

THIS ISSUE

Facts About
Blacks in the
SDA Movement

SERVING WITH

EXCELLENCE

COMPLIMENTARY

Sponsored by the
Black Caucus of
SDA Administrators

Special Edition

Produced by MESSAGE Magazine and the Black Caucus of SDA Administrators

Summer 1990

101 Facts About Blacks and the Regional Work in the Seventh-day Adventist Movement

1830s

Joseph Bates participates in the antislavery society.

John Byington, the first General Conference president, and John P. Kellogg, the father of John Harvey, offer their homes as stations on the Underground Railroad, which was set up to help fleeing slaves.

Millerite movement begins; Blacks exposed to Advent message.

1833

Frederick Douglass and other Blacks witness the falling of the stars. Douglass writes his account in his book *My Bondage and My Freedom*; his daughter, Rosetta Douglass Sprague, later becomes a Seventh-day Adventist.

1841

William Still, a Black preacher who spent his life working with the Anti-Slavery Society and the Underground Railroad, accepts the Millerite teachings, later experiences the Great Disappointment.

1842

William Ellis Foy, a Black Millerite minister, receives the first of four visions relating to the early Advent movement. Foy faithfully carries out his commission. In 1844 he meets with Ellen White and recognizes her prophetic gift and ministry. Though he receives no more visions after 1844, he continues to pastor until his death in 1893. His grave is in the Birch Tree Cemetery in Ellsworth, Maine.

1843

Charles Bowles, another well-known Black Millerite minister, becomes instrumental in setting up quarterly Millerite meetings.

Sojourner Truth (formerly Isabella Van Wagener) visits at least two Millerite camp meetings. She accepts the Advent teachings. It is believed she was baptized by Uriah Smith in Battle Creek. She dies around 100 years of age and is buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery, close to the grave of Ellen G. White and other pioneers.

1844

Black Advent believers affected by the Great Disappointment, which effectively ends Millerite movement.

John Lewis, a Black Millerite minister, writes biography of Charles Bowles entitled *The Life, Labor, and Trials of Charles Bowles*.

1859

Ellen G. White instructs church members to disobey the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act that requires American citizens to deliver fleeing slaves to their masters.

1861

Ellen White receives the historic vision at Roosevelt, New York, revealing the horrible curse and degradation of slavery. She declares God is bringing judgment against America for "the high crime of slavery," and that God "will punish the South for the sin of slavery and the North for so long suffering its overreaching and overbearing influence."

1862

Abraham Lincoln signs the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, effective January 1, 1863. The move opens the door for the Adventist message to move into the South.

1863

The Seventh day Adventist Church is officially organized in Battle Creek.

1871

Elbert B. Lane, the first Adventist minister in the South, reports holding meetings in a Tennessee depot building with "White people occupying one room, and the Colored the other."

1877

First Black SDA school begins in Missouri.

1886

The first Black congregation is formed in Edgefield Junction, Tennessee.

1889

Charles Kinney becomes first Black ordained SDA minister; was won to the Adventist faith through the preaching of J. N. Loughborough and E. G. White. He goes on to become one of the major pioneers in the Black work.

The concept of Black conferences is first suggested by Charles Kinney when confronted by efforts to segregate him and his members at camp meeting on the day of his ordination. He suggests this as a way to work more effectively among Blacks and to help deal with racial tensions and problems in the church.

1890

Marshall Enoch begins SDA work in Bermuda. (Bermuda Mission is organized by J. A. Morrow in 1959 with 35 members.)

1891

The famous testimony by Ellen White entitled "Our Duty to the Colored People" is published.

1892

James Patterson leaves for Jamaica; becomes first Black missionary.

Harry S. Shaw is appointed as a special agent by the General Conference to evangelize Blacks in the South.

1894

Edson White and Will Palmer begin to evangelize Southern Blacks via the steamship the *Morning Star*; they land in Vicksburg, Mississippi, in 1895.

1895

Southern Missionary Society, devoted to working for Blacks in the South, is begun, headed by Edson White. It is incorporated in 1898 and becomes part of the Southern Union Conference in 1909.

1896

Oakwood Industrial School begins operation; becomes junior college in 1927. J. L. Moran becomes first Black president in 1932; school becomes senior college in 1943; receives accreditation in 1958. (Presidents: J. L. Beardsley, 1917-1923; J. A. Tucker, 1923-1932; J. L. Moran, 1932-1945; F. L. Peterson, 1945-1954; G. J. Millet, 1954-1963; A. V. Pinkney, 1963-

101 Facts About the Regional Work

1966; F. W. Hale, 1966-1971; C. B. Rock, 1971-1985; E. A. Cooper, interim, 1985; B. F. Reaves, 1985-present.)

1898

Gospel Herald is published by Edson White at Yazoo City, Mississippi. Designed to be an evangelistic journal for Black people; *Message*, its successor, begins in 1934.

1900s

Booker T. Washington is among notable persons to visit Battle Creek Sanitarium; becomes acquainted with Adventist health message.

1901

First Black SDA camp meeting, Edgefield Junction, Tennessee.

Anna Knight arrives in India; becomes first Black woman of any denomination to serve as a missionary there.

First Black SDA medical facility is founded in Nashville, Tennessee; it is later expanded to Riverside Hospital in 1927 under the direction of Mrs. Nellie Druillard. Turned over to the General Conference in 1935; further expanded with the purchase of 46 acres adjacent to property. Modern hospital building constructed in 1947; sold in 1983.

1906

In Los Angeles, Furlong Track church, the first Black SDA congregation on the West Coast still in existence, is organized. (Later becomes Wadsworth church and then University church.)

1907

John Ragland, a product of Adventist education and church worker, leaves the Adventist Church because of discrimination and segregation. He later rejoins in the 1960s.

1909

Testimonies, vol. 9 is published; section entitled "Among the Colored People," dealing with work among Blacks, is included.

Negro Department of the General Conference is formed; name changed to North American Colored Department in 1941; changed to North American Regional Department in 1954; discontinued in 1978. The department is created in the General Conference to deal with the growing issues of the Black work. W. H. Green becomes first Black head of the department. His successors are G. E. Peters, F. L. Peterson, C. E. Moseley, H. D. Singleton, and W. W. Fordham.

1910

Black membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is 1,000.

1912

Lottie Blake becomes first Black physician in the Adventist Church.

1914

Hadley Memorial Hospital opens.

1920

Black membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is 4,000.

Harlem (later Northeastern) Academy opens.

1921

Eva B. Dykes becomes first Black woman in the United States to complete requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

1929

James K. Humphrey, a Black Baptist minister who became an Adventist in 1902, a gifted leader, founds the First Harlem Seventh-day Adventist Church. Plans to create Utopia Park, consisting of an orphanage, a nursing home, a training school, an industrial area, and health-care facilities. Conference administration feels that Humphrey is not cooperating and moves to defrock him. Harlem congregation stands with Humphrey, and the Greater New York Conference votes to defrock him and disfellowship the entire congregation. It adopts the name United Sabbath-day Adventist Church.

1930

Black membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is 8,000.

1932

Black Adventist evangelistic journal *Message* magazine, successor to the *Gospel Herald*, receives its name after the decision of a national conference of Black leaders at the Ephesus church in New Orleans; begins publication in 1934. (Editors: R. B. Thurber, 1935; J. E. Shultz, 1936-1942; H. K. Christman, 1942-1943; R. L. Odom, 1943-1945; L. B. Reynolds, 1945-1959; J. E. Dykes, 1960-1967; G. J. Millet, 1968-1970; W. R. Robinson, 1971-1978; L. B. Reynolds, 1978-1980; J. P. Monk, Jr., 1980-1985; D. W. Baker, 1985-present.)

The historic student strike takes place at Oakwood Junior College.

1934

The Hope of the Race, a doctrinal work focusing on the progress of Blacks, is published. (F. L. Peterson, author.)

1939

Sweet Chariot Hour radiobroadcast begins in Pasadena, California.

1941

North American Informant published; ceases in 1978. *North American Regional Voice*, its successor, begins publication in 1978. (Editor: L. A. Paschal, 1978-present.)

1942

Office of Regional Affairs in Pacific Union Conference created with F. L. Peterson as its first secretary; 1,350 Black members in union at this time. (Current membership: 20,396.)

E. E. Cleveland starts his evangelistic ministry--baptizes more than 13,000 persons into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

101 Facts About the Regional Work, a special issue of the SERVING WITH EXCELLENCE (SWE) newsletter, results from a joint effort between MESSAGE magazine and the Black Caucus of SDA Administrators. Naturally, this list could not be all-inclusive. However, it documents some of the major events that have impacted on the Black Adventist work. These facts have been derived mostly from published sources, but some facts may vary. As the list will be adjusted and updated, readers are encouraged to submit additional facts for consideration in future editions. Contact the MESSAGE editorial office (55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740) or the Black Caucus of SDA Administrators (715 Youngs Lane, Nashville, TN 37207). The following persons formed the working committee that compiled these facts: Delbert W. Baker, Richard C. Brown, Earl Canson, William J. Cleveland, Jr., Tracy Cook, Charles E. Dudley, Frank W. Hale, Jr., and J. Paul Monk. This complimentary copy of the SERVING WITH EXCELLENCE newsletter is provided by the Black Caucus.

SWE is produced six times a year by MESSAGE magazine, and published by the Review and Herald® Publishing Association, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740 (301-791-7000). It is designed to be a vehicle of communication and leadership resource for Christian leaders and other professionals. Individual subscription rate, \$7.00 per year; libraries, \$6.00 per year. MESSAGE magazine is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization, and donations are tax-deductible. Donors and supporters may request the newsletter without charge. Articles may be reprinted without permission if suitable credit is given. Back issues are available for one year at \$1.00 per issue or \$5.00 for an entire year of six issues. To order, write SWE Newsletter at the above address.

Editor: Delbert W. Baker; Coordinator: Pat Humphrey; Typist: Carol Barron Thomas; Designer: Lee Cherry; Consultants: NAD Leaders

101 Facts About the Regional Work

1943

Lucy Byard, a gravely ill Black woman and longtime Adventist from Brooklyn, is admitted to Washington Adventist Sanitarium and Hospital, but is discharged when it is discovered that she is Black. She is transferred to Freedman's Hospital. She later dies of pneumonia. This incident, along with others, stirs the Black leadership to press the General Conference to act to ensure that such discrimination and inhumane treatment does not occur again in church institutions.

1944

Black membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is 20,000.

At Spring Meeting, held in Chicago's Stevens Hotel, the General Conference Committee approves Black (Regional) self-governing conferences.

1945

Lake Region Conference becomes the first Regional conference organized, with 2,320 members; J. G. Dasent elected first president. (Current membership: 19,897.)

Northeastern Conference is organized with 2,400 members; L. H. Bland elected first president. (Current membership: 32,765.)

Allegheny Conference is organized with 4,000 members; J. H. Wagner elected first president. (Divided in 1967.)

South Atlantic Conference is organized with 3,523 members; H. D. Singleton is elected first president. (Current membership: 21,344.)

South Central Conference is organized with 2,235 members; H. R. Murphy is elected first president. (Current membership: 19,738.)

1946

Pine Forge Academy opens. (Principals: J. L. Moran, 1946-1948; R. L. Reynolds, 1948-1950; E. I. Watson, 1950-1959; C. L. Brooks, 1959-1963; L. R. Palmer, 1963-1966; C. B. Tivy, 1966-1969; A. T. Westney, 1969-1976; A. Humphrey, 1976-1979; P. R. Jones, 1979-1981; R. Smith, 1981-1982; W. A. Cheatham, 1982-1985; C. Gill, 1985-1989; R. Mills, 1989-present.)

1947

Southwest Region Conference is organized with 1,939 members; W. W. Fordham elected first president. (Current membership: 12,619.)

Central States Mission is organized with 798 members; T. M. Rowe elected first president; becomes conference in 1952. (Current membership: 7,648.)

1960s

During the civil rights period White Adventists in many churches and schools refuse to admit or associate with Blacks.

1960

During this period a number of talented Black entertainers attend Oakwood College and/or join the church.

1962

At the General Conference session in San Francisco, more than 1,000 Black Adventists demonstrate against the church's racial policies.

Frank L. Peterson becomes the first of several Blacks to hold the position of general vice president of the General Conference.

1965

The *Review* carries actions of the General Conference that call for the ending of racial discrimination in the denomination's schools, hospitals, churches, and institutions.

1966

The Southern Work, a reprint of Ellen White's testimonies relating to the work for Blacks during the years 1891 to 1899, is published.

1967

Allegheny East Conference is organized with 7,264 members; W. A. Thompson is elected first president. (Current membership: 19,743.)

Allegheny West Conference is organized with 4,777 members; W. Starks is elected first president. (Current membership: 9,655.)

1968

Southern College in Tennessee admits its first Black student five years after the last state university, Alabama, had integrated its campus.

1970

Free at Last, a popular evangelistic work, is published. (E. E. Cleveland, author.)

Ron Graybill's *E. G. White and Church Race Relations* is one of the more significant books in the church's effort to educate the membership on racial matters.

The historic *16 Points* resolution outlining the General Conference's renewed commitment to equality and its position on Regional conferences and human relations is voted. This resolution remains a binding document today.

1971

Mission to Black America, an account of Edson White's missionary journeys in the South, is published. (Ron Graybill, author.)

1973

Breath of Life begins its first series of telecasts. C. D. Brooks is speaker and director; W. Arties is executive producer.

1975

G. Ralph Thompson becomes first Black to hold the office of General Conference secretary.

Angels in Ebony, an overview of Black Adventist history, is published. (Jacob Justiss, author.)

1977

Oakwood College church and Moseley Complex are constructed.

Robert Carter becomes first Black president of Bermuda Mission.

1978

Black Caucus of Seventh-day Adventist Administrators is organized in Huntsville, Alabama.

1979

The first Pastoral Evangelism Council held at Oakwood College.

Charles E. Bradford becomes first Black president of the North American Division.

1980

Robert Carter is elected president of the Lake Union Conference, becoming the first Black union conference president.

1981

Southeastern Conference organized with 7,774 members; James Edgcombe is elected first president. (Current membership, 14,484.)

1983

Monogram on E. G. White and race wars/future slavery question released by E. G. White estate.

1984

We Have Tomorrow, a history of the Black Seventh-day Adventist

101 Facts About the Regional Work

Church, is published. (L. B. Reynolds, author.)
 Albert Dudley becomes first Black administrator of Hadley Memorial Hospital.

1986
 Bermuda Conference organized with 2, 235 members; E. Richardson is elected first president. (Current membership: 3,650.)

Dr. Samson Kisekka is appointed prime minister of Uganda, highest ranking public official in the Adventist Church. (In 1988 a biography on his life was written by D. W. Baker.)

1987
 A biography on the life of William Ellis Foy, *The Unknown Prophet*, is published, providing research showing that Foy fulfilled his prophetic mission and that he did not reject God's command to share his vision with others, as did Hazen Foss. (D. W. Baker, author.)

1988
 The first GC Annual Council to be held in Africa convenes in Nairobi, Kenya.

Adventists in Africa is produced by *Message* magazine for the General Conference and the Eastern Africa and Africa-Indian Ocean divisions. This magazine and other witnessing literature are sent to every African embassy in Washington, D.C., sharing the Adventist message and life-style.

1989
Black membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America reaches 187,000.

A Star Gives Light, a Black SDA history text for elementary church schools, is published. (Norwida Marshall, editor.)

Barbara Jackson-Hall becomes first Black editor of NAD church magazine other than *Message*.

Rosa Banks becomes the first woman to hold the position of General Conference field secretary/NAD Human Relations Director.

1990
The more than 187,000 Black Seventh-day Adventists give more than \$66 million in tithe. These figures approximate 26 percent of the North American Division and 11 percent of the world church total. The tithe income of Black Adventists is larger than any division outside of the North American Division.

Church Leadership: A Call to Virtue, a work dealing with various aspects of administration, is published. (C. B. Rock, author.)

Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story is published. (Ben Carson and Cecil Murphy, authors.)

The Wit and Wisdom of Charles Bradford, a series of stories and experiences of C. E. Bradford, is published. (William and Noelene Johnsson, compilers.)

Profiles of Service, 150 Black Seventh-day Adventists who are making a unique contribution to their church and community, is published. (Sponsored by the Black Caucus.)

The Caucus of Black SDA Administrators is committed to:

1. **Evangelizing:** Spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of the three angels' messages in order to prepare people for the Second Coming
2. **Ministering:** Promoting the mission work and departmental ministries of the world church
3. **Nurturing:** Building and strengthening the church in those areas that minister to Black people
4. **Strategizing:** Planning and implementing strategies for the nurture and development of the Black constituency (including young people, families, the elderly, and the disadvantaged)
5. **Networking:** Supporting the work of Black institutions of the church and allowing for sharing and counseling together among Regional leaders
6. **Facilitating:** Encouraging the integration and involvement of the Black constituency in the inner workings of the church
7. **Promulgating:** Promoting principles of equity, justice, and fairness both inside and outside the church

Caucus Membership Roster

C. Dudley, Chairman

R. Brown, Secretary

Allegheny East Conference

- A. Kibble, President
- C. Cheatham, Secretary
- B. Mann, Treasurer

Allegheny West Conference

- W. Lewis, President
- C. Rogers, Secretary
- J. Lewis, Treasurer

Bermuda Conference

- E. Richardson, President
- C. Simmons, Secretary
- D. Pearman, Treasurer

Breath of Life

- C. Brooks, Director/Speaker
- W. Arties, Executive Producer

Central States Conference

- P. Monk, President
- P. Ware, Secretary/Treasurer

Emeritus

- E. Cleveland
- G. Earle

Hadley Hospital

- A. Dudley, President

Lake Region Conference

- L. Palmer, President
- R. Brown, Secretary
- L. Stone, Treasurer

Message Magazine

- D. Baker, Editor

Northeastern Conference

- S. Brooks, President
- H. Baptiste, Secretary
- L. Hampton, Treasurer

North Pacific Union Conference

- E. Shepperd, Regional Affairs Dir.

Pacific Union Conference

- E. Canson, Regional Affairs Dir.

Regional Voice

- L. Paschal, Editor

Oakwood College

- B. Reaves, President

Pine Forge Academy

- R. Mills, Principal

South Atlantic Conference

- R. Feay, President
- V. Mendinghall, Secretary
- E. Mason, Treasurer

South Central Conference

- C. Dudley, President
- J. McCoy, Secretary
- F. Crowe, Treasurer

Southeastern Conference

- J. Doggette, President
- R. Brown, Secretary
- R. Patterson, Treasurer

Southwest Region Conference

- R. Barron, President
- S. Green, Secretary
- H. Premdas, Treasurer