BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH

ASPASIA MIRAULT

HISTORY 450

INSTRUCTOR

DR. ROGER K. WARLICK

BY

MELISSA D. WOLVERTON

From: The Savannah Biographies Volume 22
Minis Collection, Lane Library, Armstrong
Atlantic State University. 3/14/99-1997.
[written c. 1992]
Aspasia Mirault, a Mulatto, was born in Santo Domingo and immigrated to the United States in 1800 as a free person of color. She probably immigrated to the United States because of the unrest in revolution-ravished Haiti. As Ms. Mirault was not born in Chatham County, no county records exist concerning her date of birth, and marital or family status. In William Harden's *Recollections of a Long and Satisfactory Life*, she is said to have had a husband named Simon Mirault; however, no other sources confirmed the marriage.

From 1839-1853, Ms. Mirault was a confectioner and pastry cook working from a shop at the northeast corner of Bull and Broughton Streets. During these years, she paid taxes for stock in trade assessed at $200.00 and on four slaves. Although there were fluctuations, this tax came to about $6.25 per year. According to the article on Free Black Women in Savannah, she experienced some financial problems at times: in 1847 she failed to pay her taxes. This is corroborated by the fact that there is no record of Ms. Mirault paying any tax in the 1848 Tax record.

Ms. Mirault's shop, which offered "pastry and delicious ice creams of the most

---

1 Seventh Census of the United States in 1850, p. 71, Georgia Historical Society.


5 City of Savannah Tax Digest, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853.
popular flavors," was well patronized by the white people and was successful enough for her to live comfortably. On March 23, 1841, Ms. Mirault took out an advertisement in the Savannah Daily Georgian to express her appreciation for her customers' liberal patronage of her shop. The heading of the ad read, "Ice Cream! Ice Cream! Ice Cream!"

As the custom of the day, Ms. Mirault was required to have a guardian, or a representative, to own property and conduct business. Records show she had the following guardians: Mr. J. F. Tucker, Mr. J. Lewis, Mr. John B. Gandy, Mr. John E. Ward, and Mr. George Cally. This large number of guardians would indicate she was a prominent free person of color. Despite her business success, she was still considered a colored person and her life was not as well documented as other business people. I found no record of what church she attended or her religious affiliation, her social activities, or club memberships.

There is conflicting information in the records concerning her age. Ms. Mirault is listed as 60 years old in 1848 by the Register of Free Persons of Color.

---

6 William Harden, Recollections of a Long and Satisfactory Life, (Savannah, Georgia: Review Printing Company, 1934), 49.

7 Savannah Daily Georgian, 23 March 1841, p.3, c.3.

8 Savannah Clerk of Council Register of Free Persons of Color, 1817-1829, p. 82, Georgia Historical Society.


10 City of Savannah Tax Digest, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853.

The 1850 census lists her age at 50 years old.\textsuperscript{12} Cemetery records, meanwhile, list her at 65 years old at the time of her death in 1857.\textsuperscript{13} The Register of Free Persons of Color 1826-1835 states her age as 40 in 1828.\textsuperscript{14} This source corroborates her age as 60 years old in 1848 and places her age as 69 at the time of her death in 1857.

The last information about Aspasia Mirault was obtained from cemetery records. There is no date of death listed but it states she was buried on, November 13, 1857, in the colored persons’ cemetery at Laurel Grove Cemetery. According to this record, she was attended by a Dr. West and died of an inflammation of the brain.\textsuperscript{15}

Ms. Mirault obviously was well known and liked by those who knew her. This is evidenced by William Harden who stated, "She was highly respected and conducted herself in a manner which would have done credit to some of our white citizens."\textsuperscript{16} This comment indicates that Ms. Mirault was an affluent citizen of her day and is worthy of further investigation of her early life and immigration to this country.

\textsuperscript{12}Seventh Census of the United States in 1850, p. 71, Georgia Historical Society.

\textsuperscript{13}Laurel Grove Interments, Laurel Grove Cemetery, October 12, 1852 to November 30, 1861, no page number, Georgia Historical Society.

\textsuperscript{14}Savannah Clerk of Council Register of Free Persons of Color, 1826-1835, p. 24, Georgia Historical Society.

\textsuperscript{15}Laurel Grove Interments, Laurel Grove Cemetery, October 12, 1852 to November 30, 1861, no page number, Georgia Historical Society.

\textsuperscript{16}William Harden, Recollections of a Long and Satisfactory Life, (Savannah, Georgia: Review Printing Company, 1934), 49.
1 Seventh Census of the United States in 1850, p. 71, Georgia Historical Society.


5 City of Savannah Tax Digest, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853.

6 William Harden, Recollections of a Long and Satisfactory Life (Savannah, Georgia: Review Printing Company, 1934), 49.

7 Savannah Daily Georgian, 23 March 1841, p.3, c.3.

8 Savannah Clerk of Council Register of Free Persons of Color, 1817-1829, p. 82, Georgia Historical Society.


10 City of Savannah Tax Digest, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853.


12 Seventh Census of the United States in 1850, p. 71, Georgia Historical Society.

13 Laurel Grove Interments, Laurel Grove Cemetery, October 12, 1852 to November 30, 1861, no page number, Georgia Historical Society.


15 Laurel Grove Interments, Laurel Grove Cemetery, October 12, 1852 to November 30, 1861, no page number, Georgia Historical Society.

16 William Harden, Recollections of a Long and Satisfactory Life (Savannah, Georgia: Review Printing Company, 1934), 49.
ADDITIONAL SOURCES CONSULTED

Birth and Death Records, Chatham County Public Health Department, Department of Vital Records, Savannah, Georgia.

Marriage Index 1800-1870, Probate Court Records, Chatham County Courthouse, Savannah, Georgia.

Wills and Estate Records, Probate Court Records, Chatham County Courthouse, Savannah, Georgia.

Savannah City Directories 1820-1860, Georgia Historical Society.

Mr. W. W. Law, The Beach Institute African American Cultural Center, telephone conversation concerning family connections of Aspasia Mirault.