



Author Margo Lee William's North Carolina African American History Book From Hill Town to Strieby

RALEIGH, N.C. - Feb. 20, 2018 - [PRLog](#) -- Author Margo Lee William's North Carolina African American History Book From Hill Town to Strieby

Author Margo Lee Williams is pleased to announce the promotion of her book, From Hill Town to Strieby: Education and the American Missionary Association in the Uwharrie "Back Country" of Randolph County, North Carolina.

When former slave, Islay Walden returned to Southwestern Randolph County, North Carolina in 1879, after graduating from the New Brunswick Theological Seminary, as an ordained minister and missionary of the American Missionary Association, he moved in with his sister and her family in a secluded area in the Uwharrie Mountains, not far from the Lassiter Mill community along the Uwharrie River. Walden was sent to start a church and school for the African American community. When the church and school were begun this was, not surprisingly, a largely illiterate community of primarily Hill family members. The Hill family in this mountain community was so large, it was known as "Hill Town." The nearby Lassiter Mill community was larger and more diverse, but only marginally more literate. Walden and his wife accomplished much before his untimely death in 1884, including acquiring a US Postal Office for the community and a new name – Strieby. Despite Walden's death, the church and school continued into the 20th century when it was finally absorbed by the public school system, but not before impacting strongly the literacy and educational achievements of this remote community.

From Hill Town to Strieby is Williams' second book and picks up where her first book about her ancestor Miles Lassiter, an early African American Quaker [Miles Lassiter (circa 1777-1850) an Early African American Quaker from Lassiter Mill, Randolph County, North Carolina: My Research Journey to Home], left off. In From Hill Town to Strieby, she provides extensive research documentation on the Reconstruction-era community of Hill Town, that would become known as Strieby, and the American Missionary Association affiliated church and school that would serve both Hill Town and Lassiter Mill. She analyzes both communities' educational improvements by comparing census records, World War I Draft record signatures and reports of grade levels completed in the 1940 census. She provides well-documented four generation genealogical reports of the two principal founding families, the Hills and Lassiters, which include both the families they married into and the families that moved away to other communities around the country. She provides information on the family relationships of those buried in the cemetery and adds an important research contribution by listing the names gleaned from death certificates of those buried in the cemetery, but who have no cemetery markers. She concludes with information about the designation of the Strieby Church, School, and Cemetery property as a Randolph County Cultural Heritage Site.

Praise for From Hill Town to Strieby:

"This book is a superior achievement from cover to cover. It is the result of an unusually high degree of careful research, written in an eminently readable style, and should be deemed the consummate source of information regarding this rural African American community. It houses a colossal amount of copied primary sources, as well as some riveting vintage photographs of community members and their surroundings. Having only read this wonderful book online, it would benefit the reader to have a hard copy

on hand. It is one to be read, savored and then added beside other cherished books on a bookshelf for future reference or to later 'experience' again." - North Carolina Society of Historians

"For the residents of Strieby and the rest of Randolph County, and for the descendants of those who once lived there, *From Hill Town to Strieby* by Margo Lee Williams is an invaluable resource. The historical information will indeed provide a direct connection to generations past." - David K. McDonnell, Reader Views

"*From Hill Town to Strieby*, is a book of scholarly tenacity, creative boldness, and near-acrobatic balance, as it promises to become an essential addition to the history of rural America." - Thomas D. Rush, author of *Reality's Pen: Reflections on Family, History & Culture*

"The reader is immediately drawn into this narrative, its people, and their legacy as Ms. Williams brilliantly captures the history of a community that sought, and achieved, the American dream." - Carol Kostakos Petranek, Co-Director, Washington D.C. Family History Center

"Margo Williams' outstanding research tells the history of my community and family while speaking of the power of self-determination and the impact of Strieby descendants past, present, and future." - Elbert Lassiter Jr., Lassiter family and Strieby Church descendant

Request a review on NetGalley at <http://netgal.ly/JilZHi>

From Hill Town to Strieby is available for purchase in both print and ebook forms.

Book Details:

From Hill Town to Strieby

Education and the American Missionary Association in the Uwharrie "Back Country" of Randolph County, North Carolina

By Margo Lee Williams

Publisher: Backintyme Publishing, Inc.

Published: July 2016

ISBN: 978-0939479092

ASIN: B06X9C8JNQ

Pages: 418

Genre: Non Fiction: African American History

About The Author:

Margo Lee Williams is an award winning, genealogy and history author. A former editor of the *Journal of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society*, she is particularly interested in community and family histories of free people of color in the southeast, especially those in North Carolina and Virginia, who often had mixed race origins.

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