

Description: Winifred Carter saves granddaughter, Iverson named top NBA rookie, Big year for scholarship winners

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## THE OXFORD FAMILY NEWSLETTER

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*"Look How Far the Lord has Brought Us"*

December 1997 Number 37

### **"Keep Your Hand in God's Hand"**

I've always had a keen interest in historical writings. Books and articles that examined the past and tried to explain why historical events and trends happen the way they do have always intrigued me. I remember as a grade school youngster, my mother would send me and my sister Vera and brother Lawrence to the old Booker T. Washington community library to get books. The librarian knew about my interest in history books and she would always hold new history acquisitions for me instead of putting them on the shelf. By the time I entered high school, I had probably read every history book in that library.

That interest continued right through high school and college. After college I taught history at the high school level for eight years. At that point, I decided to pursue a Ph.D. Degree in history at the State University of New York. For the past 27 years I have taught history at the college level. I've also continued to be a student of history--reading and studying on my own. Over the years, I've read thousands of books and articles on historical topics. I suppose I've been driven by an instinctive urge to understand some of the mysteries that puzzled me as a youngster--racial prejudice, economic inequities, human suffering, man's inhumanity to man, and so on.

As I look back on my lifelong search for insights into the human condition, I must now admit that my most profound insight about life and the world we live in, came not from books, nor from the many brilliant teachers that I've studied with, but from my grandmother--Sarah Oxford. I lived on their farm, (in Parrott, Georgia), with my grandparents until I was seven or eight years old. During the long hot summer months, my grandmother and I spent many hours down on the "branch" at the fishing-hole. I think that she went there primarily to escape the oppressive heat. The fishing-hole was located on a creek deep in the woods. We reached it by following a winding footpath through the swamp. The creek was almost completely shielded from the sun by thick undergrowth and tall trees. It was always a cool and pleasant place.

After baiting and setting our fish hooks, we would sit on a log next to the creek. It was there that my grandmother gave me some of my most memorable lessons about life. There were two or three "lessons" that grandma would teach over and over during the years that we went fishing. Basically, I think the lessons were intended to convince me to be a "good boy," and to guide me and help me "stay out of trouble" in a dangerous world. I think she was trying to help me to understand conceptually what I was going to be up against as I embarked on my life's journey. At least, that is how I think of it now.

The lessons that she taught me were always rooted in the Scriptures. Those lessons were simple, but they had a profound influence on the way I would look at life as I grew older. In one of the lessons, she explained that the world was simply the setting in which a great universal war was being fought between good and evil. The forces of God and the forces of satan were in a life and death struggle to gain dominance over the world. In the end God was going to win, but in the day to day conflict anything could happen. She said that satan and the forces of evil were out to destroy and consume everyone and everything that was unprotected. She told me that if I always kept my hand in God's hand, God would protect me from the forces of evil in the world. (By that

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she meant that I should always do what was right, or what was pleasing to God). After explaining that context, she would teach me about good and evil--right and wrong.

During our days of fishing on the "branch," I began to understand the difference between "right" and "wrong." I learned to fear "the devil" as a real and powerful force in the world. As I grew older and began to realize more fully how dangerous and vicious the world can be, I always remembered my grandmother saying that "God was the only sure source of protection from the evil of the world." "Keep your hand in God's hand," she would say.

Those lessons from my grandmother had more influence in shaping my view of the world than any history book that I've ever read.

Monroe Fordham

### **Aunt Martha Oxford Hospitalized**

During the month of November, 1997, Aunt Martha, the Oxford family matriarch, was hospitalized and underwent surgery at Hartford Hospital. She was later transferred to a convalescent home where she currently resides. She is being ably looked after by L'Overture Carter and a host of other relatives and friends in the Hartford area. I have been informed that she has a team of excellent doctors, and that she is comfortable. Her address is Martha Oxford, Kimberly Hall, 1 Emerson Dr., South Bldg. B-wing Rm. 128, Windsor CT 06095. She would welcome cards and letters from well-wishers.

### **Mance & Sarah Ann Oxford Memorial Scholarship Award**

This is to announce that the Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship for 1998 is now open for applications. The scholarship awards, in the amount of \$500 each will be made in July, 1998. The purpose of the award is to encourage and assist high school graduates who are relatives of, or members of families related to the Oxford clan.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

1. Applicant must be a relative of, or a member of a family related to a descendent of the Oxford clan.
2. Applicant must be a high school senior who plans to attend college or a trade school following high school graduation.

### **Procedure For Applying**

(Letter of application must include the following)

1. Name, address, phone number, etc.
2. Statement explaining your relationship to the Oxford clan or related families.
3. Statement explaining your vocational or professional goals in life, and listing the college or trade school that you plan to attend.
4. A copy of your high school transcript.
5. The application deadline is May 1, 1998.

Send all of the above to:

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Mance & Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship  
49 Calvert Blvd.  
Tonawanda, NY 14150

### **Annie L. Oxford Celebrates 77th Birthday**

Last May 16-18, 1997 all of the children of Annie Lee Oxford, some of her grandchildren, and other relatives from Philadelphia met in Maryland at the home of one of her daughters to celebrate Annie Lee's 77th birthday. According to a report from granddaughter Kimmetrice Oxford, it was a memorable and exciting time.

### **L'Overture Carter to Celebrate 70th Birthday in August, 1998**

A birthday party is being planned for L'Overture Carter's 70th birthday. The party is scheduled for August 8, 1998, and will be held at the American Legion, McKinney King Post 142, 2121 Main Street, Hartford, CT. (His actual birthday is Aug. 14, but he will be involved with a Shriners Convention in New Orleans on that date, hence the Aug. 8th party date). Family members, who can, are invited to attend. There will be updates in future newsletters. Persons who wish additional information should contact Tina MacDonald, 68 Sinclair St., Windsor CT.06095 (860-688-4227).

### **Tyler DeMarcus Smith, New Baby**

Demetrius M. Smith and Shannon Golphin-Smith proudly announce the birth of their son, Tyler Demarcus Smith. The new baby was born June 27, 1997. Demetrius is the son of Cynthia Bulger, and grandson of Reggie and Naomi Carter. Demetrius is Residence Coordinator at Florida State University.

### **Next Issue of Newsletter March, 1997**

If you have news about yourself or your family that you wish to share with our larger family through the newsletter, send the information to the following address. In addition, if you have short essays, stories, testimonies, poetry, or inspiring anecdotes, that you wish to share with the family, we welcome such material. We look forward to hearing from you. Send to:

Monroe Fordham  
49 Calvert Blvd.  
Tonawanda, NY 14150  
716-694-5096

Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

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*"Look How Far the Lord Has Brought Us"*

July 1997 Number 36

### **Mance & Sarah Oxford Scholarship, 1997**

This year seven young descendants of Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford were awarded the Oxford Memorial Scholarship. The 1997 awardees were Lacreasha Clay, Sheriveun Clay, Nekesha Myers, Vontresa Oxford, Tiffany Thornton, and Arvetta Washington. All of the awardees received a \$500 stipend and an award certificate.

Lacreasha Clay is the daughter of Elizabeth Dunlap, granddaughter of Mary Ann Clay, and great-granddaughter of the late "Jess" and Johnny Mae Darnes Oxford. Lacreasha is a 1997 graduate of Terrell County High School, Dawson Georgia. She plans to attend Albany Technical Institute and major in cosmetology. Eventually she wants to attend a four year college and major in art.

Sheriveun Clay is the daughter of Calvin Oxford, granddaughter of Adolphus and Louise Oxford, great-granddaughter of the late Adolphus Oxford, Sr., and Annie Lee Oxford, and great-granddaughter of the late "Dock" Oxford. Sheriveun is a 1997 graduate of Terrell County High School, Dawson Georgia. She plans to attend Savannah Technical Institute and major in business management and cosmetology. Sheriveun would like to pursue a career as a cosmetologist.

Raven Dorns is the daughter of Brenda Darnes Washington, granddaughter of Mary Ann Clay, and great-granddaughter of the late "Jess" and Johnny Mae Darnes Oxford. Raven will graduate in December, 1997 from Albany Technical Institute in information and office technology. She plans to enroll in Dorton College (Albany) and complete an associates degree. She wants to become an "Information Processing Specialist."

Nekesha Myers is the daughter of Henderson Myers, granddaughter of Arcolia "Teck" Oxford Myers, and great-granddaughter of the late "Jess" and Johnny Mae Darnes Oxford. Nekesha is a 1997 "honor graduate" of Terrell County High School, Dawson Georgia. She had a 93 average in high school. Nekesha plans to enroll in Valdosta State University and major in accounting. Her career goal is to be a certified public accountant (CPA). She hopes one day to work in a large CPA firm.

Vontresa Oxford is the daughter of Terry Oxford, granddaughter of John "Jay" and Ethel Oxford, and great-granddaughter of the late "Jess" and Johnny Mae Darnes Oxford. Vontresa is a 1997 graduate of Terrell County High School, Dawson Georgia. She plans to attend Valdosta State University and major in mathematics. Vontresa's career plan is to teach math and english at the elementary school level.

Tiffany Thornton is the daughter of Janet Telafare Baquet, granddaughter of Curtis and Dorothy Telafare, and great-granddaughter of the late Nannie Mae Telafare. Tiffany lives with her grandparents in Atlanta, Georgia and is a 1997 graduate of Benjamin E. Mays high school. She has a 3.00 grade point average, and is in the high school marching, concert and symphonic bands. She plays clarinet and saxophone. Tiffany has been accepted at Tuskegee where she plans

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to attend in the fall and major in elementary education. Eventually she plans to pursue a graduate degree and become an elementary school principal.

Arvetta Washington is the daughter of Brenda Darnes, granddaughter of Mary Ann Clay, and great-granddaughter of "Jess" and Johnny Mae Darnes Oxford. Arvetta is a 1997 graduate of Terrell County High School, Dawson, Georgia. She plans to attend Albany Technical Institute. Arvetta wants to be a dental assistant.

We are all very proud of the 1997 Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship awardees. We are happy that you have decided to pursue your education beyond high school. As you continue to develop your personal talents and move toward achieving material success, we hope that you don't lose sight of how far God has brought our family. Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford could not have even imagined the opportunities that would be open to this generation of their descendants. However, our forebearers had faith that God would take care of those who put their trust in him. If you continue to hold on to God's hand and persevere, success and prosperity awaits you. And as you succeed, we hope that you will not forget from whence you came. Remember: "You've got promises to keep." May God bless each of you.

### **Demetrius Smith (former Oxford Scholarship winner) MAKES GOOD**

Demetrius Maurice Smith, son of Cynthia Y. Carter-Bulger, and grandson of Reginald and Naomi Carter received his Masters of Education Degree in Student Personnel in Higher Education from the University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia on June 13, 1997. Demetrius is a 1994-95 graduate of Valdosta State University, with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and Political Science. **He was a 1991 recipient of the Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Memorial Scholarship.**

Demetrius has accepted a position at Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, as Residence Coordinator and Adjunct Faculty member for Student Affairs. He began his new job in July.

Demetrius is also engaged to Shannon Wynette Golphin. The couple is scheduled to be married on December 20, 1997. Demetrius, we are proud of you. You are an excellent role model for the recipients of the Mance and Sarah Oxford Memorial Scholarship.

### **Iverson Named Top NBA Rookie** (taken from *USA Today*, by Roscoe Nance)

"Allen Iverson's late-season campaign for NBA Rookie of the Year paid off Thursday as the Philadelphia 76ers' point guard won the award. **[Editor's Note: Allen is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Iverson, grandson of Jessie Mae Oxford Iverson, and great-grandson of `Jess' Oxford].**

Iverson swung the vote in his favor by scoring 40 or more points in a league-record five consecutive games [in the final month of the season].

Iverson was the leading rookie scorer this year, and his average of 23.5 points was No. 6 in the NBA.

He gave the award statue to his mother, Ann, saying, "I wouldn't be anywhere near the NBA without my mom. She gave me the heart I have now."

Minnesota's Stephon Marbury was the runner-up, and Vancouver's Shareef Abdur Rahim finished third."

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### **Next Issue: January, 1998**

The next issue of the *Oxford Family Newsletter* will be published in January, 1998. Send us any news that you want to share about your family. Also, we welcome your editorials or other statements that you want to make to the "Oxford Clan." Send us the addresses of any persons who want to receive the newsletter and are not now getting it. Send to: Monroe Fordham, 49 Calvert Blvd., Tonawanda NY 14150.

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*"Look How Far the Lord Has Brought Us"*

April 1997 Number 35

### **Mance & Sarah Ann Oxford Memorial Scholarship Award**

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## Family News

Loverture Carter reports from Hartford, Conn. that Thelma "Tip" Walton was hospitalized on April 9. No news, at this point, on her status. Loverture also checks on Aunt Martha regularly. Aunt Martha has been hampered by arthritis during the winter months.

On January 31, 1997, SFC Reginald Carter, Jr., retired from the U.S. Army after 21 years of honorable service. "Reggie, Jr." is the son of Reginald and Naomi Carter. SFC Carter is married to Jessie R. Cauthen, formerly of Ft. Valley, GA. The couple has two children (Reginald III, and Kayce Cauthen). The family will live in Butler, GA.

Tammy Fordham, daughter of Evelyn Williams and granddaughter of the late Arie D. Fordham-Jackson, is scheduled to be married on December 13, 1997. Tammy is scheduled to be married to L. C. Jackson of Orlando, Florida. The marriage ceremony will be performed at the Life Center Church. Mr. Jackson is employed by the City of Orlando and Tammy works for AT&T. The couple plans to reside in Orlando.

Leon Perry (son of Vera Thomas and grandson of the late Arie D. Fordham-Jackson) and his wife Torri, are the proud parents of a new baby Leon James II. The baby was born January 19, 1997. The Perry's already have a six year-old daughter, Tierrri. Leon, Sr., is an assistant football coach at the University of Georgia. The Perry family resides in Athens, Georgia.

Mancefield "Flat" Fordham is a grandfather!! Faith Fordham-Salters (daughter of Mancefield and Elaine) and her husband Rodney Salters are the proud parents of a new son. ("Flat" is the youngest son of the late Arie D. Fordham-Jackson).

Deborah Allen and her husband Robert Earl Allen have announced a ceremony to renew their Marriage vows. The couple lives in Orlando, Florida with their daughter. Deborah is the daughter of Vera Thomas. She is an NCAA women's basketball official.

Tanisha Fordham, daughter of Pamela Fordham and granddaughter of Monroe and Freddie Mae Fordham, won 1st place (in the 4 - 6 grade age group) in the Carter G. Woodson Essay Contest (Buffalo, NY). Tanisha is an 8 year old 4th grader at Willow Ridge Elementary School. Tanisha's winning essay was published in *Historically Speaking*, the newsletter of the Afro-American Historical Association of the Niagara Frontier.

**Send news about your family to the editor for the July/August issue of the newsletter.**

**FROM THE *Hartford Courant* (2/19/97)**

by Staff Writer, Errol A. Cockfield, Jr.

When Winifred Carter [**wife of Robert Carter**] called 911 early Tuesday there was death in her tone.

"The baby," she said. "I don't know. She's got something. . . . She's not breathing. . . .Please hurry up. Oh Jesus."



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As an ambulance raced to the scene, Officer Mike Ganis, an emergency medical technician, tried to calm Carter, whose 2-year-old granddaughter, Sabrina Brown, had had a seizure and stopped breathing.

It was 10:21 A.M., as Ganis listened to Carter, in tears, breathing heavily and stumbling over her words. The next few minutes would be crucial.

"Ma'am. Calm down," Ganis said. "I want you to turn the baby over on your lap."

Carter was still nervous, but she settled down enough to respond as Ganis, with 19 years on the police force, began to coach her through the Heimlich maneuver.

"I want you to give her three sharp blows between the shoulder blades as if she had something caught in her mouth," Ganis said.

She tapped Sabrina. Silence.

"Ma'am. Don't just tap her," Ganis said. "You want to try and use a little force."

Carter tried again. More silence.

It was three minutes into the call. Carter was becoming more and more afraid. "Is somebody on the way?" she said.

Ganis, unsure an ambulance would make it in time, had to find another method.

He told Carter to push Sabrina's jaw back to get her mouth open for cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

"I can't get her," said Carter, growing still more frustrated.

"She's depending on you, Ma'am, to get her," Ganis said. "Put her back and the mouth will open."

When it did, Ganis asked Carter to give Sabrina three short breaths.

It was five minutes into the call.

Suddenly, there was moaning. And then crying.

"Beautiful. You did it," Ganis exulted. ". . . The baby's breathing. . . You don't need to do anything more but hold her."

"Thank you," said Carter, in tears. "God, I heard a bell. Oh God, let me see who's at the door."

It was the ambulance. Sabrina was taken to Connecticut Children's Medical Center in Hartford, where she was treated and released by 3:30 P.M. She had been suffering from a fever, which became more serious.

Moments after the call, Ganis still could not believe what had happened.

"I think what I tried to do was appeal to her sense of understanding that her calming down was important for the baby," Ganis said. "That's when she calmed down and started listening to the instructions I was giving her."

Erik Gagne, the Bloomfield police dispatcher who transferred Carter to Ganis while he called an ambulance, said his partner was collected throughout the call.

"When he was giving the instructions, he was the most focused, intent person," Gagne said.

Sandra Brown, Sabrina's mother was thankful.

"We owe (Ganis) a great deal of gratitude," Brown said. "There's not enough that we could say."

Hours later, Carter was still shaken from the day's events.

"It was terrible for me," Carter said. "I just knew something terrible was happening to this baby. . . It was quite a day for me. Quite a day."

Sabrina, on the other hand, had recovered nicely.

"She's walking around here like she owns the place," Carter said.

**Next Newsletter, July/August, 1997**



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We welcome short essays, news about family activities and achievements, or other items of interest. SEND TO:

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c/o Monroe Fordham  
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716-694-5096

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## THE OXFORD FAMILY NEWSLETTER

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*"Look How Far the Lord Has Brought Us"*  
January 1997 Number 34

### **Family Reunion Cancelled**

Due to a mix-up in the motel reservations office, we are canceling the Oxford Family Reunion which we previously announced for July 11-13, 1997. Initially, the motel business office reserved the banquet facilities for our family for July 12, but later discovered that another family had already contracted for that date. No other July weekend was open. Rather than try to make other arrangements at this late date, I think its best to drop plans for a reunion for 1997. You will be notified when/if the reunion is rescheduled for a future year.

In the meantime, we will continue to communicate and keep in touch through the *Oxford Family Newsletter*. Everyone is urged to send in news about your family. Also, send in the names and addresses of anyone that desires to receive the newsletter. Send the news and names and addresses to:

Monroe Fordham  
49 Calvert Blvd.  
Tonawanda, NY 14150

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### **"Why?"**

At some time in everyone's life, tragedy or some kind of extreme hardship strikes. Maybe we experience the death of a small child, or a fire that destroys all of our worldly possessions. Or maybe, we've watched a "God fearing" loved one suffer through a prolonged illness. Whatever the problem, at some point in all of our lives, events and circumstances will lay us low. Even if we do our best to live exemplary Christian lives, we are still subject to the ups and downs that are part of life. In such trying times, it is human and natural to ask, or at least wonder, "WHY?". As the spiritual goes, "We wonder WHY the test when we try to do our best."

The WHY question is perhaps man's most persistent and perplexing question. WHY do good and innocent people have to experience suffering and pain? (That question is especially troubling when we can see evil people who appear to be happy and prosperous.) Years ago my forebearers and Sunday School teachers used the message of the book of Job to teach me how to manage the suffering and disappointments, (and the inclinations to wonder WHY), that are sure to come at some time in life. If you can internalize the central message of the book of Job, the world may knock you down, but you will always be able to get up. People may be able to hurt you, but they won't be able to destroy you. Armed with the message of the book of Job, you will always be able to find the strength and courage to hold your head up even when the world tries to shame you.

The main characters in the book of Job are God and Satan. Job himself is merely a vehicle in a contest between God and Satan. Job is a very wealthy man who is, in God's words, "blameless and upright; a man who fears God and shuns evil." (Job 1:8) Satan insists that if God removes his protection from Job, he (Satan) will cause Job to curse God. God contends that even if he (God) removes his protection and blessings from Job, Job will not stop loving him. God insists that Job doesn't worship and praise God because of God's blessings and protection, but because Job loves God. The contest begins when God removes his protection from Job. Job is unaware of the contest.

With God's protection removed, Satan causes Job to suffer a series of disasters. Job loses all of his wealth, his children are killed, and his body is covered with agonizing boils. Chapters 3-31 focus on dialogue between Job and some of his friends who seek to console him in his agony.

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Those chapters find Job and his friends grappling with the WHY question and trying to understand the reasons for Job's personal setbacks. Job's friends argue that since God is just, Job's suffering must be due to something that he (Job) has done wrong. Job insists that he has done nothing to merit his suffering. If Job is "blameless and upright," how should he interpret the meaning of his suffering? Why should a "blameless and upright" man experience such suffering and pain? The WHY question is indeed a perplexing question. After Job and his friends explore numerous possibilities in trying to find a rational and logical answer to the WHY question, God himself intervenes and addresses the question (Chapters 38-41). God's address holds the central point of the book of Job. Chapters 38-41 (God's address) represent one of the most powerful and eloquent speeches of the Bible.

The book of Job helps to bring the WHY question into its proper perspective. For thousands of years, perhaps since the dawn of human history, the WHY question has dogged man. For thousands of years the wisest sages of the human race have grappled with the question and the human emotions of hurt and disappointment that accompany the question. About 4,000 years ago one of the wisest of the wise wrote the book of Job as an antidote to the debilitating effects of grappling with the WHY question.

The book of Job says to me--don't try to find a logical and rational answer to the WHY question. Just accept on faith the premise that the all-wise, omnipotent, and omnipresent God who created man and the universe knows what is best for us, and who are we to question him? In a practical sense, learning to accept those things that we can't change is about all that we can do anyway. But perhaps only the wisest of the wise could see such a simple and practical way of coming to terms with one of man's most perplexing questions. For me the story of Job, and the perspective it brings, makes it easier to accept the personal hurts and disappointments of life that I can't prevent or control. Get your Bible and read the book of Job--pay close attention to the story line. It might do the same for you. (You may want to get a *Good News Bible*, the language is easier to understand).

Monroe Fordham