

THE BETTER WE KNOW US ...

This article tends to objectively and respectively introduce one of Iredell County's and possibly North Carolina's most outstanding citizens, Brother John E. Chambers, Sr.

Brother Chambers, a dedicated man of God with the patience of Job, was born June 2, 1910 to the late Mr. and Mrs. J.P. Chambers of Statesville. He is one of seven children, two girls and five boys, with only one brother living, Edward M. Chambers. They presently reside at 114 Garfield Street, Statesville, N.C.

Though born of a large family with many hardships, John was determined and thus with the same fortitude he presently exemplifies graduated from Morningside High School with the honor of Valedictorian of the Class of '29.

Existing circumstances prevented him from furthering his education, however, they did not impede him from assuming his religious, civic, or moral responsibilities to his community and many friends.

In December 1939, he married Loretta Gather of Harmony, N.C. and became father of three (3) children, John Jr. presently residing in Statesville, Mrs. Florida Pendergrass and Miss Gwendolyn Chambers who resides in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

While working for the Playhouse Theatre for eighteen years as custodian and cashier, he was stricken with total blindness. However, he continued working another three years, rendering a total of 21 years service.

Meantime, his extra-curricular activities

were beginning to mount. He is a life-long member of Mt. Pleasant A.M.E. Zion Church where he served as Preachers Steward, five years; Chairman of Board of Trustees, 13 years; and Sunday School Superintendent, three years and is presently serving as Chaplain of Board of Trustees.

Brother Chambers is a member of Mt. Carmel Lodge No. 37 F.&A.M. Prince Hall, National Association Advancement of Colored People, former member Human Relations Committee (dissolved) and the Improved Benevolent Protection Order Elks of World, Skyland Banner Lodge No. 316.

"Heavy" as he is sometimes called, joined Lodge No. 316 in 1936 where he diligently served as Secretary, Esteemed

Lecturing Knight, Board of Trustees. In addition, he is a member of the Past Exalted Ruler Council of the 7th District No. 132 and the Fez Club. He formerly served as Chief Antler of Past Exalted Ruler's Council #30 of the 7th District, 1960-63.

Brother Chambers attended as delegate his first national convention in Atlanta, Georgia 1953; the State Association in High Point, N.C. 1960; National Conventions in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 1965; Cleveland, Ohio '66; and for the past five years he has attended all State Association and mid-year conferences, serving as Assistant State Chaplain.

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The 1976 Editions of THE TRIBUNAL AID will be dedicated to America's bicentennial Celebration, with emphasis on contributions our Race has made in the making of America, from birth to the present.

In 1976 there should not be a need to lift these contributions from isolated sources. Our

past should be interwoven into the fabric of our civilization, because we are, except for the Indian, America's oldest ethnic minority.

We have helped make America what it is, and what it is, since the founding of Virginia. We have been a factor in many major issues in our history. There have been many misdeeds

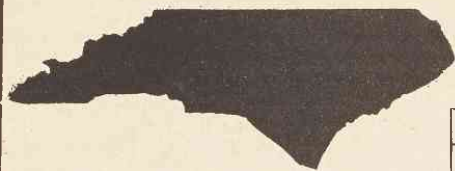
against us, yet we have been able to live through them and fight back. This is living proof of our history.

Our role in the making of America is neither well known or correctly known. Many positive contributions have escaped historians and have not found their way into the pages of

many history books.

We will strive to give readers, Black and white, many little-known facts about our past and it is hoped that a proper perspective of our history will be of value to persons who may believe that as Black People we have an unworthy past; and hence, no strong claims to all rights of other Americans.

Fay Ashe, Black History Editor



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**BICENTENNIAL
BLACK HISTORY**
"Lost-Strayed-Or Stolen"

No more substantial testimony to the role of the Black in the growth and development of America can be found than the numerous historical landmarks in various regions of the country which are associated with Black Americana. Many of these—like the Alamo and Bunker Hill—are not conventionally known as sites involving chapters of Negro history.

Red Bluff:

Oak Hill Cemetery
Burial place of Aaron Coffey, only black man in the Society of California Pioneers. Coffey, descendant of an officer who fought under Jackson at New Orleans, came to California a slave in 1849. By day, he worked at his master's claim; by night, as a cobbler, accumulating money toward his \$1,000 emancipation fee. Betrayed by his owner, he was forced to return to Missouri, where he was again sold. Coffey pleaded with his new master to allow him to return to California and earn the necessary money to free himself and his family, which he left behind as collateral. That mission accomplished, Coffey returned to Red Bluff, took up farming and settled down to a contented family life.

Sacramento:

St. Andrew's African Methodist Church
The first AME church in California, organized in a private residence in 1850. Within four years, the congregation organized a school for black, Oriental and Indian children in the church basement.

Mokelumme Hill:

Gold Discovery Marker
Site of a legendary strike involving a black miner

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Drotning, Phillip T. A Guide to Negro History in America New York: Doubleday and Company, 1968
Katz, William Loren Eyewitness: The Negro in

allegedly the butt of a white prank. According to the story, a befuddled Negro prospector asked his white colleagues where to dig and was told, with great fanfare, that a barren hillside in town was the most likely place to strike it rich. What took shape as an elaborate joke turned out, however, to be a startling prophecy, fulfilled inside of two days by a happy black prospector carrying a sack of gold. The butt of the joke had returned to thank his "friends" for their general and abundant service.

Oakland:

Oakland Art Museum
The museum has several pieces done by prominent black artists, including Sargent Johnson's *Forever Free* and lithographs by Grafton T. Brown, believed to be the first black artist active in the state.

Informative Reading

Grier, William H. & Cobbs, Price M. - *BLACK RAGE* New York, Bantam Books C. 1968

Sherman, Richard Ed. - *THE NEGRO AND THE CITY* Englewood, Cliff, N.J. Prentice Hall.

America New York: Pittman Publishing Corporation 1967

Ploski, Harry A. Phe Kaiser, Ernest *The Negro Almanac* New York: Bel-luether Company

Last week you read Dr. Du Bois' "CREDO". Some of you may ask, who was this man? What was his contribution in the making of America? In answer to some questions you might have:

W.E.B. DU BOIS was born three years after the Civil War, on February 23, 1868 in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. The DU BOISES came originally from France, settling in America in 1674. The BURGARDTS, his mother's family were descended from a slave who won his freedom after fighting in the American Revolution. Intermarrying with Dutch and Indians, they had been New England farmers for a hundred years before Du Bois was born. As a youth it never occurred to Du Bois that he was anything less than the equal of his fellow citizens. Most of his playmates were well-to-do white boys, but as he grew older he realized how people felt about his brown skin. Du Bois attended Fisk University, and this was the first time he had seen the beauty that he never dreamed of — skins that ranged from golden bronze to ebony. After graduation from Fisk, Du Bois won a scholarship to Harvard. Barred from clubs and dances because of the color of his skin, he spent long hours in classes and the library. In graduate school he wrote "THE SUPPRESSION OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE", which was published in 1896. Du Bois became the first Black to receive a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Harvard.

The SLATER FUND which had been set up for the education of Blacks was offering to send promising Blacks to Europe. Du Bois was given a fellowship for a year's study at the University of Berlin, with the promise of renewal for a second year.

Du Bois gained a reputation as prominent Black scholar and civil

rights activist. In 1905 he enlisted prominent Blacks and founded the NIAGARA MOVEMENT, through this organization he became an eloquent defender of full rights for Blacks. In addition to his demands for full equality for Blacks, Du Bois was known for his opposition to BOOKER T. WASHINGTON.

Although he described WASHINGTON as "the most distinguished Southerner since Jefferson Davis" he knew that Mr. WASHINGTON'S ATLAN-

TA COMPRISE was wrong. Dr. Du Bois believed that those Blacks who had gained success had the responsibility to lead the struggle to liberate all Blacks.

In 1910 the NIAGARA MOVEMENT merged with another group and formed the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE. A founder of this new organization, Du Bois became editor of its official publication the CRISIS and held that

position until 1934. Du Bois had a stormy career in the NAACP due to his militancy, and that year he was forced to resign.

From 1934 to 1944, Du Bois taught at Atlanta University. During this period he produced a major work, *BLACK RECONSTRUCTION IN AMERICA* and an autobiography, *DUSK OF DAWN*. As far back as 1900 Du Bois had delivered an address, *TO THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD*, which asked for self-government for Africa.

Before and after World War I, he organized the PAN-AFRICAN CONGRESS. "To focus the attention of the civilized world on the claims of Negroes everywhere". These conferences marked the beginning of what was to become African Nation's successful drive for independence from colonial powers. Du Bois attended the first meeting of the UNITED NATIONS as a consultant to the United States delegation. Later he called a new PAN-AFRICAN CONGRESS in England in 1945, and he was elder Statesman of the Congress. He greeted young African leaders, and during the years that followed he saw these men become Prime Ministers of their countries.

Because of his firm belief in equality, Du Bois spoke out and asked questions on many issues at a time in American history, the so-called McCarthy era, when fear of communism was stifling discussions, and a prudent man did not ask questions. A week before his eighty-third birthday, the Justice Department ordered his arrest as an agent of a foreign power. Du Bois faced a five year jail term if convicted. At his trial in November 1951, no witness could testify that he was a foreign agent, and the Judge dismissed the case for lack of evidence.

Du Bois continued to ask questions and became a victim of what one Black historian called "OPERATION FORGET". Magazine and book publishers shied away from his writings. This did not stop Du Bois, he wrote three historical novels, edited a book of selections from his earlier writings.

In spite of OPERATION FORGET Africa remembered him. He was ninety-three when Premier Nkrumah called him "friend and father". Before leaving the United States to live in Ghana, Du Bois applied for member-

ship in The Communist Party. He considered his action as one more stubborn fight for American principles. He thought that every American citizen should be allowed to speak no matter how sharply others disagreed.

Du Bois was given honors that had been denied him in his own country. He died in Ghana on August 27th 1963 at the age of ninety-six.

Six years earlier Du Bois had written a final message to the world:

"I have loved my work, I have loved people and my play but always I have been uplifted by the thought that what I have done well will live long and justify my life; that what I have done ill or never finished can now be handed on to others..."

"One thing alone I charge you. As you live, believe in life. Always human beings will live and progress to greater, broader and fuller life. The only possible death is to lose belief in this truth..."
Good-bye.

High Court Supports New Plan

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court, in a 5-3 vote, has ruled that redistricting plans that decrease black voter strength do not violate the federal Voting Rights Act, even when those plans result in a black voter strength that is less than their representation in the population.

The ruling means that states and localities covered by the act will now have an easier time bypassing the burden of proving that their redistricting plans are free of racial discrimination.

The high court's ruling now places the burden of proof to the challengers - black voters, civil rights lawyers and others. They will have to prove that the proposed reapportionment would discriminate against blacks.

The burden of proof is a key feature of the Voting Rights Act, which was designed to buttress the 15th Amendment's ban on racial discrimination in voting.

The decision involved a districting plan for New

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DR. WILLIAM EDWARD BURGHARDT DUBOIS
1868 - 1963

1776 Honoring America's Bicentennial 1976