The Rev. Elijah J. Lincoln organized church sanctuary on Lafayette Street between Bank Rather, Pastor. In 1850, bi-racial and black members, of color, with their own money, built their own sanctuary on Lafayette Street between Bank Street and Railroad Street.

The oldest African American congregation, Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, Episcopal Church, South began meeting in 1800's, with ten members. The name changed to Garner Memorial in 1945.

The Reverend Richard “Dick” Rather, Pastor. In 1850, bi-racial and black members, of color, with their own money, built their own sanctuary on Lafayette Street between Bank Street and Railroad Street.

Historian in the pages of Decatur, Alabama's history are the unmentioned and noteworthy African Americans, who made countless contributions to our city. The River City was built on the backs of slaves and their descendants. The Old State Bank, Charter July 29, 1833, is an example of their labor and craftsmanship. James Fennell, first Bank president, used slaves in the erection of the building. The slaves cut large stone pillars and hauled them from Trinity, Alabama to Decatur on ox drawn wagons. Many slaves worked on plantations, while others were hired out as blacksmiths, plasterers and laborers.

The spirit and work of these pioneers continue to enrich and inspire past and future generations.

Civil War Soldiers
African Americans served both Union and Confederate Armies during the Civil War. The 106th United States Colored Infantry (USCI), organized in Decatur, is the first of only two black units raised in the State. Later the bravery of the 14th USCI was exhibited in Decatur City. Between December 1863 and October 1864, when they saw combat with General John Bell Hood, resulting in a Union victory. The regiment first saw action on August 14-15, 1864, when it engaged in heavy skirmishing with raiding parties from General Joseph Wheeler's cavalry at Dalton, Georgia. On August, 2009, a military grave marker was dedicated for 1st Alabama Cavalry, Union Civil War Soldier, Amos McKinney, who is buried at Magnolia-Sykes Cemetery in Decatur. Members of the 13th US Colored Troop and the 1st Alabama Cavalry (pictures at grave) took part in the ceremony. McKinney, who died Aug. 24, 1910 in Moulton, took part in the ceremony. McKinney, who died Aug. 24, 1910 in Moulton, Georgia.

Hidden in the pages of Decatur, Alabama's history are the unmentioned and noteworthy African Americans, who made countless contributions to our city.

The River City was built on the backs of slaves and their descendants. The Old State Bank, Charter July 29, 1833, is an example of their labor and craftsmanship. James Fennell, first Bank president, used slaves in the erection of the building. The slaves cut large stone pillars and hauled them from Trinity, Alabama to Decatur on ox drawn wagons. Many slaves worked on plantations, while others were hired out as blacksmiths, plasterers and laborers.

The spirit and work of these pioneers continue to enrich and inspire past and future generations.

Civil War Soldiers
African Americans served both Union and Confederate Armies during the Civil War. The 106th United States Colored Infantry (USCI), organized in Decatur, is the first of only two black units raised in the State. Later the bravery of the 14th USCI was exhibited in Decatur City. Between December 1863 and October 1864, when they saw combat with General John Bell Hood, resulting in a Union victory. The regiment first saw action on August 14-15, 1864, when it engaged in heavy skirmishing with raiding parties from General Joseph Wheeler's cavalry at Dalton, Georgia. On August, 2009, a military grave marker was dedicated for 1st Alabama Cavalry, Union Civil War Soldier, Amos McKinney, who is buried at Magnolia-Sykes Cemetery in Decatur. Members of the 13th US Colored Troop and the 1st Alabama Cavalry (pictures at grave) took part in the ceremony. McKinney, who died Aug. 24, 1910 in Moulton, was buried in an unmarked grave since his death. James J. Sykes purchased land for the Magnolia-Sykes Cemetery in 1931.

Hidden in the pages of Decatur, Alabama's history are the unmentioned and noteworthy African Americans, who made countless contributions to our city.

The River City was built on the backs of slaves and their descendants. The Old State Bank, Charter July 29, 1833, is an example of their labor and craftsmanship. James Fennell, first Bank president, used slaves in the erection of the building. The slaves cut large stone pillars and hauled them from Trinity, Alabama to Decatur on ox drawn wagons. Many slaves worked on plantations, while others were hired out as blacksmiths, plasterers and laborers.

The spirit and work of these pioneers continue to enrich and inspire past and future generations.

Civil War Soldiers
African Americans served both Union and Confederate Armies during the Civil War. The 106th United States Colored Infantry (USCI), organized in Decatur, is the first of only two black units raised in the State. Later the bravery of the 14th USCI was exhibited in Decatur City. Between December 1863 and October 1864, when they saw combat with General John Bell Hood, resulting in a Union victory. The regiment first saw action on August 14-15, 1864, when it engaged in heavy skirmishing with raiding parties from General Joseph Wheeler's cavalry at Dalton, Georgia. On August, 2009, a military grave marker was dedicated for 1st Alabama Cavalry, Union Civil War Soldier, Amos McKinney, who is buried at Magnolia-Sykes Cemetery in Decatur. Members of the 13th US Colored Troop and the 1st Alabama Cavalry (pictures at grave) took part in the ceremony. McKinney, who died Aug. 24, 1910 in Moulton, was buried in an unmarked grave since his death. James J. Sykes purchased land for the Magnolia-Sykes Cemetery in 1931.

Hidden in the pages of Decatur, Alabama's history are the unmentioned and noteworthy African Americans, who made countless contributions to our city.

The River City was built on the backs of slaves and their descendants. The Old State Bank, Charter July 29, 1833, is an example of their labor and craftsmanship. James Fennell, first Bank president, used slaves in the erection of the building. The slaves cut large stone pillars and hauled them from Trinity, Alabama to Decatur on ox drawn wagons. Many slaves worked on plantations, while others were hired out as blacksmiths, plasterers and laborers.

The spirit and work of these pioneers continue to enrich and inspire past and future generations.

Civil War Soldiers
African Americans served both Union and Confederate Armies during the Civil War. The 106th United States Colored Infantry (USCI), organized in Decatur, is the first of only two black units raised in the State. Later the bravery of the 14th USCI was exhibited in Decatur City. Between December 1863 and October 1864, when they saw combat with General John Bell Hood, resulting in a Union victory. The regiment first saw action on August 14-15, 1864, when it engaged in heavy skirmishing with raiding parties from General Joseph Wheeler's cavalry at Dalton, Georgia. On August, 2009, a military grave marker was dedicated for 1st Alabama Cavalry, Union Civil War Soldier, Amos McKinney, who is buried at Magnolia-Sykes Cemetery in Decatur. Members of the 13th US Colored Troop and the 1st Alabama Cavalry (pictures at grave) took part in the ceremony. McKinney, who died Aug. 24, 1910 in Moulton, was buried in an unmarked grave since his death. James J. Sykes purchased land for the Magnolia-Sykes Cemetery in 1931.

Hidden in the pages of Decatur, Alabama's history are the unmentioned and noteworthy African Americans, who made countless contributions to our city.

The River City was built on the backs of slaves and their descendants. The Old State Bank, Charter July 29, 1833, is an example of their labor and craftsmanship. James Fennell, first Bank president, used slaves in the erection of the building. The slaves cut large stone pillars and hauled them from Trinity, Alabama to Decatur on ox drawn wagons. Many slaves worked on plantations, while others were hired out as blacksmiths, plasterers and laborers.

The spirit and work of these pioneers continue to enrich and inspire past and future generations.
The story continues online. Get more details and expanded articles at www.DecaturCVB.org

 Freedman’s School - Operated by the Methodist Freedman’s Aid Society, from 1867-1874. This information reveals the educational opportunities for children of color were constrained directly after the Civil War when the Northern Methodist officially returned to Alabama and Decatur.

 First Private School - The first private school was set up in the St. Stephen Baptist Church in 1875. After a fire, the school moved to St. Paul’s Methodist Episcopal Church (now known as King’s Memorial Methodist Church)

 Decatur Negro High - June 2, 1935
 Dr. George Washington Carver, renowned Tuskegee Institute scientist, Tuskegee, Alabama, delivered the Baccalaureate address at the Peace Theater. He delivered his address to an integrated audience of about 1,000 people attended. Clifford Joel Husom (brother of Willa C. C. M.), was principal at the High School. During Dr. Carver’s visit the East End School’s name changed to Carver Elementary, in his honor. The principal was William E. Witherspoon.

 Other African-American Schools were:
 Cherry Street School
 East End (later named Carver
 Woodlawn Elementary School)
 Lakeside High School

 SCOTTSDALE - BANCS COTTAGE

 During the 1870s, Samuel Schaudies and Alber Robinson Schaudies moved to this site from Huntsville and purchased this fine room cottage in 1881 for $800. The deed lists this site as part of Lot 84, “Old Times” Decatur. In 1875, their daughter, Tullie Ophelia, was born and, in 1898, she married H. J. Banks in St. where Victoria Price or Ruby Bates lived. The Schaudies cottages were numerous and were reminiscent of the Black business and educational community. Numerous rallies and demonstrations were held in support of Hines’ innocence. Tensions were high and racial turbulence exploded when the Ku Klux Klan clashed with authorities who contacted the Jackson County Sheriff Department. A posse of armed men pulled the young black riders off the train at Paint Rock. They also discovered two young white women, Ruby Bates and Victoria Price leaving the train. The women said they had been raped, and as a result the men were taken into custody and brought to the jail at Scottsboro. Although a doctor’s exam of the accusers determined the story to be false, the District Attorney quickly brought charges against the nine defendants.

 In response to the threat of violence, eight were quickly tried and sentenced to death. The jury could not reach a verdict for the ninth defendant, who was 13 years old. The NAACP raised money for the filing of appeals for the original verdicts, and their efforts were successful. The decision in Powell v. Alabama ruled that the defendants were entitled to adequate defense in a capital case.

 The change of venue for the remaining trials was to Decatur. Alabama. Decatur was a city of about 16,000 at the time, whose population had recently been swell by former farmers looking for work in the depths of the Great Depression. Decatur was not prepared for the drama and strife that would accompany the trials.

 The first trial in Decatur was that of Haywood Patterson, presided over by Circuit Judge James E. Horton. The case was prosecuted by Alabama Attorney General Thomas Knight, who sought publicity in the high-profile case. Patterson and the other defendants were defended by a team of attorneys led by prominent trial lawyer Samuel Leibowitz of New York. Controversially, the defense was funded by the National Labor E All, the anti-racism division of the American Communist Party. Leibowitz attempted to quash the indictments by arguing that the defendants could not receive a fair trial by a jury of their peers because no blacks were allowed on juries. He called prominent qualified black men from Jackson and Morgan Counties to testify that they had never been summoned for jury duty. Although Horton did not allow the motion, the argument set the precedent for the later U.S. Supreme Court decision in Norris v. Alabama, which guaranteed the inclusion of blacks in jury rolls.

 The Patterson trial gathered international media attention. Leibowitz mounted a massive defense of the prosecution case, capped by the production of Ruby Bates, who refuted her previous testimony and denied any rape had occurred. His defense was not enough to convince the all-white jury who convicted Patterson anyway. As worldwide outrage mounted, Judge Horton bravely set aside the verdict. Several more trials occurred, but the defendants all eventually experienced some form of justice and were exonerated. None were executed.

 The Scottsboro Boys trials of the 1930s, most of which took place in Decatur, Alabama, rank among the most significant cases in American legal history. Two precedent-setting United States Supreme Court cases came out of the trials. Worldwide media coverage laid bare the racial inequities of the American judicial system, especially within the racially segregated South.

 On March 25, 1931, nine young black men ranging from 13 to 19 were riding a freight train from Chattanooga to Memphis when a fight broke out between them and some young whites on the same train. The whites lost the fight and were forced from the train, they later filed a complaint with authorities who contacted the Jackson County Sheriff Department. A posse of armed men pulled the young black riders off the train at Paint Rock. They also discovered two young white women, Ruby Bates and Victoria Price leaving the train. The women said they had been raped, and as a result the men were taken into custody and brought to the jail at Scottsboro. Although a doctor’s exam of the accusers determined the story to be false, the District Attorney quickly brought charges against the nine defendants.

 The defense was not enough to convince the all-white jury, who convicted Patterson anyway. As worldwide outrage mounted, Judge Horton bravely set aside the verdict. Several more trials occurred, but the defendants all eventually experienced some form of justice and were exonerated. None were executed.