

Hopkins, Moses Aaron ^[1]

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Hopkins, Moses Aaron

by Ansley Wegner

Research Branch, NC Office of Archives and History, 2006.

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December 25, 1846 - August 7, 1886



"The Rev. Moses A. Hopkins, A.M."

Engraving. Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine

18, no. 6 (December 1885). 556.

^[3]Moses Aaron Hopkins, educator and clergyman, was born into slavery in Montgomery County, Virginia, on December 25, 1846. During the Civil War ^[4] he worked as a cook in Union camps. In 1866, at age twenty, Hopkins learned the alphabet, launching his lifelong interest in education. He attended Avery College, Allegheny City, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Lincoln University, also in Pennsylvania. Hopkins then enrolled at Auburn Seminary in New York. Completing his degree in theology in 1877, he was the first African American graduate of the seminary. Ordained by the Presbyterian Church in 1877, Hopkins moved to Franklinton.

In Franklinton Moses Hopkins founded Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church and Albion Academy. He led Albion through its formative years, which included the construction of an administration building, a shop, and a girls' dormitory. Hopkins and his wife, Carrie, published a newspaper entitled *The Freedmen's Friend*, the masthead of which designates it as "The Organ of Albion Academy and Our Race." The only known issue is from August 1884. In 1885 Hopkins applied to the Democratic Party ^[5] for a diplomatic post and was appointed Minister to Liberia on September 11 of that year. He reported to Monrovia within a month. Moses Hopkins died in Monrovia, Liberia, August 7, 1886. (Though most published sources list his death date as August 4, a researcher contacted the Department of State in 1950 to verify the date. The Chief of Historical Policy Research located a telegram dated August 9, 1886, sent to the American Colonization Society ^[6] announcing that Hopkins died on August 7.) His place of burial is unknown.

The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York, maintains the archives for Auburn Theological Seminary. The archives has a file on Hopkins that includes correspondence, newspaper clippings, and a copy of one issue of his newspaper, *Freedmen's Friend*, Vol. 1, No. 4, dated August 1884.

References:

National Cyclopededia of American Biography, XII, (1904), 112-113

"Albion Academy, Franklinton, North Carolina," in *Cape Fear Presbytery, 1886-1986* (1986)

Correspondence between William S. Powell and G. Bernard Noble, February 8, 1950 and August 16, 1950, in Research Branch files, Office of Archives and History

G. F. Richings, *Evidences of Progress Among Colored People* (1902)

Burke Theological Library (Columbia University) website: <https://library.columbia.edu/libraries/burke.html> [7]

Additional Resources:

"The Rev. Moses A. Hopkins, A.M." *Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine* 18, no. 6 (December 1885). 556. <http://books.google.com/books?id=IVw2AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA556#v=onepage&q&f=false> [3]

General biographical catalogue of the Auburn theological seminary, 1818-1918 Auburn, N.Y.: Auburn Seminary Press. 1918. 182. <http://books.google.com/books?id=rJ9VAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA182#v=onepage&q&f=false> [8]

"Moses Aaron Hopkins (1846-1886)." Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. <http://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/people/hopkins-moses-aaron> [9]

Aughey, John Hill. *Tupelo*. Liconln, Neb.: State Journal Company, Printers, 1888. 302. <http://books.google.com/books?id=1y0AAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA302#v=onepage&q&f=false> [10]

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