—The evolution

(Continued from D-5)

northern communities.

In his still definitive study, **The Philadelphia Negro**, DuBois found that early in the history of the colony of Pennsylvania, "the custom of hiring out slaves, especially mechanics and skilled workmen" led to the early development of a skilled occupational class which laid the groundwork for the rise of the black middle class in colonial Philadelphia. (Ref. 23) As early as 1708 and again in 1722, this practice of hiring out slaves to earn money was attacked through petitions to the legislature, but it survived because it was consistent with the economic self-interest of a few highly influential slave owners and other citizens. Thus, DuBois tells us, "before and after the Revolution, there were mechanics as well as servants among the Negroes." (Ref. 24) In 1820, mechanics, coachmen, shopkeepers, and barbers made up the small but growing basis for black leadership in the city. By 1848, men in these occupations represented about five per cent of all black families in the city.

What can be said, then, about the style of life and the values of the early black middle class in Philadelphia before the turn of the century? In his profile of 12 families arranged by incomes, DuBois relates the story of one family of four adults and three children whose total family budget for the year, exclusive of rent, was $805.00. They spent $430.00 for food, $60.00 for fuel, $150.00 for clothing, $20.00 for amusements, $5.00 on illness, and $150.00 for travel and other purposes. The family had one servant.

Then DuBois describes for us the precarious nature of the black middle class which plagues us till this day: "This class to which these last families belong is often lost sight of in discussing the Negro. It is the germ of a great middle class, but in general, its members are curiously hampered by the fact that, being shut off from the world about them, they are an aristocracy of their own people, with all the responsibilities of an aristocracy, and yet they, on the one hand, are not prepared for this role, and their own masses are not used to looking to them for leadership."

The bulwark of the early black middle class, as with other middle class families, was land or property. Also, in the days just after the Civil War, there were other instances of the rising sources of the new black middle class.

In 1880, for example, 28 per cent of northern-born black workers occupied white-collar and skilled occupations. This was true of 16 per cent of southern-born and 19 per cent of the foreign-born blacks.

There are other parts of the country where the rise of the black middle class can be traced to its being interwoven with the fabric of the larger community. In his book, **Black Americans in Cleveland**, Russell H. Davis has shown how the growth of the city has involved a substantial participation of the black middle class.

The Evolution of the Black Family

After 1900, a substantial increase in the black middle class took place due mainly to the great migrations from the rural South to the urban areas of the North and West, which began about 1915. By the end of World War II, roughly 16 per cent of black men were employed in middle class occupations in the clerical, craft, managerial and professional classes. This was true of nearly a quarter of all employed black men in the North and West, but only 12 per cent of those in the South. By 1960, in the nation as a whole, roughly 22 per cent of black workers occupied these middle class occupations, and by 1972, it had increased to 38 per cent. Thus, our estimate that roughly 40 per cent of black families may be considered middle class today follows fairly closely the occupational distribution. Occupation for black families is a much more stable and reliable indicator of well-being, status and opportunity, and stability than the common measures of income and education.

The Future of Black Families

As we look to future developments in the structure and the functioning of black families in American society, it seems highly likely that the shape of family life will continue to respond to and reflect some of the basic characteristics of American society. Chief among these characteristics is racism in both its overt and more subtle forms. The December 2nd, 1975 edition of the Detroit Free Press, carried an editorial endorsing the view of racism defined by U.S. District Court Judge Damon Keith in an address before the Annual Meeting of the Detroit Urban League. "To many Americans, the distinguished jurist said, "racism merely means active bigotry and discrimination, a charge from which they readily acquit themselves." He continued:

"Racism, I can assure you in reality and in practice is more subtle and wears many masks. It is hate. It is also indifference. It is the implied inferiority that is practically expressed in demeaning jobs, low wages, limited horizons and countless small and daily indignities suffered by millions of black Americans."

A second societal force which promises to continue its impact on the shape of black family life is economic in nature. While many families have moved into middle income status since the turn of the century, the pervasive reality is that the structure of income distribution still closely follows the color line. Thus, black families of whatever level of education or occupation persistently suffer average family incomes ranging between a third and two-thirds less than their white counterparts. Moreover, the fortunes of black families, though not necessarily the relative inequality of incomes, follow closely the economic condition of the nation as a whole. Unemployment and underemployment in the black community always exceed that in the white community. A study conducted by the Research Department of the National Urban League in 1975 on the impact of the then current economic recession on black families pointed out that the consequences of the weak economy of the nation were much more intense on black family life than on white family life.

Moreover, as late as December of 1975, Julius Shishkin of the U.S. Department of Labor issued a report showing the disparity of black and white unemployment rates. Unemployment among white workers slowed and stood at 7.6 per cent of the work force.

For black workers, however, unemployment remained at a three month level of 13.8 per cent. Unemployment was highest among black youth, followed by black adult men, then black adult women, and then among white women, with white men benefitting most from the upturn in employment at the end of 1975.

It was the combination of unemployment and inflation which much more than the structure of family life or the preferences of family forms among individuals which caused family breakups and suffering among the low and moderate income families during this period. There are also the economic forces which caused a substantial rise in the cost of public social welfare programs all over the nation. In a report prepared by the U.S. Government's Social Security Administration; it was estimated that state and local social welfare expenditures rose $47 billion during 1975, which was the highest annual increase in the nation's history. The total national expenditures for all forms of social welfare including veteran's benefits and unemployment compensation totaled $389 billion which accounted for about 27 per cent of the gross national product which is the total value of all the nation's goods and services.

Public spending was 73 per cent of the total and private philanthropy, which was declining sharply, accounted for 27 per cent. It is striking to note, however, that the federal government paid only about 58 per cent of the cost of these social welfare programs despite the national character of their causes. Thus, the need for a stronger federal role in social welfare programs was pointed out more intensively by leaders in health, education and social welfare fields.

For black families, then, the ebb and flow of full employment, inflation, and social welfare programs in the years ahead will vastly affect their ability to meet the needs of their members much more than their own individual behavior and preferences.

Finally, in looking at the future of black families in this country, a word must be said about education. For it is clear that as the level of education increases among black families, the level of well being increases, the level of independent and constructive functioning increases and the level of antisocial behavior diminishes. It is also true that family size and the crude birthrate also decreases as the level of education increases. Thus, even while some experts question the absolute value of further advanced education for increasing income and job advancement for white youth, education continues to be the single best indicator of well-being of black families and individuals. The future of black family viability, thus, depends heavily on the future of the nation's commitment to educational equality.

Families cannot be expected to pull themselves up by their proverbial bootstraps. They never have. The society plays the dominant role even as individuals and families must play a significant role in self-improvement.

Dr. Andrew Billingsley, president of Morgan State College, is a distinguished sociologist with extensive background in the study of black family life. A former vice president for Academic Affairs and professor of Sociology at Howard University before being named to his present position, Dr. Billingsley also served with distinction on the faculty of the University of California. A member of the editorial board of **The Black Scholar** and the **Journal of Social And Behavioral Sciences**, Dr. Billingsley is a prolific writer and is the author of several books, among them: **Black Families and the Struggle for Survival** and **Child Development and Family Life in the Black Community.**

HICKS FAMILY PHOTO was taken at 123 W. 21st., in 1908. Standing on the steps (L to R) Robert Moses Hicks. Queen Georgiana Hicks and Howard Hicks. Standing in front of the window (L to R) Willie Hicks, Misses Georgiana Hicks, Emma Hicks and Irene Hicks.

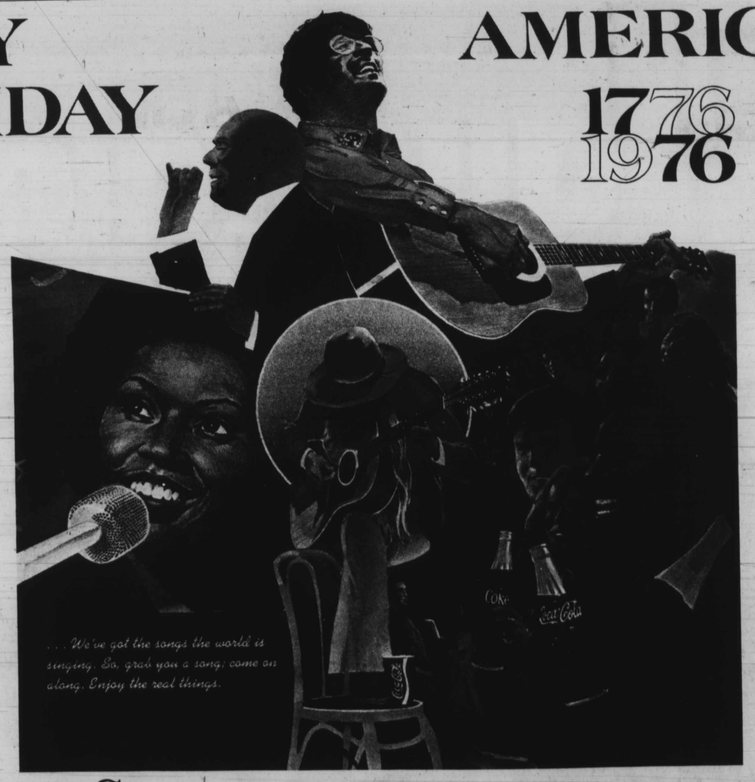
Dates to remember

JUNE 2

In 1899 black inventor L. C. Bailey received a patent for a folding bed.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA

1776 1976



Coke adds life to... everything nice

Prevailing over neglect; building for the future

A search for independence, a firm conviction that no one can do for you better than you yourself, a pursuit of personal satisfaction derived from achievement, and a desire to open up new avenues of opportunity, are the ingredients which gave birth to Hilton Court Pharmacies, Inc. fourteen years ago.

Hilton Court is the product of the combined determination and imagination of two young pharmacists and a veteran businessman who is no stranger in the arena of consumer and dealer.

John C. Hagan and Wesley Shelton, both graduates of the Howard University School of Pharmacy along with Charles T. Burns, a longtime name in local business circles were founders of Hilton Court.

The first of which now is a four store chain opened June 1962 at Liberty Heights Avenue and Hilton Street. Of the many impressive facets of the black-owned and operated firm is the impact it has had in the area of job opportunities for blacks.

The firm, based on the opinions of persons in a position to know (physicians) is doing more than an adequate job in holding its own in a highly competitive profession. A survey of a cross section of leading physicians showed, in addition to other favorable impressions, that there is unanimous agreement on one vital point: Hilton Court excels in efficiency, service and economy. "An operation with compassion," the pioneer in a "new sphere," and "correcting an ancient evil," are among other laudatory assets attributed to the pharmacies.

WESLEY SHELTON, Chief Exec. Officer, Hilton Court Pharmacies, Inc.

Physicians, who praised the firm for its reasonable prices and not refusing medicine to people who need it, credits Hilton Court with destroying a practice uncovered years ago. It is a well known fact that heretofore, prescription costs have varied in predominantly black and white areas. Those who could afford it least paid more.

Physicians felt that prescriptions should be priced so that if anyone benefits, it will be the patient." Hilton Court's refusal to "hold back medicine from those who need it and hope they will take care of the obligation," is a unique feature of the pharmacy and has helped it to establish confidence and rapport with the black community.

Hilton Court Pharmacies, as far as Mr. Wesley Shelton is concerned, represents triumph over adverse circumstances he, himself, was a victim of.

"In past years, the lack of drugstores where a black apprentice pharmacist could acquire sufficient training to become certified was a definite handicap. When I came out of school in 1955, I could find no drugstore that would hire me as an apprentice. I'd like to think of Hilton Court Pharmacies as an incentive for students of chemistry and science who do not necessarily want to enter the drugstore end of the profession."

"There is a place in the industry for people of different temperament. Those who choose not to establish a store, and few, if any of us have that kind of initial cash outlay, may enter hospital pharmacy, drug manufacturing or research."

Dates to remember

DEC. 1

Rosa Parks refuses to relinquish her seat on the bus, thus initiating the famous Montgomery, Ala. bus boycott, 1955.

DEC. 2

Hiram Revels served as Senator from Mississippi from 1870 to 1871.

DEC. 3

Frederick Douglass published the first issue of his newspaper The North Star in Rochester, N.Y., 1847.

DEC. 4

General George Washington takes his farewell leave at the close of the American Revolution at Fraunces Tavern, owned and operated by a black man, Samuel Fraunces, 1783.

DEC. 5

Fourteen Massachusetts officers sign and forward a petition to the Continental Congress commending black soldier Salem Poor for his bravery during the Battle of Charlestown, 1775.

DEC. 6

Tom Molineaux was the first black heavyweight contender. He lost against Tom Crib in 1810 and 1811.

SEVEN GRADUATING SENIORS who are members of the Morgan State University ROTC program were recently commissioned as second lieutenants during spring commissioning ceremonies held at the university. Among them are: Lt. Col. Claude M. Ligon, professor of military science, Daniel L. Ware, Reynolds B. Peele, Michael L. Bell, Sammy G. Wiglesworth, Kendall O. Thompson, and Dr. Horace A. Judson, vice president of Academic Affairs at Morgan and Civilian Aide to the secretary of the Army for Maryland. Dr. Judson was the keynote speaker during the ceremonies.

Dates to remember

DEC. 7

Executive Order 8802 issued prohibiting discrimination in the Government or defense indust ies, 1941.

DEC. 8

Lucy Sessions wss the first black woman in the United States to earn a degree. She graduated from Oberlin College in 1850.

DEC. 9

Black soldier William Flora participates in the "Second Bunker Hill" battle at the Great Bridge outside of Norfolk, Va., 1775.

DEC. 10

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., receives Nobel Peace Prize, at ceremonies in Oslo, Norway, 1964.

DEC. 11

In 1851, the courts in Christiana, Pa. upheld the right of fugitive slaves to defend themselves.

DEC. 12

In 1895, a black woman named Mary Fields (Stagecoach Mary) carried the U.S. mail via stagecoach in Montana.

DEC. 13

In 1862, President Lincoln porposed a plan for the gradual emancipation of the slaves.

DEC. 14

In 1845, black inventor J. Hawkins received a patent for a gridiron.

DEC. 15

Between 1773 and 1779, several slaves in New England sued for their freedom and won. These cases were referred to as "freedom suits," "freedom cases," or "suing for liberty."

DEC. 16

George Washington hires a black carpenter named Nase from Philip Longfit for a period of three years, 1773.

DEC. 17

Robert B. Elliott served as U.S. Congressman from South Carolina from 1871 to 1874.

DEC. 20

Boston raised a black regiment during the American Revolution called "The Bucks of America," commanded by a Black soldier, Colonel Middleton.

DEC. 21

In 1899, black inventor J. A. Burr received a patent for a lawn mower.

DEC. 22

Mississippi excluded black persons from voting by adopting racially biased literacy tests as prerequisites, 1890.

BLACK PROGRESS 1776-1976

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