



THE NATIONAL NEGRO WEEKLY
DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE DARKER RACES

VOL. VII—NO. 41

LONDON, CANADA, JULY, 1956

Price 5 Cents

100th. Annual Conference of B. M. E. Church

The 100th Annual Conference of B.M.E. Church in Canada opened in Windsor with the celebration of Holy Communion and the sermon by Rev. E. H. Richardson of Woodstock. The topic was: "Feed the Church".

Delegates were present from almost all the B.M.E. Churches. The Conference was marred by the sudden passing of the wife of the late Superintendent, Rev. T. H. Jackson.

Highlights of the Conference
The Brantford B.M.E. Church was selected to bare the name of the S. R. Drake Memorial Church in memory of the work of the late Gen. Supt. Rev. S. R. Drake. He was chiefly responsible for the incorporation of the churches. A special service will be held in Brantford on the 30th of September, 1956.

The Conference went to Dresden to the grave of the Rev. Josiah Henson, better known as Uncle Tom. After a brief memorial service a wreath was laid. The Conference on returning to Windsor stopped at the Mother Church (which is known as the B.M. Community Church) for a brief service.

A Centennial Banquet was held on Saturday afternoon, June 30th in Sott Hall. Fraternal delegates were received, words of welcome were given by the Mayor of the City of Windsor. The address was given by Rev. Dr. J. McNeill of Tabernacle Church, of Detroit. His topic: "Earn Your Heritage."

The Conference was honoured on receiving a telegram from The Honourable Louis St. Laurent, Prime Minister of Canada, expressing sincere greetings. Also a telegram from Hon. Mr. Brown, member of Parliament.

The history by Rev. W. Harrison (Windsor). The 101st Conference is scheduled to be held in Owen Sound. (St. Catharines is the alternate place.)

Address of Rev. Wm. J. Harrison

Address of Rev. Wm. J. Harrison (age 90) (from notes taken at the meeting by Louis Rock) given at the Centennial Conference, June 28th, 1956, 8 p.m., at Ontario Chapel, 363 McDougall Street, Windsor, "Origin of B.M.E. Church in Canada."

I am thankful to Almighty God for the privilege of standing before you tonight to talk to you. I may not be with you to celebrate the next Centennial so I shall do all I can now.

Among the unsung heroes of our times is the name of Wm. Wilberforce, English Philanthropist and statesman, born August 14th, 1759 and elected to the British Parliament in 1789. He asked for the abolition of slavery by Parliament in 1797—98 but gained no success at that time. Later on, his friend, Wm. Pitt became Prime Minister of England and sent Wilberforce to Jamaica in company with two others to gain first hand information on the slave traffic. He found conditions deplorable and said if God should spare him to get back to England he would do all in his power to wipe out slavery. In 1798 Lord Woodsley declared that if any man put his foot on English shores he would be free and intro-

duced the second Bill in 1812—14. By 1832 Pitt had a majority in the House of Lords, presented the Bill for the third time and it passed in 1833. Wilberforce died, killed by accident with a horse on July 28th, 1833, four days before the passing of the Bill. It was regrettable he didn't live to see the fruits of forty-four years' labour. The Bill signed by King Wm. IV freed 800,000 slaves throughout the British Empire. In the United States four million slaves heard—how—nobody knows—the old folks used to say somehow or other. Remembering the words of Woodsley—migration to Canada began. They came from Mississippi, Alabama, N. & S. Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Missouri and Virginia. In 1850 the highest number of Coloured peoples in the Dominion of Canada between Nova Scotia and Ontario was from 45 to 60 thousand. 25,000 crossed the Detroit river, among them my mother and father. They were coming to get my sister Liza in the morning so my father and mother left in the night. Their migration was greater than that of the Children of Israel from bondage, for, it is written God led them by pillar of fire by night and our forefathers had only a star. In 1848 mother and father Cooper and 38 more crossed the Detroit river on the ice. Some went around the akes following the Indian trails and every place there was a settlement they built a House of God. Many crossed at Amherstburg and were received by friends named Rankin on these shores at the Elliott House. All famous people have a monument built to their memory. Our church is a monument to those slaves who came and built it. Other churches were built in Amherstburg, Sandwich, Gelgal New Canaan, Sackville, Puce, Llesant Valley, Buxton, Simcoe, Chatham Township, 7th Concession Dresden, Owen Sound, Collingwood, Orillia, Perth, London, Lucan, Ingersoll, Stratford, Woodstock, Brantford, Guelph, St. Catharines, Drummondville, Niagara Falls, Fort Erie and Toronto. Upper and Lower Canada became a Dominion on July 1st, 1867—I am older than the Dominion having been born in 1866 and wish somebody would celebrate my birthday as we do Dominion Day (smile). In 1856 a man appealed to the A.M.E. Conference in the United States to name this Canadian collection of churches the British Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada. This permission was granted on Sept. 30th, 1856 and an American Bishop named Willis Nazrey soon afterwards became the first bishop of the British Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada. The house now occupied by Mr. Wm. Clay was the first B.M.E. parsonage in Windsor. Soon it was decided to build a brick church, land was purchased under the trusteeship of Reynolds, Wylie, Washington and Franoy. In 1883, Disney started a movement to return to the American group but was soon squelshed.

Our own first Bishop or General Superintendent as they came to be

"Our America" Features Cast Of 500

"This Is Our America," the dramatic highlight of "Panorama of Progress," hosting a cast of 500 persons revealed the creative genius of Powell Lindsay, producer, writer and director, and Maurice King, who in two months wrote a complete original musical score for the production.

The dramatization was presented nightly June 30—July 4 at the Michigan State Fair Grounds.

Yale trained Lindsay has been acclaimed the dean of contemporary Negro producers with two Broadway shows to his credit. The drama written in what Lindsay calls the "living newspaper style" traces the history of Negro Americans from Crispus Attucks to the present.

"I have written and directed many plays," said Lindsay, "but never have I felt so keenly identified with a production as I do with this prolific story of Negro American achievement."

King has been both a composer and musical arranger of note for many years. "However," he laughed "this is the first time I've written majority of a score after midnight."

"Seriously though," he said, "this thing touches me deeply and I needed to be alone with it." The theme of the score: "A Greater Tomorrow" has already been published.

Auditioners say King has captured all the pathos and hope that makes up the story of the American Negro.

Walter Mason, Detroit actor is technical director of the production, said: "I don't see how we can miss with the cast we've got. And when you shade it with a 300 voice choir, it's simply tremendous."

Willie Bryant, ABC radio network personality and Flame Show Bar produced, will narrate the moving story of black glory.

afterwards was Walter Hawkins. He visited Queen Victoria in England and preached in Westminster Abbey. He was also a great singer and at the conclusion of the service was asked by one of the Lords in what university he had been educated. He replied, the school of adversity and hard knocks was my teacher. I have had the honour to see and know every bishop we have had from Nazrey Hawkins, Charles Washington, Sammy Drake, Herbert Wright, J. T. Dawson, T. H. Jackson to the present one Rev. F. O. Stewart. From 1759 to 1956 many years have rolled into eternity and the church has withstood every storm and criticism. She still stands firm because she is founded on the Rock, Christ Jesus. I have been in the church 81 years of my 90. Mother made us go to church and Sunday School. I have no regrets only wish the modern parents would immitate the old patriarchs. We have had a glorious past because our parents held on to God and gave us this building brick and mortar, put together by their own hands with water from the Detroit river where we may sing, Praise God From Whom all Blessings Flow.

RECOMMEND G.I. FOR SOLDIERS' MEDAL

PORT BRAGG, N.C. — A veteran paratrooper from the 82nd Airborne Division reached out and grabbed a falling buddy, 1,000 feet above Sicily North Orop Zone Thursday during a mass Airborne assault at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Pfc. Wilbur Lewis, 24, son of Mrs. Carmen Lewis of Toledo, and Pfc. Charles P. Harper, son of Mrs. L. Harper of Wisconsin, were in the same plane, part of a 760-man Battalion Combat Team making a jump for General Ne Win, Chief of Staff of the Burmese Armed Forces, when the incident occurred.

Both are members of H Company, 325 Airborne Infantry Regiment.

Lewis, who was making his 60th parachute jump, had just jumped and was checking his parachute canopy when he saw a man plummet into the nylon. The man, Pfc. Harper, whose chute had not opened, slid off the bottom portion of Lewis' canopy and down one of the suspension lines.

"It all happened so fast," said Lewis, "that I didn't know what was taking place. My chute sagged and I thought it was going to collapse, but the wind rushed in and my canopy filled up again."

"Grab me!" yelled Harper, and Lewis, obeying his helpless buddy, reached out and snatched at Harper as he fell past. The added weight caused the two men to descend to the ground more rapidly.

Lewis muttered, "We're coming into the ground fast, man." They hit the ground with an impact that knocked Harper unconscious. Although stunned, Lewis nevertheless got to his feet and collapsed the canopy that was still billowed full by the 10-knot breeze drifting across the Drop Zone: then rushed back to his fallen buddy. The medics were there almost immediately.

Revived, a little stiff, and with a very-grateful-to-be-alive look in his eye, Harper was back at his regular job in the motor pool that afternoon.

Lewis, unhurt, is being recommended for the Soldiers' Medal, according to his Company Commander, 1st Lt. Richard P. Rish. The Soldiers' Medal is the nation's highest peacetime award for heroism.

Lewis, who attended Libby High School in Toledo, is a gunner in an 81 mm Mortar section of his company. He is a six-year Army Veteran, three of which have been spent in the 82nd Airborne Division.

S(O)WELL DONE, ARNIE!

University of Pittsburgh middle-distance star, Arnie Sowell, accepts the first-place medal for his victory in the 880-yard dash from the University of Houston's meet queen in Houston, Tex., during the Houston Meet of Champions. Pitt teammates Herb Carper and Paul Thrash also appeared in the big event.

AWARD LADEN

Geraldine Ellis, of Atlanta Carver High, honor student, earned a total of eight awards and a citation. The 1956 class valedictorian received among these two scholarships and the Atlanta Life Trophy. With the Delta Sorority scholarship she will enter Clark College.

Schools Close As Funds Dwindle

Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd's Bantu Education Act struck at the roots of Negro education in South Africa where church mission schools have always carried the burden of native instruction. By threatening to withhold licenses and subsidies from schools "which encourage them (natives) to think they can graze on the white man's pastures," it left the missions with only three choices: (1) hand over their schools entirely to the Government; (2) accept the subsidy (already cut from 100 to 75 per cent and will be reduced until it disappears in 1957); (3) shut down theirschoools completely.

With the exception of the Dutch Reformed Church, all churches condemned the Act, but most were unable to finance non-white education without aid. As a result the majority of them reluctantly handed over their schools to the Government. Others did not abandon their former pupils, however, but raised money for "family centers" for the children.

How long black South Africans can go on resisting the Government is a grave uestion. Already they have lost their dearest friend and most dedicated foe of apartheid—Father Trevor Huddleston. Mainly responsible for founding the African Education Movement that helped establish the cultural clubs, he was recalled to England shortly after he clashed with the Archbishop of Canterbury over the school situation.

"I am very sad," he said, as he reluctantly took his leave, "but in a religious community, one is under a vow of obedience."

TV THREATENS ANTI-NEGRO MOVEMENT

New York —It isn't visible because it hasn't been placed on the wall, but the man in the grey flannel suit along television row has put the word out, "No Negro Performers Allowed." This disturbing report, which, heretofore, was a mere whisper, took on loud overtones last week when it was one of the headline stories in Variety, the so-termed theatrical Bible.

According to the theatre weekly this report comes from some of the major advertising agencies.

9 COLLEGES ON NETWORK

New York—The schedule of college choirs to be heard during the months of July and August on the United Negro College Fund-ABC Radio Network series has been announced.

The July broadcast will feature the choirs of Texas College, July 1; Fisk University, July 8; Morris Brown College, July 15; Wiley College, July 22, and Clark College, July 29.

Choirs to be heard during the month of August are Knoxville College, Aug. 5; Livingstone College, Aug. 12; Hampton Institute, Aug. 19 and Benedict College, Aug. 26.

The weekly radio series originates from New York, Sundays, 10:35 to 11 a.m. and is heard at local broadcasting times over some 140 stations of the ABC Radio Network.