

Adopt A Black Child

# Love Is Here To Stay

(SECOND IN A SERIES)

(Editor's Note: Mrs. Strickland is working in the Raleigh area). The Children's Home Society of North Carolina, Inc. helps to bring children and parents together through adoption. Just now there are many black children in our state who need the loving security of a permanent home, which their own parents are unable to provide for them.

The following story is the actual experience of one Negro couple who fulfilled their desire for parenthood through adopting a child needing a home. (The names have, of course, been changed.)

The day they brought their baby son home changed their lives, and for the first time Marie and Sam Jones felt their house was really a home.

From the time of their marriage they had looked forward

to establishing a home, complete with two or three children. Year after year they had waited for a little boy or girl to join them. In the meantime, they welcomed every opportunity to have their numerous nieces and nephews come for a visit. Much as Marie and Sam enjoyed having the children come, both of them always felt saddened when their little visitor left to go home. As Marie once told her husband, after their nephew had been with them for two weeks, "I love having Tommy visit, but I wish he was here to stay."

The Jones were still waiting - and hoping - when one day Sam's friends came to work one day passing out cigars in honor of his newly-adopted son. All of a sudden the world seemed a different place to Sam. He could hardly wait to talk with Marie about adoption, a possi-

billy they had never considered.



MRS. DORIS STRICKLAND

Marie was completely unenthusiased at first. During the next several weeks, however, she gradually began asking Sam more and more about his conversations with the adoptive

father. Sam had lots to tell; the proud father seemed to be always talking with his young son.

Within a few months, both Marie and Sam had come to the conclusion that they, too, would like to adopt. At the suggestion of Sam's co-worker, the Joneses contacted The Children's Home Society of North Carolina, Inc., a statewide child-care agency, specializing in adoption services. When their application was accepted, the Joneses once again began to look forward to becoming parents.

One of the Society's caseworkers was assigned to them for the "home study." Marie and Sam wondered how they would feel about all the interviews they knew were necessary. During their first office interview, the caseworker treated them with such courtesy and consideration they realized their jitters were unwarranted. In the following office and home visits, the Joneses came to look upon their caseworker as a warm, understand-

ing friend who was genuinely interested in them.

They soon understood that the purpose of the home study was to help the Joneses know and understand what is involved in adoptive parenthood, to help the agency know if they could offer a stable home life to a child, and to learn what type of child could develop happily in their family. The caseworker discussed with Marie and Sam their feelings about children, their ideas on parental responsibilities, their financial ability to provide for a family, and whether Marie would need to continue her part-time work as a licensed practical nurse. The caseworker also talked with their physician, minister and other references.

A short while after the home study was completed, the Joneses received a letter from the Society telling them their home had been approved. Now that they knew a child would be placed in their home, their days were busily filled with preparations for the baby's arrival. Infant clothing and equipment ar-

rived in almost a flood from the sisters and brothers whose children had so often visited in their home. Marie and Sam couldn't resist shopping for a special "coming home" outfit for the little boy or girl who would soon be their own. Everything and everyone was in a state of readiness for that all-important telephone call.

Marie continued working, but arranged to take a leave of absence when their baby came. Her trips to the grocery store and on other errands were as brief as possible; she didn't want to be away from the telephone for very long at a time. Sam began asking every day, as soon as he got home, if there had been any word from their caseworker.

At last, one evening just at mealtime, the call came. Their caseworker told them about a baby boy, whom the Society staff felt was the right child for their home. She asked if they could be in Greensboro the next day at eleven o'clock to see him in the Society's nursery. Indeed they could! They hardly slept

a wink all night. The next morning, at the Society's office, the caseworker told Marie and Sam about the child's medical history and non-identifying family background information. Listening very carefully to her every word, the Joneses felt that the baby being described to them was truly the right one for their home. They asked if they might see him.

The caseworker took Marie and Sam to the room in the nursery where a bright-eyed three-month old baby lay in a bassinet. She left them alone with him to decide whether this was the child they could love as their own. One look at the tiny boy made all the waiting worthwhile.

Little Sammy slept almost all the way home in his mother's arms. Some of the Joneses' relatives and many of their neighborhood friends were on hand to greet them when they pulled in the driveway. Hours later, after the last well-wisher had left and the baby had been diapered and fed for the night, Marie and Sam bent over the

crib gazing at their son. With tears glistening in her eyes and her voice choked with happiness, Marie whispered to Sammy, "I'm so glad you won't have to go away. This time, love is here to stay." Couples interested in considering adoption may contact the Society's caseworker in Raleigh (Mrs. Doris Strickland, telephone 834-9840) or the administrative office (The Children's Home Society of North Carolina, Inc., P. O. Box 6587, Greensboro, N. C. 27405; telephone 274-1538) for further information.

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