D'Urville Martin

(Continued from Page 10)

Martin's name from the banks.

The disco music craze swept the country two years ago. It is still hot, spawning new artists, clubs, radio stations and an interest in dancing. Motown Records and AIP, according to Martin, are also about to produce a Disco film.

"They say the movie could gross 25 million dollars." Martin said. "I believe it when I see it. I'll spend it when I see it."

Martin co - produces and directs "Disco 9000" but doesn't star in it for a change.

"Usually when I put my name on the marquee, it guarantees five million dollars in the box office." he said. "But that would put me in the same position as the other black stars."

Fred Williamson, Sidney Poitier and Barbara Streisand must have their names on the marquee to get bank and private financing.

"I want to go to the bank and say I want to produce and direct a film and not have to use my name to get the money," he said.

"The advantage I have coming up from behind Sidney is that I can see their problems and I can learn from them. Just by observing, I'm jumping ahead. I can go on to do better."

"Of course, "he added, "Fred wants to star in his films."

If he is successful in this artistic venture, Martin will be able to deal strictly with bank financiers without worrying about private investors.

"Banks do not care about the content of the property," Martin said. "They just care about facts and figures."

Private investors tend to want you to keep making commercial successes like "Dolemite."

Like other black entertainers, Martin was criticized for his participation in black-action films. He tends to laugh it off, at first, but he's serious about the overall affect the heavy criticism has on black filmmaking.

"They fell right into their hands," Martin said not explaining whose hands "theirs" was. "They love it when black critics criticize black films like "Superfly" and "Dolemite." The man says, good, you're attacking your own people, good."

He feels that the only thing black critics saw was the violence, prostitution and dope. The camouflage.

They didn't see that for the first time black producers, directors, camera persons, actors and actresses were making their own films and making money.

"Once we've beaten the man and beaten the system," he said. "We could have gone into other areas. They should have checked what we were doing and where our heads were, first."

When the black films first came out, white movie houses switched to showing black films because of demands. Now, according to Martin, black critics helped to force black films out.

And, he said raising his voice slightly, that the decrease in black films ultimately affects the black media.

"We have to advertise in black newspapers, magazines, and on radio stations for black films." Martin said. "There will be a decline in advertising dollars."

He not only talks about the pot shots taken by blacks towards black film - makers but the lack of unified community group support to individual stars. He feels that black organizational support could have helped actors like John Amos and Scooey Mitchell in their respective television series.

Both actors, Amos on "Good Times" and Mitchell on "Barefoot In The Park" waged personal campaigns for positive male images in the scripts. They both lost. Mitchell didn't work for two years. Amos was seen recently in "Roots" after he was "killed off" a year ago.

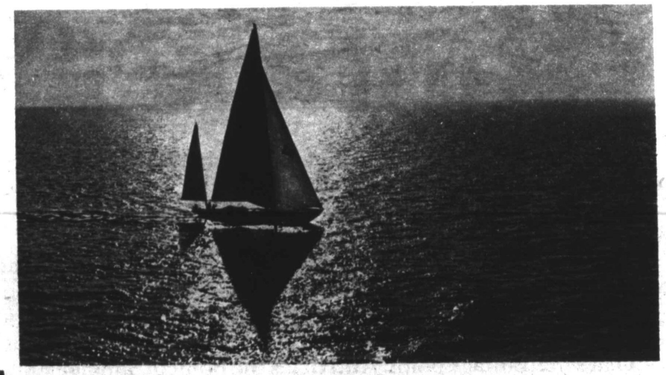
"The groups are not what they used to be because they are in debt themselves," Martin said.

It's hard to take this man seriously sometimes. He talks about sex and violence like they were next door neighbors. He indicates a decadent Hollywood life that reads like a publicist's dream.

In reality, Martin is a family man whose words ring true underneath the laughter and the brag.

"Reaching breezes,
Captain and three-man crew,
and we made it through the Bermuda Triangle.
What more could you ask for?"

"Old Grand-Dad."



Head of the Bourbon Family.

Old Grand-Dad.
When you ask
a lot more from life.

Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskeys. 86 proof and 100 proof. Bottled in Bond. Old Grand-Dad Distillery Co. Frankfort, Ky. 40601.

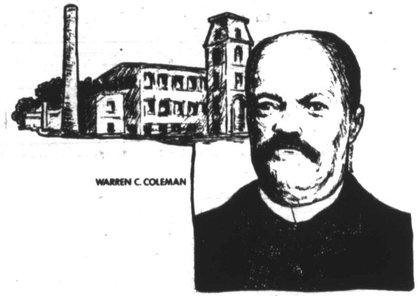
J.E. REED

J.E. REED

Born of free parents in North Carolina, he moved to New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1878. In 1880 he secured employment as an errand boy in the Photograph Galleries of G. F. Parlow. Parlow, recognizing the abilities of Reed, taught him photography.

After mastering the profession he became an assistant to Parlow. In 1888 Reed formed a partnership with a young white man named P. C. Headly and bought the gallery from Parlow.

The firm of Headly and Reed continued in business until 1895, when Reed bought out the interest of Headly.



WARREN C. COLEMAN

WARREN C. COLEMAN

February 8, 1898 was the high point in the career of Warren C. Coleman, with the laying of the cornerstone of the Coleman Cotton Mill.

He began in the grocery business which was quite successful in spite of heavy losses, some capital and little education. Coleman became one of the largest owners of real estate in Concord, North Carolina. The mill and machinery with all its fixtures represented $66,000. Later the capital stock was increased by $50,000 from investments.

Recognizing the implication of such a venture by a black man the following announcement was made: "Special inducement will be offered any party or parties who desire to establish enterprises that colored labor may be employed. Full particulars can be obtained from the secretary and treasurer, W. C. Coleman, Concord, North Carolina."

Further evidence of concern for his people was his educating out of his own resources a number of young black men and women. He was doubtlessly one of the richest black men in the United States in his time.

EUGENE BURKINS

EUGENE BURKINS

A Chicago bootblack without education or experience of any kind became the inventor of the "Burkins Automatic Machine Gun." He took a picture of the guns on the "Battleship Maine" and saw ways of improving these guns.

His first model was made with a pocket-knife. He was able to secure a patent as the result of help from many of the leading black people in Chicago. Mr. Madden, a wealthy man, provided $3,000.00 in order to make the perfect model.

The gun shot seven times faster than the Gatling gun and was said by Admiral Dewey to be ". . . by far the best machine gun ever made." He was offered a large sum of money by many foreign governments but Burkins and his partner, Madden, proposed to control the manufacturing rights in this country.

Pioneers

(Continued from Page 12)

whites had to go into businesses for themselves and needed money. Their business ability had been proven and was worthy of financing.

Since the industrial North had won and it was time for investment in the South, where else could one find better talent and local patronage? This capitalist viewpoint further militated against the blacks attempting to go into business. They could only become workers where they were once slaves, only without "Old Massa" around to shelter them.

Blacks untrained in thrift and unwilling to see any black get ahead of the other, mutual ventures were impossible. In 1866 banks were established by white friends of the black people, in order for many of the black soldiers to deposit allotments for their families.

There were quite a few of these banks around, which led Congress to incorporate them into the Freedmens' Saving and Trust Company. By 1871 nearly 20 million dollars were deposited in the Freedmens' Banks by about 70,000 depositors.

The bank was used by white speculators, including high government officials, for speculative investment. This, coupled with mismanagement, led to its closing in 1874, owing 61,131 depositors three million dollars.

Many blacks were hurt by the

(Continued on Page 21)