

Work, Sacrifice, And Prayers Make Farm Project A Reality For Mount Vernon Church Congregation

By JAMES ALLEN CARTER

It means a lot to own something; a home, a car, a business, or even a bicycle or scooter. Although there is a lot of toil and sacrifice involved in acquiring what is wanted, the joy and inspiration in knowing that it ultimately will belong to you is comforting.

Such is the belief of the members of Mount Vernon Baptist Church, who each has a share in the ownership of a farm purchased recently by the church. Some didn't believe it could be done, and some maybe couldn't see the need of making such a purchase, but with the leadership and inspiration of the church pastor, the Rev. E. T. Browne, the farm project has become more purposeful.

Needs of the church's youth prompted the idea of seeking a place for them to actively engage in safe and wholesome recreation in a quiet atmosphere.

The Mount Vernon Baptist Church Acres, as it is called, consists of a little more than 92 acres of land located 12 miles east of Durham on Wake Forest Road. A lake of 1.1 acres and an athletic field of 2 and one fourth acres are on the site for use by all who desire. The lake has a maximum depth of 14 feet and is suitable for fishing, swimming, or boating. All water activities will be under competent supervision.

Dedication of Mount Vernon Acres was held Easter Monday with W. J. Kennedy, Jr., giving the address at the farm. During the ceremonies, approximately \$900 was raised and an additional contribution of \$1,000 was made by one organization for financing the project.

Main sources of finance for the farm came from monthly contributions from members and friends of the church and annual contributions from the various church departments.

A well 140 feet deep is capable of giving 10 gallons of water per minute. A farm house which was reconitioned by Messrs. Wiggins, Meadows, and others is situated on the farm for use by a caretaker.

The largest and most versatile building on the farm is the Honor Diner, which was given this name in honor of those who have worked and looked forward to the day when their children can go to a place such as this for picnics and recreational outlet. The diner has a 20 x 11 ft. kitchen which was equipped by voluntary gifts from members and friends.

W. A. Amey gave a 50-gallon water heater; Miss Dolcie Royster gave a sink for the kitchen; Amey's Florist gave a wood stove, an ice box was given by Buddy and Mrs. Josephine Pratt; and a table was contributed by John Mitchell. The diner can be used year round.

Mr. Amey and Rev. Browne laid the cement brick foundation for the diner with the assistance of James Hardy. The Union Electric Co. wired the building; plumbing was done by the Ray Co.; and painting was done by Sam Fennell, deacon of the church. All repair work and construction on the farm was done by local Negro businesses.

A large bell has been stationed on the property for calling groups together at the end of the day. This bell holds great sentiment for Pastor Browne because it was the time

determinant for him when he worked on a farm in Southampton County, Virginia. A cesspool to accommodate 150 persons is also on the farm.

Several groups of the church have held activities at the farm this summer and others are planned for the remaining warm weather months. Earlier this summer, the church Vacation Bible School was held daily at the farm with four adult and 11 youth leaders teaching the Bible study, singing, recreation, fine and industrial arts courses. A midjet baseball league has been organized for the young members and games are played on the farm grounds at regular intervals.

To provide transportation to and from Mount Vernon Acres, two buses were purchased by the church. Ninety-two passengers can be transported per trip on the buses, and any group of 20 persons can secure the service of the buses for church outings. A voluntary staff of drivers are available to serve as chauffeurs.

The \$6,000 farm which was purchased from Mr. and Mrs. John Sutt, serves more than 1,380 members of the church including over 340 children.

Numerous good will contributions have been made in order to make the farm project materialize. A truck wheel and jack for the bus was donated by Fitz-Turner; a tire casing by Durham Furniture Co. through Mr. Faulk; an inner tube, by Sid Ransome Co. Ernest B. Cranford through the cooperation of W. A. Amey, donated approximately 30 chairs, and another donor sold the church a house for \$30 from which materials were used to make re-

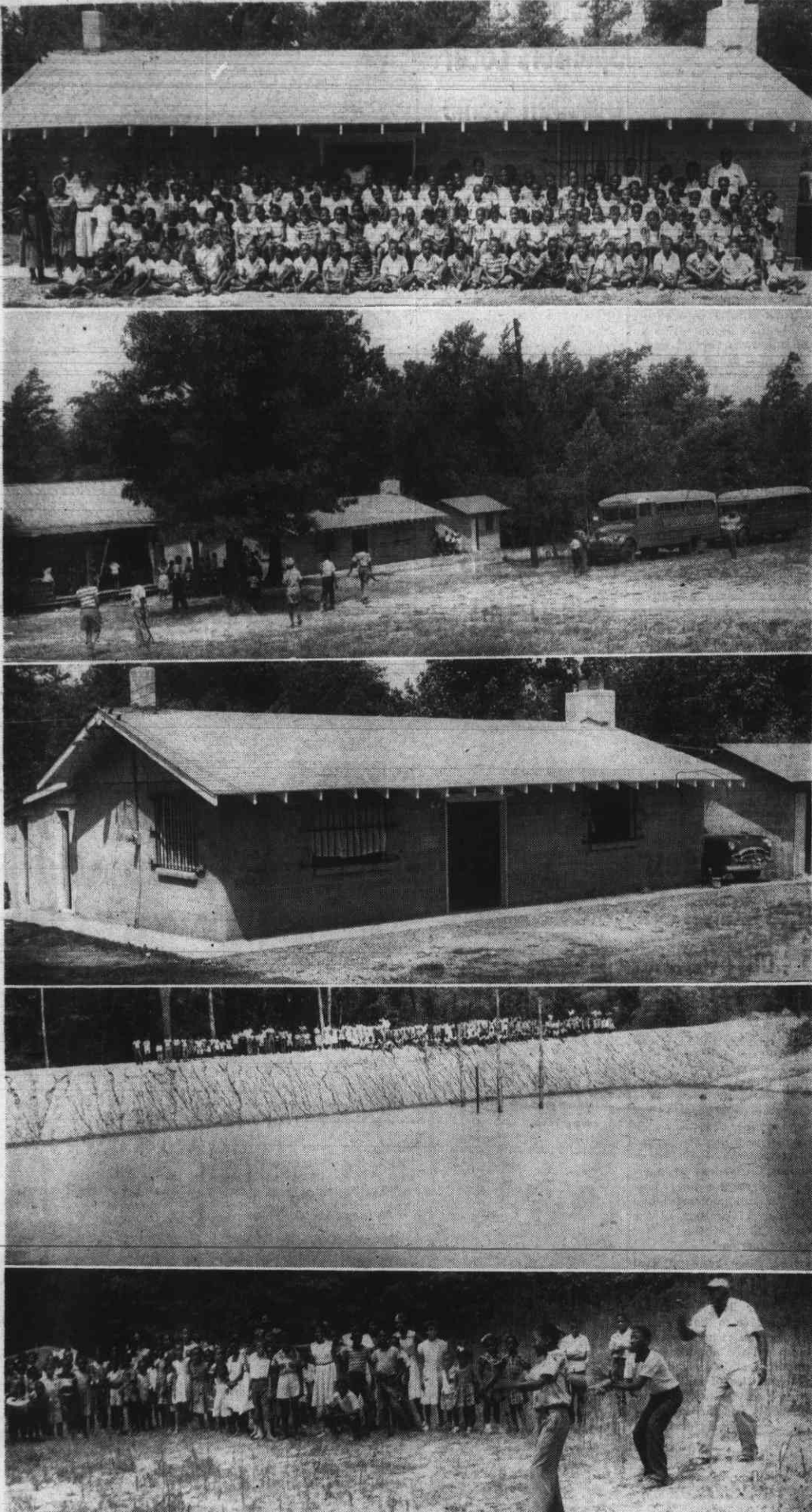
pairs on the farm house. Rev. Mr. Browne, who became the pastor of the church six years ago, considers himself "quite fortunate to be called to a church not having a wholesome outlet for its members," because this project offered him and the congregation great encouragement in proving that with God, all things are possible.

The farm idea was originated by the pastor for the purposes of providing wholesome recreation for the Mount Vernon Church family and friends; to teach members thrift, to own something; and to make it possible for many persons who ordinarily wouldn't have a vacation, to take a few days off to rest.

At the age of 18, the Mount Vernon pastor was admitted to the fourth grade in elementary

school after working on a Va. farm during the early part of his youth. He later attended Virginia Theological Seminary and College, Lynchburg, Va.; Virginia Union University, and Union Theological Seminary in New York. Such an humble beginning is an example of what can be accomplished through consistent faith. Pastor Browne does not take all of the credit for his achievements in religious uplift of the community he serves. Much credit goes to his wife, Dr. Rose Butler Browne who is an ardent worker among young people in the church and the city. The cooperation of the Mt. Vernon church family also has been a source of inspiration for all advancements made.

The pastor emphasizes the fact that the new church farm is not for Mount Vernon Church members alone. It is open for use by all groups, church or otherwise, which have a definite plan or program to execute for the development of youth and the improvement of community relations.



CHURCH FARM—Scenes of Mount Vernon Baptist Church Acres, the farm purchased by Mount Vernon Baptist Church, are shown. At the top are children of the church who attended the Vacation Bible School held at the farm earlier this summer. The next photo shows the lake

which occupies 1.1 acres on the farm and is suitable for swimming, boating, and fishing.

The Honor Diner, composed of a kitchen, lavatories with running water, and the Counselor Cabin are shown in the third photo with the two buses owned by the church in the background at the right.

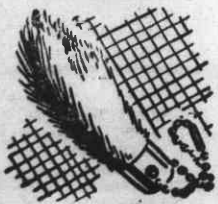
Rev. E. T. Brown is shown at

the right in the bottom photo umpiring a game played by some young people of the church on the farm's athletic field.

The project above was made possible under the leadership of Rev. and Mrs. E. T. Browne, and the cooperation of officers and members of Mount Vernon Baptist Church. It is hoped that

through this means a number of juvenile delinquency cases will be eliminated in Durham.

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(Continued from Page Three) Gail, professor of Industrial Education and W. A. Street, Jr., professor of architecture, all of A and T College and Reuben A. Clay, racial relations officer, Federal Housing Administration, Richmond, Va., will also be among the lecturers.



The sessions will begin, Tuesday morning at 9 o'clock and will conclude late Saturday afternoon.

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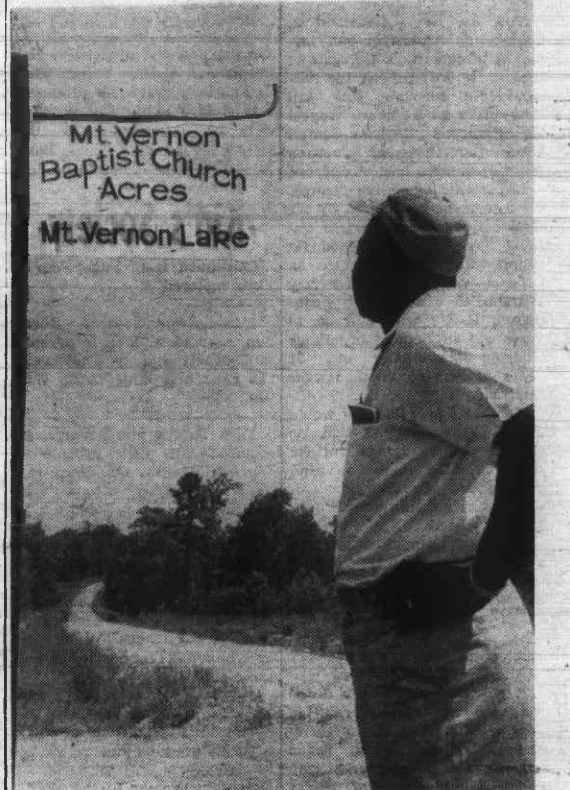
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FARM ENTRANCE—Rev. E. T. Browne, pastor of Mount Vernon Baptist Church is shown viewing the sign marking the entrance of Mount Ver-

non Acres, a 92-acre farm purchased recently by the church to make possible wholesome recreation for the members of the church and their friends.

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