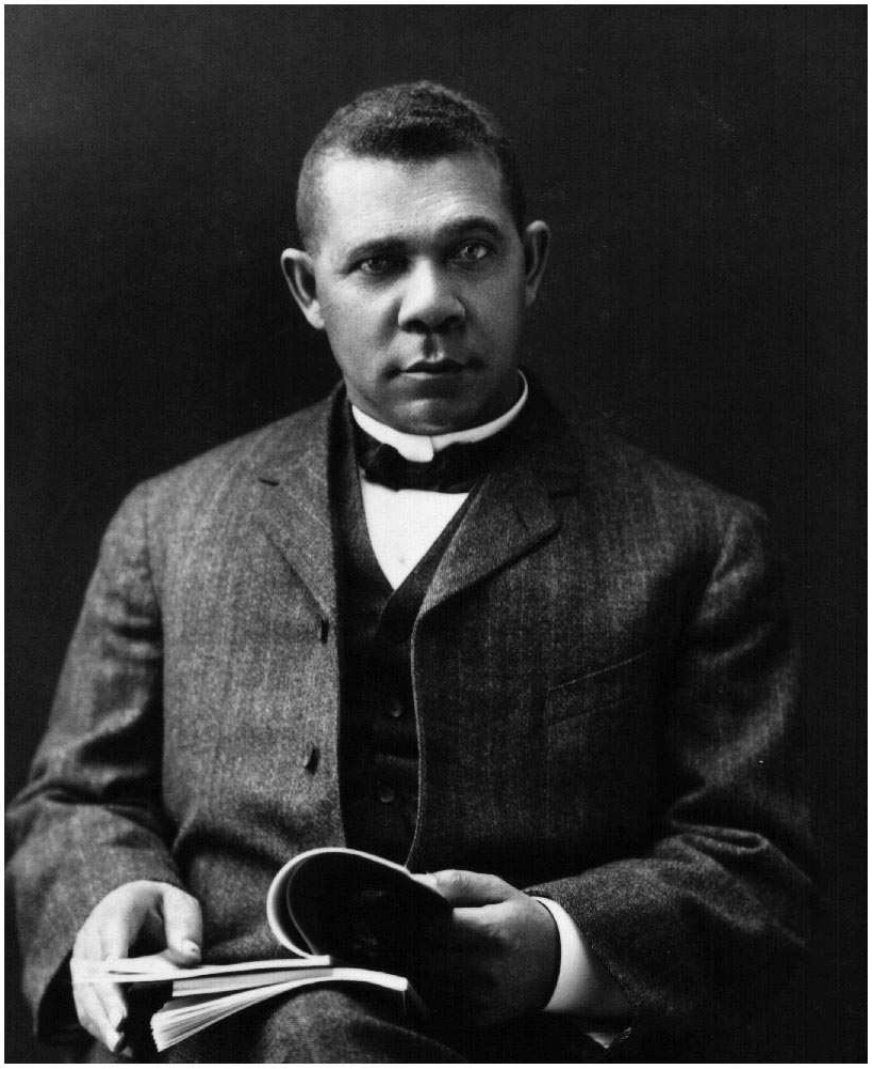
The Story of My Life and Work

1900

The Story of My Life and Work appeared in three revised editions, in the spring of 1901, the fall of 1901, and 1915. The first revision, after the sale of 25,000 copies, altered the original version in two major respects. It included new material written by T. Thomas Fortune, to fill in blank pages at the end of eight chapters. Most of this material was of a reflective or philosophical rather than factual nature. The first revision also changed the order of the final chapters, ending with the one entitled "Looking Backward." The second revision, in the fall of 1901, added an index, two additional illustrations, and a chapter on the National Negro Business League. The third revision, in 1915 soon after Washington's death, included an account by Albon L. Holsey of Washington's life from 1900 to 1915.

The present edition includes the chapter on the National Negro Business League from the second revision, and follows the first revision in ending the volume more logically with the chapter "Looking Backward."



An Article in *The Independent*

[March 30, 1911]

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA, A CITY OF NEGRO ENTERPRISES

For a number of years I have made what I have called "Educational Pilgrimages" thru various Southern States, including Arkansas, Oklahoma, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Delaware and North Carolina. These tours have been undertaken for the purpose of seeing for myself something of the progress being made by the Negro people of these various States, the actual relations existing between the races, and also for the purpose of saying whatever I can to help cement friendly relations between the races. Both races in the South suffer at the hands of public opinion, because the outside world hears of its disgrace, its crimes, its mobs and lynchings. But it does not hear very much about the many evidences of racial friendship and good will which exist in the majority of the communities of the South. I do not believe that one can find another section of the globe where two races which are dissimilar in many respects dwell in so large numbers where they get on better in all the affairs of life than they do in our Southern States.

The last of these trips was made thru the State of North Carolina during the fall of 1910. I was unusually impressed with the general prosperity of the colored people in the rural villages and smaller towns. Farms, truck farms, well-kept grocery stores, thriving drug stores, insurance houses, and beautiful tho modest homes greeted me continually. Again and again I exprest to the Negro business men in charge of my trip that here were in many ways the most encouraging signs of Negro development that I had seen. But again and again, as often as I said this there would come back from several members of the party the answer, "Wait till you get to Durham."

Now, Durham is one of the large cities of North Carolina, and knowing from my early experiences something of the superficial and hand-to-mouth living of the average city Negro, I became more and more curious to see what Durham had in store for me.

Arriving there about four o'clock on a bright afternoon in October, I found every preparation that was necessary to sweep me from my feet with the conviction that sure enough this was the city of cities to

look for prosperity of the Negroes and the greatest amount of friendly feeling between the two races of the South. In one town on my way I had actual roses strewn in my path, but here, if all I saw and heard was genuine, were the real roses that I had been seeking now for more than thirty years. Well, and not foolishly, dressed colored people, colored people representing all manner of business, from the small store to the thriving, thorogoing business enterprise, colored people seated in one and two horse carriages with rubber tires, stood eager to welcome me. Still I was not convinced. I had more than once seen members of my race who paid their last dollar for display, not having enough left to purchase a good meal or even to buy fuel to cook with. But I was assured that these people owned all they claimed to own and that I would be shorn of all my doubt before many hours had passed, and I confess that two hours of driving and visiting more than robbed me of all my skepticism.

In addition to many prosperous doctors, lawyers, preachers and men of other professions, I found some of the most flourishing drug stores, grocery and dry good stores I had ever seen anywhere among Negroes. I found here the largest Negro insurance company in the world,[1] with assets amounting to $100,000, owning its building, a large three-story structure, and being operated with nothing but Negro clerks and agents. Here is located the Durham Textile and the Whitted Wood Working Company, manufacturers of doors, window frames, mantels and all kinds of building materials. Here, too, is the Union Iron Works Company, a Negro company which manufactures general foundry products, turning out plows, plow castings, laundry heaters, grates and castings for domestic purposes, and it was refreshing to learn that in this enterprise as in others that I shall mention there was no evidence of the color line drawn on the part of the purchaser. Each groceryman, each textile manufacturer, each tailor, in fact, all the Negro tradesmen and business men numbered many white customers among their most substantial purchasers.

I began by this time to believe that Durham was a city of Negro enterprises, and, quite convinced now, I was ready to go home, but they wanted to show me one more successful Negro plant. This was the plant known as the Durham Textile Mill, the only hosiery mill in the world entirely owned and operated by Negroes. Regularly incorporated, they operate eighteen knitting machines of the latest pattern, working regularly twelve women and two men and turning out sev-

enty-five dozen pairs of hose each day. The goods so far are standing the test in the market, being equal in every way to other hose of the same price. They are sold mainly by white salesmen, who travel mostly in North Carolina, New York, Indiana, Georgia, South Carolina and Alabama, and again, so far as I have heard, there has been no man to raise the color question when he put on a pair of these hose made by Negroes.

Aside from these flourishing enterprises Durham had many individuals, such as tradesmen and contractors, who were shining examples of what a colored man may become when he is proficient and industrious. I found that Payton A. Smith, a general contractor, had put up some of the largest buildings in the city, that P. W. Dawkins, Jr.,[2] who had learned the carpenter's trade at Hampton, and Norman C. Dadd were not only never out of work, but kept jobs always waiting for them.

It was exceedingly interesting, too, to find here two individuals owning and operating brickyards. Colored people for years and years have been operating brickyards for other people and it was highly encouraging to meet here two men who had grasped the American principle of things, that of advancing from common laborer to owner and operator. With a business amounting to $16,000 per year, R. E. Clegg, manufacturer of all kinds of brick, turns out per season about two million brick. But the pioneer in brick making in Durham is R. B. Fitzgerald.[3] Beginning thirty years ago, Mr. Fitzgerald has supplied the material for many of the largest brick structures in the city. I cannot refrain from emphasizing once more the absence of color discrimination in a work of this sort. This case in particular warrants it, as Fitzgerald owes his success almost entirely to Southern white men. One man in particular, Mr. Blackwell,[4] the great tobacco manufacturer, said to him, "Fitzgerald, get all the Negroes and mules you can and make brick. I will take all that you can make." Fitzgerald followed the instruction and today he not only turns out 30,000 brick a day from his $17,000 plant, but owns besides 100 acres of land within the city limits and has $50,000 worth of real estate.

A Negro bank is no longer a novelty, there being more than fifty in America at the present time, but the one at Durham, in addition to carrying resources of $400,000 and deposits of $20,000, is an instance of what the white Southerner often does to help Negroes. When this bank was opened, the cashier and teller of the leading white bank

came over and without charge, helped the colored bankers open and close their books.

With all this prosperity, with flourishing insurance companies, a bank, brickmasons and men in the professions, it was not remarkable that this class of persons should own beautiful homes. It was more of a question of overdoing than not doing enough in their furnishings. And so while I was now ready to believe anything about the prosperity of Durham Negroes, I was curious to see if wealth had driven the people into extravagance. Far from it. With electric lights, steam heat and baths and all the modern equipments, these residences presented a modesty of taste that was more than gratifying. No baubles, no tinsel of furnishing that often represent the abuse of wealth, but conservative and tasteful furniture I found everywhere. Wealthy Negroes like Dr. A. A. Moore,[5] C. C. Spaulding and John Merrick could have fitted up their homes to dazzle the eye and evoke the envy of both white and black, but instead they have rather set a standard of good taste and good judgment to all who know them.

I must here call especial attention to Mr. John Merrick, recognized as the leading Negro of Durham. Mr. Merrick began as a poor man, borrowing money from General Julian S. Carr,[6] a leading white man, to begin his first business. During all the years he has lived in Durham, he has continually expended time and money to promote the interests of colored people, aiding them in securing homes and in establishing organizations of protection. In 1883 he founded the Royal Knights of King David and in 1898 he founded the North Carolina Mutual and Provident Association. He aided in establishing a hospital here for Negroes, is a trustee of the bank, a steward in the St. Joseph A.M.E. Church and president of the Christian Endeavor League. In addition to this he is the largest Negro owner of residence property in the city, collecting per month rents amounting to $550. That all this draws no envy from the white people is illustrated by the fact that a few months ago at the marriage of his daughter more than three hundred of the best white people were present, bringing with them costly presents for the bride.

But with all this prosperity, some doubt still assailed me. The exceptional man is everywhere and among all races. He has always been in evidence among the people of my race. In slavery days one Negro could gain his freedom and himself become a slave owner while his own brethren remained in bondage. These Durham men of whom I

am talking had had their opportunities. They had been to college, to medical schools, to dental schools, to schools in the North, enjoying everywhere contact with the best minds and spirits that the nation possessed. It was not so much wonder after all that, given a fair chance, they could create and develop enterprises and enjoy the blessings of life.

But what of the poor man, the unlettered man, the man against whom because of age or adverse circumstances, the door of training had been tightly closed? What was he doing and how was he living? This was my last question put to the city of Durham. If it could answer me this satisfactorily I would yield; because I knew that in this query lay the crux of the whole race situation in the South; for it is with this class that the white people of the South have to deal, and upon the conduct of this class that the real estimate of my race is generally formed.

It is written that we have the poor always with us and it was this poor that I wished to see. I drove through their section of the city, observing closely their homes inside and out, their yards, their fences, their window curtains, their furniture, and I own that in many cases I almost doubted my eyes. The one time hovel and the shack with rags sticking in the windows and fences rotting away, with little gulleys washed in the yards and half clad children standing in front of the door were all gone. I saw no dead dogs or cats or dead fowl in the streets as I sometimes see in our larger Southern cities and I sniffed no feverish odors from dens and dives. Neat cottages stood where in many cities still stands the tubercular shack, and well cared for children in clean yards, many of which were adorned with flower beds, everywhere greeted me. There were windows with clean curtains and clean shades and substantial furniture devoid of the cheap shimmer of the installment house.

Surely I felt there must be something at the bottom of all this and I set myself to inquire what was the secret of this general healthy appearance. Of course, the wealthy doctors, the prosperous school teachers and well-to-do ministers were no longer a mystery or a surprise. If the so-called poor were thus situated the professional man, I well knew, was bound to flourish like the proverbial bay tree.

As this was the class that came most in contact with the white people I asked what was the general spirit existing between the two races. Of all the Southern cities I have visited, I found here the sanest attitude of the white people toward the black. Disabused long ago of

the "social equality" bugbear, the white people, and the best ones too, never feared to go among the Negroes at their gatherings and never feared to aid them in securing an education or any kind of improvement. I have already stated that the wealthiest and best thought of Negro in Durham began his business career upon a loan of money from General Julian S. Carr. Perhaps a still stronger instance is that of the Duke family, the famous tobacco manufacturers. The members of this family have always given generously to support the colored schools and churches of the town, and Mr. Washington Duke during his lifetime took such interest in and attended so regularly the African Methodist Episcopal Church, that the colored people counted him as one of their own members. This is a glowing example of what I mean by a sane attitude toward the colored people. If the white people thruout the South, indeed if the employers everywhere, would encourage the Negroes by their presence and personal interest in their undertakings, there would be day by day fewer complaints of the dissolute Negro laborer and the trifling Negro servant. Nobody, white or black, has ever argued that Mr. Washington Duke was in any way contaminated by his contact with the African Methodist Episcopal Church; rather the Negroes are inclined to vie with the whites in doing his memory honor and reverence.

Another example of the substantial encouragement the white people of Durham give the Negroes is found in the attempt last summer to found in the city a Negro Chautauqua. When the colored people showed that they were really in earnest, Dr. James E. Shepard, founder of the school, laid his plans before the white people, who immediately took steps to aid him, the Merchants' Association and B. L. Duke[7] donating to the institution twenty-five acres of land valued approximately at $7,000.

The white people here further show their fine spirit by holding open everywhere the door of opportunity to the Negro. Ignoring color or race, they demand only efficiency. I never saw in a city of this size so many prosperous carpenters, brick masons, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, cotton mill operators and tobacco factory workers among Negroes.

In the larger white mills and the like the Negroes in several instances are the only ones employed. The hook and ladder company of the fire department is manned entirely by black men, showing not only a liberality of spirit, but a recognition that courage can lodge in the

breast of a black man as well as in that of a white man. I have referred to the hosiery mill owned and operated solely by Negroes; there is one here also owned by a white man, but operated exclusively by colored men. The proprietor is Gen. Julian S. Carr, to whom I have already referred. General Carr employs 150 women and a few men, and it argues the generous spirit typical here that he was willing to admit a rival Negro mill right here in his neighborhood, many of whose workmen had received their training from him.

But the company that has done most for the Negro, both in employment and in general help, is the W. Duke, Sons & Company,[8] branch of the American Tobacco Company. This company employs more colored laborers than any other firm in the city, keeping steadily at work 1,548 Negro men and women, at an average of 93 cents per day, or paying out $1,400 per day or $440,000 a year to colored people. And it is highly to the credit of the colored people that thru all the changes in the system and in the introduction of new and complex machinery they have been able to hold their positions and give increasing satisfaction to their employers.

Indeed this satisfaction has been so genuine that the American Tobacco Company has for some time been pursuing the policy for its colored employees, which, if adopted by many of our large corporations thruout the country would spare the nation many strikes, lockouts, bloodshed and the suppression of general prosperity. This company has established an employees' bounty, which upon the death of the employee, is paid to the latter's family. The company donates in cash to the person who has been before designated by the employee a sum of money equal to the wages paid to the deceased during the last year of his life; not exceeding, however, in any case, the sum of $500. Tho recently inaugurated this scheme has already allowed to be paid out more than $3,000 to the beneficiaries of the colored employees. In addition to this the company takes cognizance of its employees' health, seeing, no doubt, that better health conditions insure a constantly higher grade of service. The Lincoln Hospital here, a place for the sick colored people and for the training of colored nurses, received its grounds and building, valued all told at $75,000, from Mr. Washington Duke, the founder of the Duke Tobacco Company, and it is in co-operation with this hospital that the firm is now taking active interest in the improvement of the home life of its employees by securing a visiting nurse to work in the Negro section of the city. That thruout

all the Negro efforts in Durham these companies have been willing to entrust their money and donations of buildings and grounds to the hands of colored men shows how thoroly established is the confidence of the white men in the honor and efficiency of the Negro doctor, the Negro school teacher and the Negro minister.

Nothing in all this appealed to me more than the information that the white people everywhere encouraged the Negroes to buy and own property. Surely nothing binds a man to the general welfare of a community more than to tie up his interest there in a piece of property, no matter what kind it may be. That so large a proportion own their homes, that the most of those renting rented from Negro landlords, that the southern part of Durham was inhabited almost entirely by colored people, and that Negro possessions in the city amounted to one million dollars, was the key that unlocked for me much of the mystery of prosperity and good feeling between the two races. Two or three far-sighted white men had encouraged some few struggling Negroes to invest in a piece of property. The influence spread itself until out of men whose spirit was comparatively indifferent to their surroundings have been molded loyal, patriotic, law-abiding black citizens.

I found as a result of an interview with several of the white men of the town that the good opinion of the colored men was growing more and more general. Mr. W. T. Bost, the city editor of the Durham *Herald,* spoke in the highest terms of the general thriftiness of the colored people. Mr. Bost, as it happened, had lived in a number of other cities in the State and it was his experience that the Negroes at Durham were more law-abiding than in any other city in which he had lived. There was also less vagrancy here than in any other city. And indeed this might well be, for at the very moment of this interview, Mr. J. F. Freeland, chief of police, was making an active canvass among the colored ministers and others of influence to assist him in a movement to improve further the condition of the lower class of colored people. But to continue with Mr. Bost, the city editor said that it made no difference in Durham when it came to business. "Fitzgerald," he continued, "makes better brick than any other man in town; therefore the people buy Fitzgerald's brick. The Whitted Graded School makes the best furniture in town and so it is always in demand at a good price."

Major W. A. Guthrie,[9] one of the leading lawyers of the city, stated that there was a better feeling between the races than in any other city

in the State. "Conditions here," he declared, "are pleasing to both races. The whites have learned that it pays the town to have educated ministers and teachers and such colored business men as John Merrick." Major Guthrie, it may be said here, was for a number of years chairman of the City School Board. Some thirty years ago, on the day that, as chairman of the board, he selected the spot on which to erect the Whitted Graded School, a race riot was taking place in a nearby town. Major Guthrie said to the other members of the board, "I think it is better to buy land and build a schoolhouse for the Negroes than to shoot them down." Thirty years of experience has proved that he was correct.

The Independent, 70 (Mar. 30, 1911), 642-50.

[1] The North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co.

[2] Pinckney William Dawkins, Jr.

[3] Richard Burton Fitzgerald, born in New Castle County, Del., of a prosperous free black family, moved south in 1869 and settled in Durham, where he was a leading brick manufacturer, owner of real estate, and president of the first black bank in the city. (Murray, *Proud Shoes*, 55–57, 267.)

[4] William T. Blackwell (b. 1839), partner of Julian S. Carr in tobacco manufacturing.

[5] Probably Aaron McDuffie Moore (b. 1863), Durham's first black physician and a founder of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co. (Weare, *Black Business in the New South*, 52–56.)

[6] Julian Shakespeare Carr (1845–1924), a former Confederate general, was president of the Bull Durham Tobacco Co. He also owned a hosiery mill in Durham that was operated entirely by blacks.

[7] Brodie L. Duke, eldest son of Washington Duke, established his own tobacco business and also had cotton mill and railroad investments.

[8] Washington Duke (b. 1820) and his sons established a tobacco business in Durham after returning from the Civil War. It merged with other firms to form the American Tobacco Co. in 1890.

[9] William A. Guthrie, a Durham lawyer and a Republican, joined the Populist party in 1894, and in 1896 both the Republicans and Populists nominated him for governor. (Edmonds, *The Negro and Fusion Politics*, 150.)

An Account of Washington's North Carolina Tour by William Henry Lewis

Boston, November 12, 1910

WITH BOOKER WASHINGTON

WILLIAM H. LEWIS ON ONE OF THE NEGRO LEADER'S TYPICAL TRIPS SOUTH

Dr. Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee Institute, fresh from his triumphs abroad, where he had been dined by the king and queen of Denmark and had received marked attention from other notable personages, with little more than a week's rest, plunged at once into his life's work in the South – that of improving the condition of his own race and bringing about more friendly relations between the two races. The tour through North Carolina, which he has just finished, is the sixth in order of the visits he has made to the different Southern States, having heretofore visited Arkansas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Mississippi and South Carolina.

The tour of North Carolina began at Charlotte on Oct. 29 and ended at Wilmington on Nov. 4, occupying little more than a week, during which time thirteen cities and towns were visited, and stops made at five or six others, where speeches were made from the rear end of the train. The party was conducted by Rt. Rev. Bishop George W. Clinton of the A.M.E. Zion Church of North Carolina, assisted by Mr. John Merrick,[1] president of the North Carolina Mutual and Provident Association, a life insurance society, with assets of over $100,000, and also president of the Mechanics and Farmers Bank at Durham, a prosperous Negro institution; also by Mr. C. C. Spaulding,[2] an enterprising and surprising young man, who is engaged in various business activities and is vice president and general manager of the insurance company referred to. The party included Mr. Emmett J. Scott, the private secretary to Dr. Washington and former Commissioner to Liberia, and other officials from the institute, among whom was Mr. John Washington, a brother of Dr. Washington, an ardent co-worker of his and a most lovable man. The party included also President W. T. McCrorey[3] of Biddle University, a Presbyterian institution at Charlotte; Mr. E. H. Clement, editor of the Star of

Zion; Professor J. B. Dudley, president of the Agricultural and Mechanical College at Greensboro; Dr. J. E. Shepard, president of the National Chautauqua and Religious Training School at Durham; Professor Charles H. Moore,[4] national organizer of the National Negro Business League, the first colored graduate of Amherst College, the class of 1878; Major R. R. Moton of Hampton; W. T. B. Williams, agent of the Slater fund; Messrs. Slatter,[5] King[6] and Thompson,[7] newspaper correspondents, and other well-known business and professional men in their communities, some twenty or more in number. During the tour Dr. Washington must have reached nearly 100,000 people. Wherever the train stopped or even "hesitated," as the old man said, crowds had gathered to greet and to get a glimpse of this distinguished citizen of the South. At points where the stops were made, the whole colored population seemed to have turned out. Brass bands, carriages, motor cars, to take the party to their place of meeting, were on hand. Men, women and children crowded round the carriage, all eager to grasp his hand. "God bless you," was the cry and the fervent prayer of many an old granny who came to see the first man of her race. He was their friend and their champion, and they were correspondingly proud of him and happy to see and to be with him and to hear what he had to say.

WINNING THE ESTEEM OF BOTH RACES

I do not recall any occasion in this country where a mere private citizen who has not held high public office has been received with greater general acclaim, by both white and colored citizens, because of his services to his fellows, than was Dr. Washington upon his trip through the Old North State. The attitude of his white fellow citizens was hardly less noticeable than that of the blacks. Everywhere he was introduced by the mayor or some leading citizen of the town. Prominent citizens occupied the platform and in some instances his audiences were more than half white. Those who came out of curiosity, or came with doubts or misgivings, went away with praise upon their lips and giving hearty expressions of good will and approval and support, and absolutely sure that Dr. Washington was pointing the true and the only way.

One could not follow Dr. Washington upon such a trip without becoming thoroughly convinced of his sincerity, his simplicity,

his unselfishness, his desire to serve not only his own race, but his country. His oratory was of the popular type, powerful, pleasing, convincing, making new converts of every soul he reached. His language was simple, straightforward, direct. His points were made clear by convincing logic or illustrated by one of his inimitable stories. The dominant qualities of his oratory were his humor and logic; there was little pathos and less poesy, evidencing the intensely human and practical side of the man — the courageous worker rather than the theorist, the bewailer and the dreamer.

The object of the tour through North Carolina and other Southern States, as expressed by Dr. Washington, was to see the actual conditions of the colored people and find out how best to elevate them and to "better cement the relationship between the white man and the Negro." That, he said, was the only object. How well he succeeded, the future alone can tell. The immediate results, however, were gratifying indeed, and most promising, judged by the expressions of leading white and colored citizens.

ECONOMIC PROGRESS THE SAFETY OF NEGROES

The first stop of the Washington party was at Charlotte, the largest city of the State in point of population. Three thousand or more people, white and black, crowded into the largest auditorium of the city to listen to the great leader. He was introduced by Mr. T. W. Hawkins, whom Mr. Sanders, a colored citizen and lawyer, characterized as the greatest mayor in the United States. For two hours Mr. Washington appealed to the blacks to lay the foundations of progress and civilization by improving their economic conditions; to the whites for sympathy, for a fair chance and for justice. While he handled the subject, charged with a high explosive, nobody seemed to get nervous or the least bit uneasy. A reception was given in the home of Bishop Clinton, who is as handsome, scholarly, cultured and well-balanced a black man as one could wish to see. The party visited Biddle University, one of the first schools in the South for the higher education of the Negro; and also the A.M.E. Zion Publishing Company, with its large and extensive plant.

The next stop was at Concord, where the usual crowd met the distinguished visitor. Doctor Washington here addressed the students of Scotia Seminary, numbering 265 pupils, and went from

there to the Opera House, where he was introduced by Mayor Wagner, who welcomed him as "one of the ablest and most distinguished educators of the South." The mayor said of him: "By sheer force of manhood and strength of character he has risen from humble conditions, overcoming obstacles and almost insurmountable limitations of environment, until today he is recognized not only in this country but the world over as one of the men who has accomplished great things for his day and generation. At the head of one of the great institutions of learning of the South, he has used his influence toward bringing about better social and industrial conditions for his people; and he is a man whom the South does honor and is delighted to honor because he is a great factor in solving the problems that confront it. When the final day of reckoning is come, no greater laurels shall rest upon any man than upon him who has spent his life in the service of his fellow-man."

The party was welcomed at Salisbury by ex-Mayor Boyden,[8] who, after Mr. Washington had spoken, declared: "I am glad to be here and hear Dr. Washington, and I know that both whites and Negroes profited by what he said. The principles inculcated by Dr. Washington will not only help the Negro people in working out their part of the problem, but will help the white people also." The mayor spoke touchingly of the faithfulness of the Negroes during the war and adjured his audience to give them fair play. Here, in addition to a speech at the Opera House, an address was made at Livingstone College, founded by the lamented, gifted, talented and eloquent Jesse [Joseph] C. Price.

Mr. Washington was given an enthusiastic reception and ovation at High Point. Winston-Salem was reached Sunday morning, the 30th, where an immense concourse of people was waiting to receive the party. They were entertained at the Slater Normal and Industrial Institute. In introducing Dr. Washington to an audience of two thousand or more in the Elks' Auditorium, Mayor Eaton[9] declared that he, Mr. Washington, possessed in the most wonderful degree the qualifications of common sense, sound character and diligence. He said: "He has had the sense to select the right field for his labors, and with untiring diligence has set in action his wonderful creed." The party was also breakfasted at the home of Dr. J. W. Jones. One of the richest white ladies[10] in the

town sent her silver and linen and two servants to assist in entertaining the large party.

THE GOSPEL OF TOLERATION ON BOTH SIDES

The prosperous and thriving city of Greensboro was the scene of a most remarkable demonstration. Three thousand people, white and colored, gathered in the railway station to catch a glimpse of the distinguished visitor. So great was the crush that a committee of the Chamber of Commerce that went to meet him missed him, and the party found it difficult to get their carriages. The white churches held an early service so that everybody could go to hear Mr. Washington. An audience of four thousand people heard the address upon that occasion. The speaker was introduced by the Hon. E. J. Justice, ex-Speaker of the House of Representatives of the State. He said: "Long ago he (Dr. Washington) saw the position the Negro race ought to occupy, and must occupy in America if they would reach that destiny that had been planned by our Creator. He saw before others did the necessity for the Negro men and women and sought to prepare the Negro men and women for usefulness and tried to bring the races into closer relations rather than to widen the breach between them. His one aim has been to have the races in the South work together in peace and harmony."

While at Greensboro the party visited the Agricultural and Mechanical College, an industrial school for colored youth, supported by the State; also Bennett College, an A.M.E. Zion institution presided over by Dr. S. A. Peeler;[11] and the Emanuel Lutheran College, supported by the Lutheran denomination, with white teachers, a strong body of earnest and enthusiastic young men. Mr. Washington made a short address in all three institutions, appropriate, helpful, practical and to the point.

Monday morning, the 31st, found the party at Reidsville, a small, flourishing country town. The school children turned out with flags and supported by the brass band made things lively enough. They lined the pathway to the hall and pelted him and strewed his pathway with flowers. One could not help thinking of the thorny path this man had trod to his present place of usefulness and honorable service to his race and to his country. Three prominent white citizens came to the hall where the party was

breakfasted to welcome Dr. Washington in the name of the City Government. The mayor introduced the speaker to an audience of about 3000 in an old tobacco warehouse. In this and a few other North Carolina towns and cities the colored children have a school term of nine months. The Negro vote there is only 150, but the mayor was elected by nine votes, so that the Negro vote, though small, holds the balance of power. More than 1000 people followed the party to the depot to see Mr. Washington off for Durham where the party arrived at nightfall. Durham is perhaps the richest city in the State, being the home of the Dukes and the American Tobacco Company. The colored people are well off here, living in and owning beautiful and even luxurious homes. Negro business enterprises are many here — three Negro insurance companies; one bank; two drug stores; one shoe store; one dry goods store; one millinery store; one iron foundry; one textile mill; twenty-five groceries; a mattress factory; two tailoring establishments; and one of the largest brick manufacturing plants in the country. The Negroes own about $125,000 worth of business property upon the principal streets. This was the only place where Dr. Washington spoke in a colored church and was introduced by one of his own race, Dr. J. E. Shepard, a brilliant young man of rare intellectual gifts who is conducting here a Chautauqua and Bible Training School for his race. But, as usual, the audience was about half white. Here Dr. Washington also addressed the Bible Training School and the graded school, presided over by Professor Pearson.[12] The public school term in this town is ten months. Mr. Washington showed his versatility by being able to entertain and instruct little ones between six and twelve years of age.

En route to Wilson, the train stopped at Selma for ten minutes, where a brief speech was made from the rear platform to crowds of two hundred or three hundred people. At Wilson he spoke in the assembly room of a large school for colored children. The audience was more than half white. Prominent citizens occupied the platform. Ex-Congressman Woodard[13] introduced Dr. Washington. After he had completed his address, Professor Charles L. Coon, superintendent of schools, asserted, with figures to back it up, that the Negroes are not only paying their proportion of the school tax, but in some instances educating white children. Professor Coon made a strong address, commending the efforts of Dr. Wash-

ington and said that he would be ashamed to call himself a man if he opposed the education of any human being because of his color.

EVERYWHERE CORDIALITY FOR THE NEGRO LEADER

Rocky Mount was a Southern town to delight the eye. Everything is up-to-date – water, sewerage, electric lighting, new buildings, and so forth. In twenty years the railways have worked a miracle here. The population is about 12,000, half white and half black. A uniformed brass band met the party at the station, and many carriages. There was a parade through the city and a banquet at mid-day. These banquets had been steady things all through the trip, usually at night after the speaking at the one-night stands. One of the party said at one of the numerous banquets that we had been eating our way through North Carolina, digging our graves with our teeth. Here we found our largest audience, of six thousand people, gathered in a cotton warehouse. The schools were closed and some of the business houses as well. Dr. Washington was in his happiest vein and for two hours moved that vast audience first to laughter and then to sober, serious things. Mr. Thomas Battle,[14] president of the Bank of Rocky Mount and former mayor, made an extended address in introducing Mr. Washington. He said in part: "It gives me pleasure, at the request of our City Government, to introduce to you the eminent citizen who is with us today. He is a man to be proud of. We who have watched him and read his speeches and his writings feel that he is best fitted to settle the greatest question of our time, on the proper solution of which depends the welfare of our entire Southland."

Rear end speeches were made to crowds at Tarboro and Parmelee. Washington, N.C., was the next stop. The venerable rector of the white Episcopal Church, ex-superintendent of schools, introduced Mr. Washington to a crowd overflowing the Opera House. When he had finished speaking he was presented with flowers and with a gold-decorated fountain pen. Mayor Wooten of the neighboring town of Greenfield [Greenville] sent a cordial letter of greeting to Dr. Washington at this place. The former governor and ex-United States Senator Jarvis also sent a letter, in which he said: "The colored people are a part of the citizenship of the State, and

a very important part, and I heartily welcome and indorse any movement and influence to make them better citizens. I believe the teachings contained in your address will be helpful to those who hear them."

New Bern was no exception to the rest of the towns and cities. Here automobiles and carriages and the inevitable and inexorable brass band were in evidence. The opera house was thrown open. Ex-Mayor Bryan introduced Mr. Washington to an audience including the Board of Education, the Board of County Commissioners and other leading citizens.

A DELICATE SITUATION HAPPILY MET

Wilmington was the last stop. We had traversed the State almost from the mountains to the sea. There was considerable anxiety as to how Dr. Washington and his party would be received here, owing to the riot of ten years ago, in which a number of Negroes and whites were killed. However, three thousand people jammed the approaches to the railway station. The police had to be called in to hold the people in check, so that the party could reach the carriages in waiting. The best auditorium in the city, the beautiful and spacious Academy of Music, was thrown open. The whites occupied one side of the orchestra and one tier of boxes; the colored people the other side and boxes and both galleries. The available standing room was fringed on one side with the whites and on the other side with the blacks. The stage was beautifully decorated with potted plants. Leading white citizens sat cheek by jowl with leading colored citizens. Dr. Washington was introduced by Mayor McRae in a few fitting words.

After Dr. Washington had spoken for nearly an hour and a half several leading white citizens arose and made generous acknowledgement of the fact that they came in some doubt of the value of such a meeting, but could ever after be counted as warm friends of Dr. Washington, his programme of education and of friendship between the races. Dr. Washington referred to the fact that his last visit to Wilmington was in 1898, just before the riot, and that the problem had changed somewhat; that they were having a political campaign with the Negro left out. The subject was a delicate one and the situation rather tense, but, as usual, the speaker got away with it by one of his inimitable stories. He said

the situation reminded him of an old colored man down in Alabama who had a pig and sold it to a white man for three dollars. The pig came back, and he sold it to a second white man for three dollars. The first white man, going back to the old colored man to look for his pig, found the second man coming out with his pig, and said to him: "That is my pig; I paid Uncle Jim three dollars for it." The second man said: "It is my pig; I paid Uncle Jim three dollars for it." So they decided to go back to Uncle Jim and put it up to him. So in a few moments they met him and the first man said: "Uncle Jim, didn't I pay you three dollars for this pig?" "You certainly did, boss." The second white man said: "Uncle Jim, didn't I pay you three dollars for this pig?" "Yes, boss, you gave me three dollars, too." "Well, Uncle Jim, whose pig is it?" Whereupon the old man said: "Fo' de Lord, can't you white folk settle your own troubles without bothering a poor colored man?"

The sentiment created here for fair play and equal opportunity is bound to work good for both races. There were many instances which showed that Dr. Washington was winning the South for his race. The leading citizens, men and women, not only crowded the platform to shake his hand; they came to the car and asked to meet him. A fine looking, prosperous business man came into the car one day, shook hands with Mr. Washington, thanked him for what he was doing, and said he was glad that the king and queen had dined him. At another time there came along a farmer lad, lithe of limb, cleanly but poorly clad, took off his old slouch hat, exposing a shock of red hair, and warmly grasped Dr. Washington's hand.

The meetings were of the most unique character. After prayer and perhaps a solo by some local talent or a classical selection by the choir, Major R. R. Moton would lead the audience in singing some of the Negro melodies — "Climbing Jacob's Ladder," "In Bright Mansions Above," "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," adjuring the audience that singing these old songs was one thing the colored people could beat the white folks doing, and that they should not be ashamed to sing these melodies, the folk songs of their race, which keep in memory the strivings of the fathers. Then there came an introduction of the speaker by some of the leading white citizens and of the mayor of the town.

THE GIST OF WASHINGTON'S MESSAGE TO HIS PEOPLE

What was the message that Dr. Washington carried to these people? It would be impossible within the scope of this article to give his speeches in full, and yet it is equally impossible to give any adequate idea of it without doing so. The speaker called attention to the fact that nine million of the ten million of the Negroes in this country must permanently reside in the South, and showed that the extinction and expatriation of the Negro were impossible. The white man, he said, came here a few years before the Negro, got lonesome and sent for him, paid his passage for him, a thing which had not been done for any other class of immigrants, and it would be discourteous and impolite for the Negro to leave. The Negro didn't want to go, and the white man didn't want him to go, and that about settled the question. He referred to his recent trip abroad in these words: "I have studied the condition of the black race in most parts of the world, and I am frank to say that I know no portion of the civilized or uncivilized world where there are so many white people residing by the side of so many black where the relations are so satisfactory and friendly as they are between the two races right here in our Southern States. This statement I make despite the fact that I know there is often wrong, oppression and injustice practised upon the Negroes, and that there is much to be done before conditions will be entirely satisfactory. But we are on the road to progress and while we are making progress there is always encouragement." He said that recently he had been in a country where there were seventeen different races residing, speaking seventeen different languages, each race thinking itself superior to all the rest. They had seventeen race problems there. In this country the problem was very simple because there was only one race thinking itself superior to the other. The Negro should emphasize his advantages, said the speaker, and not his disadvantages.

Nowhere in the world does the Negro have so large a monopoly of the labor market as he does in the South. In the cities of the Old World, London and Liverpool, Dr. Washington said he had seen people sleeping in the parks and upon the sidewalks and other out of the way places, men and women, looking for work and finding none. The Negro could buy land in the South, and sometimes the white man would sell him the land and lend him the

money to pay for it. In the old countries the land was held by the old families in large estates and could not be obtained by the poor man except in small acreages and at a very high price. He said that in order to make progress the Negro must settle down in one place and get hold of the soil. To hold the labor market he must learn to put brains, dignity and skill into every occupation. The educated colored man must learn that it is no disgrace to work with his hands. He advised the colored people to get bank accounts, get something that the white man wants.

The necessity for getting money was illustrated by one of his stories, of the old colored man at the ferry. A white man came along and said to him, "Uncle, lend me three cents to get across the river." The colored man looked at him and said: "Look here, boss, you look like a white man and I suppose you is, but I ain't going to lend you no three cents today. Let me tell you another thing, boss: the man that ain't got no money is just as well off on one side of the river as on the other." The race, he said that had no money was just as well off on one side of the river as on the other. He spoke of the emotional side of the Negro; that sometimes he sang about being washed in the blood of the Lamb; but he particularly was a great deal more interested in seeing that every Negro had a nice bath tub so that he could be washed in good, clean, pure water down here; that the best preparation for heaven was decent, clean living down here; that he was not so much interested in getting people into heaven as getting heaven into people. He was not so much troubled about keeping people out of hell as keeping hell out of people. It was hell getting into people down here that made most of the trouble. He advised the Negroes to draw the line between the moral and the immoral, so that the people would understand that they were not all alike; to get rid of the idle, shiftless and disorderly. The speaker would talk to the blacks for a while, and then he would talk to the whites, and then talk to the whites over the heads of the blacks. The whites admitted that what was said to the blacks was good for them as well, because his advice to his own people was so wholesome that it contained the fundamentals of life and civilization.

It was interesting to note how Dr. Washington, right in the heart of the South, dealt with the things considered so vital by race leaders in the North. He would say to the colored people: "Stay in

the country. If you come into the cities there are a lot of little problems, vexing problems, you must consider; which end of the street cars you can ride in, which side of the street you can walk on and where you can get a glass of soda water. Stay in the country where all the seats are free, where all the roads are yours, and there is plenty of good spring water. The soil draws no color line; it yields the same crops to the skilled black hands that it does to the white. There is as much rain for the poor Negro's crop as there is for the white man's, and the sun, if it discriminates at all, is in the Negro's favor."

AS TO LYNCHING

On the subject of lynching, he said that he had the hardest time in the world to convince the people abroad that the average Southern white man didn't get up in the morning and go out and lynch two or three Negroes before breakfast in order to get up an appetite. He said: "Our white friends can help again by preventing the influx of our people to the cities in large numbers by seeing to it that the people are just as well protected in their lives and property in the country as in the cities. When the Negro feels that he is likely to be lynched or likely to be made to suffer for any kind of crime, here again he is tempted to move into the city, where he can receive police protection." Again: "The rule of the mob, the lynching bee, is widely heralded, while the quiet work of educating, of civilizing, of property getting, of schoolhouses built, of churches built, that is going on day by day, is seldom heard of. The white men who kill Negroes are heard of outside the United States; the white men in every community who will help the Negroes to get an education, to get property, to build churches, are seldom heard of." Here was no denunciation or abuse, but the argument was just as effective.

At Washington, N.C., he said, with tremendous emphasis, at the close of his magnificent address: "We would not thrust ourselves socially upon anybody. What we want is justice in the courts, education and a fair chance." He argued strongly against the use of the Negro as a political issue. He said that he found that the Negro was abused occasionally by some man for the purpose of getting some office; that when a man wanted an office he would say anything about anybody; and when he inquired about that

particular man, how he treated the colored people in the community, he was one of their best friends.

A STRONG PLEA FOR EQUAL EDUCATION

The plea for education was one of the strongest ever heard anywhere. Without pretending to quote accurately, he said that in some of the rural districts the Negro children had only three months' schooling, while the other race had six or more months. Some people thought the Negro had really more sense than he had. He was willing to admit that Negroes couldn't learn as much in three months as a white boy could in six; that was too high a compliment. While the Negro boy is handicapped in his training at the beginning, yet there was no discrimination made when the black boy was accused of crime. He was tried by the same law, the same courts, the same juries and judged by the same standards of ethics and morality as the educated white boy was. There was no discrimination made in the punishing line, and there ought not to be any in the education line. He said: "If I were a white man sitting upon a jury and called upon to decide the guilt or innocence of a Negro accused of a crime, I would lay my hand on my heart and ask myself upon my conscience and before my Maker, whether I had given that black boy a fair chance to know right and wrong, to curb and restrain his passions and desires, to know the law and to obey it." Between the individual white man, he said, and the black man there was the strongest tie of friendship. Each Negro had a white man picked out upon whom he relied and upon whom he could call. Each white man had a Negro upon whom he could rely, with whom he would trust his dearest possessions, and each would lay down his life for the other. He said that the worst enemy of the Negro is the man who unnecessarily stirs up racial strife, and the worst enemy of the white man is an individual who unnecessarily stirs up the feelings of bitterness and hatred between the races. He said that last year, while in some city abroad where the language was strange, the people were strange, and he couldn't eat the food, he heard there was a Southern man from Mississippi in that city, and the Southern man heard of him, and they got together and they were like two long-lost brothers.

The important thing that Mr. Washington emphasized was the making of progress; not to worry about details. He illustrated his

point with the story of the old-time colored preacher who was travelling with him and his party in South Carolina, who wanted to get a carriage to take him to the depot. The first hackman he struck was a white man, and he told the fellow to take him to the depot. "I am sorry, Uncle," he said, "but I can't drive Negroes in my hack." The colored man said: "That is all right, boss. We will settle this right here. You take the back seat and do the riding, and I will take the front seat and do the driving." So in a few minutes they were both at the depot; the white man got his quarter and the colored man got his train. What Mr. Washington wanted to show was that both races are going to the depot. He said: "I believe in talking to the whites frankly in the South and not abusing them in the North," and his frankness and sincerity carried conviction to the hearts of his hearers.

The better day is dawning for the Negro in the South. In North Carolina alone he owns nearly $50,000,000 worth of property and there are 3000 Negroes who can be registered if they wish to be. The reduced vote is still swaying the destination of the State. Ex-Mayor Battle of Rocky Mount said that in the ten years of his official life the Negroes always stood with him for the best government, and he never paid a cent to a single man. Mr. Washington is different from the old leaders; he does not talk about the past or the glories of the future to come, but lives right close to the hour and now; he lives right down among the masses of the people and is trying with heart and soul to help them here and now.

This article cannot be closed better than by quoting once more from one of his speeches: "If we learn to be frank with each other, to trust each other and cultivate love and toleration instead of hatred we will teach the world a lesson, how two races different in color can live together in peace and harmony and in friendship."

Boston *Transcript*, Nov. 12, 1910, pt. 3, p. 4.

[1] John Merrick (1859–1919), the son of a slave mother and a white father, became the most successful barber in Durham, N.C. In 1883 he launched a fraternal insurance agency, the Royal Knights of King David, the forerunner of the North Carolina Mutual and Provident Association, founded in 1898. Merrick also developed a real estate company and a bank. Merrick served as president of his insurance company until his death. (See Weare, *Black Business in the New South*.)

[2] Charles Clinton Spaulding (1874–1952) operated a successful black grocery business in Durham when he joined with John Merrick and Aaron McDuffie Moore to form the North Carolina Mutual and Provident Association, which in 1919 changed

its name to North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co. Spaulding became general manager and expanded the sales force and added a newspaper, *The North Carolina Mutual*, to espouse the ideology of racial economic solidarity. He was also a partner of John Merrick in a land company and a textile mill. In 1923 he became president of North Carolina Mutual, and in 1931 he was the first black man appointed to the Slater Fund board.

[3] Actually Henry Lawrence McCrorey (b. 1863), president of Biddle University beginning in 1907. McCrorey later served as president of the black chamber of commerce in Charlotte, N.C.

[4] Charles Henry Moore (1853–1952) was professor of English at North Carolina A & M College in Greensboro (now North Carolina A & T State University) from 1894 to 1907. He later served as a national organizer for the NNBL, was president of the Greensboro Negro Hospital Association, and in 1917 was named supervisor of building for the Rosenwald Fund schools in North Carolina.

[5] Horace D. Slatter, a general press correspondent from Hopkinsville, Ky.

[6] George H. King, a reporter for the Greensboro *Daily Industrial News*.

[7] Richard W. Thompson.

[8] Archibald Henderson Boyden.

[9] Oscar Benjamin Eaton.

[10] Mrs. R. J. Reynolds.

[11] Silas Abraham Peeler (1864–1948), born in Cleveland County, N.C., was educated at Bennett Seminary, Clark University in Atlanta (A.B. 1893), and Gammon Theological Seminary (B.D. 1895). He was president of Bennett Seminary (1905–13) and thereafter served as pastor of a number of North Carolina churches of the Methodist Episcopal denomination.

[12] William Gaston Pearson, born in 1859, graduated from Shaw University and Cornell University. He was principal of a black graded school and later a high school in Durham. He also invested in many black business enterprises in Durham and owned twenty-two tenement houses. He was the co-founder with John Merrick of the Royal Knights of King David and of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co.

[13] Frederick Augustus Woodard (1854–1915) was a Democratic representative from North Carolina (1893–97) and a lawyer in Wilson, N.C.

[14] Thomas Hall Battle (b. 1860) was mayor of Rocky Mount, N.C., from 1886 to 1896.

When W. E. B. Du Bois visited Durham, North Carolina in 1912, he recorded an unparalleled level of black entrepreneurship, crediting the tolerant attitude of the city's whites and writing "it is precisely the opposite spirit in places like Atlanta."

THE UPBUILDING OF BLACK DURHAM
THE SUCCESS OF THE NEGROES AND THEIR VALUE TO A TOLERANT AND HELPFUL SOUTHERN CITY

BY W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS

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Durham, N.C., is a place which the world instinctively associates with tobacco. It has, however, other claims to notice, not only as the scene of Johnston's surrender at the end of the Civil War but particularly today as the seat of Trinity College, a notable institution.

It is, however, because of another aspect of its life that this article is written: namely, its solution of the race problem. There is in this small city a group of five thousand or more colored people, whose social and economic development is perhaps more striking than that of any similar group in the nation.

The Negroes of Durham County pay taxes on about a half million dollars' worth of property or an average of nearly $500 a family, and this property has more than doubled in value in the last ten years.

A cursory glance at the colored people of Durham would discover little to differentiate them from their fellows in dozens of similar Southern towns. They work as laborers and servants, washerwomen and janitors. A second glance might show that they were well represented in the building trades and it would arouse interest to see 500 colored girls at work as spinners in one of the big hosiery mills.

The chief interest of any visitor who stayed long enough to notice, would, however, center in the unusual inner organization of this groAmerican - the closed circle of social intercourse, teaching and preaching, buying and selling, employing and hiring, and even manufacturing, which, because it is confined chiefly to Negroes, escapes the notice of the white world.

In all colored groups one may notice something of this cooperation in church, school, and grocery store. But in Durham, the development has surpassed most other groups and become of economic importance to the whole town.

There are, for instance, among the colored people of tup of men, women, and children. It is a new "group economy" that characterizes the rise of the Negro he town fifteen grocery stores, eight barber shops, seven meat and fish dealers, two drug stores, a shoe store, a haberdashery, and an undertaking establishment. These stores carry stocks averaging (save in the case of the smaller groceries) from $2,000 to $8,000 in value.

This differs only in degree from a number of towns; but black Durham has in addition to this developed five manufacturing establishments which turn out mattresses, hosiery, brick, iron articles, and dressed lumber. These enterprises represent an investment of more than $50,000. Beyond this the colored people have a number of financial enterprises among which are a building and loan association, a real estate company, a bank, and three industrial insurance companies.

The cooperative bonds of the group are completed in social lines by a couple of dozen professional men, twenty school teachers, and twenty churches.

All this shows an unusual economic development and leads to four questions: (1) How far are these enterprises effective working businesses? (2) How did they originate? (3) What has been the attitude of the whites? (4) What does this development mean?

The first thing I saw in black Durham was its new training school (now North Carolina Central University) - four neat white buildings suddenly set on the sides of a ravine, where a summer Chautauqua for colored teachers was being held. The whole thing had been built in four months by colored contractors after plans made by a colored architect, out of lumber from the colored planning mill and ironwork largely from the colored foundry. Those of its two hundred and fifty students who boarded at the school, slept on mattresses from the colored factory and listened to colored instructors from New York, Florida, Georgia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and North Carolina. All this was the partially realized dream of one colored man, James E. Shepard. He formerly worked as secretary for a great Christian organization, but dissatisfied at a peculiarly un-Christian drawing of the color line, he determined to erect at Durham a kind of training school for ministers, and social workers which would be "different".

One morning there came out to the school a sharp-eyed brown man of thirty, C.C. Spaulding, who manages the largest Negro industrial insurance company in the world. At his own expense he took the whole school to town in carriages to "show them what colored people were doing in Durham."

Naturally he took them first to the home of his company - "The North Carolina Mutual and Provident Association," an institution which is now twelve years old. One has a right to view industrial insurance with some suspicion and the Insurance Commissioner of South Carolina made last year a fifteen days thorough examination of this enterprise. Then he wrote: "I can not but feel that if all other companies are put on the same basis as yours, that it will mean a great deal to industrial insurance in North and South Carolina, and especially a great benefit to the Negro race."

The company's business has increased from less than a thousand dollars in 1899 to an income of a quarter of a million in 1910. It has 200,000 members, has paid a half million dollars in benefits, and owns its office buildings in three cities.
Not only is the society thus prosperous at present but, it is making a careful effort to avoid the rocks upon which the great colored order of "True Reformers" split, by placing its business on an approved scientific basis. It is installing a new card bookkeeping system, it is beginning to construct morbidity and mortality records, and its manager is a moving spirit of the Federated Insurance League for colored societies which meets annually at Hampton, Va.

The Durham office building of this company is neat and light. Down stairs in the rented portion we visited the men's furnishing store which seemed a businesslike establishment and carried a considerable stock of goods. The shoe store was newer and looked more experimental; the drug store was small and pretty.

From here we went to the hosiery mill and the planning mill. The hosiery mill was to me of singular interest. Three years ago I met the manager, C.C. Amey. He was then teaching school, but he had much unsatisfied mechanical genius. The white hosiery mills in Durham were succeeding and one of them employed colored hands. Amey asked for permission here to learn to mange the intricate machines, but was refused. Finally, however, the manufacturers of the machines told him that they would teach him if he came to Philadelphia. He went and learned. A company was formed and thirteen knitting and ribbing machines at seventy dollars apiece were installed, with a capacity of sixty dozen men's socks a day. At present the sales are rapid and satisfactory, and

already machines are ordered to double the present output; a dyeing department and factory building are planned for the near future.

The brick yard and planning mill are part of the general economic organization of the town. R.B. Fitzgerald, a Northern-born Negro, has long furnished brick for a large portion of the state and can turn out 30,000 bricks a day.

To finance these Negro businesses, which are said to handle a million and a half dollars a year, a small banking institution has been started. The "Mechanics' and Farmers' Bank" looks small and experimental and owes its existence to rather lenient banking laws. It has a paid-in capital of $11,000 and it has $17,000 deposited by 500 different persons.

A careful examination of the origin of this Durham development shows that in a peculiar way it is due to a combination of training, business capacity, and character. The men who built 200 enterprises are unusual, not because the enterprises in themselves are so remarkable, but because their establishment met peculiar difficulties. To-day the white man who would go into insurance or haberdashery or hosiery making gathers his capital from rich men and hires expert managers who know these businesses. The Negro gathers capital by pennies from people unused to investing; he has so experts whom he may hire and small chance to train experts; and he must literally grope for success through repeated failure.

Three men began the economic building of black Durham: a minister with college training, a physician with professional training, and a barber who saved his money. These three called to their aid a bright hustling young graduate of the public schools, and with these four, representing vision, knowledge, thrift, and efficiency, the development began. The college man planned the insurance society, but it took the young hustler to put it through. The barber put his savings into the young business man's hands, the physician gave his time and general intelligence. Others were drawn in -- the brickmaker, several teachers, a few college-bred men, and a number of mechanics. As the group began to make money, it expanded and reached out. None of the men are rich - the richest has an income of about $25,000 a year from business investments and eighty tenements; the others of the inner group are making from $5,000 to $15,000 -- a very modest reward as such rewards go in America.

Quite a number of the colored people have built themselves pretty and well-equipped homes -- perhaps fourteen of these homes cost from $2,500 to $10,000; they are rebuilding their churches on a scale almost luxurious, and they are deeply interested in their new training school. There is no evidence of luxury - a horse and carriage, and the sending of children off to school is almost the only sign of more than ordinary expenditure.

If, now, we were considering a single group, geographically isolated, this story might end here. But never forget that Durham is in the South and that around these 5,000 Negroes are twice as many whites who own most of the property, dominate the political life exclusively, and form the main current of social life. What now has been the attitude of these people toward the Negroes? In the case of a notable few it has been sincerely sympathetic and helpful, and in the case of a majority of the whites it has not been hostile. Of the two attitudes, great as has undoubtedly been the value of the active friendship of the Duke family, General Julian S. Carr, and others, I consider the greatest factor in Durham's development to have been the disposition of the mass of ordinary white citizens of Durham to say: "Hands off - give them a chance - don't interfere." As the editor of the local daily put it in a well deserved rebuke to former Governor Glenn of North Carolina: "If the Negro is going down, for God's sake let it be because of his own fault, and not because we are pushing him."

Active benevolence can, of course, do much in a community, and in Durham it has given the Negroes a hospital. The late Mr. Washington Duke conceived the idea of building a monument to ex-slaves on the Trinity College campus. This the colored people succeeded in transmuting to the founding of a hospital. The Duke family gave nearly $20,000 for building and equipping the building and the Negroes give largely to its support.

Beside this, some white men have helped the Negroes by advice, as, for instance in the intricacies of banking; and they have contributed to the new training school. Not only have Southern philanthropists thus helped, but they have allowed the Negroes to administer these gifts themselves. The hospital, for instance, is not simply for Negroes, but it is conducted by them; and the training school is under a colored corps of teachers.

But all this aid is as nothing beside that more general spirit which allows a black contractor to bid on equal terms with a white, which affords fair police protection and reasonable justice in court, which grants substantial courtesy and consideration on the street and in the press, and which in general says: "Hands off, don't hinder, let them grow." It is precisely the opposite spirit in places like Atlanta, which makes the way of the black man there so hard, despite individual friends.

Booker T. Washington in Durham

When John C. Kilgo was president of Duke University (when it was called Trinity College) from 1894 to 1910 he was invited to give the opening speech of the Durham County Colored Fair of 1896. President Kilgo gave the opening remarks at the Durham County Colored Fair. It was not out of character for him to speak before predominantly black audiences. But it was surprising for him, with faculty approval, to suspend college classes for half a day so students could attend the Fair. The reason was not Kilgo's opening remarks but those of the featured speaker, the renowned African American leader of the day, Booker T. Washington. Even more surprising and unprecedented was Kilgo's invitation to Washington to speak at Chapel exercises on the Duke University (Trinity College) campus while he was in Durham. Washington thought enough of the invitation to write in his acclaimed autobiography, Up From Slavery, "It has been my privilege to deliver addresses at many of our leading colleges including Harvard, Yale, Williams, Amherst, Fisk, the University of Pennsylvania, Wellesley, the University of Michigan, Trinity College in North Carolina, and many more."

Why did he include Duke University (Trinity College) in his list? Because Duke (Trinity) was the first white institution of higher education in the south to extend Washington an invitation to speak on its campus.

Unfortunately neither the local nor the state press reported on the speech on campus. Washington's invitation and reception, however, was reported by the national progressive weekly magazine, Outlook. It noted that Washington's speech was received with "marked enthusiasm" and that his entourage of a half-dozen colleagues was treated with the "greatest courtesy" even receiving a "hearty college yell" by the students as they departed the campus.

E. Franklin Frazier's 1925 "Durham: The Capital of the Black Middle"

In an essay published in *The New Negro*, a 1925 anthology, E. Franklin Frazier christened Durham the “Capital of the Black Middle Class.” Frazier exclaimed, “But the Negro is at last developing a middle class, and its main center is Durham. As we read the lives of the men in Durham who have established the enterprises there, we find stories paralleling the most amazing accounts of the building of American fortunes.”

E. Franklin Frazier and Black Bourgeoisie 1957

Durham North Carolina was immortalized in E. Franklin Frazier's Black Bourgeoisie
Black Bourgeoisie focuses on the African-American middle class.

"Frazier is the touchstone; he catapulted me into thinking about his representations of us."

— Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, author of *I've Known Rivers*

BLACK BOURGEOISIE

THE BOOK THAT BROUGHT THE SHOCK OF SELF-REVELATION TO MIDDLE-CLASS BLACKS IN AMERICA

E. FRANKLIN FRAZIER

3. Mobility and Money

When Harlem in New York City became the Mecca of the "New Negro" and the center of the Negro Renaissance, the capital of the black bourgeoisie was Durham, North Carolina.[19] In this city were located the most spectacular achievements of Negroes in the field of business enterprise: the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, the Mechanics and Farmers Bank, the Bankers Fire Insurance Company, and the National Negro Finance Corporation. These enterprises had grown out of the pioneering efforts of men who had had little experience with business but had been inspired by the current faith, promulgated by Negro leaders, that business enter-

prise would open the way to equality and acceptance in white America. One of the pioneers had started out as a barber and with his savings had bought a fraternal organization. Later he joined with a physician and a manager of a grocery store in promoting the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. Success in this undertaking led them into other forms of business whenever an opportunity to promote some enterprise appeared.

Although the promoters of these enterprises were inspired by the spirit of modern business, they exhibited at the beginning of their careers the old-fashioned virtues of the old middle class. Their lives reveal none of the Negro's love of leisure and enjoyment of life. They were frugal and abstemious in their habits. They strove to attain middle-class respectability through industry and morality. They maintained middle-class ideals. In fact, in the nineteen twenties the children of the founders of these Negro enterprises were beginning to assume positions of control in these business undertakings. Because of the influence of these families, the Negro community in Durham with its fine homes, exquisite churches, and middle-class respectability was regarded as the capital of the black bourgeoisie.

As the black bourgeoisie has grown in size and influence, Durham has ceased to enjoy the distinction of being its "capital." The Negro communities in Chicago and Detroit have both claimed to have become the center of the black bourgeoisie. In either case the shift of the "capital" of the black bourgeoisie from a small southern city to a northern metropolis is indicative of the change in the character and outlook of this class. Although the

younger generations of Negro businessmen in Durham had acquired more thoroughly than the pioneers the psychology of the modern businessman, they were still influenced by the older traditions that had grown up in the Negro community. They still conformed to the tradition of the gentleman which lingered and shaped their morals and manners. They still felt some identification with the Negro masses despite the fact that their interests might be opposed to those of the masses. This was due partly to the fact that they as well as the Negro masses lived under a system of rigid racial segregation. Moreover, they were more closely identified with the institutions in the Negro communities which were supported by the masses. On the other hand, the black bourgeoisie which has become important in recent years, has tended to break completely with the traditions of the Negro. As the system of rigid racial segregation has broken down, the black bourgeoisie has lost much of its feeling of racial solidarity with the Negro masses. In the metropolitan areas of the North where there are increasing opportunities for employment and earning money, social mobility, which means primarily the attainment of middle-class status, has become a question of the amount of money which one has to spend. When a French sociologist, on a study tour in the United States, saw the emergence of the black bourgeoisie in northern cities, he observed that they were "really colored Babbitts."[20]

The break with traditional values is seen in the changes in the canons of respectability. Among the older upper-class families in the Negro community, who really stood for a middle-class way of life, the canons of respectability

Booker T. Washington's Visit to Trinity College
(now Duke University)

In years past Trinity College had required Chapel services for all students twice a week. When John C. Kilgo was president from 1894 to 1910 he personally conducted the Chapel exercises. The compulsory nature undoubtedly dulled student interest although one young man reluctantly admitted that Kilgo's superb oratory and penchant to invite surprise guests often made attendance worthwhile.

When the Durham County Colored Fair opened for its annual October run in 1896 few were surprised that Kilgo was invited to give the opening speech. As an idealistic yet activist churchman, it was not out of character for him to speak before predominantly black audiences. But it was surprising for him, with faculty approval, to suspend college classes for half a day so students could attend the Fair. The reason was not Kilgo's opening remarks but those of the featured speaker, the renowned Negro leader of the day, Booker T. Washington.

Even more surprising and unprecedented was Kilgo's invitation to Washington to speak at Chapel exercises on the Trinity campus while he was in town. Washington thought enough of the invitation to write in his acclaimed autobiography, *Up From Slavery*, "It has been my privilege to deliver addresses at many of our leading colleges including Harvard, Yale, Williams, Amherst, Fisk, the University of Pennsylvania, Wellesley, the University of Michigan, Trinity College in North Carolina, and many more."

Why did he include Trinity College in his list? Because Trinity was the first white institution of higher education in the south to extend Booker T. Washington an invitation to speak on its campus.

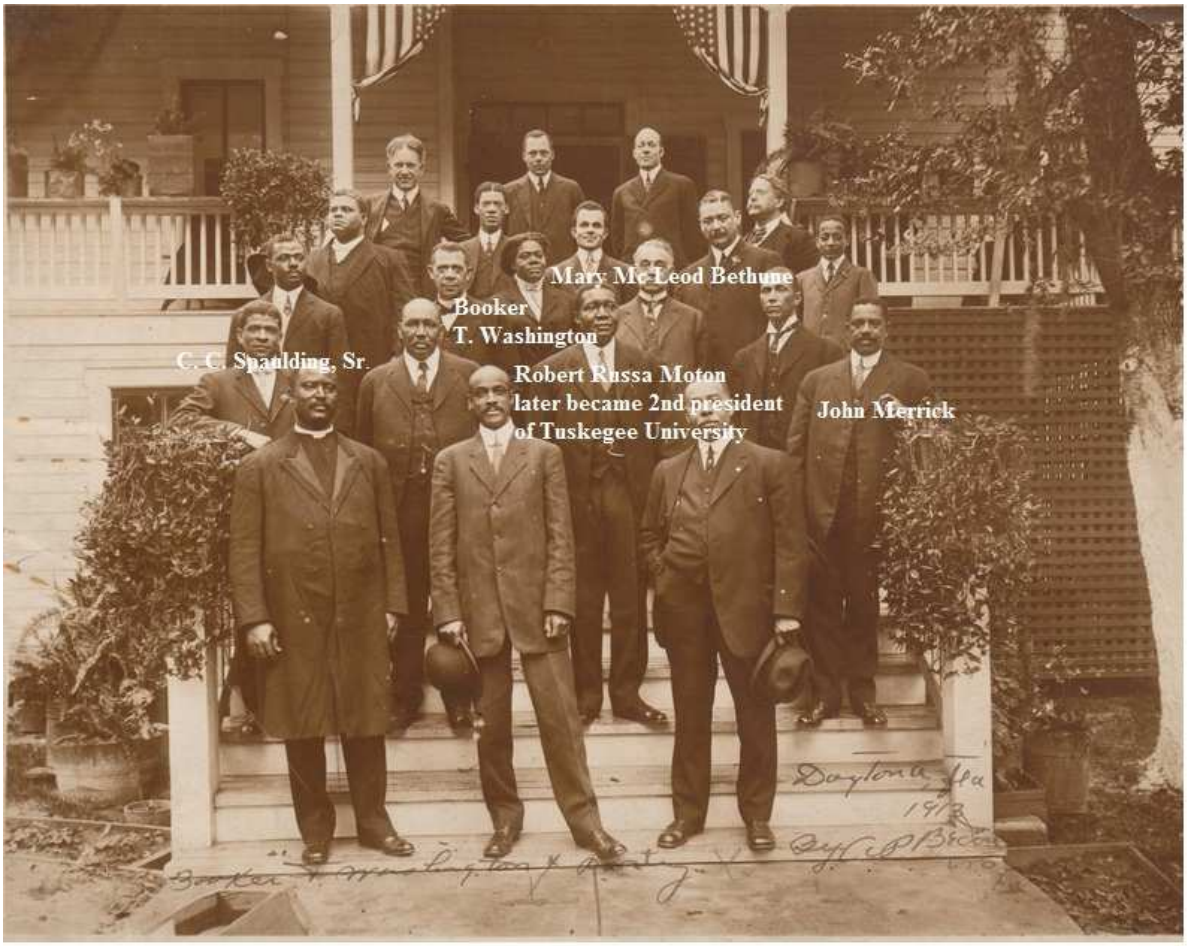
Unfortunately neither the local nor the state press reported on the speech on campus. Washington's invitation and reception, however, was reported by the national progressive weekly magazine, Outlook. It noted that Washington's speech was received with "marked enthusiasm" and that his entourage of a half-dozen colleagues was treated with the "greatest courtesy" even receiving a "hearty college yell" by the students as they departed the campus.

The only campus publication of the day, The Trinity Archive, reported on Washington's visit in its November issue. Even though the content of his speech was not covered, his appearance obviously impressed the students. Washington's sincerity, devotion, simple bearing, and honest and conscientious service to his people elicited admiration. The editor concluded his comments saying, "We are glad that our college community gave him the welcome and hearing that is due to all truth from whatever source it may come."

Apparently Washington never forgot his reception at Trinity College (Duke University). Eight years later he wrote alumnus Walter Hines Page that Trinity students had sought a conversation with him aboard the train on his most recent trip north. Even though Washington's visit was not widely publicized, it remains significant in the history of Trinity and Duke. It shows that the celebrated case of academic freedom, the Bassett Affair in 1903, was not without precedent. In the words of Louis R. Harlan, Washington's biographer and editor of his published papers, his speech on campus in 1896 reveals that the college trustees' defense of Professor John Spencer Bassett "was rooted in an atmosphere of comparative racial liberalism at Trinity College all through the Kilgo era."

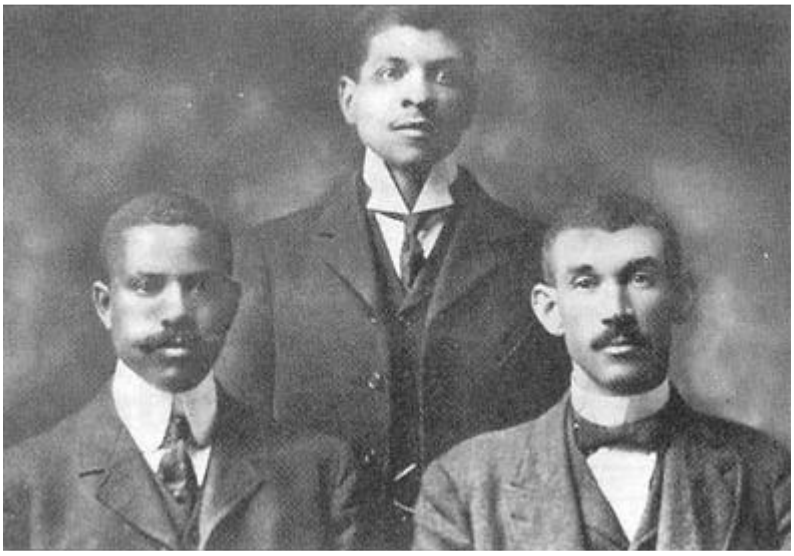
William E. King
University Archivist, 1972-2002
This article originally appeared in Duke Dialogue March 27, 1992. The quote from Harlan is from Louis R. Harlan to William E. King, February 8, 1978, Archives biographical file on Booker T. Washington

Booker T. Washington visits Durham. Group photo. ca. 1910. Mr. Washington is in center, 6th from right



Booker T. Washington is located on the third row, second from the left. C. C. Spaulding, Sr. is on the second row, to the extreme left and John Merrick is on the second row, extreme right. Famed educator Mary Mc Leod Bethune, is on the fourth row in the center of the photograph.

Founders of North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company



John Merrick, C.C. Spaulding, and Aaron Moore

John Merrick - A former enslaved African, who learned to read and write in a Reconstruction School. He later became a brick mason in Raleigh, North Carolina and learned the barber trade during a lull in construction. Subsequently, he moved to Durham owning several barber shops, some of which catered to wealthy white men. He was involved in real estate and the Royal Knights of King David, a fraternal benefit society. It was there, Merrick got the notion of life insurance from the very popular mutual benefit societies developing in the south. A seed had been planted. Merrick was born on September 7, 1859 and died August 6, 1919.

Dr. Aaron McDuffie Moore - A humanitarian. Born September 6, 1863 of free parents. He taught high school for several years and attended medical school at Shaw University's Leonard Medical School. He was the first Black person to practice medicine in the city of Durham. Dr. Moore was the Company's first treasurer and wielded wide influence in the city. He was instrumental in starting other enterprises such as a drug company, Lincoln Hospital and a library. He became president of the Company following Merrick's death in 1919. He devoted full time to working for North Carolina Mutual until his death in 1923.

Charles Clinton Spaulding - The builder. Born in Columbus County, North Carolina, August 1, 1874. He came to Durham at age twenty and attended high school graduating in 1898. He began his career as a part-time agent with the Company and went on to become general manager in less than a year. Spaulding served in various capacities, i.e., as agent, clerk, janitor and general manager. He was named president in 1923, a post he held until his death in 1952. In addition to his career in life insurance, he was widely respected. Mr. Spaulding served on Howard University's board of trustees from 1936 until his death in 1952.

The founders of the Mechanics & Farmers Bank in Durham, 1900. Courtesy Durham County Public Library

North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company Headquarters. ca. 1930

BUSINESS

W. Becket & Associates To Build N. C. Mutual Offices

After more than a year of research, investigation and a succession of interviews with outstanding Negro and white architectural firms, the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co. unanimously decided to commission the internationally famous firm of Welton Becket & Associates to design their new home office building (their new multi-story high-rise home office building) to be located on the old Doris Duke estate at the southeast corner of Duke and W. Chapel Hill St. in Durham.

The announcement, made by Asa T. Spaulding, President of North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co., said:

"It is a well-known fact," Mr. Spaulding continued, "that Negro workers have limited opportunity and are the last hired and first fired. With the economic situation facing the country in the months ahead and the present-day employment practices, our Board of Directors insist that we employ every sound method to guarantee fair and equitable employment in all trade and in every job level in the construction of this building. Since the Welton Becket firm has a fair employment policy of more than 20 years standing, and presently employs Negro technicians, Negro trainees and has other Negro workers on their staff, we are confident that their past experience will be more than helpful in the maximum use of Negro workers in construction of our new home office building."

September 13, 1962 JET

N. C. Mutual Breaks Ground For City's Tallest Office

Asa T. Spaulding, president of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Co. of Durham, was presented the key to the city by Mayor E. J. Evans at ground breaking ceremonies for the firm's new, five million dollar headquarters building, the tallest in the city. Located in the heart of downtown Durham, the structure is located on a site formerly known as Four Acres, the home of the late B. N. and J. B. Duke, founders of the American Tobacco Co. and Duke University.

June 6, 1963 JET

This headquarters building would break ground before the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that was signed on July 2, 1964. This building was completed before the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, signed on April 11, 1968.

Four Acres
Duke family estate site of the NC Mutual Life Insurance headquarters

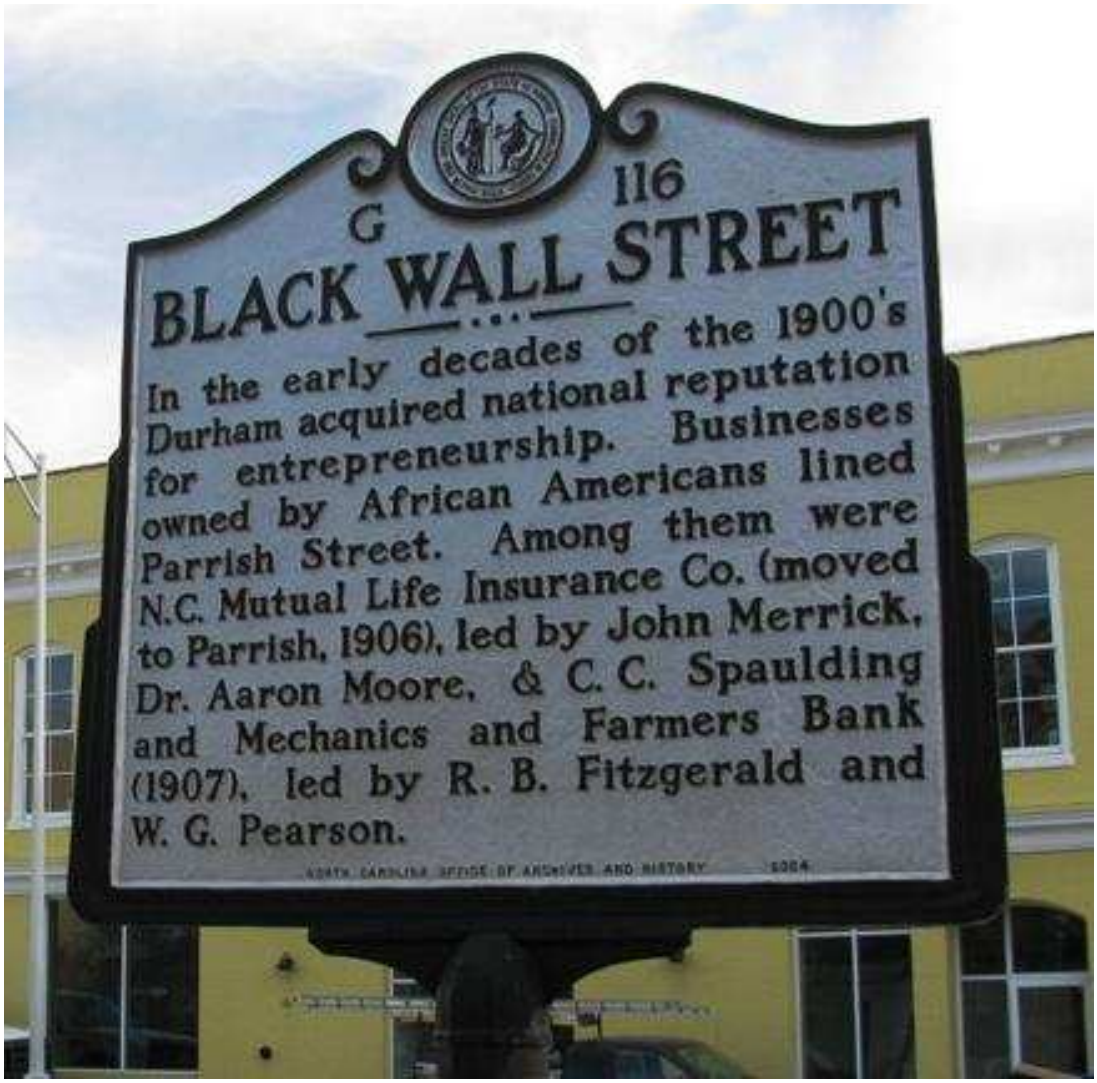
Construction site for N.C. Mutual building
A group of executives stand in front of a sign that announces "New home office for North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company." The lot pictured is the former site of the Benjamin Newton Duke family estate.

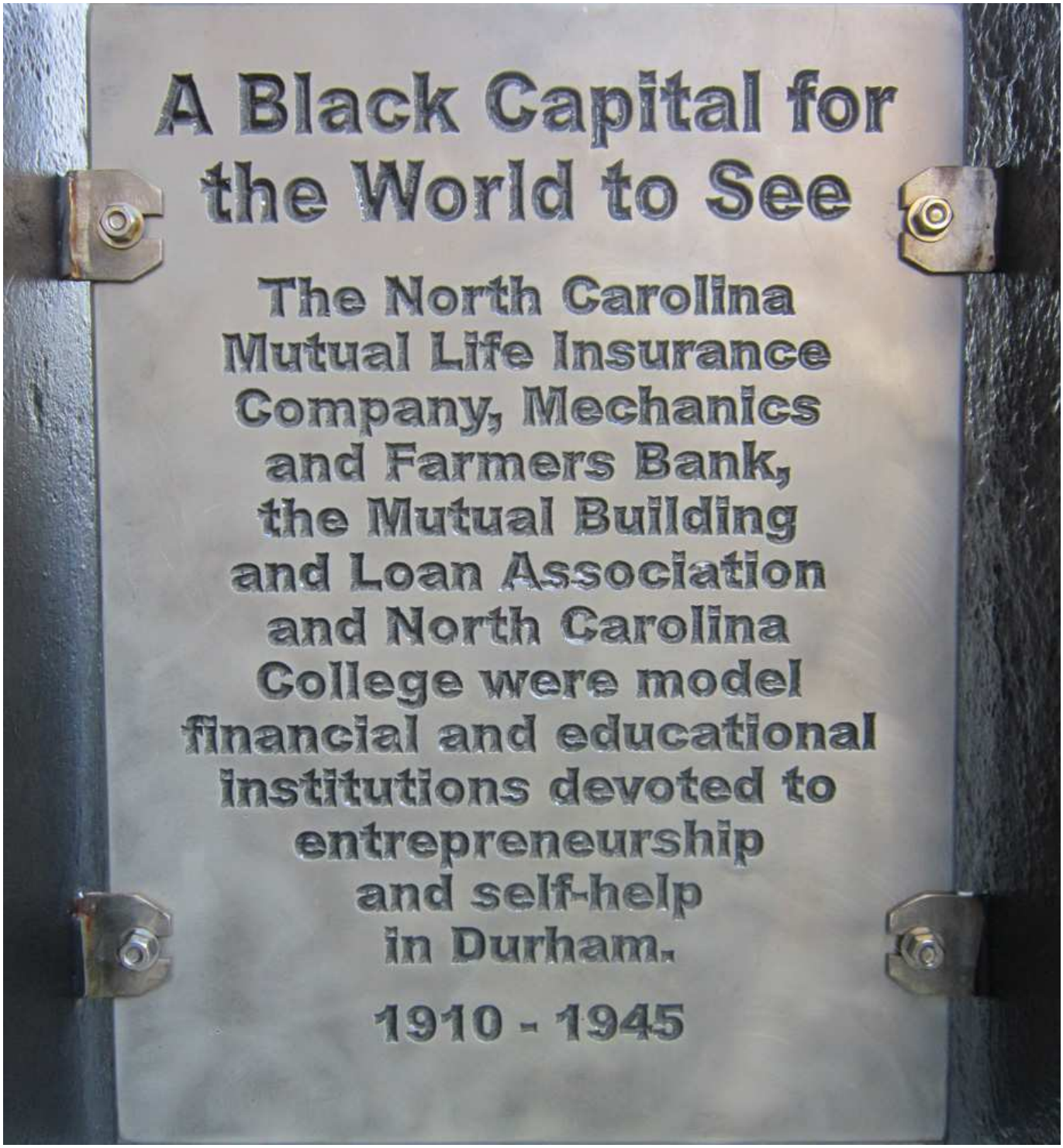
Four Acres
Duke family estate

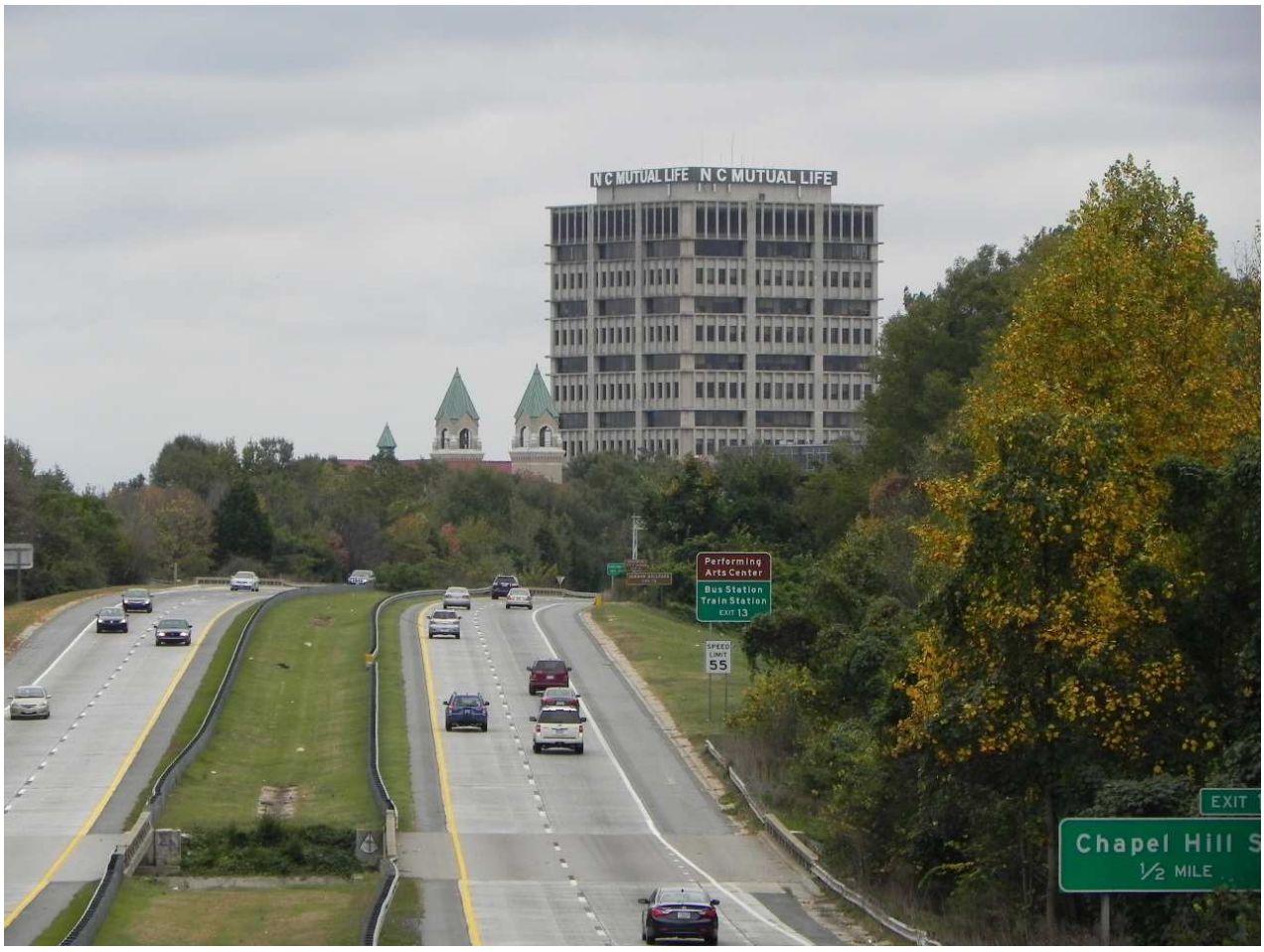
U. S. Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey delivers dedication address during ceremony attended by thousands of firm's friends and policyholders (left). Seated behind him in first row are (l. to r.) Thomas E. Posey of AID, U. S. Sen. Sam J. Ervin, HUD Sect. Robert C. Weaver, Mutual Executive Vice President Joseph Goodloe and North Carolina Gov. Daniel K. Moore.

Ghanaian visitors in colorful national dress add international flavor to festive occasion. Liberian Ambassador S. Edward Peal was among African dignitaries attending dedication. U. S. Information Agency assigned team to farm out stories for worldwide distribution.

June 1966 EBONY


G 116
BLACK WALL STREET
In the early decades of the 1900's Durham acquired national reputation for entrepreneurship. Businesses owned by African Americans lined Parrish Street. Among them were N.C. Mutual Life Insurance Co. (moved to Parrish, 1906), led by John Merrick, Dr. Aaron Moore, & C. C. Spaulding and Mechanics and Farmers Bank (1907), led by R. B. Fitzgerald and W. G. Pearson.


A Black Capital for the World to See
The North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, Mechanics and Farmers Bank, the Mutual Building and Loan Association and North Carolina College were model financial and educational institutions devoted to entrepreneurship and self-help in Durham.
1910 - 1945


N C MUTUAL LIFE
N C MUTUAL LIFE
Performing Arts Center
Bus Station
Train Station
EXIT 13
SPEED LIMIT
55
EXIT
Chapel Hill S
½ MILE