



## Charles N. Love

### Founder of the Texas Freeman Newspaper & Early Supporter of Civil Rights

**1893:** Charles N. Love founded the Texas Freeman with Emmett J. Scott and a railway mail clerk named Jack Tibbett. The paper was funded by subscriptions and politicians. Love's editorial "The Man About Town" often voiced his opinions about the constitutional and civil rights of Black citizens.

**1896:** Recognizing the power of journalism in local politics, Love secured financial backing from White mayoral candidate Baldwin Rice, facilitating a groundbreaking move by the Houston Democratic Executive Committee to permit Blacks to vote in a special night primary. Rice's successful election marked a significant milestone in Black political participation in Houston.

**1894:** Love successfully led a campaign for better treatment of Black American citizens arrested by the Houston Police Department.

**1911:** In defiance of discriminatory ordinances, Love staged a protest against a Houston law prohibiting Black citizens from hitching their horses on downtown streets for more than thirty minutes. His deliberate violation of the law, leaving his horse in a restricted area for eight hours, led to his arrest but ultimately prompted the city council to revoke the discriminatory ordinance.

**1917:** During World War I, Love was summoned to court because of his editorial criticism of the treatment of Blacks. He was accused of obstructing the war effort. He eloquently represented himself... and won.

**1921:** In a landmark legal challenge, Love, with William Nickerson Jr. and others, filed a lawsuit against G.W. Griffith. They sued to overturn the discriminatory Terrell Election Law of 1903, which disenfranchised Black voters from participating in primaries. Despite the case, Love v. Griffith, reaching the US Supreme Court, the ruling went against Love due to technicalities. Nevertheless, Love's efforts catalyzed a 23-year struggle against voter discrimination in Texas.

**1930-1946:** Love retired from management of the Texas Freeman when it merged with the Houston Informer. He remained dedicated to journalism and civil rights activism and worked as an Informer editor until his death, in Houston Texas, on September 10, 1946.



1862 - 1946

Source: <https://www.tshaonline.org>



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# Emmett J. Scott

## Texas Freeman Editor, HBU, Business & National WWI Cultural Advisor

**1887:** Emmett Jay Scott, born to formerly enslaved parents Horace Lacy Scott and Emma Kyle, enrolled at Wiley College in Marshall, Texas. He left in his third year to begin a career in journalism at the Houston Post, starting as a janitor and eventually rising to become a reporter.

**1893:** A pivotal year in Texas journalism when Emmett Scott, Charles N. Love and Jack Tibbit, founded Houston's first African American newspaper, the Texas Freeman. Scott journalistic endeavors caught the attention of renowned leader Booker T. Washington, who later hired him in 1897. For the next eighteen years, Scott served as Washington's confidant, personal secretary, and speechwriter, playing a crucial role in advancing Washington's vision of racial uplift and economic empowerment.

**1900- 1915:** Scott and New York Age editor T. Thomas Fortune helped Professor Washington found the National Negro Business League (NNBL), promoting Black entrepreneurship and economic self-sufficiency. In 1912, Scott became Tuskegee's treasurer-secretary where he advocated Washington's philosophy of constructive accommodation over immediate social integration.

**1917:** Two years after Professor Washington's death, President Woodrow Wilson appointed Scott as a special WWI advisor of black affairs to Secretary of War Newton Baker. Scott's insightful reports on the conditions facing African Americans during this tumultuous period shed light on the challenges and opportunities for Black Americans during wartime. They were published as "The American Negro in the World War" (1919) and "Negro Migration during the First World War" (1920).

**1919- 1945:** Scott was the business manager and secretary/treasurer of Howard University. He retired from the college in 1938. During World War II, Scott worked for the Sun Shipbuilding Company of Chester, Pennsylvania. There he helped Sun create a special Yard No. 4 for Black laborers.

**1957:** Emmett J. Scott was a proud member of the Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity. He died at the age of 84, in Washington, D.C., on December 12, 1957.



1873 - 1957

Source: <https://www.blackpast.org>

BLACKPAST

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# Clifton Richardson

Founder of the Houston Informer & Houston Defender Newspapers  
NAACP Founding Member, Businessman, Social Activist and Civic Booster.

**1909:** Clifton Frederick Richardson graduated with honors from Bishop College with a degree in journalism and printing. At Bishop, he was the first editor of the school's weekly publication: "The Louisiana Watchman." After graduation, he and his young wife, Ruby Leola Rice, moved to Dallas where he worked as a printer with the Dallas Express.

**1916:** Five years after moving to Houston to work with the Western Star. Clifton F. Richardson, became the editor and founding member of the Houston Observer with R. T. Andrews and Campbell A. Gilmore.

**May 2, 1919:** Richardson was a vocal supporter of civil rights, writing many articles on the issue in his various publications. Richardson founded and became the first publisher of the Houston Informer Newspaper. He endured threats of violence and attacks on the Houston Informer newspaper office for his activism, but continued *"Without Fear or Favor."*

**Oct 11, 1930:** Clifton Richardson founded and became editor/publisher of the Houston Defender. Richardson was a founding member of the Civic Betterment League (CBL) of Harris County and founding member and later president of Houston's NAACP chapter. He was also an officer of American Mutual Benefit Association Inc.; the Safety and Loan Brokerage Company; Houston Community Chest; National Negro Business League; the Houston Negro Chamber of Commerce; Texas Association of Negro Musicians for South Texas; Coleridge-Taylor Choral Choir; Houston Colored Commercial Club; Houston Independent Voters League/Progressive Voters' League; Black and Tan Party of Harris County; Real Building and Loan Association; Houston Negro Business League; Bethel Baptist Church; Webster-Richardson Publishing Company; Ancient Order of Pilgrims and United Brothers of Friendship; Odd Fellows; Knights of Pythias; and the YMCA.

**Aug 1939:** Clifton F. Richardson dies. His funeral procession was one of the largest in Houston's history.

Publisher Richardson is currently enshrined in the Black Press Gallery of Distinguished Newspaper Publishers at Howard University by the National Newspaper Publishers Association-Black Press of America.

1892 - 1939

Source: <https://www.tshaonline.org>



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# Carter Walker Wesley

## Legal Activist, Financial Innovator and Founding Member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association

**1917-1918:** Carter Walker Wesley, a native Houstonian and magnum cum laude graduate of Fisk University, was made a 1st Lieutenant in the newly-formed Black officers' training in Des Moines, IA. In 1918, he was assigned to the French Army's 372nd Infantry Regiment. By the end of the war, Carter Wesley was in command of his own company—stepping in for a severely wounded captain.

**1919-1927:** Following the war, Wesley pursued legal studies at Northwestern University Law School, earning his J.D. degree in 1922. He partnered with his Fisk University friend, Jack Alston Atkin, to establish a law practice in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Their firm became renowned for its fervent defense of African American and Native American rights, securing victories in eleven out of thirteen cases brought before the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

**1927:** Relocating to Houston, Texas, Wesley and Atkin diversified their endeavors, engaging in construction and brokerage while also founding the Freedmen's Publishing Company. This coalition birthed the Houston Informer network, a prominent voice advocating for equal rights for Black Americans. Under Wesley's leadership, the paper expanded statewide, reaching over 45,000 subscribers.

**1946:** Wesley worked with National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's attorney Thurgood Marshall on a brief that resulted in granting African Americans the right to vote in all primary elections in Texas. Additionally, he provided personal and financial support to Heman Marion Sweatt, facilitating Sweatt's pivotal role in the landmark case, Sweatt v. Painter, challenging segregation in higher education.

**1948:** As publisher of the Dallas Express and a prominent member of the National Negro Publishers Association (later renamed the National Newspaper Publishers Association), Wesley undertook a significant mission to Germany. Alongside ten NNPA colleagues, he investigated reports of discrimination against Black servicemen, highlighting racial injustice on the international stage.

**1969:** Carter Walker Wesley passed away in Houston, Texas, on November 10, 1969, leaving behind a legacy of activism and dedication to achieve equality and justice for all.

**1892 - 1969**Source: <https://www.tshaonline.org>**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS:**

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# George "Mr. Mac" McElroy

## Barrier Breaker Journalist, Educator and Social Editorialist

**1938:** George Albert McElroy, a native Houstonian, graduated from St. Nicholas High School, had a passion for writing and subsequently worked his first journalism job penning a youth column for the Houston Informer Newspaper. McElroy, nicknamed "Mr. Mac," remained with the paper throughout his 58 year journalism career...serving in almost every capacity from writer to editor-in-chief to publisher.

**1940 - 1952:** "George McElroy enlisted in the US Navy and served in Asia, 1940-1942. From 1950 to 1952, he was an information specialist at Ellington Air Force Base near Houston. in 1973, McElroy was asked to be an admiral in the Texas Navy but declined the offer.

**1952:** The Texas Supreme Court had ordered the University of Texas to admit a Black law student in 1950, but McElroy was still denied admission in 1952. He sued the University but to no avail. He enrolled at Texas State University for Negroes, where he majored in journalism, and graduated in 1956.

**1954-1956 :** Breaking barriers in mainstream media, McElroy became the first African-American sports writer for the Houston Post, the city's largest morning newspaper. In 1956 he became the first African American to write a weekly column for the Post newspaper.

**1957-1977 :** After earning a Master's degree from the prestigious University of Missouri School of Journalism, "Mr Mac" taught journalism, first at Yates High School in Houston, then at Texas Southern University. During a white media black-out of Houston's 1960s Sit-ins, McElroy' articles and editorials kept his readers informed "Without Fear or Favor." McElroy was the first African American on the University of Houston faculty; first Black member of the Houston Press Club, and first Black to win 1st place for editorials from the Texas Gulf Coast Press Association and the honor of a "City of Houston George McElroy Week."

**2006:** "Mr. Mac" received the Golden Pen Award from the Black Heritage Society and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Houston Association of Black Journalists.

1922 - 2006

Source: <https://www.tshaonline.org>



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# STEP BACK IN TIME:



Publishers of the Houston Informer & Texas Freeman ...Since 1893.

[hifieventsnow.org](http://hifieventsnow.org)

## Lorenza P. Butler, Jr.

Founder, Houston Informer Foundation, Inc.   
 Publisher, Political Consultant, Entrepreneur and Influencer

**1977-1981:** The only son of TSU's famous Lorenza "Coach" Butler Sr. and Josie Swenson Butler, young Lorenza graduated from Houston's Lamar High before earning Bachelor degrees at Wiley College and Clark Atlanta University. In 1979, Butler became a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

**1981-1982:** Butler joined Miller Brewing Company's College Marketing Teams, eventually opening East Tex Wholesale, making him the youngest beer distributor in the nation. In 1982, he graduated with a Masters Degree in Communications Law from Emerson College in Boston.

**1987-1990:** Butler purchased 18 Jack in the Box franchises in San Antonio, Texas, winning numerous business awards. He also served on numerous boards and commissions (*See below*) Butler owned and operated both El Paso's KVIV-AM and Gary Indiana's WLTH-AM radio stations.

**1993:** After a tragic accident left him paralyzed, Butler partnered with Pluria Marshall Jr. to purchase the Houston Informer and Texas Freeman Newspaper. The circulation grew to five Texas markets: Houston, Dallas, Huntsville, Ft. Bend, Galveston and Bryan-College Station, before dissolution.

**1995:** Building bridges across cultures, Butler became friends with international Chinese businessman, financier and publisher Wea Lee. Lee appointed Butler as a publisher, event consultant, political and media executive at Southern Chinese Daily News / Southern Daily News and the Chinese language television station KTBV-TV.

**2015- Present:** Butler, now a quadriplegic, opens Butler Wiseman, LLC, a Public Relations/Consultation firm in collaboration with The Wiseman Company; the firm specializes in Black and Asian media. In 2022, Publisher Butler and Mikel Collins create and spearhead the Houston Informer Foundation, Inc., a non-profit historical organization dedicated to reviving and celebrating the legacy of the Houston Informer and Texas Freeman while honoring the lives of Texas' exceptional African American patriots--past and present.

**Lifetime Board Affiliations:** Greater Houston Frontier's Club; Bay Ridge Christian College-Chairman, Bennett College for Women-Vice Chairman, University of South Florida-College of Arts & Science Development Board, Wiley College-Advisory Board, St. Augustine College-Advisory Board, Friends of Parks-Tampa, Central Life Broadcasting Company of Florida, Central Life Insurance Company of Florida, Houston Area Urban League, Houston Citizen Chamber of Commerce, Lockwood Bank Development Board, United Black Fund of Texas-Houston, Houston Association of Black Journalists, Friends of the Robert James Terry Library Foundation (Texas Southern University), National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People-Youth & College Division, Texas Press Association, Texas Publishers Association, National Newspapers Publishers Association, Gary Historical and Cultural Society-Chairman, Gary Symphony-Chairman, PRIMO Inc. (NASDAQ), Operation PUSH.

Source: <https://www.lorenzabutler.com> and Lorenza Butler interview on 3/24/2024



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