Funds, etc.

One hundred years ago, this community now known as Brewerville, was a dense forest, awaiting the arrival of a day when the establishment of a modern settlement would be ushered into existence. In the year 1879, in the month of March, the long expected idea became a reality - the founding of the Settlement of Brewerville.

Brewerville was settled March, 1870 under the able leadership of our sainted father and founder, John Butler Munden. Immediately upon the final conclusion of their establishment as a Settlement, they wasted no time in transferring their ideas into realities. After a period of years had elapsed, and nearly all of the original members of that expedition has expired by death with the exception of one Mr. Henry Clemens, it became necessary to have a written history of the founding and establishment of Brewerville; hence it was decided by the Community that Mr. Joseph W. Parker, Sr. should approach and request Mr. Clemens to perform this task. This request was made and the job done.

Long before the Civil War between the Northern and Southern States of America, there was a large timber company in Astoria; which produced shingles in very great quantities from a large, deep and muddy swamp about fifty of seventy-five miles square, that surrounded a small piece of highland. It was on this piece

of highland that houses were built to accommodate the employees engaged in the shingle industry on the Roanoke River. The woods from which the shingles were produced were cypress and juniper trees. These were found in abundance in this swampy area. The production of shingles grew and expanded and provided adequate employment of its inhabitants until the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. The business then closed down, and the laborers were scattered in the rebellious Southern States until the War came to an end on April 9, 1863, in favor of the North.

In 1866 a Company named Simon and Grady resumed business in shingle-making as it did before the War. Shingles then had a high price. The War destroyed nearly everything in the South. Houses were burned to ashes including large plantation houses. Everywhere throughout the South and North, shingles were exported to foreign countries. Shingles were even shipped to Liberia by the Ship "Colconda" along with some immigrants to Mr. H.W. Dennis who was then Agent for the American Colonization Society of Liberia. These shingles were used to repair the houses that were being used by members of the Society in Liberia.

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After voting in November, 1869, a few weeks later when they all took boats from Astoria and moved up the Reanoka River and landed at Bertee, Passquetank County, N.C., USA. From here they

went to Winsaw, spent a few days and then on to Norfolk, Virginia where they spent a week. Later they boarded the ship "Colcunda" which had anchored outside the Cheespeak Bay. It was here that the two leaders, Alan Hoggard of Arthington and John Butler Munden of Brewerville met for the first time. With Alan Hoggard of Arthington, John Butler Munden of Brewerville and their men all aboard, on the following morning the ship weighed anchor, and off to Liberia they came.

Thirty-two days they were out on the ocean sailing, and on the 20th of December, 1869, landed in Monrovia Harbour. Hon. Henry W. Dennis, the Agent then of Society in Liberia, along with such distinguished gentlemen as Dr. Dunbar; Dr. McGill; Dr. Johnson; Milton and many others, visited the immigrants, welcomed and congratulated the new-comers. That Sunday morning they all landed and went into the Receptacle and took Christmas in Monrovia.

In January the following year, 1870, they had the privilege of witnessing the inauguration in the Government Square of E. J. Roye as President of the Republic of Liberia. This was an occasion which they had never witnessed before (in all their lives), to see a black man inaugurated as President.

Early in February, 1870, they all got anxious to know about their next homes and locations. Agent Dennis spared no time in the business of finding a suitable location in Liberia for the

new-comers. He provided the leaders with two cargo boats manned by Kru men with instructions that they should take Munden up the St. Paul River as far as Millsburg to view the situation of unoccupied lands for the establishment of Arthington and Brewerville which were originally planned to be settled opposite each other. Unfortunately this could not be done.

The citizens of Millsburg who were directing them, conveyed them on through Meulenburg Mission, which was called Days Mission at that time, and carried them far beyond the limits of their community so as to enable them to secure a good location for a settlement. As a result of this effort, Arthington was located in the rear of Millsburg and this location was quite acceptable by their leader Hoggard.

Leader Munden viewing the right bank of the St. Paul River which was opposite Arthington and with a desire to have the settlers located opposite the Arthingtonians in keeping with instructions from their American Headquarters, found it quite difficult to accept this location since it was not reasonably possible. Munden reported that he came off a river called Reanoke River which was not a rapid river like the river he had found flowing by Millsburg, and that he could not settle down on that river. He said, "Agent Dennis, Liberia is before me, please allow me to look out for another location for Brewervillians?" This request was not quite satisfactory to Agent Dennis, but he agreed and reminded leader Munden to name the village Brewerville

wherever he secured a location and to have it cut up into town lots and laid off with streets according to previous instructions.

Agent Dennis still helped by sending Munden to Virginia. The citizens of Virginia told Munden they could show him Government land unoccupied and free to all citizens of America, people of Negro descent, if they would come and inhabit the land. It was Agent Dennis' wish that the Virginians shared with this new set of immigrants at least five (5) acres of land on the river front and joined with Brewervillians to make a village divided into town lots on the river side; but the Virginians flatly refused and said they could take them to a place where they would have no trouble in laying out the kind of town they wanted and be at ease. The time was appointed for them to secure this location. At the appointed time, the following citizens of Virginia were present: Oldman James Roots; Rev. C.H. Bailey; Rev. Starks; Rev. Miller, and others whose names have been forgotten. They brought leader Munden and his men right where Brewerville is now settled and declared that they were on Government land belonging to no one but the Government, so when Munden returned to the Waterside as it was then called, he rejoined his boat and went back to Monrovia and reported to Agent Dennis who was satisfied with the report.

Agent Dennis then instructed John Moore, a Government Surveyor, to go up the river in the rear of Virginia with leader

Munden and his party and survey off the town lots first, and then other places which leader Munden would show him. Both old and young people of Virginia accompanied leader Munden as he went along with Government Surveyor Moore each day performing the survey. The streets in Brewerville were laid off in a manner running east and west; and north and south with farm land on the north of Brewerville. The first street running east and west is Malcum Street; the second running east and west is Carpenter Street; the third running east and west is Dennis Street; the fourth street running east and west is Hardy Street. The cross streets run north and south. The first street is Bridge Street; the second is Logan Street; this street runs to the old landing wharf where all the motor launches and canoes landed to take on and discharge their cargoes. The third street is Upton Street which leads to the graveyard (cemetery). This street is so named to commemorate the death of the first person in Brewerville after its founding. The fourth street is Brown Street which runs by the Methodist Church. The fifth street is Cartwright Street; the sixth street is George Moore Street which runs to Lott Carey Mission and on to Free-Town (so called by the early settlers).

When all the immigrants had been apportioned their lots, they all got on a move their locations since farming time was rapidly approaching. They were anxious to find occupations to help themselves to live and support their families as the most of them had families with children. The first occupation they found was shingle making which was not strange to them. This proved

quite profitable since shingles were in great demand at this time when the immigrants were being located and settled down in their new homes.

In 1869 when the first set of immigrants landed in Monrovia to found Brewerville, there were only two (2) zinc houses in Monrovia. One was a store which was being operated by a white man named Yancy, a German by nationality. This store was on the waterside, and the other a School House where the A.M.E. Church was built on Broad Street. The President's Mansion at that time was covered with something called slate. Nevertheless shingles were in great demand.

Besides the town lots, in Brewerville there were three avenues known as the East, West and North-West Avenues. The immigrants who formed the Settlement of Brewerville were settled in the following manner:

1869

Nathan Diggs and family  
Silas McClain and family  
Oldman Griffin and family  
Augustus Freeman and family  
Gorman, a West Indian who  
went back to America  
George Moore (single)

Joseph Saunders and family  
Oldman Slight and family  
Henry Clemens and family  
John Butler Munden and family  
Mingo Alexander and family  
Wilson Slight and family



Richard Upton and family

Harmon Saunders and family

and many others whose names have been forgotten.

In 1870 <sup>12</sup> another set of immigrants came out. They were profound Christians, who sought fellowship under watch-care with Shiloh Baptist Church of Virginia until their own Church was organized. They were as follows:

Benjamin Newberry and family

Aaron Lewis and family

(Leader)

Jesse Newberry and family

Richard Norman and family

Warren Phelps and family

Joseph Phelps and family

Hudson Sheavers and family

Washington Terry and family

Wilson Frice (single)

Daniel and family

Alice Walker and family

Channie Norman (single)

and many others whose names cannot be remembered.

The above-mentioned immigrants settled on the various avenues. John Butler Munden and Henry W. Clemens were the first Justices of the Peace of Brewerville, and Munden the later was appointed Tax Collector for Brewerville.

The immigrants of 1874 were as follows:

J.C. Brown, Sr. and family

Silas Brown and family

Joshua Webb and family

Aaron Holmes and family

King John (single)

Isaac Woods and family

Sarah Brown

George Brown

Grandma Taylor

Hannah Williamson and family

Amanda Brown (single)

Amos Brown

Elijah Gordon

Mary Danelson and Peter Behare

The 1897 immigrants were as follows:

Benjamin McCheavers and family

Nathaniel Holt Sr. and family

William Bell and family

John Samson and family with William N. Lucas and family, one of the wealthiest families of Brewerville.

Parker Yancy and family

Moses Johnson and family

William Bennett and family

The immigrants of 1880 are as follows:

John Brown and family

William Hayes and family

Samuel Ash and family

Elijah Parker Jr. and family

William Bizzel and family

James McDonald and family with many others.

Norfelt Brown and family

Charles Wilson and family

Elijah Parker Sr. and family

William Facing and family

Still George and family

Immigrants for the year 1884 are as follows:

James H. Sears and family

Goerge Henry and family

Richard Booker and family

Abraham Powell and family

Allison Shaw and family  
Isaac Moorte  
Hannah Carter  
Augustus and family  
Ambus Shaw and family  
Nero Shaw and family  
June Freeman and family  
Moses Cresston and family  
McDouglas and family  
Jack Allison and family  
Washington Tucker and family

Grandson Miles and family  
Joseph Carter  
Peter Shaw and family  
Steven Shaw and family  
George and family  
One James and family  
Newton and family  
A.J. Matthews and family  
Rev. E. Holmes and family  
Thomas Lee and family  
Joseph W. Parker

Immigrants for 1889 are as follows:

William M. Coleman and family  
Fortes Jones and family  
Joe Jones and family  
Wade Hamilton and family  
Oldman Bryant and family  
Abraham Richardson and family  
Burn Anderson and family  
Erik Bouse and family  
one Shaw and family

Edy Small and family  
L.C. Greeseey and family  
Prof. Smith and family  
Harvey Tyles (single)  
Tim. Colep and family  
John Cheeks, Sr. and family  
John Cheeks, Jr. and family  
Nemous Burmees and family

Leader Munden was very honest as a Tax Collector and did all he could towards the advancement of his new home town. It was about the period of 1870 when the great educator and scholar, Dr.

Edward Wilmot Blyden visited Liberia and Brewerville in particular, to acquire firsthand information on the condition of the settlers. Being satisfied with what he saw, he promised that upon his return to America he would negotiate for additional help to be sent out in the educational field since he had already observed the shortage of teachers. This he did when Mrs. Barboza was sent along with her husband to help in the work. Mrs. Barboza was a college graduate who taught and lived in Brewerville until her death. Mrs. Eliza Brown; Mrs. Ada E. Merritt-Hayes; Rachel Leah Phelps and Ella Parker were few of her students.

Hon. Elijah Parker, Jr. was the first Representative from Brewerville. After serving in the House for a number of years, he was subsequently elected to the Liberian Senate where he served efficiently up to his death in 1924. The Hon. Joseph H. Davis was Chief Clerk of the Liberian Senate and exemplified himself by his efficient and dedicated services in such a manner, that won for him the confidence of his constituents which led him to be elected to the exalted position of Representative for Montserrado County hailing from Brewerville. The third was the Hon. James W.S. Bowens, who was fortunate in being elected to the House of Representatives where he served faithfully until his death. All these made their contribution to the development and peaceful existence of this community. Their passing left a void in Brewerville which seemed difficult to fill. The fourth Legislator was the Hon. H. Carey Thomas, who served in the House

of Representatives for a period of (12) twelve years. Prior to his ascendancy to this position, Hon. Thomas served his Government as Commissioner of the Bureau of Civil Service for a number of years.

Mr. A.J. Matthews was noted for his outstanding contributions in the educational field and served as the second Public School Teacher for quite a number of years. Having demonstrated such broad experiences in the teaching field, his sound sense of judgment won for him a position on the Legal Bench as Quarterly Judge, a position which he held with credit to himself and price to the settlement of Brewerville from which he sprang. Speaking of personalities, we dare omit the name of Andrew Matthews, who helped in spreading the Light of Salvation around our community as he served the Zion Grove Baptist Church as its third Pastor. It was said that his manner of oratory and the spirit which accompanied the messages which he so often brought to this congregation, won for him the love and confidence of his entire membership.

#### CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

The family of the late Rev. E. Holmes who lived far out on the outskirts of Brewerville town, found it inconvenient to travel this long distance for Worship Service, hence it was decided that a Church be organized, and same was done in the home of Samuel Ash and named the Salem Baptist Church of Brewerville.

The spot where the old church now stands is where the first Church was built in those ancient days.

The then Methodist Episcopal Church was organized by Rev. Daniel Ware with Jack Smith and his family and members. Although in there was the Rev. Andrew Cartwright who helped with the work of the Methodist Church, yet, it took some time for membership to increase. Through the evangelical works of Rev. Cartwright along the St. Paul River, the Methodist Church grew and prospered, increasing daily in number. Back in the United States Cartwright was called Zion War Horse because of his powerful messages and the influence they had on his hearers. His was the task of organizing the Zion Methodist Church, but for reasons best known to himself, upon arrival in Liberia Cartwright thought it best to connect himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church, thus loosing the title of Zion War Horse. As the hands of Providence would have it, dissatisfaction arose in the Methodist compact and Rev. Cartwright became aggrieved, thus necessitating his return to the Church of his origin, the Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, where he soon organized the Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, now known as Cartwright Memorial AME Zion Church. Although this Church has had its trying times, yet its members have survived and under the able leadership of the Late Bishop S. Dorme Lartey of Liberia, this Church was re-built during the administration of our late beloved President Tubman and now stands in the heart of the city as one of our cherished shrines.

The Presbyterian Church was later established in Brewerville by Rev. H. Erskin of Clay-Ashland. Since there were members of so many denominations represented in Brewerville, each sought to organize and have its own Church of worship, thus we find that John Butler Munden and his family connected themselves with the Presbyterian Church which flourished for quite a number of years. The membership of this Church has all died out and today the Presbytery of Brewerville is extinct.

Because of the feelings that prompted the founding of the A.M.E. Church and the causes that led to the founding of the Republic of Liberia, the Rev. Flegner who came out from America as one of the immigrants, found some of his associates in the faith, and thus spared no time in organizing the AME Church and naming it to the memory of one of his most outstanding and reliable associates, T.R. Geda in the year 1891. This Church has had great Spiritual leaders, some of whom have made valuable contribution to both State and Church. Among the many stalwart sons we mention only a few: Abraham L. Brisbane, Sr.; Amos C. Slight and James T. Wilson.

A Financial Agent of the Baptist church in the Person of Dr. John T. Richardson of the Foreign Mission Board of the United States of America was sent out to Liberia to make negotiations for a suitable location for the establishment and erection of a mission school. Dr. Richardson wrote back to his parent board informing them of a location which he claimed to have made in

Brewerville. This sparked off great interest among the American Missionaries in the United States who were anxious to have a Mission field established in Liberia; the result of which necessitated the sending out to Liberia of a white representative of the Foreign Board to inspect the work of Dr. Richardson and report back.

Upon the arrival of his white counterpart it was discovered that Dr. Richardson was sick in bed and for well over two months unable to take his counterpart up to Brewerville where he could see for himself the location which he Dr. Richardson was supposed to have made in the interest of the Baptist Denomination. Quite discouraged after spending more than two months here without having a change to see for himself the location made by Rev. Dr. Richardson, the white representative returned to America and reported the situation just as it was. This did not sever the Liberian Baptist from the American Baptist by it served as a means of having the white American Baptist to drop Brewerville from their missionary program in Liberia.

Because of the growing interest and increasing membership of the Methodist Episcopal Denomination in Liberia, Rev. Saunders Washington of the Baptist Denomination launched a special campaign for the establishment of Missionary work in Montserrado County. Being well versed in several of our tribal dialects, he was able to persuade the Baptist Association in Montserrado County to lend a helping hand in an endeavor to establishing a



mission school in this county. His plans and objectives were discussed during several of their Baptist meetings and being persuasive and comprehensive, he won their overwhelming approval and thus his work commenced.

Under the guidance of Almighty God he was able to secure financial aid from such devoted men like Moses Ricks; John H. Ricks and Thomas Lomax. An appeal was made to the Government of Liberia for land grant, and this was done. It might be recalled that the government of Liberia realizing that its founding was based upon Christian principles, the authorities did not hesitate to grant Rev. Washington the land he requested for his worthy cause where future leaders of the nation would be trained. Next in order was the problem of securing materials for buildings. Since Mr. Henry W. Clemens who was requested to write the history of the founding of the Settlement of Brewerville was an expert Forester, this task was assigned to him, and he too in turn secured the help of March Carvey and William Y. Garder who were very skilled in the field of Forestry.

These men were very conscientious and enthusiastic in hewing out the lumber as well as shingles that were used for the construction of the first buildings to house Ricks Institute. As Providence would have it, there was no need to secure a carpenter outside of Brewerville, since there were several skilled men and among the many was Alexander Hayes who accepted the contract and erected the first set of buildings on the compound which was

named Ricks Institute.

Because of his outstanding ability in leadership, Dr. R. B. Richardson was appointed the first Principal of Ricks Institute and later made Superintendent. He was also a good teacher and could have raised the status of his school to that of a college but because of the limited amount of financial aid that was made available to him, his desire to raise the status of his school to college level was not accomplished; still, he could rightfully boast of having made valuable contributions to the State when from his tutelage emanated such personalities as Richard White of Millsburg; the Stubblefield Brothers of Monrovia; E.W. Wilson and A.B. Gant of Brewerville, to name a few, some of whom became judges, Legislators, Churchmen, etc. etc. Dr. R. B. Richardson could not do this alone, hence his appeal to the United States of America brought out the Rev. James Cole Hayes who taught for more than five years at that institute and Hon. J. C. Stevens who taught for about two years and was later requested by the Government of Liberia to serve as Attorney General.

In 1892 when President Joseph J. Cheeseman became President of Liberia, he received information that Ricks Institute had risen to prominence in the educational field. In order to investigate for himself he was escorted on a private visit to Ricks by Captain Wynn of Brewerville Militia. His observations were satisfactory and the mission received much help from Government during his presidency.

Following the resignation of Dr. R. B. Richardson as Superintendent of Ricks Institute, Rev. W. H. Johnson of Virginia succeeded him as Principal, a position he held until his death. Rev. U.H. Brooks of ClayAshland succeeded Rev. Johnson and during his time a Church was built on the mission compound and named to the sacred memory of Washington who pastored this Church for several years.

Notwithstanding the failure of Rev. Richardson to establish a mission school in Liberia, God still moved the hearts of those concerned with the foreign mission board of America and Dr. and Mrs. William H. Thomas were sent out to Liberia in 1909 to do Missionary work. They settled in Brewerville but Dr. Thomas returned to America after being well briefed on the existing conditions in Liberia, and after consultation with the Board returned to Liberia empowered to establish the Mission which Rev. Richardson failed to establish. At this time we find Dr. Thomas striving hard to re-locate a small school that was being operated by the then Pastor of Zion Grove Baptist Church, Rev. James O. Hayes. This effort resulted in the founding of the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission School in Brewerville. It is worthy of note that we mention here that it was through the instrumentality of Rev. James O. Hayes that both the Zion Grove Baptist Church and the Salem Baptist church of Brewerville raised sufficient funds with which they purchased a piece of land from Mr. Cooper. Having received from the Churches the deed for this piece of

land, Dr. Thomas commenced erecting buildings, and it is a pleasure to note that men of every walk of life were taught at this school. In 1915 the first set of buildings were dedicated to the use of the school by the President of its Foreign Mission Board, Rev. O. S. Brown, accompanied by Rev. A. A. Graham, Secretary of the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Board. This institution stands as a beacon light upon the hill top giving light to traveling men in darkness.

About 1875 to 1876 it became necessary that some navigable way be made possible to travel from Monrovia to Brewerville; hence, Agent Dennis employed the services of some Kru men to clear a portion of the Stockton and Logan Creeks to make it navigable for canoes and row-boats from Brewerville landing to the St. Paul River to facilitate smooth transportation for citizens to and from Monrovia. This was done and transportation commenced.

In 1920 when His Excellency Charles D. B. King became President of Liberia, the first motor road was opened between Brewerville and St. Paul River. This road was named King's Highway.

The first three children born in Brewerville were Selecter Slight; Freeman Bailey and John Alven Clemens. Unfortunately Bailey who was born an invalid, died afterwards. The other two grew to maturity.

Brewerville has progressed slowly but surely; and under the leadership of the present head of State where all citizens and foreign residents are being totally involved in the development of a Wholesome Functioning Society, together with our present young, strong, energetic and progressive Commissioner, the Honorable Alfred B. Curtis, Brewerville will in the not-too-distant future excel as a developed and influential entity in the communities of Liberia.

May God save our leaders and preserve the State.

**TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONERS 1870 – 1975**

1. Honorable J. B. Munden
2. Honorable J. H. Davis
3. " J. B. Hayes
4. " T. E. Davis
5. " Fedrick Eastman
6. " Henry Capps
7. " S. V. Parker
8. " Henry Phelps
9. " T. W. Hunter
10. " W.B. Gant
11. " H.B. Holland
12. " Edward Tower
13. " Albert Hayes
14. " A. C. Slight
15. " H.B. Chesson
16. " W.F. Chesson
17. " J.T. Banks
18. " A.G. Carter
19. " Allen Brisbane
20. " H.G. Hayes
21. " K.D. Clemens
22. " G.A. Curtis
23. " G.T. Wilson, Sr.
24. " S. B. Stubberfield
25. " S.D. Shaw
26. " J.B. Ash
27. " J.W. Parker
28. " J.H. Brown
29. " J.D. Jackson
30. " J.A. Parker
31. " James Sydney Newberry
32. " L.W. Flowers
33. " J. M. Bryant
34. " J.H. Banks
35. " R.B. Outland
36. " S.P. Wilson
37. " A. B. Curtis

**MAYORS 1975 – 2004**

38. Honorable Alfred B. Curtis
39. " Annie Banks-Williams
40. " Darlington Davis
41. " E. Sia Hayes-Sherman
42. " Julius S. Parker
43. " Lucinda Punni