

Georgia E. Patton Washington

(1864-1900)

Georgia E. Patton Washington was the first African-American woman licensed physician and surgeon in the state of Tennessee, U.S.A. and one of the first African-American medical missionaries in Africa. She was born April 16, 1864 as a slave in Grundy County, Tennessee but was freed with all the slaves after the conclusion of the American Civil War. She attended Nashville's Central Tennessee College for four years and then enrolled in Meharry Medical School in Nashville from which she graduated in 1893 as a medical doctor. Soon after graduation she sailed to Liberia as a misionary and paid for the passage herself because her church couldn't afford the expense. She practiced medicine in Liberia for about two years until her health suffered and she had to return to the United States. After her return, she opened a medical practice in Memphis, Tennessee and married David Washington, one of the most highly-respected local letter carriers. The couple had one child who died. Georgia Washington died November 8, 1900 at the age of thirty-six.

Contributed by Danuta Bois

Bibliography:

The Book of African-American Women: 150 Crusaders, Creators, and Uplifters by Tonya Bolden, Adams Media Corporation, 1996

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