

**A Tale of Two Brothers:**  
*Reverend Edward Green and*  
*His Brother Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth*



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## I. INTRODUCTION: TWO BROTHERS

This is a tale of two men; neither man knew of the other and their paths never crossed. However, the two men shared a father, and more than that, they shared a profession and a belief that racial discrimination was never justified. Both men suffered for that belief.

The first brother, Reverend Edward Green, is unknown to history. At first glance his life and death may seem quite insignificant. However, as a black man, as a veteran of World War II, as a minister, his perceived transgression of refusing to pick cotton for low wages led to his death. Nearly twenty years later, the second brother, Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, known and remembered by history, faced incredible adversity for standing up against racial discrimination.<sup>1</sup> Although he faced at least three attempts on his life, Rev. Shuttlesworth lived to see the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and he continued the fight for civil rights throughout his long life.<sup>2</sup>

The brothers, though unknown to each other, represent the extreme risks that African Americans faced when they questioned the inequality they faced every day. Both brothers faced violence for fighting on behalf of what they believed was right. Reverend Shuttlesworth vowed to “kill segregation or be killed by it.”<sup>3</sup> He was one of many who struggled to kill segregation; he managed to survive the fight. His brother, however, was not so lucky. While there are books and archives dedicated to the long and active life of the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, the Reverend

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1 Andrew Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out: The Civil Rights Life of Birmingham's Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth*, (1998), hereinafter Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*.

2 Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*.

3 Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*, 255.

Edward Green was not so fortunate, and died without public acknowledgement of the significance of his life or the details of his death.

This paper describes the lives of each brother, piecing together what is known and what is most likely to have occurred during the short lifetime of Reverend Green. The paper relies on an extensive body of history concerning Reverend Shuttlesworth's life and his role in the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960's. It also includes a section about labor relations and racial discrimination in agricultural settings, as those issues seem to be related to the reason Rev. Green was killed. It concludes with an analysis of the similarities between these two brothers and the impact their lives may have had on one another.

## **II. REVEREND EDWARD GREEN**

Reverend Edward Green was born November 4, 1919 to Vedder Green and Georgia Terrell in Montgomery County, Alabama.<sup>4</sup> He was found dead near the Tyler-Goodwin Bridge on September 13, 1943.<sup>5</sup> These are the only certainties known about the life of Rev. Green. His name is not in any censuses for the area during his lifetime, and no records of military service exist in his name: his story begins and ends with one piece of paper.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Death Certificate for Edward Green, 13 Sept. 1943, File No. 18323, Alabama Center for Health Statistics. Certified copy in possession of CRRJ clinic.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> See United States Census Bureau, 1920 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama; United States Census Bureau, 1930 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama; and United States Census Bureau, 1940 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama. (Green is not listed in any of the aforementioned censuses; No military records were found at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis).

The Tyler-Goodwin Bridge, which connects Elmore County to Montgomery County over the Alabama River, has a story of its own. Members of the Ku Klux Klan used the bridge as a burial ground in at least one instance.<sup>7</sup> In early 1957, Willie Edwards Jr. had recently been hired as a driver for Winn-Dixie.<sup>8</sup> He was called in to work for a sick employee on the night of January 23, 1957.<sup>9</sup> After stopping to buy a soft drink on his way home from his first trip to Sylacauga, Alabama, Edwards turned on the dome light in the truck to read his log book.<sup>10</sup>

Henry Alexander, a prominent member of the local KKK identified Edwards as the man who was accused of making an offensive remark to a white woman.<sup>11</sup> After Alexander made the identification, two Klansmen ordered Willie Edwards into their car at gunpoint.<sup>12</sup> Edwards, who had two children and one on the way, had kept himself at a distance from the civil rights turmoil in his hometown.<sup>13</sup> He had never harassed a white woman, but when the car driven by the Klansmen arrived at the Tyler-Goodwin Bridge, they gave Willie Edwards a choice: run or

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7 Adam Nossiter, *Murder, Memory and the Klan: A Special Report; Widow Inherits a Confession to a 36-Year-Old Hate Crime*, *The New York Times*, Sept. 4, 1993, hereinafter Nossiter, *Murder and the Klan*.

8 Nossiter, *Murder and the Klan*.

9 *Id.*

10 *Id.*

11 *Id.*

12 *Id.*

13 *Id.*

jump.<sup>14</sup> Feeling that his chances were better in the Alabama River than being chased by four Klansmen with guns, Edwards jumped off the bridge.<sup>15</sup>

The investigation into the disappearance of Willie Edwards was quickly written off by the local authorities. His body washed up three months later, and no charges were brought until two other cases involving the unsolved death of African American men were dismissed in 1976.<sup>16</sup> No one was ever tried or served time for the murder of Willie Edwards.<sup>17</sup> The Tyler-Goodwin Bridge is known for the murder only because Willie Edwards's family continued seeking answers. Rev. Edward Green did not have a wife or children to continue pressing for answers after his death. In 1943 Alabama, no one batted an eye at the death of a young black man.

None of the local newspapers: the *Montgomery Advertiser*, *Wetumpka Herald*, or the *Millbrook Independent*, had any stories about Rev. Edward Green's death.<sup>18</sup> None of the papers from this time in these areas mention the body of a black man being found along the Alabama River.<sup>19</sup> Even had this been a suicide, one would expect some local reporting on the subject, but

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14 *Id.*

15 *Id.*

16 *Id.*

17 *Id.*

18 See generally *The Montgomery Advertiser*, Sep. 1943; *The Wetumpka Herald*, Sep. 1943; and *The Millbrook Independent*, Sep. 1943. (Green was not mentioned in any of the aforementioned newspapers, nor was there any report about a suicide or the finding of a black man's body at the Tyler-Goodwin Bridge).

19 *Id.*

there was none. Nor did the national newspapers pick up the story.<sup>20</sup> Although the death certificate lists Rev. Edward Green's death as a suspected suicide, it seems clear that there was another story.<sup>21</sup>

The American Civil Liberties Union's Committee against Racial Discrimination (CARD) formed by Roger Baldwin, one of the founders of the ACLU, and chaired by the famous author Pearl Buck, learned about Rev. Green's death.<sup>22</sup> Although the committee was formed after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and was originally designed to fight discrimination against Asian Americans, CARD also fought for equal employment opportunities, a federal anti-lynching law, the abolition of the poll tax, and elimination of discrimination in the military.<sup>23</sup> Ms. Buck warned Americans that discrimination against blacks served the Japanese propaganda and hurt America's

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<sup>20</sup> See generally, *The Atlanta Daily World*, Sep. and Oct. 1943. *The Baltimore Afro-American*, Sep. and Oct. 1943; *The Chicago Defender*, Sept. and Oct. 1943; *The Los Angeles Sentinel*, Sep. and Oct. 1943; *The Pittsburgh Courier*, Sep. and Oct. 1943; and *The New York Amsterdam News*, Sep. and Oct. 1943. (No mention of Green or a drowning/murder of a black man in Alabama exists in these papers. Often times, national black newspapers picked up stories of the deaths of African Americans, especially if the death was due to discrimination.)

<sup>21</sup> Death Certificate for Edward Green, 13 Sept. 1943, File No. 18323, Alabama Center for Health Statistics. Certified copy in possession of CRRJ clinic.

<sup>22</sup> See Letter from Winifred Raushenbush, Secretary Committee against Race Discrimination in the War Effort of the American Civil Liberties Union, to Victor Rotnem, Civil Rights Section of the Department of Justice (Sept. 28, 1943) (on file in the CRRJ clinic); Letter from Tom C. Clark, Assistant Attorney General, to Winifred Raushenbush, Secretary of the Committee against Race Discrimination in the War Effort of the American Civil Liberties Union (October 6, 1943) (on file in the CRRJ clinic); and Samuel Walker, *In Defense of American Civil Liberties: A History of the American Civil Liberties Union* (1999), (hereinafter, Walker, *A History of the ACLU*).

<sup>23</sup> *Id.*



national image; many pamphlets quoted her saying, “every race riot, every lynching, gives joy to Japan.”<sup>24</sup>

The only organization that attempted to take up the cause of determining finding out what happened to Rev. Green was CARD.<sup>25</sup> In a letter to the Victor Rotner of the Civil Rights Section of the United States Department of Justice, the Committee asked about three incidents:

“Terrorization of Negroes in Wetumpka, Alabama, because of refusal to pick cotton at a low price; the killing of Rev. Edward Green in Millbrook by white men because of his refusal to pick cotton, and the shooting of a Negro soldier on Monroe Street [presumably in Montgomery, though the letter is not clear about this] by a white M.P.”<sup>26</sup> The letter was intended to be an inquiry into whether the Department of Justice knew anything about these incidents and it sought help in looking into the accusations to determine whether there was any foundation for these charges.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Peter Conn, *PEARL S. BUCK: A CULTURAL BIOGRAPHY*, 297 (1998).

<sup>25</sup> See Letter from Winifred Raushenbush, Secretary Committee against Race Discrimination in the War Effort of the American Civil Liberties Union, to Victor Rotnem, Civil Rights Section of the Department of Justice (Sept. 28, 1943) (on file in the CRRJ clinic); Letter from Tom C. Clark, Assistant Attorney General, to Winifred Raushenbush, Secretary of the Committee against Race Discrimination in the War Effort of the American Civil Liberties Union (October 6, 1943) (on file in the CRRJ clinic); and Walker, *A History of the ACLU*.

<sup>26</sup> Letter from Winifred Raushenbush, Secretary Committee against Race Discrimination in the War Effort of the American Civil Liberties Union, to Victor Rotnem, Civil Rights Section of the Department of Justice (Sept. 28, 1943) (on file in the CRRJ clinic).

<sup>27</sup> Letter from Winifred Raushenbush, Secretary Committee against Race Discrimination in the War Effort of the American Civil Liberties Union, to Victor Rotner, Civil Rights Section of the Department of Justice (Sept. 28, 1943) (on file in the CRRJ clinic).

Attorney General Tom C. Clark, wrote in return stating, “No such information or reports have been received here to date...If you desire to furnish any specific allegations or complaints concerning the occurrences referred to, prompt consideration will be given if it appears that there is any violation of Federal criminal statutes.”<sup>28</sup> No further correspondence exists.<sup>29</sup> The two aforementioned letters make up the entirety of the Department of Justice file concerning the Rev. Edward Green’s death.<sup>30</sup> No investigation occurred; no further complaints were made, and it seems that neither CARD nor the DOJ spent any more time investigating the death of Rev. Green, the terrorization of others in Wetumpka, or the shooting of a black soldier by a white military policeman.

### **III. AGRICULTURE AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**

1943 was a tough year for the cotton crop and the cotton farmers for multiple many reasons, including a labor shortage due to the war and wage disputes. While this section could be considered speculative, since the only source suggesting that Rev. Edward Green’s death was related to agricultural labor problems is the letter from the Committee against Racial Discrimination,<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, the labor situation may have led to pressure on Rev. Green to pick

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28 Letter from Tom C. Clark, Assistant Attorney General, to Winifred Raushenbush, Secretary of the Committee against Race Discrimination in the War Effort of the American Civil Liberties Union (October 6, 1943) (on file in the CRRJ clinic).

29 See Letter from Winifred Raushenbush and letter from Tom C. Clark (these two letters are the entirety of The Department of Justice’s file on Reverend Edward Green).

30 See Letter from Winifred Raushenbush and letter from Tom C. Clark (these two letters are the entirety of The Department of Justice’s file on Reverend Edward Green).

31 See Letter from Winifred Raushenbush (stating that he was killed for refusing to pick cotton).

cotton and may suggest reasons why he refused to do so. Therefore, this section addresses the cotton crop of 1943 and the effects of racial discrimination upon agricultural labor

- Cotton crop of 1943 – boll weevil
- Insurance issues of 1943
- Documented discrimination in agricultural labor
- Role of the war in agricultural labor and labor relations in general

#### IV. FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Reverend Edward Green's parents were Georgia Terrell and Vedder Green.<sup>32</sup> By the time of her son's death, Georgia Terrell had become Georgia Jackson.<sup>33</sup> She never married Rev. Green's father.<sup>34</sup> However, her son was given his father's name.<sup>35</sup> Little else is known about Georgia Terrell's life. She eluded the census and her name does not seem to appear anywhere but on her son's death certificate.<sup>36</sup> Vedder Green, however, seems to have been quite the lady's man. He

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<sup>32</sup> See Death Certificate of Edward Green.

<sup>33</sup> See Death Certificate of Edward Green.

<sup>34</sup> As there was no record of a marriage between Georgia Terrell and Vedder Green and Vedder was seeing Alberta Robinson shortly after the birth of Edward Green, it is more likely than not that the two never married.

<sup>35</sup> See Death Certificate of Edward Green.

<sup>36</sup> See United States Census Bureau, 1900 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama; United States Census Bureau, 1910 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama; and United States Census Bureau, 1920 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama; United States Census Bureau, 1930 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama; United States Census Bureau, 1940 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama; United States Census Bureau, 1950 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama; and United States Census Bureau, 1960 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS, Alabama; (Georgia Terrell or Georgia Terrell Jackson is not listed in any aforementioned censuses as a black woman with a son the age of Edward Green).

lived in a dilapidated shack in an alley in Montgomery and made a living keeping dogs and repairing watches and guns.<sup>37</sup>

Shortly after the birth of his son Edward, Vedder Green became involved with a young woman named Alberta Robinson.<sup>38</sup> The two were very much in love, but since Vedder Green appeared to be without education or ambition, Alberta's father would not approve the marriage.<sup>39</sup> She continued seeing Green, and on March 18, 1922, they had a son.<sup>40</sup> Alberta named him Freddie Lee, and he was given his mother's maiden name – Robinson.<sup>41</sup> When Alberta became pregnant again in 1923, her father decided to move his family, including his daughter and his illegitimate grandson, to Jefferson County where Birmingham is located.<sup>42</sup>

It seems that neither of Vedder Green's sons knew of the other. Freddie Lee Robinson was raised by his mother and step-father.<sup>43</sup> After Alberta Robinson married \_\_\_\_\_, she gave her children Freddie and Cleola, (the daughter with whom she was pregnant upon moving) her new

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37 Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*, 12.

38 *Id.*

39 *Id.*

40 *Id.*

41 *Id.*

42 *Id.*

43 *Id.*

(husband's name.<sup>44</sup> Thus, Freddie Lee Robinson became Fred Shuttlesworth.<sup>45</sup> The Shuttlesworths had seven children together, and each had two children from previous relationships.<sup>46</sup> While Fred Shuttlesworth grew up surrounded by family, it seems Edward Green had no siblings and lived and died believing he was an only child.<sup>47</sup>

## V. REVEREND FRED SHUTTLESWORTH

As much is known about Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth's life and his work in the Civil Rights movement, this section will focus on the work of Fred Shuttlesworth in the courts and his resolve to challenge the status quo of racial discrimination. After the Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education, Fred Shuttlesworth, the NAACP, and many whites in Birmingham supported the need for "Negro police."<sup>48</sup> In 1955, Fred Shuttlesworth drafted a petition and presented it to the ministers of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance for endorsement, couching the appeal in terms of "crime, delinquency, and lawlessness," rather than integration.<sup>49</sup> His request called for "immediate hiring of Negro police and detectives in areas populated by Negroes." He argued that this would reduce and prevent crime and, since other Alabama cities

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44 *Id.*

45 *Id.*

46 *Id.*

47 Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*, 12. Note also the absence of a connection between Vedder Green and Edward Green in census data.

48 Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*, at 82.

49 *Id.*

were already using black police with success, Birmingham should too.<sup>50</sup> At this point in his career, Shuttlesworth was still willing to accommodate Jim Crow laws to a certain extent; his petition also called for more recreational facilities for blacks, rather than integrating recreational facilities.<sup>51</sup> The petition was presented to city hall on July 25, 1955; it was rejected the next day.<sup>52</sup> Shuttlesworth continued seeking additional support for the petition and presenting it to city hall, but Birmingham would continue to have a colorless police force into the 1960s.<sup>53</sup>

Due to his involvement in civil rights work, Shuttlesworth began to experience threats and violence.<sup>54</sup> On Christmas day 1956, six to sixteen sticks of dynamite were thrown under his bedroom window; the explosion caved in the front porch, took out the roof on the front part of the house, dug a crater in the yard, and blew out the windows in across the street.<sup>55</sup> Remarkably, neither he nor any of his family was harmed in the bombing.<sup>56</sup> If the message of the bombers, who are still unknown, was to warn Shuttlesworth to stop working for civil rights, they

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50 *Id.*

51 *Id.*

52 Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*

53 *Id.*

54 *Id.*, at 108.

55 *Id.*

56 *Id.*

accomplished the opposite, as Shuttlesworth was quoted as saying, “I knew in a second, [a] split second, that the only reason God saved me was to lead the fight.”<sup>57</sup>

While continuing his work to get African Americans on the Birmingham police force, Shuttlesworth kept up with his duties as pastor and attempted to achieve integration in other spheres. His efforts to enroll his children in a public school closer to their home,<sup>58</sup> led to a case that went to the Supreme Court - Shuttlesworth v. Birmingham Board of Education.<sup>59</sup> The Shuttlesworths and other African American families wanted to send their children to public schools situated closer to their homes than the schools to which they had been assigned.<sup>60</sup> The assignments were based on race, but the Birmingham Board of Education argued that the School Placement Law was constitutional and placements were based on individual merit.<sup>61</sup> The Alabama State Superintendent of Education wrote to the parents who were questioning the validity of the law, stating, “If you refuse to cooperate with the city board of education in the school placement of your children, you will in effect invite the abolishment of the public schools. Where would your children be, and where would the children of your friends and your people be in this State without public schools? Your child has many advantages in having a teacher of your race.”<sup>62</sup>

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57 *Id.* at 109.

58 *Id.* at 108.

59 162 F. Supp. 372 (1958).

60 162 F. Supp. 372 (1958).

61 162 F. Supp. 372 (1958).

62 162 F. Supp. 372, at 374 (1958).

The Court found that the law furnished the legal machinery for an orderly administration of the public schools in a constitutional manner by the admission of qualified pupils upon a basis of individual merit without regard to their race or color; the Court presumed it would be so administered, and if not it would come back to the Courts.<sup>63</sup> Effectively, the Court was not about to cause more racial tension in the city known as “Bombingham.”

For his efforts in pressing for equal rights in education, Rev. Shuttlesworth experienced another attempt on his life; this time his wife Ruby was also harmed.<sup>64</sup> This attack was by a mob of Klansmen who beat Shuttlesworth with chains and brass knuckles in the street, and his wife was stabbed.<sup>65</sup> Police were nowhere to be seen, and no one was arrested in connection with this incident; although one of his assailants was eventually convicted for another crime he committed (the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church Bombing).<sup>66</sup>

Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth continued fighting for integration and ending racial discrimination; his civil rights campaigns took him to the Supreme Court on two other occasions.<sup>67</sup> In 1965, Shuttlesworth was arrested and charged under the Birmingham General City Code for refusing to

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<sup>63</sup> 162 F. Supp. 372, at 384 (1958).

<sup>64</sup> Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*.

<sup>65</sup> *Id.*

<sup>66</sup> Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*. (Bobby Frank Cherry was one of the assailants; he was tried and convicted for murder nearly forty years after the bombing of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church in which four young black girls were killed).

<sup>67</sup> *Shuttlesworth v. Birmingham*, 382 U.S. 87 (1965) and *Shuttlesworth v. Birmingham*, 394 U.S. 147 (1969).



leave the sidewalk where he was standing after being asked to do so by a police officer.<sup>68</sup>

Although he was charged with violating §§ 1142 and 1231 of the City Code, the Supreme Court sided with Shuttlesworth, ruling that §1231 was for directing vehicular traffic, and there was no evidence the officer was doing so at the time he asked Shuttlesworth to move.<sup>69</sup> In his concurring opinion, Judge Fortas stated, “Shuttlesworth’s arrest was an incident in the tense racial conflict in Birmingham...Any attempt to punish Shuttlesworth in these circumstances would, in my view, violate the Fourteenth Amendment of the Federal Constitution.”<sup>70</sup>

In 1969, Shuttlesworth challenged the constitutionality of an ordinance that was clearly being administered to deny the right of assembly.<sup>71</sup> On Good Friday, April 12, 1963, fifty-two African Americans were led out of a Birmingham church by three ministers, Rev. Shuttlesworth, Rev. Ralph Abernathy, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.<sup>72</sup> The group had first attempted to obtain a permit from the City Commission, but were told that under no circumstances would they be permitted to demonstrate.<sup>73</sup> The picket occurred without leaving the sidewalk, interfering with other pedestrians, obstructing vehicles, or disobeying traffic signals; however nearly all participants were arrested.<sup>74</sup> The Supreme Court reversed the lower courts’ decision and found that the ordinance was administered so as “to deny or unwarrantedly abridge the right of  
68 Shuttlesworth v. Birmingham, 382 U.S. 87 (1965).

69 Shuttlesworth v. Birmingham, 382 U.S. 87 (1965).

70 382 U.S. 87, at 102 (1965).

71 394 U.S. 147 (1969).

72 394 U.S. 147 (1969).

73 394 U.S. 147, at 158 (1969).

assembly and the opportunities for the communication of thought...immemorially associated with resort to public places.”<sup>75</sup> Through his work in the Birmingham, Shuttlesworth was able to inspire and help organize African Americans. His work led to the enactment of Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other significant civil rights reforms. He was dedicated to doing whatever it took to make things right and could be confrontational when it was necessary. In a letter to Martin Luther King, Jr. he stressed the importance of the hard work after the “flowery speeches.”<sup>76</sup> Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth lived his life, standing up for justice and fighting inequality through confrontation and his own strong will.

## **VI. PARALLEL LIVES**

Although the men never met, both Reverend Edward Green and Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth worked in the church. They both felt compelled to do the Lord’s work and with that came a larger responsibility to their congregation and to their race. Although it is unlikely neither man knew of his brother, they lived quite similar lives. Neither man was willing to do what he was told to do by white men just because they were white. By insisting upon something as simple as standing on a sidewalk, Rev. Shuttlesworth was jailed. He had to appeal to the Supreme Court to prove that he was not legally required to move from a public sidewalk when he was doing nothing wrong.

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74 394 U.S. 147 (1969).

75 394 U.S. 147, at 158 (1969).

76 Letter from Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth to Martin Luther King, Jr. (Apr. 24, 1959) (on file with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project).

His brother Rev. Green may have refused to pick cotton for a similar reason. Reverend Green was not a field laborer; he would not pick cotton simply because he was told to do so. His refusal ended in his death. Perhaps Rev. Green's challenge to the \_\_\_\_\_???? was ahead of his time. Not even Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth stood up against racial inequality in the 1940s; his civil rights activism came later. Had Shuttlesworth known about his brother's death, he might have become involved in the civil rights movement earlier, risking more attempts on his life and a greater probability of his life ending tragically, like his peer Martin Luther King, Jr. Had these two brothers known each other, history might have been very different.

However, had the Department of Justice done its job and looked into the death of Rev. Green and many of the other racial homicides of the era, perhaps Rev. Shuttlesworth wouldn't have had to work so hard to ensure the police did their jobs rather than work against people of color.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth did not meet his biological father until he attended Alabama State College in 1949.<sup>77</sup> At this point, his brother, Reverend Edward Green, had been dead for more than six years.<sup>78</sup> It is unknown if Vedder Green was ever a part of his first son's life. Even if he were, it is unlikely that Edward Green's death would have come up in conversation when Vedder Green met his second child for the first time in twenty-three years. This tale of two brothers was never a story about a united family, but by examining the two brothers' lives it becomes clear how difficult it was to stand up for equality in Alabama especially for African

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<sup>77</sup> Manis, *A Fire You Can't Put Out*, 449.

<sup>78</sup> Death Certificate of Edward Green.

Americans. Two brothers; two reverends; two men were willing to stand up for what they felt was right. Both men faced extreme violence. One has been forgotten; one forever changed history. Both brothers were prepared to die for their beliefs, and, in the words of Fred Shuttlesworth, “You have to be prepared to die before you can live.”<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why Can't We Wait*, 1964.