

# THE TRIBUNAL AID

VOLUME IV, NO. 16

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1976

\$6.00 PER YEAR

25 CENTS

MEMBER: North Carolina Black Publishers Association

North Carolina Press Association, Inc.

**A VIABLE, VALID REQUIREMENT  
RESPONDING TO  
BLACK NORTH CAROLINA**

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.

Faye Ashe, Black History Editor

FORMER HIGH POINT RESIDENT

## RHYMES FROM THE DELTA

PART TWO

A few years ago I found a book entitled *RHYMES FROM THE DELTA*. The cover of the book was worn and I had no idea at the moment the author of the book. When I turned to the title page I discovered that the author was a High Pointer and a member of my church.

*RHYMES FROM THE DELTA* is a collection of Narratives and Poems by Mr. George W. McCorkle. In the words of Mr. McCorkle, I would like to share with you some of his recollections about the schools he attended, his first compositions written and first poem published.

I am sure some of the recollections given here and names mentioned will bring back memories to many people in the City of High Point and other states and cities visited by Mr. McCorkle.

Many of his poems are dedicated to people of this city, many of whom we have known.

Continued From Last Week

SENT TO SHELLBANKS FARM

My stay on Hampton campus was short-lived, for after being there about a week, I was sent to Shellbanks Farm. This farm was not a place of punishment, but had been provided by some philanthropist for boys who were unable to pay their way over at the Institute. Unfortunately, I was classed in that number. I do not know how this farm got its name, possibly from the donor, but anyhow it was a lovely spot, out there in the woods, located six miles from the Institution. Those boys who were sent to this division of the school worked on the farm during the day, and attended night classes out there. A short while after arriving at Shellbanks, I was put in charge of the boys out there. My examination over at the school proved that I was in a class to myself at Shellbanks, and, so, the teachers didn't bother me with any classroom work. I had the freedom of just sitting in class. I felt much uplifted, for I had found one school where I didn't have to study. This gave me more time for writing.

It was really an inspiration to be out there in the woods with the location as it was right on the Chesapeake Bay, so I made myself happy, feeling that even though I had been sent to the woods, my time would eventually come.

OPPORTUNITY COMES

One evening, the lady who was secretary to the head of the Agricultural Department of Hampton Institute, visited Shellbanks for the purpose of giving the boys the benefit of some moving pictures. For a while the little machine acted nicely, but finally it grew stubborn and failed to function. There the lady was in a situation which puzzled her. At that time, I went forward and told her that I could entertain from Dunbar and other authors, and would be glad to entertain the boys the rest of the evening. She gladly consented for me to entertain the group. My program was so well taken that at the conclusion, the lady asked if I would give another number, she would be glad to give a selection. I gave another number, and she gave a selection with great satisfaction. This same lady went back to the Institution and told Mr. Graham, head of the Agricultural Department of the School, of my ability, and in a few days Mr. Graham came out to make me a visit. He called me down to the office one morning through his secretary, and advised me to be patient, and in a few days I would be returned to the Institute.

LEAVES SHELLBANKS FARM

Sure enough, one morning they sent for me to return to the school. On my arrival to the campus, I found out that my reputation had gone before me. The first person I met was Capt. George W. Blount, to whose office I was taken. Captain Blount said, "You're back, are you?" And he made this very significant statement, "McCorkle, its hard to keep a good man down."

Once more back on the Hampton Campus, I soon entered upon the poetical field in a big way. In a short while I had invitations to speak to diffe-

rent groups on the campus. My first invitation was to give a program one Sunday afternoon before the Young Men's Christian Association. The auditorium was packed. At Hampton, in those days, they had what was known as "The Annual Oyster Roast." The guests at this affair were the faculty, officers of the school and their friends. I was the only student invited to share in that program. I soon succeeded in publishing, there at Hampton, my first collection of verses, "Poems of Thought and Cheer." My second collection, "Poems of Perpetual Memory," was also published there.

Mr. Betts who was head of the printing department at Hampton was very kind to me. He knew that I was without means and so after seeing my manuscript for my booklet, readily consented to print them for me. There and then I was made to feel I was getting somewhere.

OTHERS AT HAMPTON WHO EXPRESSED INTEREST IN ME

I've never been at a place where I received so much honor as I received at Hampton Institute because of my talent to write and to entertain. I had some staunch friends both on the faculty and in the student body. Mr. Aery, one of the officers of the school, took great interest in my writing. Among others were Mr. P. L. Prattis, editor of the Hampton Student, the school publication, and who is now Executive Editor of the Pittsburgh Courier, Pittsburgh, Pa., Rev. Laurence Finninger, Chaplain of the school, Mr. Lorenzo White, Mr. Walter Brown and the late Dr. R. Nathaniel Dett. In one of the issues of the Hampton Student, Mr. Prattis spoke very complimentary of my published volume of verses and even quoted some of the poems with comment. The very fine comment given my booklet by Mr. Prattis gave my poems a ready sale on the campus among both teachers and students.

IN THE CITY OF NORFOLK

Just across the Chesapeake Bay from Hampton Institute, an hour's ride on the boat, lies the city of Norfolk, Va. Here I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. J. H. L. Baxter, who was also striving for recognition as a writer of verse. Through the kindness of Mr. P. B. Young, Editor of the Norfolk Journal and Guide, Mr. Baxter succeeded in publishing a monthly Magazine of verse, "The Praiseworthy Muse." Mr. Baxter asked me to serve on the editorial staff of this magazine. The late Dr. John R.ustus, who was principal of one of the public schools there in Norfolk, as well as Prof. D. G. Jacox who was Principal of the Booker T. Washington High School, showed me many favors in giving me opportunities of giving recitals and speaking before their student bodies.

It was also in Norfolk where I met the late Bishop George Lincoln Blackwell of the A. M. E. Zion Church. During an annual conference that was being held in Norfolk, I was so impressed with the wonderfully personality of the Bishop that I wrote a poem as a tribute to him. Bishop Blackwell seemed to have been equally impressed with me, for in a short while he asked me to accept the Principalship of the Edenton Normal and Industrial School, Edenton, North Carolina, which I did. I served as principal of that school for one year after which time I resigned and recommended Prof. and Mrs. J. M. Foust of High Point, North Carolina, for the position. They were elected and accepted the position and served very acceptably for quite some time.

IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

During the First World's War, I went to Washington, D.C., to serve as Y. M. C. A. Secretary at Camp Meade, between Washington and Baltimore. When mustered out, I returned to the city of Washington and took up work with "The Washington Tribune," a colored weekly newspaper, of which Mr. W. O. Walker was editor. I served in the capacity of City Circulation Manager. Mr. Walker who is now editor of The Call and Post of Cleveland, Ohio, showed me many favors and allowed me every opportunity to make good. Here, at the capital of the nation, I also met Dr. W. O. Carrington who was at that

time pastor of John Wesley A. M. E. Zion Church. I had succeeded in publishing the third edition of my poems, "Poems of Perpetual Memory." Dr. Carrington spoke very encouragingly of my booklet of verses one Sunday morning before that great congregation at John Wesley.

On account of the illness of my father who lived with my brother, Rev. E. A. McCorkle, at Gaffney, South Carolina, I left the Capital to be at his bedside. My father remained sick for sometime, and so I gave up the idea of returning to Washington.

ENTERS GAMMON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

In the fall of 1924, I entered Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Ga., graduating in the spring of 1928. My stay in Gammon was spiced with some very fine contacts. Here I had fine opportunity for writing and study, for Atlanta is really a city of culture. Those on the campus who showed interest in me by giving me an opportunity to appear before audiences with my verse were President M. S. Davage and Dean Brawley and the late Dr. Luther Brooks of Clark University. Dr. John Van Pelt, Professor in Gammon, Prof. Fredrick Hall, Instructor of Music at Gammon, Clark and Morris Brown Colleges, and the late Dr. J. W. E. Bowen who was also a Professor at Gammon, did not fail to express and show their interest in me as a writer of verse. It was through these and other friends that I got an opportunity to read my poems before the three schools mentioned above, including Morehouse College. The late Dr. Archer, who was President of Morehouse College at that time, expressed deep interest in my writing.

IN THE CITY OF ATLANTA, GA.

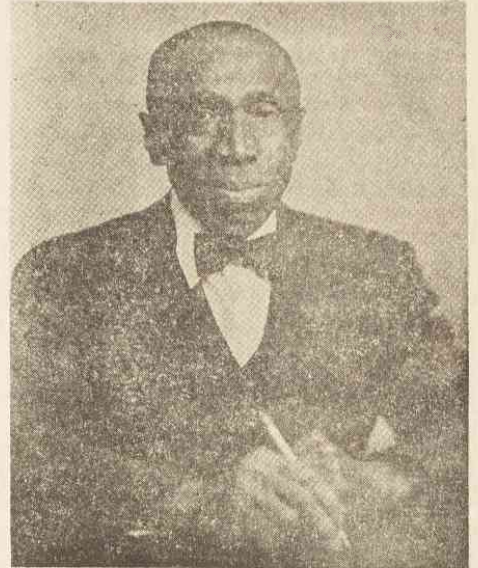
While a student in Gammon Theological Seminary, I was also associated with The Atlanta Independent, a colored weekly newspaper of which the late Benjamin J. Davis was editor, in the capacity of City Circulation Manager. Mr. Davis was nationally known as National Committeeman from the state of Georgia for the Republican Party. While with the Independent I contributed articles every week.

GOES TO NEW ORLEANS, LA.

I left Atlanta in the spring of 1928 after completing my work at Gammon Theological Seminary. My destination was further south. I finally landed in New Orleans, Louisiana, The Metropolis of the South. I made a host of friends in that great city. There in the Crescent City, I was fortunate in publishing the fourth edition of "Poems of Perpetual Memory." Mr. W. G. Carradine, one of the wealthiest Negroes in the Crescent City, consented to have my poems published for me. Another very staunch friend was Prof. L. D. Crocker, who at that time was the principal of the J. W. Hoffman Junior High School, but at present is principal of the New Booker T. Washington High School. It was through the kindness and thoughtfulness of Prof. Crocker that my poems had a ready sale in the city of New Orleans. He not only bought a number of books for the school library and encouraged the teachers to buy copies from me, but also gave me a letter of introduction to all the other principals of the schools of the city. Others in New Orleans who sought to encourage me in my efforts were Dr. W. T. Handy, Dr. and Mrs. G. W. Carter, Dr. J. W. E. Bowen, now Bishop Bowen, President O. E. Driege, Dean Robert B. Hayes and Prof. and Mrs. S. C. Walker of New Orleans University, the late Mr. S. W. Green, Miss Anita L. Johnson, Rev. T. R. Albert and Mrs. Virginia Robinson.

SWINGS INTO MISSISSIPPI

My last stop in the Deep South was in the state of Mississippi. Up until this hour, I am unable to give any reasonable excuse for landing in the state of Mississippi, but I did take up my abode there, and remained in that state for four years unmolested. And I have never regretted my visit to this much talk of "backward" Southern state. Even though Mississippi is backward, so far as racial relations are concerned, in my line of work, my



George W. McCorkle

reception was most cordial among the whites. I was really surprised how I was received and appreciated by the white people of Mississippi.

STOP IN JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, FOR A SHORT WHILE

On my way to Canton, Mississippi, a lumber town 20 miles south of Jackson, I stopped for sometime in the capital of the state. I had some fine contacts with the people of Jackson. The pleasure was mine to visit all the colored schools and to give recitals at most of them. Jackson and Campbell Colleges were among the schools which I visited. I also read some of my poems at both of these colleges. Persons in Jackson who were very considerate of me were Dr. Scott, President of Campbell College, Rev. J.W. Hair, Presiding Elder of the Jackson District of the A.M.E. Church, the late Professor M.C. Collins, Prof. I.S. Sanders, Principal of Lanier High School and the late Dr. S. D. Redmon.

GOES TO CANTON, MISSISSIPPI

After remaining in the city of Jackson for a few months, I finally took my hop to Canton, Mississippi. I was invited to this lumber center by Rev. Frazier whom I met in the city of Jackson where he had an opportunity to observe some of my writings. He at once sought to interest me in going to Canton for the purpose of working with him on his paper.

During my stay in Canton there was organized "The City Chorus," which was made up of members of the choirs of the various churches of the city. Being a member of this chorus, I had the opportunity of reading some of my poems on all of its programs. These programs were given before both white and colored audiences, in and out of the city.

On one occasion I was invited to give a recital by one of the leading churches there, and the Chorus was invited to make music. This was one of the most successful recitals I have ever given.

During my four year's stay in Canton I had the pleasure of meeting some fine people, both white and colored. The whites who expressed interest in my writings were Mr. J.M. Smith, Supt. of Public Schools of Canton; Mrs. George Harvey, Social Service Worker; Mr. George Smith, businessman; Capt. Mims, Mr. E. A. Howell, president of the First National Bank, of Canton, and Mayor Harris. Those among the colored people who showed interest in me were: Rev. Frazier, editor of the weekly newspaper, and pastor of the A. M. E. Church; Mr. & Mrs. S. L. High, Undertakers; Miss Sadie Williams, Public School Teacher; Prof. Mackey, County Farm Demonstration Agent; Rev. and Mrs. W. H. Hightower, of the A.M.E. Church where my recital was given, and Prof. and Mrs. A. M. Rogers, of Cameron Street High School.

Continued Next Week

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