

GENERAL NEWS SUMMARY FOR 1931

Defender Files Give Selected News of Past Year

From every point of view the year 1931 has been an eventful one, because in spite of the fact that gains have assuredly been made in race relations, they have to a great extent been overshadowed by the constant recurrence of the hatred specter of lynchings and mob rule. As usual the tentacles of the lynching octopus reach the White House and President Hoover, remaining supinely aloof in the snuggled seclusion of the White House, and taking no definite stand against this un-American evil, has done much to shake the confidence of millions of American citizens in the efficacy and justice of this democratic form of government.

But the goal is not entirely lost, and some gains have been made. In education, religion, the arts and sciences and in the business and commercial world, we continue our triumphant march of progress and achievement in the face of obstacles that challenge the respect and admiration of the world.

The year 1931 has passed into history and we can make no better use of its stirring events than to let our minds be guided by the guiding posts of the future. Read this summary of news, garnered from every section of the civilized world.

JAN. 3—Walter L. Cohen, most noted political figure in Louisiana, unquestioned leader of the Republican party in the state and controller of customs at New Orleans, passed away in the Crescent city at his home, 1017 N. St.

James Weldon Johnson, poet, author, former United States consul in Nicaragua and Venezuela, and editor of "The Book of Negro Spirituals," passed away in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

A good resolution for 1931, offered by The Chicago Defender, was "The year 1931 has passed into history and we can make no better use of its stirring events than to let our minds be guided by the guiding posts of the future. Read this summary of news, garnered from every section of the civilized world."

Adam Beckley of Chicago, a mail carrier for 25 years, laid aside his gun in the first year since 1925 when 30 persons were victims of mob rule. According to figures released by the records and research department of Tuskegee Institute, 21 persons were lynched in 1930.

JAN. 10—Bishop Nelson Caldwell Cleaves of the C. M. E. church died at his home in St. Louis, Mo., after a lingering illness. He was 66 years old.

Characterized as one of the greatest events of the year, the induction of Charles E. Toney and James S. Thompson into the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was held in the Washington Heights court.

Thomas Handy, one of the oldest and best known Negro newspaper reporters in Kansas City after a five days hunt in which he was wanted for kidnapping Adolphus Busch Ortwine.

Delegates to the 15th annual meeting of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority gathered at Wiley college, Marshall, Tex. They elected Mrs. Maude E. Busfield of Chicago supreme basilius for the coming year.

JAN. 17—Raymond Gunn was arrested for the slaying of Miss Velma Colter, a school teacher of Marysville, Mo., and although forced to confess by cruel police methods, he was not taken to a place of safety and later became a mob victim. He was taken from the jail, chained to the school house and then cremated when the mob set the building on fire.

The Spingarn medal for 1930, awarded annually by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for the highest achievement by a member of the Race, goes to Richard Berry Harrison, star of "Marc Connelly's play," "The Green Pastures."

Victor H. Tulane, wealthy and influential resident of Alabama and a former member of the board of trustees of Tuskegee Institute and of the State Infirmary, died at the age of 57 at his home in Montgomery.

The high hopes held by his wife and friends that Thomas Fleming, former political leader and city alderman of Cleveland, Ohio, would

bomb throwers, the explosion rocking the entire neighborhood.

More than 1,600 younger members of the Race petition State Senator Charles A. Roxborough to draft a bill to amend the constitution of the legislature. They claim the present civil rights bill is inadequate. The New York assembly unanimously adopted a resolution commending lynching and calling upon congress to enact laws to counteract the menace.

Stephen Neal, who framed the 14th amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which made the Negro a citizen, was born in Lebanon, Ind.

Hon. Robert S. Abbott, editor and publisher of The Chicago Defender, and State Senator Adelbert H. Roberts were appointed by Governor Emmerson of Illinois to the Lincoln memorial commission, which will select a suitable memorial to Abraham Lincoln to be located in the state capital.

FEB. 21—A commission from the Virgin Islands arrives in Washington, D. C., to report on the matter of returning to the manufacture of rum.

Because J. Claude Fields, chairman of the Red Cross chapter at Hattiesburg, Miss., refused to discriminate against the Race in the handling of relief, the staff was ousted and Mayor W. F. S. Tatum had offices of the chapter located in the city hall.

Mary McLeod Bethune champions the cause of the Race at interracial conference in Lakeland, Fla.

United States senate expected to pass the soldiers bonus bill, already passed by lower house of congress.

Senator Charles McNary, of the House of Representatives, introduced investigation of charges of discrimination against Race students at the University of Michigan.

National Builders association ends its ninth annual conference at Hampton Institute, William T. Courtney, Atlanta, Ga., elected president for ensuing year.

FEB. 28—Dante Bellegarde, newly appointed minister of Haiti, is well received when he presents his letters of credence to President Herbert Hoover.

Frank Flowers, vice president of the defunct Roosevelt-Bankers State bank, Chicago, who fled following his indictment, is captured in San Diego, Cal.

New York state police accused of burning the fingers of Alvin Dumas, 25, a prisoner, in an effort to wring a confession from him.

For the first time in the history of the Race in Indianapolis, Henry J. Richardson Jr., an attorney, acts as presiding judge in the superior court.

Longshoremen at New Orleans go on strike as protest against race discriminations and other intolerable conditions.

R. R. Wright Sr., president National Negro Bankers association, in a speech at Philadelphia praises Race banking institutions for their splendid showing during present period of depression.

MARCH 7—Stirred by revelations in The Chicago Defender of peonage conditions in Florida, agents of the United States department of justice, operating from Jacksonville, investigated the case of a knife blade in the hands of a man.

Mrs. Bessie Rucker Davis, wife of President Davis of West Virginia State college, dies after an illness of several months.

The sixth child is born to Empress Etege Menen, consort of Haile Selassie I, emperor of Ethiopia.

Starting revelations are unearthed by national press concerning the Chicago Defender concerning the unfair methods and discrimination as practiced by the Oklahoma school system in city and county.

Judge Albert B. George of Chicago was named by Governor Louis L. Emmerson to fill the vacancy on the Illinois high court.

Another instance of the absolute fairness of the French people was evidenced by the announcement in the Southern, that a white prisoner had been freed without a burn. The fire is said to have started from an "unknown cause."

A Harlem chauffeur and a maid are believed by police to have conspired to the murder of Vivian Gordon, whose garroted body was found several days ago.

March blizzard, the worst of the winter, whipped by a 40-mile-an-hour gale, left 18 inches of snow in Chicago and provided work for 35,000 unemployed who dug the city out from under the white hide.

Jesse Binga, Chicago banker, is indicted by the grand jury on charges of embezzlement.

Josephine Baker, well known American dancer, is named "queen of the night" for the coming French colonial exposition to be held in Paris.

Five nationally prominent Race members are appointed to the general committee of the George Washington bicentennial celebration to be held in Washington in 1932.

MARCH 21—A new tax collector in Washington for Dr. James T. Blue, convicted of having performed an illegal operation resulting in the death of Mrs. Hilda Frances Leimlich.

Announcement is made that two closed banks, the Chelsea Bank & Trust company of New York and the American Exchange Trust company of New York, will soon reopen their doors.

The First National Bank of Atlanta, Ga., opens a Jim Crow window to "accommodate" Race and to "expedite" business.

Educators and representatives of the Rosenwald and Jeannette-Slater fund and 175 Jeannette supervisors studied the Georgia school system at a conference at Augusta, Ga., called by President Peters of Paline college.

The organization having charge of the case of the condemned Scottsboro boys, plans have been completed for the demand for a new trial and the four boys, who are about to be released, are about to be released.

M. S. Stewart of Memphis, Tenn., is elected president of the National Negro Insurance association, at its annual convention in Hot Springs, Ark.

For the fourth time Charles R. Campbell was unanimously re-elected grand master of Union Grand lodge Free and Accepted Masons of Michigan, at its 66th annual communication held at Jackson, Mich.

A large group of fellowship awards was announced by Edwin H. Bess, president of the Julius Rosenwald fund, to enable students, artists and musicians to continue their work in advanced fields of knowledge.

Frank and Zelator Taylor, 25 and 18 years old, respectively, were convicted of robbing a bank in St. Louis and sentenced to 20 years in the state penitentiary.

The National Negro Business league holds its 12th annual convention at the Hotel New York in New York city and is presided over by the president, Dr. Robert R. Moton, principal of Tuskegee institute.

JUNE 22—Mme. A. Lelia Walker, daughter of the late Mme. C. J. Walker, dies suddenly in Long Beach, Cal., at the home of Miss Mary Faine, where she had come to attend a birthday party. Death was due to apoplexy.

Samuel Bess, a wealthy Harlem realtor, is shown to death by a known man in the hallway of his home in New York city.

The will of Dr. Dan Williams, eminent surgeon, of \$300,000, reveals many huge gifts to charitable and educational institutions.

Congressman Oscar Delrieux speaks in Mobile, Ala., in the Pure Heart of Mary, Roman Catholic church, at the city administration refused him the use of the public auditorium.

The Century Life Insurance company and the Woodmen of the World, president, and John L. Webb, chairman of the board of directors, effect a merger here with A. E. Kendall, president, and John L. Webb, chairman of the board of directors.

Thirty-six members of the British parliament sign a statement urging the retrial of the eight youths sentenced to death in Scottsboro, Ala.

Dr. J. H. H. Jones, prominent Chicago, who is a member of the Baptist union of Rochester, N. Y., the union is composed of 40 churches, and 33 of them are white.

A last minute plea for commutation of the death sentence of a convicted convict in the camps and his revelations rival the history of tortures of the Spanish Inquisition.

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Roger Williams-Howe college, Memphis, Tenn., is elected president of the National Negro Insurance association, at its annual convention in Hot Springs, Ark.

Col. Hubert Julian receives his pilot's license as an aviator from the United States department of commerce, at Washington, D. C.

Temporary receiver is named in Atlanta, Ga., for the National Benefit Life Insurance company.

Ernest Morrison, known in the movies as "Sunshine Sammy," is accused of criminally assaulting Blanche Van Putten in New York.

AUG. 15.—Twenty bodies are recovered from Sampit creek, where a bus carrying a picnic crowd plunged through a drawbridge. Survivor, Mrs. Cora Winfrey Bush, widow of the late John E. Bush, founder of the Moslems Temple, passed away in Little Rock, Ark.

C. C. Spaulding, president of the North Carolina Mutual Insurance company, Durham, is attacked and killed by George Brown, a white soda clerk.

Dental graduates of Howard university protest the removal of Dr. College of dentistry, in a letter to the trustee board.

Jesse S. Heap, Toledo, Ohio, is elected president of the National Negro Bar association in New York.

Dr. Joseph J. Rhoads, president of Bishop college, addressed the department of sociology at the University of Michigan, in a letter to the trustee board.

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discloses an estate valued at \$100,000. Race delegates attend the 13th annual convention of the American Legion at Detroit and participate actively in the sessions.

Tom Fleming, former councilman of Cleveland, now in prison, is aided by his wife in requesting a pardon from the Ohio governor.

OCT. 10—Citizens of Wilson, N. C., request the board of education to remove W. H. A. Howard, principal of the Wilson high school, who has been charged with irregularities in the handling of public funds.

Marcus Garvey, founder and president general of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, is elected a member of the council at St. Andrews, British West Indies.

Dean Sage, president of the board of trustees of Atlanta university, announces a gift of \$1,000,000 to the university by a friend.

Dent Williams (white) of Birmingham, Ala., brother of a girl abducted and murdered, shoots Willie Peterson, World war veteran, held as a suspect. Williams shot Peterson three times as he was being questioned in the local jail.

Bill Buckner, for 21 years trainer of the Chicago White Sox baseball team, receives \$800 as his share of the receipts from the city series.

OCT. 17—Miss Alma Crutcher stabs to death her common-law husband, Robert Lee Williams (white), in New York city.

Florida state supreme court decided Rev. R. A. Blount must go to prison for seducing a 13-year-old girl.

George L. Vaughn, prominent attorney of St. Louis, is acquitted of a charge of subordination of perjury in connection with a divorce case.

Dr. R. Nathaniel Dett resigns as director of the school of music at Hampton Institute.

Dr. Will W. Alexander of Atlanta accepts the position of acting president of the New Dillard university in New Orleans.

Fisk university, Nashville, Tenn., celebrates the 60th anniversary of the famous Fisk Jubilee Singers, and Mrs. Maggie Porter Cole of Detroit, one of the two surviving original members, was guest of honor.

OCT. 24—Dr. William Henry Croghan, director and president emeritus of Clark university, Atlanta, Ga., passes away in Kansas City, Mo., at the home of his daughter.

Betty Green of New York city is found not guilty of participation in the kidnaping of C. M. Rosenthal, wealthy Long Island broker.

Orphan Jones, 60-year-old farmer, says "whisky and the devil" prompted him to kill a woman and her two daughters in Berlin, Md.

Miss Lillian Fernandez, a well-known beauty culturist of Brooklyn, N. Y., is badly beaten by a street car conductor, who faces a jail sentence on an assault charge.

Chicago police and federal operatives arrest a pharmacist and three others as counterfeiters of spurious \$5 bills.

The 10th cavalry is disbanded at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., after having been stationed there for 18 years, and leaves, after 65 years of continuous service, for their various destinations throughout the country.

OCT. 31—The board of trustees of Howard university ousts Dr. Arnold Donawa, dean of the college of dentistry, effective Oct. 7, 1931.

Two hours after the close of the evening service, a dynamite explosion tore away the walls of the Triumph Baptist church in New Orleans.

Thirty million Methodists sent 600 delegates to the sixth ecumenical conference at Atlanta, Ga. This is the second time America has been host to this 10-year gathering and the first time it has been held in the South.

Relatives of the late Dr. Daniel Williams, noted surgeon of Chicago, contest the will, seeking to prevent the instrument from being admitted to probate.

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters protest the dreaded "camp stool" torture, which requires porters to watch over passengers at night, seated on a camp stool in the aisle of the car. His Excellency Stenio Vincent, president of Haiti, expresses "thanks to The Defender" for the interest it has shown in his countrymen.

NOV. 7—Charles C. Diggs, Detroit undertaker, brands Congressman DePriest a traitor for his untimely speech in that city before a crowd of 5,000 persons.

A crazed man in Guthrie, Okla., runs amuck with gun and kills the Rev. J. E. Toombs, prominent clergyman, as he was about to enter his pulpit. "I'll tell all," is the answer of Mrs. Maud Smyth, society matron of Newark, N. J., to the divorce suit filed by her husband, Dr. Arthur Smyth.

Dove Ballard, alleged slayer of a sheriff in Alabama, puts up fight in Battle Creek, Mich., against extradition.

Fred Moore of New York city, alderman and editor of the New York Age, is beaten in his effort to be re-elected to the council by John Martin (white).

Mayor James Walker of New York city personally welcomes members of

the Hampton Institute football team at the city hall.

NOV. 14—Miss Juliette A. Derriotte, dean of women at Fisk university and Miss Nina Mae Johnson, a senior student, meet death in an auto accident near Dalton, Ga.

Opponents of Dr. Mordecai Johnson, president of Howard university, push fight to oust him from his position, and it is rumored congress may be asked to settle the controversy.

"Jack the Ripper," the maniac who is said to have killed three women in Chicago last year, bobs up in Brooklyn, N. Y., and is pursued by angry citizens after an attempted attack on a 7-year-old girl.

Lonnie Boaz, 32-year-old crippled instructor in tailoring at Alabama A. and M. college, is murdered by a mob of hoodlums near Birmingham, Ala., after the auto in which he was riding collided with a truck driven by two white men.

Principal R. R. Moton of Tuskegee Institute attends Hampton-Lincoln football game at the Polo grounds in New York city.

NOV. 21—According to the report of Receiver Daniel C. Roper of the National Life Insurance company of Washington, D. C., there is a deficit below the legal reserve of nearly \$3,000,000.

Spencer Williams, song writer, is arrested in New York as the slayer of Hal Baker, an entertainer at Connie's inn and a former partner of "Sunshine Sammy."

South Carolina officials of the Knights of Pythias are ordered suspended by S. W. Green, supreme chancellor, because of their failure to comply with the laws of the supreme lodge.

Peter Mbiyu, Koinange, Kenya colony, British East Africa, matriculates as a freshman at Ohio Wesleyan university, Delaware, Ohio.

At impressive ceremonies ground is broken in New York for the new million-dollar Harlem Y. M. C. A. building.

Race football players prove to be star performers at a game staged between the convicts of Sing Sing prison at Ossining, N. Y., and the Naval Militia.

NOV. 28—Earle H. Gray, indicted alderman of the Fifth ward in Waukegan, Ill., has gone into hiding. He faces trial on 12 warrants.

Barney Lee Ross, 23, is given a death sentence in Houston, Texas, after a "trial" lasting only two hours, and residents have formed a defense committee to demand a new trial for him.

Bud Billiken party, sponsored by The Chicago Defender, attracts a crowd of 12,000 to the Regal theater, and Chicago's unemployed of all races will share in the receipts.

Mrs. Grace Brooks, Brooklyn, N. Y., society matron, facing divorce by her husband, Dr. Phillip Brooks, enters his office and catches another woman in his arms, giving the case an entirely new angle.

Roland Hayes, celebrated tenor, starts his eighth concert tour of America. He has given 397 concerts to date.

More than 50 Hampton graduates greet President Arthur Howe of Hampton Institute at a reception held in Chicago at the Y. W. C. A. President Howe has been attending the conference of presidents of land grant colleges.

DEC. 5—Ruth Brown of New York city is sentenced to the electric chair for the fatal stabbing of Eli Huston. Hers is the first sentence of death imposed on a woman of the Race in Manhattan in 40 years.

Citizens of Medford, Mass., succeeded in having the word "Nigger" removed from all text books used by the city's junior high schools.

Col. Hubert Julian, "The Black Eagle," arrives in Los Angeles with a new plane, and will stage a flying spectacle for residents of the far western city.

William Monroe Trotter, editor of the Boston Guardian and head of the National Equal Rights league, leads a delegation to make formal protest to President Hoover against racial discrimination.

Henry Love, former \$50 a week employee, makes \$1,000 a week mining lead ore in his mine near Galena, Kans.

DEC. 12—"Judge" William H. Harrison, formerly of the Illinois pardon and parole board, is freed by a jury in Chicago of a charge of conspiracy on the plea of Attorney Wendell E. Green.

Brutal mob in Salisbury, Md., lynches and then cremates Matthew Williams after taking him from his bed in the Peninsular General hospital. It is the most revolting crime ever committed in this state.

Charges of misconduct against Miss Thelma Hamilton, a school-teacher, of Washington, D. C., are dismissed as groundless by the board of education.

The executive committee of the Federal Council of Churches and the commission on race relations of the council were guests at a banquet in Philadelphia, which marked the close of the sessions.

The committee on Negro housing attending President Hoover's confer-

ence at the White House presented a plan to the body to relieve and improve the housing situation among Race members all over the country.

Rev. J. A. Mayo is ordained a priest of the Protestant Episcopal church at ceremonies in Washington, D. C., presided over by Bishop James E. Freeman.

DEC. 19—New York city police capture Robert Russell, ex-convict, and known as the "human fly" because of his skill in scaling walls and burglarizing houses.

William Bryant, 36, is found guilty in Cleveland of the murder of Mrs. Geraldine Johnson, "policy queen," and is sentenced to the Ohio state penitentiary for life.

In Charleston, W. Va., three brothers confess part in lynching at Lewisburg when two Race prisoners, held in connection with the slaying of a constable and his deputy, were taken from their cells and hanged to a telegraph pole.

The four Mills brothers, called the "human orchestra," create a sensation all over the country by their radio program, which they broadcast over the Columbia system.

Assistant Attorney General Nathan K. McGill, general counsel for The Chicago Defender, is honored at a banquet given by his friends during his visit to Sanford, Fla. Attorney McGill's mother, Mrs. A. E. Irvin, was present as a special guest.

DEC. 25—Wilfred Brunder, alleged "policy king" of Harlem, is sentenced to nine months in federal prison and assessed \$4,400 in back taxes by Federal Judge John C. Knox for failure to make income tax returns for 1929 and 1930.

Prince D'Uby, a native of Africa and a student at Morehouse in Atlanta, Ga., runs amuck in the college dining hall with a revolver in an alleged attempt to shoot the steward, Charley Robinson, against whom he is said to have had a grudge.

Joseph H. Diggs is found guilty of second degree murder in Washington, D. C., in connection with the death of Capt. William Frank Norman (white), former assistant attorney general.

Representative Emanuel Celler, Democrat, of New York, introduces a bill in congress that, if passed by both houses, will create a commission to solve the Race problem from every conceivable angle.

James Banks, 80, white husband of Mrs. Dolly Banks of Chicago, passes away at his home. Mr. Banks is the scion of a wealthy New England family, and some of his relatives have been persistent to break the marital relationship because his wife was a member of the Race.