

# *Famous Figures of Silver:* **ANITA SCOTT COLEMAN**

The daughter of a buffalo soldier, raised in Silver City, Anita Scott Coleman became a writer of the Harlem Renaissance -- an African American literary movement centered in Harlem, New York in the 1920's and 30's.

Far from the bustling art culture of Harlem, Anita was a unique voice of the black west.

Today, Scott Park is named after her family. It was once part of their 180-acre ranch.

Anita was born in Guaymas, Sonora, Mexico in 1890. Her family came to Silver City when she was three. Her father William Henry Scott had originally come west from Florida as a buffalo soldier, a term for black enlisted men deployed to fight Native Americans after the Civil War.

Besides ranching, William also worked for the railroad in Silver City. He brought home newspapers and magazines that supported the rights of black people. Anita read a lot and was a good student. She went to New Mexico Teachers College (now WNMU) and became a teacher.

Anita wrote short stories, essays and poetry. She published 13 stories across the country, some winning awards. Her work included themes of family history, migration, home and belonging, and racial identity. She often used dialogue and humor.

Anita also wrote scenarios for silent films, inspired by trips to movie houses on North Bullard.

In 1926, Anita moved to Los Angeles. Her husband had found work as a photographer and printer. He later became the manager of a prominent black paper.

She raised four children in L.A. and continued to write. Her last published work was a children's book.

Anita Scott Coleman died in 1960.



*“For here prevails for every man be he white or black a hardier philosophy—and a bigger and better chance...”*

~ from “Arizona & New Mexico- The Land of Esperanza,” 1926



Sources:

*Western Echoes of the Harlem Renaissance: The Life and Writings of Anita Scott Coleman*; ed. Cynthia Davis and Verdner Mitchell, 2008