

Lucius Franklin Monroe Jackson

**Lucius Franklin Monroe Jackson** was a kind and caring family man, who lived in Nogales for 75 years.  He was born in Eufaula, Alabama in 1894.  Both of his parents were educated, his father was born in 1865 and was a traveling Baptist minister in the South; his mother was born in 1887 and was a school teacher.  In 1915, at the age of 21, Lucius enlisted in the U.S. Army and was assigned to the all Black 25th Infantry division, also known as the Buffalo Soldiers. He was stationed in Honolulu, Hawaii at the Schofield Barracks and transferred to Nogales in 1918.  The 25th Infantry was sent to Camp Little, Arizona, to restore order after the Battle of Ambos Nogales.  His duties included being a cook and dog handler in the specialized K-9 unit.  Lucius was a master cook and is remembered for his sweet potato pie along with many other dulces he loved to bake.  He left the military in 1923 and decided to stay in Nogales saying, “I fell in love with the place.”

Lucius married Maria de los Angeles Perez from Sinaloa, Mexico.  They had eight children, 21 grandchildren, and many great and great-great-grandchildren (including his namesake, Lucius Jackson V).  Their family home was located at the top of the hill on East Street and Morley. It was literally on the U.S. border, only several yards from their Mexican neighbors.  He would tell people, “We didn’t have the big fence back then. You could go back and forth across the line.”  He found “ambos” Nogalians to be very friendly, the Mexicans and Americans even played baseball together.

Lucius, along with the other Buffalo Soldiers, created a school for their children; the Grand Avenue/Frank Reed School. The school provided a quality education and instilled in the students an African- American experience (many of the children had Mexican mothers and spoke Spanish).

Lucius worked in several different industries and drove his automobile to and from work until he retired at 95 years old.  He passed away at the age of 98, living in his home to the very end. The only place Lucius enjoyed more than Nogales was Honolulu, Hawaii.  This is where some of his ashes were spread along with a 21-gun salute. Lucius is laid to rest beside his wife in the Nogales Cemetery. As a memorial, his favorite old hat is encased on his grave.

The Jackson family contributed to the establishment and founding of the African American/Mexican families who have been of historical significance in Nogales.  In 1996, they donated a plaque in honor of the school, its students, and dedicated teachers. The inscription ends with, “this school turned out some outstanding students that grew up to be the leaders of yesterday, today and tomorrow.”