

**The 1939 Alexandria Virginia Library Sit-In:  
Breaking a Barrier to Read at a Public Library**

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America was experiencing a dark time in the 1930s, when racial segregation was prominent - a time before the Greensboro Sit-Ins, before the Montgomery Bus Boycotts, before Martin Luther King Jr. said "I Have a Dream." This was a time when America was sinking into the "Quicksands of racial injustice," when African Americans were "stripped of their adulthood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating 'For Whites Only,'"<sup>1</sup> when certain people were not even allowed to enter a library building, much less receive a library card. Such barriers of racial inequality were ones that Samuel Tucker and the participants of the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In tried to break down through a peaceful protest. While this protest missed the front pages of the national news in 1939 (Hitler's invasion of Poland stole that publicity from them), the news spread locally. The Library Sit-In expedited the need to open a library for African Americans in Alexandria: The Robert Robinson Library. The Sit-In was Alexandria's first challenge to the seemingly unbreakable Jim Crow laws.

### **African Americans in Alexandria: Post Civil War through 1940s**

After the Civil War, Alexandria became a pass-through city for African Americans from the South who were trying to travel farther north. Its African American population remained relatively small. They formed nine small, mostly African American neighborhoods: The Berg, "Colored" Rosemont, The Bottoms / The Dip, Cross Canal, The Fort (by Fort Ward), Hayti, The Hill / Vinegar Hill, The Hump, Uptown (the largest with 24 blocks), and Seminary.<sup>2</sup> The living conditions were sometimes not ideal. Some houses did not have adequate sanitary facilities and many were in need of repair.<sup>3</sup> In an account by Henry Johnson about The Hump, he recalls in winter, "It was so cold that you could go to bed and see the moon shining (through the walls).

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Luther King, I Have a Dream Speech

<sup>2</sup> Courageous Journey, 16-19.

<sup>3</sup> Poag, Rev. Fred V., 150.

The snow'd come through them cracks on your feet...Ice'd freeze on the washstand...It'd freeze in your bedroom..."<sup>4</sup> Although neighborhoods in Alexandria were considered either white or African American, there were some whites living in the African American neighborhoods and vice versa. In an interview, Lillian Patterson (92 years old), an African American Alexandria native alive at the time of the Library Sit-In, described how her grandmother and father lived on Oronoco Street, in Uptown. She stated that if a new project were to be built by the city, the houses of African Americans would be the first ones to be destroyed, and the relocation process for the residents was slow. She used the example of the Seminary neighborhood, where she and her family lived when T.C. Williams High School was built in 1965.<sup>5</sup>

African Americans did own some businesses in Alexandria, including a popular bakery and flower shop. There were also four African American owned funeral homes.<sup>6</sup> However, most African Americans were "domestic service workers, laborers (non-farm)..., and service workers other than domestics."<sup>7</sup> Lillian Patterson explained how, due to Jim Crow laws, African Americans could go into shops owned by other African Americans, but not a white-owned shop, whereas a white person could go into an African American business and could not be told to leave.<sup>8</sup> African Americans also had their own churches and – of course – schools, since those were segregated in Virginia. The African Americans had two: the Hallowell School for Girls and Snowden School for Boys, which were built after the Civil War.<sup>9</sup> The Parker-Gray school was then built in 1920 for grades one through seven. In 1921, the African American community requested a high school for its students, but were given only one eighth grade class with one

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<sup>4</sup> Courageous Journey, 19

<sup>5</sup> Lillian Patterson. Personal interview. 4 January 2020

<sup>6</sup> Neighborhoods. Alexandria: African American Hall of Fame.  
[http://www.alexandriaafricanamericanhalloffame.org/?page\\_id=163](http://www.alexandriaafricanamericanhalloffame.org/?page_id=163)

<sup>7</sup> Poag, Rev. Fred V., 140.

<sup>8</sup> Lillian Patterson. Personal interview. 4 January 2020

<sup>9</sup> "The Dedication of the Black Alexandria and Parker Gray Alumni Historic Resource Center"

teacher and 18 students.<sup>10</sup> African American high school students from Alexandria had to attend Armstrong or Dunbar High Schools in Washington D.C. (falsely claiming residency in D.C.), while right across the train tracks from Parker-Gray sat George Washington High School, only accepting white students.<sup>11</sup> Parker-Gray High School finally expanded through twelfth grade and graduated its first class in 1936. African Americans also did not have a public pool and could only swim in the Potomac River. They had three playgrounds compared to eleven for Whites<sup>12</sup>, and were also not allowed to go to the Alexandria Free Public Library, which was built in 1937.

### **Samuel Wilbert Tucker and the Alexandria Library Sit-In**

The situation for African Americans in Alexandria was far from ideal. Samuel Wilbert Tucker made it his mission to change that. Tucker was born in Alexandria on June 18, 1913. His parents were educated; his mother was a teacher, and his father worked many different jobs. His father ran his own real estate business in an office shared with lawyer Thomas Watson. School was important to the Tuckers, so they ensured that Samuel and his siblings were well educated. The family also loved to sing and dance. Samuel could play the autoharp and the piano. When he was ten years old, Tucker began helping in his father's office,<sup>13</sup> where they had a typewriter on which he taught himself to type. Watson trusted Samuel to prepare court documents for his cases. This is one of the reasons he became interested in law. On another occasion, Samuel and his brothers George and Otto boarded a streetcar in D.C., which they often did since they attended high school there. They changed the direction of the last movable seat in the African American section, so that it was facing the back. A white woman, who had walked past empty

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<sup>10</sup> Becker, Sarah. "The Fight for Parker Gray School."

<sup>11</sup> Out of Obscurity, documentary

<sup>12</sup> Poag, Rev. Fred V., 145.

<sup>13</sup> Samuel Wilbert Tucker: The Story of a Civil Rights Trailblazer and the 1939 Library Sit-In, 41.

seats in the white section, asked them to give up their seats. They refused. When the streetcar stopped in Alexandria, the woman told the police, and the boys were charged with disorderly conduct. The lawyer Tom Watson argued the case, and the boys were found not guilty before a court of five white male jurors. This experience helped Tucker realize that “with evidence and convincing legal arguments, justice was sometimes possible in a court of law.”<sup>14</sup>

Samuel Tucker read the law on his own and took the bar exam at 20½ years old, too young to work as a lawyer. He never attended law school, since he was barred from it in Virginia due to his race.<sup>15</sup> He started practicing law with Tom Watson in Alexandria<sup>16</sup> and was a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Tucker became famous in Alexandria and wanted African Americans and white people to have equal rights. He was active in the Civil Rights Movement. He once said “I got involved in the Civil Rights Movement on June 18, 1913, in Alexandria, Virginia. I was born black.”<sup>17</sup> He organized the Library Sit-In and was the advocate for the participants in their court case.

Before the Sit-In, Samuel Tucker and his neighbor, retired black Army Sergeant George Wilson, had tried to get a library card at the Queen Street Library, but the librarian had denied them.<sup>18</sup> Tucker brought this case to court, and he argued that all citizens of Alexandria pay taxes which support the library, so all citizens should have the right to use the library. This argument is based on the Public Assemblages Act, which states that blacks and whites could use the same facilities, as long as they were segregated within them.<sup>19</sup> The ensuing court case stalled, so Tucker decided to try something else. He had learned during his time at Howard University

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid*, 39

<sup>15</sup> Ackerman, S.J. “The Trials of S.W. Tucker.” *Washington Post*, 11 June 2000.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel Wilbert Tucker: The Story of a Civil Rights Trailblazer and the 1939 Library Sit-In, 30.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*, 71.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid*, 41.

<sup>19</sup> 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In: Jim Crow lives here. <http://jimcrowlivedhere.org/exhibits/show/1939-alexandria-library-sit-in>

about a form of protest called a Sit-Down or Sit-In, which was used by Mahatma Gandhi in India and by striking auto workers in Michigan.<sup>20</sup> He decided to use this method to protest his ineligibility for a library card. Samuel Tucker gathered eleven young men and explained to them how the protest would be executed, how they should act, how they should dress, and what they should say.<sup>21</sup> They were to go into the library, request a library card, and if they were denied one (which Tucker knew would be the case), then they should peacefully go into the reading room and pick out a book to read.

On August 21, 1939 five of the eleven original volunteers, William “Buddy” Evans, Otto L. Tucker (Samuel Tucker's brother), Edward Gaddis, Morris Murray, and Clarence Strange gathered outside of the library.<sup>22</sup> In a 1990 profile, William “Buddy” Evans, who was 18 during the Sit-In, recounted “I remember being some kind of scared... I was afraid I was going to get beat up or put in jail.”<sup>23</sup> A sixth young man served as a lookout, to let Tucker know when the police arrived. According to the documentary *Out of Obscurity*, which is about Samuel Tucker and the Library Sit-In, the five young men walked into the library separately, in five minute intervals (Otto entered first), and requested a library card from the assistant librarian, Alice Green.<sup>24</sup> They were, of course, denied, and each one continued into the reading room. Each of them then picked a book from the shelf at random and started reading, remaining for about an hour. Alice Green sent the library’s page to notify the head librarian, Katherine Scroggins, at her home. The page declared, “Oh mercy, Miss Scroggins, there’s colored people all over the

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Out of Obscurity*, documentary

<sup>22</sup> Samuel Wilbert Tucker. *The Story of a Civil Rights Trailblazer and the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In*. 44

<sup>23</sup> Kopf, Curtis. “Sit-In participant recalls tense day.” *The Alexandria Journal*, A4.

<sup>24</sup> 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In: Jim Crow lives here. <http://jimcrowlivedhere.org/exhibits/show/1939-alexandria-library-sit-in>

library.”<sup>25</sup> Scroggins and the city manager notified the police, and she and a policeman arrived at the library and asked the men to leave. Each protester asked, “What will happen if I don’t?” After their third refusal, the policeman told them they would be arrested. The men all quietly followed the police officer, again making sure not to be disorderly. A crowd of about 300 onlookers, including the press, were gathered outside the library.<sup>26</sup>

The men were first charged with trespassing, but Tucker argued that this was a public building.<sup>27</sup> The charge was then changed to disorderly conduct. In order to prove the point that their arrest was entirely due to racism, Samuel Tucker had made sure that all of the participants were well dressed, quiet, and respectful. “When asked by the boys’ lawyer if it were true that had the defendants been white and acting as they did, would they be forcibly removed, the librarian said no. Practically admitting that the cause for the arrest was a matter of color and not a violation of any city ordinance.”<sup>28</sup> Samuel Tucker wanted the case to be ruled upon by a judge, but it was simply dropped.<sup>29</sup> The story was reported in some local newspapers, including the *Washington Post*, but hardly appeared in national newspapers. There were two articles in the *Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper, one which described the court proceedings in detail.<sup>30</sup> The charges in this case were only dismissed in the participants’ favor in October 2019.<sup>31</sup>

During the interview, Lillian Patterson recalled that she was familiar with all of the participants of the Library Sit-In except one (Buddy Evans), which shows how tight-knit the

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<sup>25</sup> *Out of Obscurity*, documentary

<sup>26</sup> Ackerman, S.J. “The Trials of S.W. Tucker.” *Washington Post*, 11 June 2000.

<sup>27</sup> Samuel Wilbert Tucker. *The Story of a Civil Rights Trailblazer and the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In*. 45

<sup>28</sup> “Boys Wanted to Read, But Librarian Has Them Jailed”. *New Journal and Guide*, Sept. 2, 1939.

<sup>29</sup> *Courageous Journey*, 14-15.

<sup>30</sup> “Claims Cops Broke Law in Library Case.” *Chicago Defender*, Sept. 23, 1939.

<sup>31</sup> Alexandria Circuit Court Dismisses Charges Against Civil Rights Advocates at 1939 Library Sit-In

African American community was. Surprisingly, when asked about the Library Sit-In, Mrs. Patterson said she had not heard much about it at the time.

The Library Sit-In brought attention to the need for a library and other services for African Americans in Alexandria. The city did not want to allow African Americans to use the Queen Street library. Construction went quickly and on April 23, 1940, the City of Alexandria opened the Robert Robinson Library, which was “free to all colored citizens of Alexandria, and [was] for their exclusive use.”<sup>32</sup> The library was separate but not equal: the collection was not as extensive as the one in the Queen Street Library, and the furniture was older. However, in the first year, 600 people registered, more than half of whom were children. On average, each library-goer borrowed almost 20 books in the first year.<sup>33</sup> The African Americans were now allowed to read at a public library, even though they remained second class citizens. Gladys Davis, who was an assistant at the Robinson Library, recalled that she “would travel to the white-only Queen Street Library to borrow the books that Robinson Library didn’t have” for the African American patrons.<sup>34</sup> African Americans were joyful, but Samuel Tucker was disappointed. In a letter to Katherine Scoggins, the head librarian at the Queen Street Library, he wrote:

I refuse and will always refuse to accept a card to be used at the library to be constructed and operated at Alfred and Wythe Streets in lieu of a card to be used at the existing library on Queen Street for which I have made an application. Continued delay -- beyond (*sic*) the close of this month -- in issuing to me a card for use at the library on Queen Street will be taken as a refusal to do so, whereupon I will feel justified in seeking the aid of court to enforce my right.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> “New Colored Library Branch To Open To Public Tomorrow.” *Alexandria Gazette*. 22 April 1940.

<sup>33</sup> *Out of Obscurity*, documentary

<sup>34</sup> “50 years, her life’s an open book: Library’s Davis is a city treasure.” *Alexandria Journal*, 13 Feb 1997.

<sup>35</sup> Samuel Wilbert Tucker. *The Story of a Civil Rights Trailblazer and the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In*.



According to Lillian Patterson, as well as other sources, Samuel Tucker never entered the Robert Robinson Library, even though he was the driving force for its creation, nor did he receive a card for the Queen Street Library while it was segregated. Finally, in 1960, the Queen Street Library was desegregated, and the Robinson Library was closed,<sup>36</sup> later becoming Alexandria's Black History Museum, which still stands. Over the years Tucker continued to fight for equal rights, arguing more than 50 Civil Rights cases to integrate public schools.

The Sit-In broke, or at least made a large crack in, the racial barriers known as the Jim Crow Laws. It was the first Sit-In for Civil Rights in America, and although it did not get much press, it led the way to many other, more famous Sit-Ins. However, the Alexandria Library Sit-In did not fully serve its intended purpose. Samuel Tucker wanted to have an integrated public library. What he got instead was a segregated, tiny space with older books and furniture. He was not satisfied by the outcome of the Sit-In, even though he was the catalyst for it. But other people definitely were. The 600 plus people who applied for library cards in the first year of the library opening benefited from the change, as well as all the African Americans who went to the Robinson library to read books. Lillian Patterson recalls how she enjoyed reading there as a teenager.<sup>37</sup> At the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Alexandria Library Sit-In Descendants Panel, when asked what the descendants thought about civil rights issues today, Kimberly Evans-Reed (granddaughter of Buddy Evans) said that the issues today are not as "in your face" as in the past, but still important.<sup>38</sup> She said education is the key. In an interview, Michael Johnson, Community Outreach for Alexandria Parks and Recreation, said that Alexandria has come a long

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<sup>36</sup> "50 years, her life's an open book: Library's Davis is a city treasure." Alexandria Journal, 13 Feb 1997.

<sup>37</sup> Lillian Patterson. Personal interview. 4 January 2020

<sup>38</sup> Alexandria Library Sit-In Descendants Panel, 21 October 2019, Beatley Library.

way, but still has further to go.<sup>39</sup> These are both strong points, and equally true. Alexandria, and the U.S., have come far, and equality is coming closer. I hope that in another 80 years there will be true equality for all.

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<sup>39</sup> Michael Johnson, Community Outreach for Alexandria Parks and Recreation. Personal interview. 28 January 2020

## Primary Sources

Barrett Branch Library, Vertical File Photograph Collection, MS394, Alexandria Library, Local History and Special Collections, Alexandria, Virginia.

At the library, the librarian helped us find the photograph of the library from the time of the Sit-In. It was a new library and was much smaller than the Barrett Library today. Even though the library was small, no one can remember where exactly the 5 young men sat.

Evans-Jackson, Joyce Angela, Evans-Reed, Kimberly, and Martin, Stephen A., panelists. Panel discussion. Alexandria Library Sit-In Descendants Panel, 21 October 2019, Beatley Library.

This was a panel discussion with the descendants of the participants of the Library Sit-In. It was very interesting to hear how the families talked about the Sit-In and their relatives' participation. The head of the library (Rose Dawson) asked the panel questions, and at the end the audience was given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments as well. I also asked something, and many audience members talked to me afterward. I am even planning to meet on Alexandria to talk about the history of Alexandria at the time of the Sit-In.

Lillian Patterson. Personal interview. 4 January 2020

I visited the Alexandria Black History Museum on January 4. We asked if there was information about Alexandria at the time of the Sit-In, and the person at the help desk told us that we could talk to someone who actually lived in Alexandria at the time of the Sit-In. She introduced us to Lillian Patterson. She is a 92 year old African American who works at the museum. She told us about her experiences living in Alexandria, about her family (grandparents, parents, and children), about Parker-Gray and about her personal opinion of the school, and about her education.

Michael Johnson, Community Outreach for Alexandria Parks and Recreation. Personal Interview. 28 January 2020.

This was a very informative interview. Mr. Johnson read my draft and commented about it. He pointed out immediately that one of the people I quoted, Henry Johnson, was his great uncle. He even showed me many more documents that are difficult to find, and he encouraged me to keep working on this topic. He explained that the state of equality is much better than it was earlier, but there is still much to be improved.

“New Colored Library Branch To Open to Public Tomorrow.” *The Alexandria Gazette*, 22 April 1940. Alexandria Library Special Collections, Vertical file: Alexandria Library--Sit-In, 1939.

This article describes the opening of the Robert Robinson Library for Coloured People. It describes the building and the cost of the building.

Poag, Rev. Fred V. *Social Survey: Alexandria Council of Social Agency*, Survey Committee, January, 1947.

A librarian helped me find this survey and it was extremely interesting to read. I read the chapter on Racial Relations, which talks about many details of life for African Americans and Whites in Alexandria. There was so much information that I would have liked to use, but I ran out of space. Here is the most interesting: “The high school building is outmoded, overcrowded, and has few facilities. There is no stadium, and a poorly equipped playground. ... The cafeteria has been closed since the beginning of the present school year... all of the pupils must bring lunch, go home or to one of the stores in the neighborhood for lunch. The nearest store also sells beer, which creates an undesirable atmosphere for the children who go there to buy their sandwiches.”

### Secondary Sources

“1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In.” *Jim Crow Lived Here*. <http://jimcrowlivedhere.org/exhibits/show/1939-alexandria-library-sit-in>. Accessed 20 May 2020.

I discovered this while revising my paper, and it put the laws of Virginia during Jim Crow into context, and also gave me an understanding of the other Civil Rights protests in Virginia. It had a lot of useful information that I added to the paper, but I therefore had to take some other information out of the paper.

“1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In: One of America’s first Sit-Ins took place at Alexandria library on August 21, 1939.” *Alexandria Library*, <https://alexlibraryva.org/1939-Sit-In>. Accessed 6 November 2019.

This article is from the Alexandria Library Website and talks about how this event was mostly ignored by newspapers but it was widely reported in the African American Press. There is a link to the letter that Tucker wrote because he was so mad about the opening of the African American Library.

Ackerman, S.J. “The Trials of S.W. Tucker.” *Washington Post*, 11 June 2000.

This is another article that I found while editing my paper, from the *Washington Post*. It helped

me understand Tucker's history and what Tucker and the other men did and said during the trial. Many of the accounts that I read about the Sit-In describe the details of the Sit-In differently, and I think that the information comes from interviewing different people, and some information is lost or changed when people recall what happened.

Alexandria Circuit Court Dismisses Charges Against Civil Rights Advocates at 1939 Library Sit-In. [https://www.alexandriava.gov/news\\_display.aspx?id=111874](https://www.alexandriava.gov/news_display.aspx?id=111874) Accessed 19 October 2019.

This article on the library's website summarizes the Library Sit-In and talks about how the charges against the Sit-In participants have been dismissed on Oct. 19. The judge never issued a ruling and the charges were technically still outstanding.

Becker, Sarah. "The Fight for Parker Gray High School." *Alexandria Times*, October 23-29, 2008. Alexandria Library Special Collections, Vertical file: Neighborhoods--Parker Gray.

This article talks about the Parker-Gray school fight to gain a high school program and how they did it. It shows the citizens' letters and what they asked for as well as describes the state of the school.

Becker, Sarah "Righting a Wrong." *Old Town Crier*, February 2006, p. 8. Alexandria Library Special Collections, Vertical file: Alexandria Library--Sit-In, 1939.

This article describes that the Parker Gray neighborhood was known as Uptown and the problems there. And it talks about the move to rename the neighborhood Parker-Gray (its name today). Information included African American jobs: black carpenters, bricklayers, and coopers, Black entrepreneurs started grocery stores, butcher shops, and cleaners, and there was a government bakery. The railroad attracted business. There was also information about Parker Gray HS.

*Boys Wanted to Read, but Librarians Had Them Jailed.* New Journal and Guide (1916-2003), Sep 2, 1939. ProQuest Historical Newspapers Norfolk Journal and Guide (1921-2003), p. 1. Alexandria Library Special Collections, Vertical file: Alexandria Library--Sit-In, 1939.

This article, published on September 2, 1939, explains how the case was progressing at the point of publication. It also included a description of what went on inside the library. This article is very interesting. It shows that even though the men were arrested for disorderly conduct, there was no proof that they were disorderly, but rather arrested because they were black.

*Courageous Journey: A Guide to Alexandria's African American History.* Extraordinary Alexandria, 2015.

*Courageous Journey: A Guide to Alexandria's African American History* is a detailed pamphlet about the many African American Neighborhoods in Alexandria. It was very helpful, and it also gave me a good quote about the conditions of some of the houses.

*The Dedication of the Black Alexandria & Parker-Gray Alumni Historic Resource Center. Saturday, June 25, 1983.* Alexandria Library Special Collections, Vertical file: Neighborhoods--Parker Gray.

This pamphlet describes the schools before Parker Gray, and what the students thought when Parker-Gray was desegregated.

Kopf, Curtis. "Pioneer Sit-In is recalled." *The Alexandria Journal*, 6 December 1990, p. A1. Alexandria Library Special Collections, Vertical file: Alexandria Library--Sit-In, 1939.

This newspaper article, written in 1990, 51 years after the Sit-In interviews participant Buddy Evans. He talks about what he did before and after the Sit-In. He also includes that he was "Some kind of scared."

Lubold, Gordon. "50 Years, her life's an open book: Library's Davis is a City treasure." *The Alexandria journal*, 13 February 1997 p.A1. Alexandria Library Special Collections, Vertical file: Alexandria Library--Sit-In, 1939.

This article is about Gladys Davis, who celebrated her golden anniversary working at Alexandria libraries. She was the assistant librarian at the Robinson Library. It is interesting to read about her experiences.

Murray, Florence. "Claims Cap Broke Law In Library Case." *Chicago Defender*, Sept. 23, 1939, p. 4. Alexandria Library Special Collections, Vertical file: Alexandria Library--Sit-In, 1939.

This article is one of the only article that I found, which was published in a different region. I didn't even have luck with the Library of Congress archives. The photocopy of the article, which was in the Vertical File at the library, was very hard to read and we couldn't find a version online. It was very detailed and, the part that we could read, gave me a lot of information about the arrest and court case.

Neighborhoods. *Alexandria: African American Hall of Fame*.  
[http://www.alexandriaafricanamericanhalloffame.org/?page\\_id=163](http://www.alexandriaafricanamericanhalloffame.org/?page_id=163)

This website has a list of African American neighborhoods and businesses during the time of the library Sit-In. I found the funeral home information there.

*Out of Obscurity: The Story of the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In.* Produced by Matt Spangler and Beth Ann Schmitt, 2014

This documentary explained the events before and after the Sit-In. This movie shows interviews with the participants and was very informative. There was a reenactment of the event. I felt like this serves as a good foothold for what to research in the future.

Sullivan, Patricia. "Lawyer Samuel Tucker and his historic 1939 Sit-In at segregated Alexandria library." *Washington Post*. 7 August 2014, Web. 6 November 2019.

This describes Tucker's motives to become a lawyer, organize the Sit-In, and what he did after the Sit-In. One new thing from this article is that it says that Tucker disliked the idea of an all African American Library.

Tebbe, Jen. "St. Louis's Forgotten Sit-In Story." *Missouri Historical Society*, <https://mohistory.org/blog/st-louiss-forgotten-Sit-In-story>. Accessed 6 November 2019.

Sit-Ins were not common until the 1960s. Alexandria was one of the first cities to have a Sit-In but here I learned of Sit-Ins in Missouri that started in 1944, These were lunch counter Sit-Ins that resulted in the desegregation of many of the restaurants. I found it interesting that the owners and waitresses did not think that white people would sit next to African Americans, but they did.

## Appendix



Alexandria Library Sit-In Participants leaving the Queen Street Library

[https://www.alexandriava.gov/news\\_display.aspx?id=111874](https://www.alexandriava.gov/news_display.aspx?id=111874)



Samuel W. Tucker

<https://alxndria.ent.sirsi.net/custom/web/lhsc/sitin/tuckerletter/doc.html>



916 Queen Street  
Alexandria, Virginia  
February 13, 1940

Miss Katharine H. Scoggin, Librarian  
Alexandria Library  
Alexandria, Virginia

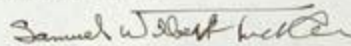
My dear Miss Scoggin:

Together with copy of letter from the City Manager to you dated January 26, 1940, I am in receipt of your letter of February 9 with reference to my application for library privileges, filed January 30, 1940.

I refuse and will always refuse to accept a card to be used at the library to be constructed and operated at Alfred and Wythe Streets in lieu of card to be used at the existing library on Queen Street for which I have made application. Continued delay -- beyond the close of this month -- in issuing to me a card for use at the library on Queen Street will be taken as a refusal to do so, whereupon I will feel justified in seeking the aid of court to enforce my right.

A letter is being sent to the City Manager on this subject, a copy of which I am herewith enclosing.

Very truly yours,

  
SAMUEL WILBERT TUCKER

Samuel W. Tucker's letter to Katherine Scoggins, Librarian, Queen Street Library  
<https://alxndria.ent.sirsi.net/custom/web/lhsc/sitin/tuckerletter/doc.html>