

Feb. 11

A SALUTE TO BLACK HISTORY WEEK

Feb. 15

Booker T. Washington

A leading spokesman for Southern blacks from the 1880s through the early 1900s (page 85), Washington believed that Negroes should concentrate on useful trades like farming and carpentry. Although sometimes branded a "conciliator," Washington was concerned about the effects of segregation, as he indicated in the following remarks excerpted from a speech delivered in Brooklyn, New York, in 1896:

It is said that the strongest chain is no stronger than its weakest link. The most intelligent man in your community has his intelligence darkened by the ignorance of a fellow citizen in the Mississippi bottoms. The most wealthy in your city would be more wealthy but for the poverty of a fellow being in the Carolina rice swamps. No member of your race in any part of our country can harm the weakest and meanest member of mine without the proudest and bluest blood in the city of Brooklyn being degraded.

I know that, whether in slavery or freedom, we have always been loyal to the Stars and Stripes, that no schoolhouse has been opened for us that has not been filled; that 1,500,000 ballots that we have the right to cast are as potent for weal and woe as the ballot cast by the whitest and most influential man in your commonwealth. I know that wherever our life touches yours we help or hinder; that wherever your life touches ours you make us stronger or weaker. Further, I know that almost every other race that tried to look the white man in the face has disappeared.

My friends, we are one in this country. There is no power that can separate our destiny. The Negro can afford to be wronged; the white man cannot afford to wrong him. Unjust laws or customs that exist in many places regarding the races injure the white man and inconvenience the Negro. The Negro can endure the temporary inconvenience, but the injury to the white man is permanent. It is for the white man to save himself from his degradation that I plead. Physical death comes to the one Negro lynched in a county, but death of the morals - death of the soul - comes to the thousands responsible for the lynching. This country demands that every race measure itself by the American standard. By it a race must rise or fall, succeed or fail, and in the last analysis mere sentiment counts but little.

During the next half-century and more my race must continue passing through the severe American crucible. In working out our destiny, while the main burden and center of activity must be with us, we shall need in a large measure the help, the encouragement, the guidance that the strong can give the weak. Thus helped, we of both races in the South shall soon throw off the shackles of prejudice and rise above the clouds of ignorance and selfishness.



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President : Wilson Gulley

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National Business League

Chairman-Willie W. Ross



COUNTEE CULLEN (1903-1946)

POET. Born Countee Porter in Baltimore, Maryland. Orphaned at an early age and adopted by Reverend Frederick Cullen of New York City. B.A., New York University, with Phi Beta Kappa honors, 1925; M.A., Harvard, 1926. Guggenheim Fellowship for study in France, 1928. Nationally acclaimed poet at 21 with publication of his first book of poems, *Color*, which won the Harmon Foundation's gold medal for high achievement in literature, 1925. Taught French in Harlem schools for 13 years. Primarily a lyrical and emotional poet; one of the leading figures in the "Harlem Renaissance" of the 1920's. Other books: *The Ballad of the Brown Girl*, 1927; *The Black Christ and Other Poems*, 1929; *On These I Stand*, 1947.

COMPLIMENTS OF



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BILLIE HOLIDAY (1915-1959)

BLUES SINGER. Born Eleanora Fagan and dubbed "Lady Day" by Lester Young, Billie Holiday was a product of the East Baltimore slums. Moved to New York City and began her singing career in an assortment of Harlem nights spots, 1929. Featured vocalist with Benny Goodman's Band; vocalist with orchestras of Count Basie and Artie Shaw. Regarded as the outstanding modern jazz female singer in the great blues tradition of Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith. Her sensitive handling of tone and rhythm projected a universal sense of loneliness and sultry pathos. A Decca recording artist, many of her records are collectors items: "Strange Fruit," "Lover Man," "Them There Eyes," and "God Bless the Child."

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SARAH McWILLIAMS WALKER (1867-1919)

COSMETICS MANUFACTURER, PHILANTHROPIST. Madame C. J. Walker, as she was known, was born to ex-slave parents in Delta, Louisiana. Overcame an early life of poverty and hardship to become first black woman to attain great wealth by her own efforts. First to develop and produce hair and beauty products, together with a system of beauty culture, for black women. An innovative businesswoman and financial genius, she had more than 2,000 agents selling and demonstrating the "Walker System" of hair styling and cosmetics. Donated large sums of money to Negro institutions and charities. Founded an academy for girls in West Africa and bequeathed \$100,000 to it.

COMPLIMENTS OF

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