



Remaining Children

The remaining children in the Frank Manuel family are, from left, Cardelia, Arvin, Frank, John, Sylvia, Nola Belle, Jesse, Emily and Annie Lee. (Photo special to The Sun)

Manuels' Place In Local History

(The column below is one of a continuing series about contributors to Greene County's black heritage, written for *The Sun* by Mary E. Brownlow as a Homecoming '86 project of Greeneville's black community.)

By MARY E. BROWNLOW

Years ago, Ridge Road extended from the underpass on North Main through to some parts of the Kingsport Highway. This area was once called "The Ridge," and many Negro families lived there. They owned their land; some were farmers, brick makers, or pursued other occupations.

In the 1800s Jesse Manuel, a Cherokee Indian descendant from North Carolina, lived in Greene County on "The Ridge." He was a farmer and brick maker, and owned his land. He was married to Nola Dickson of Pruitt Hill, and they had three children, one son, John Franklin; and two daughters, Pearl Lee and Annie Belle.

John Franklin Manuel was born on "The Ridge" on Jan. 15, 1885. He died Sept. 26, 1965.

Miss Annie Lee and Miss Emily Manuel, two of his daughters who live at 702 North Main, told me what they could remember about their father.

Miss Annie Lee said her father "went to school quite a bit because he could read and write well." She said, "He went to school out where we live now, but there was another school, also, farther out. Also, he attended school in town. When he was quite young he helped his father

make bricks by hand. Most of the bricks were made on the property where we live now. The hand-made bricks in the 'old post office,' which was built in 1904, Daddy helped to make and lay those. He was quite a brick layer. The hand-made bricks in the Doughty and Stevens building, and the Brumley Hotel, Daddy helped to make those."

Frank Manuel was married to Anna Eliza Snapp of Greeneville, who was born in Greene County March 26, 1884. They were the proud parents of 12 children, seven girls and five boys. Annie Lee, Emily, Nola Belle, Sylvia, Cardelia, Jesse, John, Frank Jr. and Arvin are the children living today.

Miss Annie Lee said, "Daddy owned a small farm up on the 'Ridge Road' when he first married. He



The Manuels

Bill Manuel is at left, and his nephew, Frank Manuel Sr., is at right.

later moved to the home where we live now. He farmed, laid bricks and did some carpenter work, also quite a bit of labor for the 'Section Railroad' for thirty-some years."

Miss Emily said, "He believed in education, and all the children have a good education. He taught us to work, to be honest, fair, truthful and to respect our elders. We had what we called a truck farm. We sold vegetables, fruit, molasses, milk and butter. Occasionally we would have a country ham to sell, or a beef, and always plenty of eggs and chickens. Daddy was a good provider, and by producing some of our food, was a great help. Some of the fruit trees Daddy and Mother planted are still bearing where we live now. Daddy also grew tobacco. Daddy always gave to others of the fruit and vegetables he raised, if they were needed."

Miss Annie Lee said, "He was active in politics, became chairman of the Negro Republican Party, and was for several years deputy sheriff. He was, and the family is today, among the members of the Tabernacle Presbyterian Church, where he took an active part in the early days of his life."

Three children preceded him in death, also his wife, who died July 4, 1961.

Mr. Frank Manuel Sr. was a highly respected Negro in the community, a man who lived his family, a good friend and neighbor.

The lessons of life declare the life of service to God, our families and our fellow man.