

Historic Milestones

by Elva P. DeJarmon

(Brief anecdotes of Negro History from BEFORE THE MAYFLOWER, by Lerone Bennett, Jr., and THE NEGRO IN VIRGINIA, Writers Program of WPA in Virginia, Hampton Institute Sponsored.)

1866

Fisk University, opened Jan. 9.

Thaddeus Stevens proposed measure authorizing President to set aside land to be distributed to freedmen in 40 acre lots, Feb. 5. Measure was defeated by vote of 126 to 37.

Civil rights bill passed over President's veto, April 9. Race Riot, Memphis, Tenn., May 1-3. Forty six Negroes, two white liberals killed; about 75 wounded. Ninety homes, twelve schools and four churches were burned.

Race riot, New Orleans, La. July 30. Thirty five killed; more than one hundred wounded.

Edward G. Walker, son of abolitionist David Walker, and Charles L. Mitchell elected to Massachusetts House of Representatives, the first Negroes elected to an American legislative assembly

1867

Bill giving suffrage (vote) to Negroes in District of Columbia passed over President's Johnson's veto, January 8.

Negro delegation led by Frederick Douglass, called on President Johnson and urged ballots for ex-slaves, Feb. 7.

Morehouse College, opened,

First of series of Reconstruction Acts passed by Congress, March 2. Acts divided former Confederate states into five military districts under command of generals. Elections were ordered for constitutional conventions and freedmen were given the right to vote.

First national meeting of Ku Klux Klan, Maxwell House, Nashville, April.

Howard University, opened May, 1. Talladega College also opened in 1867 and Atlanta University was chartered.

The Knights of White Camelia, a secret white supremacist organization, founded in Louisiana, May.

1868

South Carolina Constitutional convention met in Charleston, January 14. This was the first assembly of its kind in the West with a majority of Negro delegates; seventy-six of the 124 delegates were Negroes.

William Edward Burghardt DuBois born in Great Barrington, Mass. February 23.

Hampton Institute opened, April, 1868.

Oscar J. Dunn, an ex-slave, formally installed as lieutenant governor of La., the highest elective office held by an American Negro, June 13. Negroes were later elected lieutenant governors of Mississippi and South Carolina.

First General Assembly of South Carolina Reconstruction government met at Janney's Hall, Columbia, July 6. Eighty-four of the 157 legislators were negroes.

Fourteenth Amendment became part of Constitution, July 28, 1868. Death of Thaddeus Stevens, architect of Radical Construction program, Washington, D. C. August 11.

Race riot, New Orleans, September 22; Other race riots in Louisiana in 1868 were at Opelousas, September 28; St. Bernard Parish, October 26.

1869

Ebenezer Don Carlos Bassett became minister to Haiti, April 16. Bassett was probably first negro to receive an appointment in diplomatic service.

1870

U. S. population: 39,818,449. Negro population: 4,880,009 (12.7%) Jonathan Jasper Wright became Associate Justice of South Carolina Supreme Court, February 2.

Hiram R. Revels succeeded Jefferson Davis as U. S. Senator from Mississippi, February 25. Revels was first Negro in Congress. Fifteenth Amendment became part of Constitution, March 30.

American Anti-Slavery Society dissolved, April 9.

First of series of Enforcement Acts (Klu Klux Klan Acts) put federal elections in hand of federal officials and guaranteed civil and political rights of freedmen through federal courts, May 31, 1870.

Governor Holden declared state of insurrection in two North Carolina counties, March 7 and July 8.

James W. Smith of South Carolina entered West Point, July 1, Smith, the first Negro student, did not graduate; he was separated June 26, 1874.

Joseph H. Rainey, first Negro in House of Representatives, sworn in as Congressman from South Carolina, December 12.

Colored Methodist Episcopal Church organized Jackson, Tenn. December 16. Robert H. Wood elected mayor of Natchez, Mississippi, December. 1871

Race riot, Meridian, Miss. March 6.

Fisk Jubilee Singers began first tour, October 6.

President Grant issued proclamation against KKK in South Carolina. Suspended writ of habeas Corpus in nine counties, October 17.

1872

Paul Lawrence Dunbar born in Dayton, Ohio, June 27.

Charlotte E. Ray, first Negro woman lawyer, graduated from Howard Univ. Law School, February 27. Atty. Ray, the first American woman to graduate from a university law school, was admitted to practice, April 23

John Henry Conyers of South Carolina entered Annapolis, September 21, He later resigned.

P.B.S. Pinchback became acting governor of Louisiana on the impeachment of the governor, December 11.

1873

P.B.S. Pinchback elected to the U.S. Senate, January 15. Colfax Massacre, Easter Sunday morning, Grant parish, La. April 13, more than 60 negroes killed.

Henry E. Hayne, Secretary of State, accepted as student at University of South Carolina, October 7.

W. C. Handy, born in Florence, Ala. November 16.

Richard T. Greener, first Negro graduate of Harvard University, named professor of Metaphysics at the University of South Carolina, November. University had several negro students and an interracial board of trustees.

from HISTORY'S SCRAPBOOK

DATES AND EVENTS FROM YESTERYEARS

January 30, 1933-The "Lone Ranger" radio program is broadcast for the first time across the United States.

January 31, 1917-Germany announces a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, accelerating the pace of World War I.

February 1, 1790-The Supreme Court of the United States holds its first session, meeting in New York City under the leadership of Chief Justice John Jay.

February 2,Ground Hog day.

February 3, 1924-Woodrow Wilson, former President, dies at his home in Washington.

February 4, 1789-Presidential electors cast all 69 of their votes for George Washington. John Adams is chosen Vice President.

February 5,Constitution Day in Mexico. This day commemorates the Constitutions of both 1857 and 1917 in that country.

Redbook Salutes H. Tubman

To celebrate Black History Month (February), Redbook magazine is publishing a condensed version of the forthcoming novel about the life of Underground Railroad heroine Harriet Tubman in its February issue, to be released January 20.

Anne Smith, fiction editor of Redbook, which publishes more fiction than any other mass circulation monthly and is the only two-time winner of the National Magazine Award for fiction, was so impressed with this first novel by March Heidish that she changed the magazine's regular publication procedure.

"Because the novel was long, our usual practice of condensing to 36,000 words was not practical, so we decided on an excerpt of the first three sections," Ms. Smith said. A new ending was prepared for the magazine version which covers Ms. Tubman's early years of slavery, her escape, and her first ten years with the Railroad.

Ms. Heidish's novel, "A Woman Called Moses," will be published in February by Houghton Mifflin.

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