




GRANDVIEW CEMETERY

BURIAL SITES OF FORMERLY
ENSLAVED INDIVIDUALS



Grandview Cemetery holds the remains of at least five Black Americans who were born into slavery: Charley and Anna Clay, Harkless and Hattie Hicks, and Georgianna Coff. Find depictions of their headstones and grave locations inside.



Georgianna Coff (1853-1941) was born into slavery in Mississippi. Her obituary noted she was enslaved by the Lunn family as a child and stayed with them after emancipation. She worked for the family while they resided in Grand Rapids, Michigan and in Fort Collins, where she also worked for the L. R. Welch family. Coff was skilled with her hands and spent many hours crocheting pieces for her friends. Beginning in 1924, Coff lived at the county home, where she passed in 1941. After her death, it was discovered that she had assets worth \$10,000; Larimer County brought a suit against her estate and won \$8,000 to cover the cost of her care over the last seventeen years of her life. The remainder went to Alex Lunn.

The Clay Family -

Charles Henry Clay (1828-1910) was enslaved by the Robertson family in Callaway County, Missouri. When the Civil War began, he was in the process of purchasing his freedom. In 1861, he left Missouri planning to join an uncle in San Francisco, but detoured to work as a cook at Fort Laramie. Clay accompanied the Army contingent to Camp Collins, and remained as a well-known pioneer farmer. After a fire destroyed the Clay homestead, he moved to town and worked as a caterer and cook. The Clay home at 317 Maple was the center of Black social life in the early 1900s. The first organized Black church was built adjacent to it. At the end of his life, Charley worked as the town “scavenger,” removing disposed items and trash from public streets. He is buried just south of the family gravestone in an unmarked grave.

Anna (Annie) Garland Clay (1854-1892) was likely born into slavery in Virginia. She married Charley in the 1870s and together they had seven children.

Kathrine (Katie) Clay was the couple’s sixth child, born in Fort Collins in 1884 and died of pneumonia at the age of 20.

The Hicks Family -

Harkless Hicks (1862-1932) was born into slavery in McCracken County, Kentucky. He married Hattie Hicks in 1883. By 1900, they were living in Fort Collins; Harkless later noted he arrived in town with fifty cents to his name. The Hicks worked as caterers and were active in the local community, holding AME church services in their home on Meldrum and attending the wedding reception for the Birdwhistles. Harkless worked as a janitor for the Poudre Valley Bank and Scott Drug Company for more than 25 years.

Hattie Hicks (1847-1906), Harkless’s first wife, was born into slavery in Kentucky. While living in Fort Collins, Hattie worked as a laundry woman. She passed shortly after their move to Colorado.

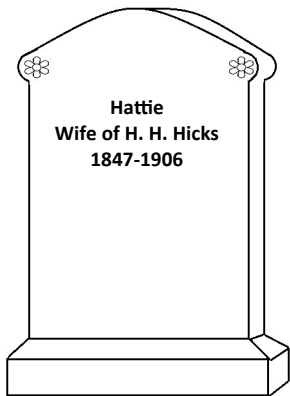
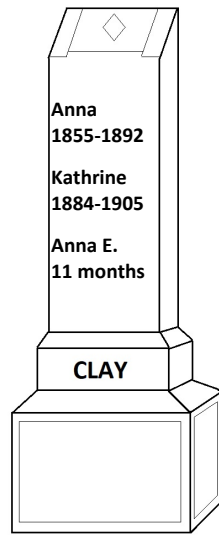
Josie Hicks married Harkless in 1907. She was born in Texas in 1876 and died in 1922.

For more information:

Fort Collins Black history: <https://www.fcgov.com/historicpreservation/blackfortcollins>

Fort Collins cemetery history: <https://www.fcgov.com/cemeteries/history.php>

The Clay Family marker notes the burial location of Anna, Charley's wife, and his daughters, Kathrine and Anna E. Charley is also buried here, but his grave is unmarked.



The marker only notes Hattie, Harkless Hick's first wife, but Harkless and his second wife Josie's unmarked graves are also here just to the east.

Georgianna Coff is buried with the Lunn family, for whom she worked as a domestic servant in the 1890s. Coff's grave is unmarked and is located south of James Lunn's gravestone.

