



JOHN MERRICK : SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS MAN

WHAT ARE NEGROES DOING IN DURHAM?

BY CLEMENT RICHARDSON

WHO has not heard of Durham, North Carolina, the city of tobacco? Think of a flourishing little city in the north central part of the Tar Heel State, surrounded by vast tobacco fields and inhabited by some 25,000 prosperous black and white people! Think of the blacks as dividing honors almost evenly in the matter of population and as emulating the whites to the point of good-natured rivalry in civic and business progress!

Some present-day sage goes up and down the land preaching that where one race falls the other must fall and that where one rises the other will rise. I wonder if he does not have Durham in mind.

In Durham there is a hosiery mill owned by a white man, General Julius S. Carr, which is operated entirely by Negroes—150

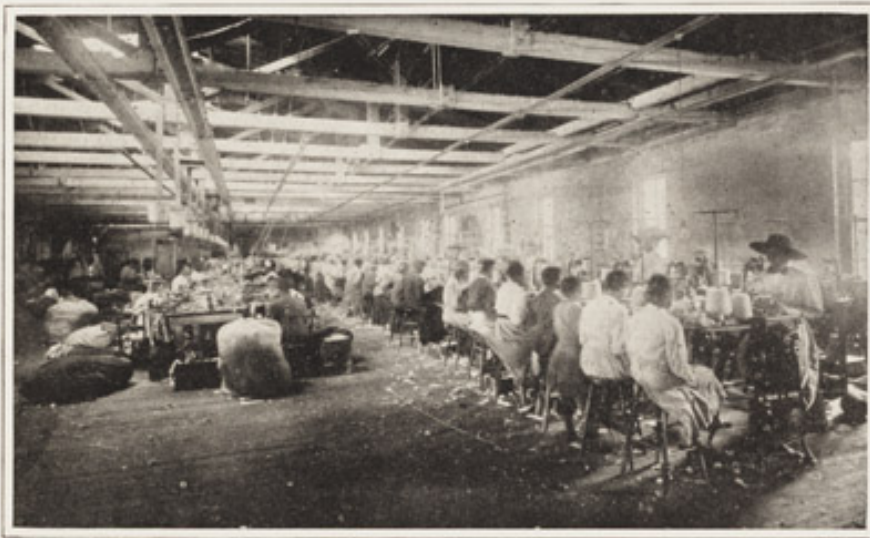
Negro girls and women, as well as a few colored men. In Durham is another hosiery mill owned and operated by Negroes. The concern is regularly incorporated. Dr. A. N. Moore is its president; C. C. Spaulding, treasurer; and Charles C. Viney, secretary and manager. With eighteen knitting machines of the latest pattern, machinery whose total value is \$6000, this company manufactures seventy-five dozen pairs of hose a day. The goods are handled by white salesmen and are sold in New York and Indiana in the North; in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama in the South. How far the white hosiery mill mothered the Negro mill may be guessed when you peep behind the curtain and discover that E. R. Merrick, the vice president of the Negro company has been for a number of years a business protégé of General Carr, the owner of the white mill. How easy it would have been for the general to scotch the wheels of the little Negro enterprise!



THE LINCOLN HOSPITAL: BUILDING AND GROUNDS VALUED AT \$15,000, GIFT OF WASHINGTON DUKE

It will not be possible to set a Negro enterprise in every case over against a corresponding white enterprise. Emphasis must shift more and more to the black man, but everywhere the lives of the two races are of such a mingled yarn that more than enough will be said of the white man to exhibit the two people marching on to progress side by side. They conceive and execute on a big scale in Durham. The firm of W. Duke and Sons employs 1548 colored people at a daily wage of \$1400, or the American Tobacco Company, of which Duke and Sons is a branch, puts into the hands of Negro employees

\$440,000 a year. Be it said to the praise of the employees and the company that race prejudice, labor unions, and modern machinery have not been able to check the flow of wages into the coffers of the Negro laborer. The company has established for its Negro workmen a sort of insurance. To the family of a deceased employee the company gives in cash a sum of money equal to the amount paid to the dead employee the last year of his life, the sum not to exceed \$500. The company sends a nurse at its own expense into the homes of its employees to brighten life and to make improvements in the conditions of health. This is all done on a big scale without parsimony and without grudge.



DURHAM HOSIERY MILL OPERATED ENTIRELY BY
NEGROES FOR SIX YEARS

There are in the City of Durham, Negro carpenters, blacksmiths, brickmasons, brickmakers, plumbers, in fact the representatives of nearly all the skilled trades. In many cases they cease to be tradesmen; they become contractors and owners. There is Peyton H. Smith, once a mason now a contractor, who points to several of the largest brick structures in Durham as his creations. There is P. W. Dawkins, Jr., a graduate of the carpenters' trade of Hampton Institute, now a contractor and builder; and there is Norman C. Dodd, a contractor with thousands of dollars of work always on hand. Here again is H. T. Smith, a hotel keeper, who also owns four houses valued at \$3500. He has a one-half interest in the Smith-Hodge shoe, hat, and notion store. Here is W. H. White, a prosperous grocer, who owns his store building, his dwelling,

and ten houses which he rents. L. J. Spaulding is another grocer doing from \$12,000 to \$15,000 worth of business a year. He owns a house and nine lots and a one-sixth interest in a tract of 2900 acres of land. George W. Stevens is a third grocer who owns his store building, his own dwelling, and sixteen rented houses. The fourth big grocer is C. D. Beasley. He also can boast of a \$15,000 business and of owning ten city lots.

The Negro manufacturer is still a rare being. This is not so in Durham. Here is located the Durham Textile Mill and the Whitted Wood-Working Company, which manufactures all sorts of doors, windows, window frames, mantels, columns, brackets, and the like. This company does from \$300 to \$400 worth of business per month. Another manufacturing company, still in the big-infant stage, is the Union Iron Works Company, headed by James W. Yeargin. It turns out general foundry products: plows, plow castings, and rough iron for building material, laundry heaters, grates, and castings for domestic purposes.

With so much prosperity among black folk, of course the tailor would be in conspicuous demand. It would appear that graduates of Hampton Institute had fixed an eye on a large bite of this particular business plum. The Williams-Mickle Tailoring Shop is the enterprising house of two Hampton men. John H. Allen with his associate, M. T. Norfleet, two other products of the Virginia school, runs



THE HOME OF DR. S. L. WARREN: ONE OF DURHAM'S LEADING
COLORED PHYSICIANS AND MAN OF WEALTH



A PRIVATE SCHOOL BUILDING IN THE
CITY OF DURHAM

a ten-year old tailoring establishment. Carrying stock valued at \$4000, Mr. Allen does about \$14,000 worth of business a year. What Allen and the Williams-Mickle seek to do for the men, the Victoria Millinery and Ready-to-Wear establishment undertakes to do for the ladies, selling high-grade hats, trimmings, and dress goods.

One day, a long time ago, a white man who was a tobacco manufacturer, said to R. B. Fitzgerald, a Negro brickmaker: "Get all the Negroes and mules you can find and make brick. I will buy all you can make." The behest was carried out very literally. The result is that there are few brick structures in Durham without Fitzgerald brick in them. Thirty years at this work has netted Fitzgerald a big brickyard with a \$6000 cement dryer, which makes it possible to turn out brick at all seasons; a yard whose capacity is 30,000 brick per day, and whose value, including ten acres of land, is \$17,000. This brickmaking seems to have taught Fitzgerald the real value of land. Turning his profits into real estate, he has made some such deals as these: He invested \$1500 in a lot and five years later sold the property for \$6000; he bought forty acres of farm land for \$800, made brick on it for ten years and then sold it for \$3000. All this time he was buying and selling homes on easy terms to colored people in the city. He was teaching, helping, and making profits. At one time he put up a brick business house worth

\$10,000; at another a three-story structure worth \$30,000. Turning over his money, investing, and making brick, R. B. Fitzgerald has accumulated in thirty years holdings valued conservatively at \$100,000.

There is another brickmaker who is doing a good business in Durham. R. H. Clegg owns and operates a plant which produces brick for all building purposes. Two million bricks per season are turned out in this smaller yard. This work gives R. H. Clegg a business of \$17,000 per year.

Notice two up-to-date drug stores owned and operated by colored people. Notice the plant of the Reformer Publishing Company, job printers, publishers of a Negro weekly. Here, too, is Scarborough's undertaking establishment, with a branch in Kinston, N. C. J. S. Scarborough has been in business twelve years, owns a good bit of real estate, a one-half interest in the Warren Scarborough Block, is worth some twenty-odd thousand dollars.

At last you reach the bank, a real young but very much alive institution in Durham. Its resources exceed \$40,000; its deposits exceed \$20,000. At one period a short time ago it did more than \$10,000 worth of business in six months.

In Durham there are located the offices of the Royal Knights of King David, the American Life and Benefit Association, and the North Carolina Mutual and Provident Association. The remarkable fact is not that there are so many Negro insurance companies but that they are so substantial, so far removed from the mushroom type of enterprise. The patriarch among these companies is the Royal Knights of King David. Founded in 1883, it marked the beginning of insurance companies in Durham. A little more than a year ago this company paid out \$15,414.35 in sick and death benefits.

The great enterprising insurance company, however, is the North Carolina Mutual and Provident Association, being one of the most thriving Negro business concerns of its kind in the world. It does not confine its business to one city or one state. It is active and substantial in South Carolina and Georgia, as well as in North Carolina. It owns choice property in Wilmington, N. C., in Florence, and in Columbia, S. C. In its own city, it does business in its own house and owns the two houses adjacent, making a block which is appraised at \$33,500. On still another street it has five brick stores, which are occupied by two groceries, one café, a barber shop, a feed store, and a textile mill. In addition, it has sixteen other

pieces of real estate, mainly residences, with an appraised value of \$55,680 for all these city holdings. It collects \$10,000 a year in rents.

This company furnishes a thrilling example of the right use of money. It put up such an attractive home building that immediately this insurance block became the center of new business. Two young men rented rooms and opened a shoe store; the ladies opened a millinery establishment; seven men opened a drug store: twenty formed a corporation and opened a bank. Hither flocked the Durham Reformer printers; the Knights of King David, with its force of clerks; the lawyers; the physicians; and the dentists.



THE WHITTED GRADED SCHOOL : BOYS LEARNING TO MAKE
FURNITURE FOR THEIR HOMES : THE MANUAL
TRAINING DEPARTMENT

The North Carolina Mutual and Provident Association assumed a form of protectorate for Negro homes and Negro home buyers. It not only encouraged individuals and in a measure stood sponsor for the humble Negro home buyer, but it set itself the task of bringing health into the homes. It has its physician, Dr. A. M. Moore, who gives illustrated lectures on the care of the body and the prevention of disease. It sets apart a special day for agents and workers to preach health, calling in the aid of ministers, teachers, and all persons of influence among colored people.

A remarkable career indeed is this for a company not yet fifteen years old. Even here in the matter of statistics there is an interesting tale. Beginning business on April 1, 1899, its office has never

been changed. John Merrick, the founder, is still its president; Dr. A. M. Moore is still the secretary; and C. C. Spaulding is still the vice president and general manager. The company employs 550 men and women as agents, superintendents, clerks, and other workers. Its fourteenth annual statement showed total assets of \$128,304.54 and \$40,000 beyond obligations or liabilities. It handles ordinary and industrial insurance and carries five different classes of policies. Its gross income for 1912 was \$313,516.19, which was an increase of \$53,312.93 over 1911.

This general triumph of business and industry has been a purgative to the professions. School teaching, the ministry, and other professions have been freed from those who enter them merely to get a start. Business has called for some of the best talents and has left the professions open to those who would enter them by choice. Thus the professions are not overcrowded and those electing them are efficient and prosperous. Durham has one Negro lawyer, who practices in all the courts; five physicians; two dentists; thirty-five school teachers and a large corps of able ministers. Many of the men in the professions have caught the property owning fever. E. W. Cannady, the Negro lawyer, lists houses and lots worth \$6000. The physicians, S. L. Warren, A. M. Moore, and F. D. Page, are all men of wealth. Dr. Page rents twenty-two houses and two plantations. Dr. Moore, in addition to his interest in the North Carolina Mutual and other interests, is the founder of the \$15,000 Lincoln Hospital and Nurses' Training School.



THE WHITTED GRADED SCHOOL: GIRLS LEARNING TO PREPARE
AND COOK WHOLESOME FOOD