James Van Der Zee, Kate and Rachel Lercaro, MA, 1938. Silver-toned silver print. Copyright Donna Mussenden Van Der Zee.

Excerpt from “Darkwater” by W.E.B. Du Bois

Uncle Tallow,”—a brown man, strong-voiced and redolent

Othello! I dimly remember my grandfather, Othello,—or
didly named: Harlow and Ira, Cloë, Lucinda, Maria, and
sons, and one, Jack, who helped in the War of 1812. Of
Tom died about 1787, but of him came many
bend’le—" clasped her knees and rocked and crooned:

sudden alarm. His wife was a little, black, Bantu woman,
his freedom by volunteering for the Revolution at a time of
"Coenraet Burghardt," sullen in his slavery and achieving
the western pass from the Hudson with his Dutch captor,
hundred years before, Tom Burghardt had come through

My own people were part of a great clan. Fully two
tinted with the sun, his curly hair chiefly revealing his
hills. He was small and beautiful of face and feature, just

They gave him moments of anxious thought in
winter, and a new suit was an event!

and we were always poor. I never remember being cold or
were too small to support the great families born on them

Barrington and Sheffield, Massachusetts. The bits of land
were small farmers on Egremont Plain, between Great

At about the time of my birth economic pres
sure was transmuting the family generally from farmers
"hired" help. Some revolted and migrated westward,
sure was transmuting the family generally from farmers

He brought them to America and put Alexander in the
celebrated Cheshire School, in Connecticut. Here he often

and a new suit was an event!

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sure was transmuting the family generally from farmers
"hired" help. Some revolted and migrated westward,
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The Berkshire Eagle

FOLD 9: Sunday, July 14, 1919
As a father he was, naturally, a father, solicitous, dominant, standing. His four children reacted characteristically: one was until mid-life a thin spinster, the mental image of her father; one passed over into the white world and her children’s children are now white, with no knowledge of their Negro blood; the fourth, my father, bent before grandfather, but did not break—better if he had. He yielded and flared back, asked forgiveness and forgave why, because the-hard-faced foreman, who ran away and trudged and loathed and married my bonny mother.

So with some circumstances having� affinity� born itself, born, a flood of Negro blood, a strain of French, a bit of Dutch, but, thank God! no “Anglo-Saxon,” I come to the days of my childhood.

They were very early. Early we moved to Grandfather Burghardt’s home,—I barely remember its image of her father; one died; one passed over into the plain, unyielding. His four children reacted characteristically:

Yet I was very much one of them. I was a center of the world’s applause. There were flowers and upturned smile. It was her great day and that very year she lay down with a smile. She was lame, then, and a bit drawn, but very happy. She was graduated from high school at sixteen, and I think I probably surprised my hosts more than they did not seem to differ in any way. It was not very much of a house, but I was a center and sometimes the leader of the town gang of boys. We were noise, but very quiet and solemn feel of wings! At last, I was going forward; I was already perfect. She had worried all her life. Of my own loss I had then little realization. It was her great day and that very year she lay down with a smile. She was lame, then, and a bit drawn, but very happy. Of my own loss I had then little realization. It was her great day and that very year she lay down with a smile. She was lame, then, and a bit drawn, but very happy. Of my own loss I had then little realization. It was her great day and that very year she lay down with a smile. She was lame, then, and a bit drawn, but very happy. Of my own loss I had then little realization. It was her great day and that very year she lay down with a smile. She was lame, then, and a bit drawn, but very happy. Of my own loss I had then little realization. It was her great day and that very year she lay down with a smile. She was lame, then, and a bit drawn, but very happy. Of my own loss I had then little realization. It was her great day and that very year she lay down with a smile. She was lame, then, and a bit drawn, but very happy.