

HERE WE ARE

We came from near,
We came from far,
Some of us do not know who the others are:

But this is a Reunion for one and all,
The old, the young, the large and the small.

To get to know more about each other
You might ask, "Who's your father or who's
your mother?"

We are here to have Lots of fun,
Whether in the shade or in the sun;

We will eat, drink, laugh, talk and play,
But it will not end with the day;

We will continue late into the night,
Dancing, partying, and cruising in the moon-
light;

By the time this reunion come to an end,
We will be happy that it began;

But before we depart and go our separate ways
We'll give thanks to GOD, to whom we praise.

BRITT

Family Reunion

HESSSEL PARK
SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 1983

EVENING FAMILY REUNION PARTY
TOWNE HALL
124 W. White St.
CHAMPAIGN, ILL.

HEADQUARTERS: Mrs. Jessie Britt
414 East Tremont Street,
Champaign, IL 61820

"WE ARE FAMILY"

The oldest family members living is
Mother Winnie Britt, who started this family
reunion with the aid of her children:

<u>SONS:</u>	<u>DAUGHTERS</u>
Marshall	Winnie B. Tracey
Jessie D.	Kathryn B. Humphrey
Edward	Mildred B. Wilson
George	Barbara B. Holloway
David	Margaret B. McGaa

and Elsie Wilton, Cousin	
Along with:	28 Grandchildren
	31 Great Grandchildren
	1 Great-Great Grandchild
and a Host of other relatives.	

TOGETHERNESS WITH THE BRITTS

B---is for the beauty that we share in this
world together.

R---is for the richness of life.
I---is for the improving of the family tree
that most of us have played a part.

T---is for the trust we have in GOD to keep
this family happy.

T---is for the time we've shared together.

S---is for sharing our love for one another
for the successful series of our succeed-
ing growth.

We are grateful to Mother Winnie Britt and
her family for bringing us together. All of
us who know Mother Britt love her, because to
know her is to love her!

P R O G R A M

"THE MORE WE GET TOGETHER THE HAPPIER WE ARE"

TOASTMASTER.....JOHN K. MCGAA	
1:00.....REGISTRATION	
2:00.....GREETINGS	MARSHALL J. BRITT

GAMES-----FUN-----LAUGHTER	
BASEBALL	TENNIS
BINGO	SLIDES
SWINGS	EGG TOSS
CHECKERS	BASKETBALL
PEPSI CHALLENGE	
3:00.....E A T S	

A W A R D S

FARTHEST DISTANCE	
FAMILY WITH MOST CHILDREN	
YOUNGEST PERSON PRESENT	
OLDEST PERSON PRESENT	
NEWLY WED	
LONGEST WED	

DOOR PRIZE.....PORTABLE TV
!!!!!! SEE YOU TONIGHT !!!!!

Many came to C-U because they'd 'had enough'

Last of a series

Kathryn Humphrey knows exactly why her mother and father came to Champaign almost 60 years ago. She knows why — and nobody had to tell her.

Jesse and Vennie Britt came here because in 1915 they had had enough. Enough of plowing. Enough of picking cotton. Enough of Jim Crow. Enough of the South. Enough of everything... except money.

"It's nice down home now," Mrs. Britt, 80, said. But it wasn't so nice in 1915 when her Jesse took her away from Huntington, Tenn. and brought her to Champaign.

The move, she said, made her "shoutin' happy." She even remembers the day: July 1, 1915.

"Mr. Britt had been up here working and when he came back I nailed him," Mrs. Britt said laughingly. "I was a farm girl"

and the chance arose to move to a place where there was more work available at better pay, she explained.

Her husband — dead for seven years — worked as a hod carrier for the coal company to support the 10 little Britts who came along during the periods when Mrs. Britt wasn't working as a domestic. At times, he took an extra job to make sure his five girls and five boys were fed.

It was difficult, but not overpowering, Mrs. Britt said. "We always had enough" The Britts were able to get by, she philosophized, because "I... we was raised to be somebody." Other southern blacks who were transplanted during the first decades of this century, she suggested, "lacked the pride-ness that I have."

Kathryn Humphrey, 51, now

a Champaign school board member, shares some of her mother's feelings about getting by in the North End, but she speaks more freely about how difficult life here has sometimes been for blacks.

"I have truly seen change," she admits, pointing to the degradation once considered commonplace in the North End.

Opportunities were limited, she explained, "but hope was not lost."

"You kind of could feel your way around and get by," she said. "The opportunities were limited," she agreed, "but they were limited for all other blacks as well" so the Britts didn't view themselves as involved in a struggle alone.

Mrs. Britt said she vividly remembers black homes, without indoor toilets or electricity, which were nothing but shacks.

But she always thought Champaign was a better place to

be than Huntington, Tenn. Her daughter agrees. "I thought it was better than what it was down there, because I had seen pictures of my grandfather's place and my brothers had been down there to visit and they'd come back and talk about the country."

"However, when I was a girl, we had an outdoor toilet (and) 'it wasn't until... a city ordinance changed the ruling that we had a toilet inside. That change came about when I was about 10 or 12.'"

There was more than a little envy of the imagined affluence of blacks who lived elsewhere in Champaign, Mrs. Humphrey said. "Some blacks folk lived on the other side of town. There was one little street on what we called the West Side with about one block of blacks and maybe around the corner. Those of us on east side, on north end, thought that they had more

than we did, but as we grew older and saw those kids in school, they didn't have any more than we did. They were just blacks over there on another street that was a little different than the setting over here."

Both women recalled the restrictive conditions which once permeated life for blacks in Champaign, especially during the 30s and 40s.

They remember, for example: — When blacks attending one of Champaign's five theaters were required to sit in a designated and segregated section of the building.

— When Boyd's Restaurant, near campus, was a gathering spot — because few other places were open — for the few blacks attending the U of I.

— When blacks could not attend public dance halls or use the public pool because of racial prejudice against them.

Mattie Burch, who came to C-U during the 40s, said, "That North End was pitiful. It was sad. Only about five houses. There was nothing but shacks." She lived on the fringes of the North End in Urbana near Mercy Hospital.

She said the dismal housing situation was what bothered her most about being here.

But Mrs. Britt apparently did not view the situation quite as negatively. Her husband, she said, worked hard to purchase a house for his family on Tremont Street. She said the home, though modest, was in decent condition.

Still she vowed to own a house across the street occupied by whites. She now lives in that house at 414 E. Tremont where she has lived for 37 years. "The Lord can open up things, and I've had things open up beautifully for me," she reported.

Mrs. Humphrey, however, has

not forgotten how slowly things opened to blacks. She spoke, for example, of the situation which kept her from leaving home for the black college she wanted to attend when she was graduated from high school in 1941. The gains which led her to the job she now holds as a technician for the U of I college of veterinary medicine, came later, she said.

As a high school graduate, she had to go to work as a domestic because "domestic service paid more" than any other job available to her.

"I have some regrets about that. I wish I would have moved away when I was younger... right after World War II. But you see the, we were still prone to want to stay in our community where we could get help if we needed it rather than being pioneers or explorers and moving out and away." Mrs. Humphrey said.

"Blacks now," she said, "have whatever they want. Personally, I'm happy with community. Lots of people I have met, young people especially, with jobs, that working here, going to school here... I ask them how I like living here. Well, they don't like it socially, but they not what a town is all about. You're not supposed to p... all the time."

"If it offers you good, clean environment, surroundings you're not pressed hard compact in this area... We in this area — the North End as it's called. But nobody really hits us in the head to make us live here."

If we could get money if we want to, we can make someplace else."

Her mother, however, still things up better. "In 50 years it's changed everywhere."

Everything's in the name

North End
 WED AUG 7 1974

What's in a name? Not much for most persons in Champaign-Urbana. But it can be everything for those who live in northeast Champaign.

Two simple words: North End. To too many persons it has meant the end of an already short line. Just a few years ago, according to some who still live in the area, it was enough to make an employer turn down a job application, for example.

Though white and black persons alike often refer to the section of Champaign where the largest concentration of blacks live as the "North End," no one seems to know how or when the term originated.

Kathryn Humphrey, a Champaign school board member, who has never lived anywhere else, says it was a term imposed by local news media. She said blacks living in northeast Champaign picked the term up after seeing it repeated on news pages.

But a neighbor says the development was from inside out. Black job seekers, supposedly reluctant to name the deteriorated street on which they lived, evasively answered "the north end of town." In time, it became the North End, and reporters later picked it up.

Mattie Burch, 69, has lived in Champaign-Urbana for more

than 30 years. She once lived on the fringes of the North end, but in Urbana. The area was being called the North End when she moved here, she said.

But it apparently goes back even further. Charles Phillips, now 86, can remember the term being used "years ago." He does not, however, remember when its use became widespread.

What do you think of when you hear the name North End?

Many persons take offense and feel it is a derogatory label.

This comment from one North End resident, however, probably summarizes feelings for those who live in the area:

"Well, it depends on the con-

versation that a person is involved in and also the connotation that an article may be implying. Geographically located, that is correct. And I cannot have any qualms about it.

"Sometimes, I guess I have a defensive attitude about it because I live in the North End and I think that the person that is making the remark may be trying to make a derogatory comment of some sort. How else can you describe it — geographically — as anything but the North End?"

"Newspapers put it that way. Our saying had always been 'across the tracks'."

Vennie Johnson Britt

In addition to raising ten children (five boys and five girls) Ms. Britt also did day work for other families. "Washing, cooking, and housecleaning."

"They didn't always pay in money. Sometimes they would give you clothes for your family."

She didn't have the education to pursue any other occupation, but has been deeply involved with the Mt. Olive Baptist Church and is well-known in the community.

Now 89 years old with five generations of her family living in Champaign, she is most proud of "my children, my home, and my church."



VENNIE BRITT FAMILY FILE

Miss Catherine Britt Weds Chanute Man

Miss Catherine Britt, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Britt, 414 East Tremont street, became the bride of Corp. John C. Humphrey, Chanute Field, in a ceremony on the lawn of the Britt home at 9 p. m. Thursday. Rev. C. W. Saunders, pastor of Mt. Olive Baptist church, performed the ceremony. The presence of 250 guests. 8 1975
Mrs. Marie Banks served as maid of honor. Bridesmaids were Miss Ella Belew, Mrs. James Williams, Mrs. Elsie Milton and Mrs. John C. Britt. The bridegroom was attended by Pfc. James Critchlow as best man. The bride wore a white net formal gown with white net bouquet and carried a bouquet of red roses and babies' breath. The bride is a graduate of Champaign high school and is a recreation leader at Douglas park. The bridegroom is the son of Mrs. Lena Humphreys, Cleveland, Ohio.

Woman held in shooting

Champaign police arrested Mildred Rector, 47, of 510 E. Columbia St., today on a charge of aggravated battery in connection with a shooting Saturday night.

Police said the woman is charged with shooting Edward Britt, who was reported in good condition today at Mercy Hospital.

Police said the couple was at the Elks Club, 61 E. Chester St. Saturday night when they began arguing. The woman left the club, reports said, and Britt followed her out.

Once outside, police said, the woman pulled a small gun from her purse and fired one shot. Though police said Britt did not ask that charges be filed, police arrested the woman today after she came to the police station voluntarily.

She also turned over to police a small pistol believed to have been used in the shooting.

Woman shot MFD says charges filed

A pregnant Urbana woman, shot once in the stomach Tuesday afternoon, was reported in satisfactory condition today in the trauma unit of Burnham City Hospital.

The unborn infant was not seriously injured by the gunshot wound, according to police sources.

The victim, Barbara Britt, 24, of 1213 N. Lanore Drive, underwent surgery Tuesday afternoon for the wounds she suffered about 2:10 p.m. in the front yard of 62 Burch Village, Champaign.

Rose Marie Doss, 30, of the Burch Village address, was arrested shortly after the shooting and has been charged with attempted murder.

Police detectives were questioning witnesses today in an attempt to learn the circumstances of the incident. One police source said the shooting may have been the result of a long-running feud between the two women.

The victim is three months pregnant, according to police. She was taken by car to Burnham by a friend.

Police said Miss Doss, who allegedly fire the shot, notified them of the shooting and called an ambulance.

Woman 22 1975 arraigned

A Champaign woman charged with attempted murder was arraigned Wednesday before Associate Judge G. R. Skillman.

Rose Marie Doss was freed on \$10,000 bond. Skillman appointed the public defender and set a preliminary hearing for next Wednesday.

Miss Doss, 30, of 62 Burch Village is accused of having shot Barbara Britt, 24, of 1213 N. Lanore Drive, Urbana, Tuesday afternoon. Mrs. Britt was reported in satisfactory condition this morning at Burnham Hospital.

Britt Dismissed From City Job

Jesse D. Britt, 414 East Tremont street, night janitor at the Champaign city building, has been dismissed, it was learned Thursday.

Britt, who had held the position since the administration of Mayor James D. Flynn in the late 1930's was removed from his position as of May 1.

He had been replaced by Jesse J. Lewis, 312 East Church street, who at one time several years ago was the day janitor.

Britt first was named janitor by Mayor Flynn, who dismissed John Bigelow while Commissioner of Public Property Virgil W. Burgess was vacationing in the West. That episode provoked a clash between Flynn and Burgess.

The letter to Britt notifying him of his dismissal did not assign any reason. Some of the commission-

ers reportedly objected, however, to political activity by Britt's son, Marshall J. Britt, during the recent city election.

Marshall Britt is the Republican committeeman of the No. 1 precinct, a position held by his father when the latter was first named by Flynn to the city building job.

Jess J. Britt

Funeral services for Jess J. Britt, 76, longtime resident of Champaign who died early Saturday, will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday in Mt. Olive Baptist Church with the Rev. J. C. Offutt officiating. He lived at 414 E. Tremont St. **MAY 15 1967**

Friends may call from 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday at McHaney Funeral Home.

Mr. Britt was born March 26, 1891, in Huntingdon, Tenn., to Freeman and Dona Britt. He was a retired hod carrier, a deacon and member of Mt. Olive Baptist Church.

He was a member of Hiram Lodge 10, AF and AM, where he served for many years as chaplain. He had an active membership in the International Hod Carriers and Common Laborers Union of America.

For many years he served as an elected committeeman of the first precinct. In recent community activities he was working with the Homeowners Association against Urbana Renewal.

During his years of political attachment, he was employed by the sheriff's offices for eight years and also for eight years as a city employe as a custodian at Champaign City Building. **MAY 15 1967**

In 1914 he was married to Vennie Johnson of Huntingdon, Tenn. who preceded him in death.

He leaves five daughters, Mrs. Minnie Bracy, Mrs. Kathryn Humphrey, Mrs. Mildred Wilson, all of Champaign; Mrs. Barbara Holloway, Gary, Ind., and Mrs. Margaret McCaa of Omaha, Neb.; five sons, Marshall, Jessie D. and Edward of Champaign; George in Vietnam and David, Gary, Ind.; four brothers, Claude and Ferman of Champaign; Earlis and Ester of Gary, Ind.; one sister, Mrs. Lillie Snello of Urbana, 28 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Hiram Lodge 10, AF and AM, will conduct rites Tuesday at McHaney Funeral Home after visitation.

Britts Wed

Fifty Years

MAR 27 1967

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse J. Britt, 414 E. Tremont S., will observe their 50th wedding anniversary at a reception from 3 to 6 p.m. Sunday, March 22, in the Fellowship Room of the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, 808 W. Bradley St.

Mr. Britt and the former Vennie Johnson were married March 24, 1914, in Huntingdon, Tenn. They have lived in this area since soon after their marriage.

The Britts have five daughters and five sons. They include: Mrs. Ehmer (Minnie) Bracey, Mrs. Kathryn Humphrey, Mrs. James (Mildred) Wilson, Marshall Britt, Jesse D. Britt and Edward Britt, all of Champaign; Mrs. Harold (Barbara) Holloway and David Britt of Gary, Ind.; Mrs. John (Margaret) McCaa of Spain; and

George Britt, who is in the Army.

The couple has 18 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. **MAR 15 1967**

Mrs. Ruth Johnson, Mrs. Britt's mother, also will attend the reception.

Mrs. Ruth Johnson

Funeral services for Mrs. Ruth Johnson, 98, the mother of Mrs. Jesse Britt Sr., 414 E. Tremont St., will be at 2 p.m. Saturday in Mt. Olive Baptist Church. Burial will be in Lincoln Cemetery. Friends may call from 7 to 9 p.m. Friday at McHaney Funeral Home. **SEP 30 1966**

the home of the daughter with whom she made her home in Champaign.

BRITTS - MAREITJE VAN
 BRITT - MARIA RAVA
 BRET - MARIA BRET
 BRIT - MARIA RAVA
 BRET - MAREITJE
 BRITT - MAREITJE ROLL

ALL dates time of BAPTISM
 TAKEN FROM THE KATSBLOOM CHURCH
 ULLSTER VOLS. 1-10 - 1730 - 1801
 REGISTER of BAPTIZED CHILDREN
 UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED
 CHURCH RECORDS PUBLISHED IN "CLDE"
 1801
 CHILDREN BEGAN Nov. 2, 1730

