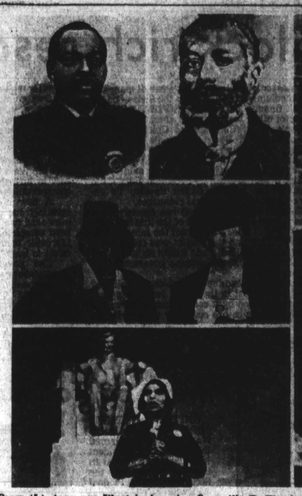

From (L), top row: Electrical genius Granville T. Woods, Elijah McCoy, whose invention inspired the term "The real McCoy," Jesse Owens (far R) after winning the 100-meter dash in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin; Dr. Charles R. Drew, who discovered the use of blood plasma. Middle row, at (L): Mary McLeod Bethune, with Eleanor Roosevelt. Bottom row, from (L): Marian Anderson sings in front of the Lincoln Memorial in D.C.; Ralph Bunche, first black recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize; Martin Luther King Jr. delivers the "I Have a Dream" at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington.

Black Pioneers

The following states forbade immigration of free blacks: Virginia in 1806, and all slaves freed after May 6th had to leave the state; in 1838, those who would leave the state for schooling in the North could not return. Delaware in 1811 law also applied to any native free black who remained out of the state for six months; Louisiana in 1814; North Carolina in 1836 (and native free blacks were restricted from trading in certain articles); Mississippi in 1831 (not could free blacks remain in the state); Indiana in 1851 (not could native free blacks serve in the militia or on juries); Illinois in 1853; Oregon in 1857; and Arkansas in 1859 required free blacks either to leave the state by the end of the year or choose masters who must post bond not to allow such individuals to act as free.

Other laws enacted by some states prohibited free blacks from selling corn, wheat or tobacco without a license, rescinded voting rights; subjected them to a felony charge for requesting, or receiving abolition newspapers; and decreed punishment of twenty lashes if caught meeting for the purpose of learning to read and write; and a flogging for associating with slaves without written consent of the slaveowner or his overseer.

These laws aptly explain the plight of free blacks to simply survive in the South and the North during the greater part of the 19th century. Observing the precarious situation, legislators in Tennessee in 1857, Texas in 1858, Louisiana in 1859, and Maryland in 1860 felt obliged to pass laws to facilitate re-enslavement of free blacks who preferred the security of slavery to the poverty of freedom.

The states carved out of the Northwest Territory Indiana (1800), Ohio (1802), Michigan (1805), Wisconsin (1836), and part of Minnesota absorbed a goodly number of free blacks. In 1800, there were about 500 in the territory but by 1815 in-migration began to increase and by 1860, they numbered 63,699. 13% of the total free black population in the country. Until 1828, they were tolerated; from then to 1841, they were persecuted; after then, conditions and chances to engage in business improved.

Yet, was California though, which provided the best conditions and business opportunities. It became a free state in 1849, and was the first commonwealth in the West to admit blacks without reservations. There were forces however that were intolerant of them, and several efforts were made to have immigration of blacks stopped, but the attempts failed. Before the Gold Rush in 1848, only a few dozen blacks resided in the state. In 1850, there were 962; and by 1860, the number had increased to 4,086.

What to do about free blacks had been a perplexing problem for the country since the 17th century. As early as 1713, Quaker abolitionists were urging freed blacks to return to Africa. The proposition took political form in the chamber of the House of Representatives on December 21, 1816, with formation of the American Society for the Colonization of the Free People of Color of the United States. The thesis of this southern-inspired maneuver that free blacks were incapable to serving useful lives in the United States met with the approval of the anti-slavery forces. In 1819, Congress appropriated $100,000 to establish a colony in West Africa. It was named Liberia.

The plan caused dissension among blacks and some abolitionists for more than two decades. Of the 7,836 sent out of the United States by 1852, 2,720 were born free, 204 purchased their freedom, 3,968 were emancipated for removal to Liberia, and 1,044 were liberated blacks sent out by the United States Government. The project, therefore, fell very short of fulfilling its purpose.

Although the revised Federal Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 was not designed to encourage expatriation, it is certain, that many more free blacks fled to Canada to avoid apprehension as fugitive slaves or kidnapping by over-zealous slave catchers, than responded to the appeal for repatriation to Liberia.

An indication of the number of free blacks who fled to Canada can be seen from the following table which shows a 11% drop in growth of the free black population between 1840 and 1860. To determine how much of the decrease is due to deaths and the small number who were taken to Liberia would require more research than time permits.

There were notable exceptions, of course, to the general depressive conditions of free blacks prior to the Civil War, and among them are the following individuals and the establishment of the black press:

NEW ENGLAND STATES

Lewis Temple, a blacksmith in New Bedford, Massachusetts, invented the toggle harpoon in 1848. It became the standard instrument in whaling, and was regarded as the most important invention in the industry. The fact that it did not slip out of a whale's mouth made it possible to capture more whales.

David Walker (1785-1830), clothier. Born in Wilmington, North Carolina, Walker migrated to Boston. He established a used clothes business there in 1827. Having an abhorrence to slavery and impatient over the slow progress to freedom, he published three issues in 1829 of *Walker's Appeal is Four Articles, Together with a Preamble to the Colored Citizens of the World but in Particular and very Expressly to those of the United States of America*. In uncompromising language, he appealed to blacks to use force, if necessary, to gain freedom. This publication was considered incendiary by slaveholders, and untimely by many abolitionists. Slaves were forbidden to obtain it, under threat of punishment and, in some cases, death. Shortly after publication, Walker died under mysterious circumstances.

MIDDLE ATLANTIC STATES

Cato Alexander (1771-1858), caterer. Alexander was an ex-slave. He established a tavern on the Old Post Road, way uptown in New York at that time. It was a favorite resort for aristocracy for 48 years. They had special parties there. One writer stated, "those who tasted his terrapin, fried chicken, curried oysters, roast duck, or drank his Virginia eggnog wondered how anyone who owned him could sell him even to himself." Another writer wrote, "not to know Cato's is not to know the world." Alexander made a fortune.

Robert Bogle (? 1837), caterer. It is not known precisely when Bogle established his business in Philadelphia. It is a matter of record, however, that early in the 19th century he was conducting a prosperous enterprise. Bogle started out as a waiter, then went into business professionalizing catering to affluent and prominent families. He acquired considerable wealth.

Peter Augustine took over Bogle's business in 1818, and within a few years the business became known throughout the nation. His clients were among the best families in the city, distinguished foreign visitors, and the prominent among American officialdom. *James Presco* and his son, *Henry Jones*, *Henry Minton* and *Thomas Duvall* followed as the leading caterers between 1845 and 1875.

George T. Downing (1819-1903), caterer. At 26 years of age, Downing's restaurant at 40 Broadway in New York, was already a popular place for high society. He had other places in Newport and in Providence, Rhode Island. By 1860, he had earned enough money to finance construction of a block of buildings in New York. In 1865, he was asked to manage the restaurant of the House of Representatives. He accepted.

Thomas Jennings (1791-1859), tailor, inventor. Jennings invented a process for cleaning clothes. He patented it and became wealthy. He was an activist and benefactor in the anti-slavery movement.

Stephen Smith (1795-1873), merchant, realtor, philanthropist. Smith was born a slave and was brought to Columbia, Pennsylvania, in 1801. His mother escaped and followed him to Columbia. His master took her in and refused to give her up to her mistress. Smith grew up to become a businessman, forming a partnership with William Whipper, an activist in the underground railroad and an intellectual. They operated a coal and lumber business and became very successful, accumulating stock in several thousand bushels of coal, 2,250,000 feet of lumber, 22 railway cars on the Baltimore to Philadelphia route, $9,000 of stock in the Columbia Bridge, and $18,000 of stock in the Columbia Bank. Smith was reputed to be the wealthiest person of color in the United States. In 1867, he contributed property and cash amounting to $250,000 for establishment of a home in Philadelphia for the aged, the first home in the United States for black aged people. The home bears his name.

William Still (1821-1902), abolitionist, merchant, philanthropist. Still was born free and came to Philadelphia in 1841. In 1847, he became a clerk in the office of the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery. Between 1851 and 1861, he was chairman and corresponding secretary of the Philadelphia branch of underground railroad. Then, he started his own business, a new and used stove operation. It was successful and enabled him to construct an office building and enter the coal business from which he amassed a fortune. He also constructed the largest black-owned public hall in the country. He is best known for his book, "The Underground Railroad", published in 1872. It recorded the stories told to him by fugitive slaves whom he interviewed when they reached Philadelphia for further instructions about their flight. Still founded the first black YMCA.

SOUTHERN STATES

Austin Dabney was a hero of the Revolutionary War. He was a slave in South Carolina and was mustered into service. In performing his duties with unusual fortitude and valor, in addition to being wounded severely, the people of Georgia and the State honored him. In 1785, the legislature passed a special act emancipating him, his wife and children. He received a pension from the United States government, and a track of land from the State. He became one of the wealthiest and most highly respected men in the State. He also owned some of the finest race horses in the State. While on a trip to Savannah, the then governor, General James Jackson, saw Dabney riding by on his horse. He dashed out, greeted him and had him as his house guest until he had finished his business.

John Dabney (1821-1900) caterer. Dabney of Richmond, Virginia, was the celebrated caterer of his time. He was known as the "mint-julep maker" of the United States. The drink made history when Dabney served it in the course of a dinner he prepared for the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) in 1860. A prominent writer of the day wrote, "a Negro gentleman of remarkable dignity, and a chef who prepared immortal foods."

Thomas Day (1801-?) Virginia cabinet-maker. Mr. Day was free born, where he received his education and training is not known. It is indicated, however, that he went to Caswell County, North Carolina about 1823 and settled in Milton, center of the county's tobacco economy, operated by a relatively prosperous planter class whose life-style spurred development of the town. For 10 years, the town and Mr. Day grew up together. He built one of the largest furniture-making businesses in the state, selling to the retail trade and merchants. He built custom furniture, did interior carpentry and made coffins. His shop was on the main street.

In 1834, Mr. Day became a stockholder in the state bank and, in 1836, he purchased a second property on the main street. Then in 1848, he bought what had been one of the largest and finest taverns in the area and converted it into a residence and shop. The 1850 industrial census credits him with $5,000 capital investment in a business employing twelve workers, one-fourth of the investment of all carpetmers and builders in the state, and 10% of the workers involved in carpentry and building.

His interior work for the Philanthropic and Dialectic Society at the University of North Carolina is well documented. The North Carolina Museum of History, Department of Cultural Resource, in Raleigh has on permanent exhibition three rooms of furniture made by Mr. Day.

He was married to Aquilla Wilson, a free woman from Halifax, Virginia. They had three children.

Mifflin Wistar Gibbs (1828-?), merchant, publisher, judge, diplomat. Gibbs had a good common school education before becoming apprentice to a carpenter. After learning the trade well, he became a contractor and builder but Philadelphia offered little opportunity for him to succeed in his undertaking. All along he availed himself of opportunities to cultivate himself in literary matters. Gibbs went to San Francisco in 1850, poor in cash but rich in determination. There, white mechanics refused to work on the same job with him. He formed a partnership and went into the clothing business. They did well. In 1852, he went into a larger business with another partner, importing fine boots and shoes the first business of this kind in San Francisco. Their business became extensive. During this time, he also became one of the proprietors, publishers, and contributors to *The Mirror of the Times*, published in 1855, the first black-oriented newspaper in California. The gold discoveries in British Columbia, Canada, intrigued Gibbs, and in 1858 he relocated to Victoria, went into mercantile business and became wealthy, and a large stockholder and director of an English company in the business of mining anthracite coal. Gibbs also became popular. In 1866, he was elected to represent his affluent ward in Common Council, and was reelected in 1867. Shortly afterwards, he returned to the states, went to law school, finished and settled in Little Rock, Arkansas. He worked in a law office, continued his studies and was admitted to the bar. One year afterwards, he was appointed county attorney of Pulaski County and, in 1873, he was elected to the office of city judge the first black person in the nation elected to such a post. In 1877, Gibbs was appointed United Consul to Madagascar, another first.

Solomon Humphries, merchant. He was the leading grocer of Macon, Georgia, in 1883, irrespective of race. He had more credit than any other merchant in the city. Before his death, he accumulated property worth more than $20,000 quite a bundle during those days.

Horace King, born a slave, was one of the foremost bridge engineers in the South before and after the Civil War. Freed by his master who sent him South to be educated in engineering, he returned to build bridges in Georgia, over the Chattahoochee River, and others in Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina. Georgia and Alabama enacted special laws giving him standing with white builders and contractors.

Thomy Lafon (1810-1893), realtor. Born free and in poverty, in New Orleans, Lafon accumulated a personal fortune of almost a half million dollars. He contributed so much to the development of the city that the State Legislature ordered a bust of him to be carved and placed in some public institution in New Orleans. He left his wealth to charities, irrespective of race.

Norbert Rillieux (1806-1894), mechanist, engineer, inventor. Rillieux was born in New Orleans. His father was a French engineer-inventor. In 1846, Rillieux invented, patented and marketed a vacuum cup which revolutionized sugar refining methods of that day. The basic process is now universally used throughout the sugar industry, as well as in the manufacture of condensed milk, soap, gelatine, and glue, in the recovery of waste liquors in distilling and paper factories, and in many other processes." Rillieux also produced a practical plan for a sewage system in New Orleans but the city fathers refused it. They did not want to credit a black man with the honor for its conception. He grew intolerable of racial discrimination and returned to Paris where he had received his higher education. The government appointed him head of the Central School, a scientific institution. In 1934, at the initiative of European scientists, a tablet was dedicated in his honor in the Louisiana State Museum by corporations representing the sugar industry all over the world.

MIDWESTERN STATES

Henry Boyd, inventor. Boyd was a Kentucky freedman. He settled in Cincinnati. There, he invented a corded bed. It came to be in great demand throughout the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys. Boyd employed twenty-five men. The operation helped to diminish racial prejudice against black mechanics in the city.

Robert Gordon, merchant. He was born a slave in Richmond, Virginia. As a young man, he was placed in charge of the coal yard on the plantation. To reward his efficiency, he was given all the slack from the coal. This he sold to local manufacturers. After accumulating several thousands of dollars, he purchased his freedom in 1846. He went to Cincinnati and entered the coal business. His success incurred the envy of white competitors. They conspired to squeeze out Gordon by lowering prices to a point at which he could not compete. Soon the Ohio River froze, making it impossible to transport coal into the city. Gordon then sold out of his supply at a higher price. He increased his wealth sufficiently to invest heavily in United States bonds and in real estate.

John Jones (1816-1901), tailor. Jones came to Chicago as a young man with a pittance of money, but the tailoring business made him wealthy. He helped to finance the underground railroad and fought against racial discrimination in Illinois. One of the victories was getting repeal of the "Black Laws" which denied legal equality. He was also instrumental in securing passage of a law that admitted black children to Chicago schools. The city's first public library was located in one of his buildings, among the best in the city. After the Civil War, he was twice elected Cook County Commissioner.

NORTHWESTERN STATES

James P. Beckwourth (1798-1867), frontiersman, fur trader, innkeeper. Beckwourth was born in Virginia, a mulatto son of an officer in the Revolutionary War. The family relocated to a settlement near present-day St. Louis. At eighteen, Beckwourth was apprenticed to a blacksmith, but he ran away, fleeing to live as a slave. He joined a Rocky Mountains expedition and found that on the frontier a man is a man, regardless of color. With this satisfaction he became a man of the mountains, and learned it even better than the Indians. During the 1820s and 1830s, the peak era of mountain men and the fur trade, Beckwourth became a legendary figure as one of the main scouts, hunters and Indian fighters of his time. The Indians respected him so highly, they accepted him into their tribes; first, the Blackfeet; and later the Crows, who made him their chief. In 1852, Beckwourth established a hotel and trading post in what is now Beckwourth Valley. He discovered a route to California that served as a gateway to the territory in time for the Gold Rush. The mountain is also named after him. He was also one of the founders of Denver, Colorado.

(From L): W.E.B. DuBois, Mary McLeod Bethune and Walter White in 1954.

George Bush, trapper, explorer, founder of the State of Washington. Bush was a veteran of the War of 1812. In 1844, with his wife and five children, he organized and led a group of whites to the shores of the Puget Sound. They became the first settlers north of the Columbia River. Although blacks were denied the right to homesteads, a member of the Oregon Legislature interceded with Congress. Bush was granted 640 per acre land. He cultivated it and raised livestock. His farm became the main source of grain, vegetables and fruit for newcomers in the region. He became wealthy. At times, he would be the only farmer in the area with food, but he would never take advantage by raising prices, nor would he permit anyone to buy more than his needs during an emergency. Bush Prairie is named after him.

Barney Ford (1821-1902), barber, hotel owner, politician. Ford, the son of a white father and a mulatto mother, was born and reared as a slave in Richmond, Virginia. He escaped to Chicago where he worked with the underground railroad operators while learning barbering. He married and was looking forward to opening his own shop. News about the discovery of gold in California fascinated him. Feeling that it was a better location than Chicago for making money, they sailed for California in 1851, via Nicaragua. During the layover and his serious illness there, he saw the need for a first class hotel. He settled in Nicaragua and built the hotel. From this effort, Ford made and lost a half dozen fortunes in Nicaragua, Colorado and Wyoming. He is credited with changing the history of Colorado and of preventing President Andrew Johnson from being impeached. Ford was an ardent civic rights leader until his death.

WESTERN STATES

George Washington Dennis, restaurant owner, realtor. Dennis was brought to San Francisco as a slave in 1848. He purchased the freedom for himself and his mother, as well as a concession for a restaurant in a hotel operated by his master. His mother's cooking delighted the guests, and receipts from the restaurant averaged about $200 a day. Dennis purchased some real estate which doubled in value within six months. This enabled him to purchase blocks of properties. He opened the first livery stables in the city, and supplied and broke-in 500 horses for the British government. He also opened the city's first wood and coal yard.

Alexander Leidesdoff (?-1848), corporate businessman, diplomat. Leidesdoff was born in the Virgin Islands, the son of a Danish father. He arrived in San Francisco in 1843; became a Mexican citizen and was granted 30,000 acres of land. He became enormously wealthy. In 1841, he sailed his 106-ton schooner from New Orleans to San Francisco—the first steamship to enter the bay. Leidesdoff was also the first to introduce horse racing to California. After California joined the Union in 1846, he served as city councilman, city treasurer, and the American Consul to Mexico. Establishment of the first American school in California is also credited to Leidesdoff. When he died, the city arranged a public funeral, and a street was named after him.

Biddy Mason (1818-?), realtor. Miss Mason was taken from Texas by her master, but gained freedom through the California Court in 1856. She settled in Los Angeles and worked as a midwife and practical nurse. She saved every penny possible, and purchased some real estate on the outpost of the city. The city moved in that direction, and the muddy land for which she paid $250 increased to $200,000 in value. Miss Mason became one of the most successful financiers and property owners in the states. She founded a nursery school; initiated welfare work among children; aided the poor and unfortunate in the slum areas; fed people left destitute from the flood; visited men in jail, and made her home the refuge for all in the early settlement—irrespective of race or national origin.

Mary Pleasant, boarding house proprietor, housekeeper, civil rights activist. This controversial lady, generally referred to as "Mammy Pleasant", was born a slave in Georgia. She was freed by her master and provided passage to Boston. She married a well-to-do Cuban whose home was a meeting place for abolitionists. He died and the Miss Pleasant married again, and joined those enroute to California to find gold. She opened a boarding house which became the most popular of its kind in the city, attracting the most influential men in the area. Later, she became the housekeeper and confidante to Thomas Bell, a very wealthy businessman. All the family funds were entrusted her, including deeds which had been transferred to her name. She became the most influential black voice in San Francisco. She used it and her other resources to fight racial discrimination. Her suit against the street car company made it possible for blacks to use the facility. She played a vigorous and successful role in the fight for the right of blacks to testify in the courts. She earlier had occasion to return to the East Coast to give John Brown $30,000 for furthering his work in connection with emancipation.

Freedom's Journal, published in New York City March 16, 1827, was the first black-oriented newspaper produced in the United States. It marked the beginning of black journalism in this country. John Brown Russwurm and Samuel E. Cornish were the co-founders and co-editors. Russwurm was an 1826 alumnus of Bowdoin College, the second black American to graduate from college. Cornish was pastor of the African Presbyterian Church in New York: the first black church of this denomination in the city. In announcing its purpose, the editors wrote: "We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us. Too long has the public been deceived by misrepresentations in things which concern us daily." Its editorial contents were directed to gain support for emancipation and full citizenship rights for black people. It also advocated unity of blacks and whites, and universality of mankind, and the elevation of all races and peoples. Between founding of the Freedom's Journal and the signing of the Proclamation of Emancipation, some two dozen of these newspapers were published in various northern cities and, since emancipation, the number rose considerably and, of course, some fell by the wayside. They did their job as no other force could. They are continuing to do so.

The position of free blacks throughout the country became even more untenable and uncertain as southern planters gained control of the national economy through production of cotton, with slave labor. So carried away with adding this economic success to their already political clout, they maneuvered to take over northern industry, enslave white factory workers and re-enslave free blacks.

Northern industrialists, having an economic stake in the slave system, had not opposed slavery, but the turn of events necessitated abandonment of that position. To protect their interests from intrusion by the planters, they had to make abolition of slavery a key issue of their differences with the planters. The Civil War, therefore, was unavoidable.

As the war progressed and victory of the federal troops was in the balance, President Lincoln felt it expedient to issue an executive order on January 1, 1863, which freed slaves in areas of states which were in rebellion. This action was followed by passage of the Thirteenth Amendment by Congress on January 31, 1865. It was ratified by the states and slavery was abolished throughout the country. (The northern states had already abolished slavery by the end of 1790. The amendment simply made it constitutional).

The proclamation led to official acceptance of blacks in the armed forces. Before the war ended, some 200,000 of them, free and slave, served as troops. The Confederacy, having no illusions about blacks being unwilling to defend slavery, did not attempt to press them into service as troops, but in desperation they decided to experiment with the idea on March 13, 1865. The war ended before it became a reality.

The Reconstruction period which followed the war was a fruitful transition of blacks "from slavery to freedom". The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution were enacted, granting them civil rights and use of the ballot, respectively. Federal troops were stationed in strategic areas in the South to protect blacks in the exercise of these rights, and the Freedmen's Bank was specifically created by the federal government to serve the needs of the race. But these conditions were short-lived. By 1874, the bank, administrated by conniving whites, closed in 1874 with losses of some $3,000,000 by depositors, who could ill afford to lose what little they had. In 1876, the planters conspired with Rutherford Hayes, made him president, and in return, he recalled the federal troops and the Ku Klux Klan assumed freedom to commit atrocities against blacks to the extent that they feared to vote; thereby, state rights were reinstituted and practically all the gains made by blacks went down the drain. Historian Rayford W. Logan aptly described the period as "the nadir", the lowest point of a situation. Despite these obstacles and competition by experienced merchants who had begun to immigrate from Eastern Europe and settle mainly in the North, blacks were able to make commendable business progress. Andrew F. Hilyer, U.S. Commissioner to the Paris Exposition in 1900, analyzed the census of 1890 and made the following statistical report of blacks in business:

Agents and collectors, claims, real estate, etc	1,172
Auctioneers	13
Bankers and brokers, money, stocks, commercial	114
Boarding and lodging house keepers	2,262
Builders and contractors	506
Dealers in drugs and chemicals	139
Dealers in dry goods	135
Dairy keepers	966
Grocers	1,829
Hotel keepers	420
Huckasters and peddlers	2,816
Journalists and publishers	154
Liquor dealers (111), wholesale (3)	306
Livery stable keepers	290
Manufacturers	461
Merchants and dealers not specified (326 wholesale)	5,014
Nurses	291
Officials of insurance, banking and trust companies	213
Photographers	196
Restaurant Keepers	2,167
Undertakers	291
	20,020

In addition, there were 17,480 barbers, more than 5,000 of whom were proprietors; 2,810 teachers, many of whom were proprietors of large butcher shops; 718 printers; 10,762 blacksmiths; 61 watch and clock makers; etc.

The following individuals and businesses were among those that made outstanding contributions to the economic progress of Afro-Americans between 1865 and 1900:

NEW ENGLAND STATES

A. C. Howard (1863-?), Mississippi, manufacturer. Mr. Howard went to school only briefly before he went to work at the age of 12 to help support his mother. They finally settled in Boston where he worked first as a steward on a yacht, and then as a porter for the Pullman Company. He observed that there was a need for improving the blacking used for polishing shoes, and he began to experiment in making a more satisfactory shoe polish. He succeeded in doing so and started a business with $180. By 1907, he was producing 7,200 cans of polish a day, with his picture on it, and shipments were made all over the United States.

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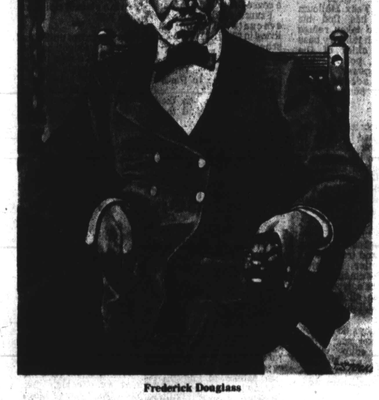
Which gives you a total education fund of $8,100.

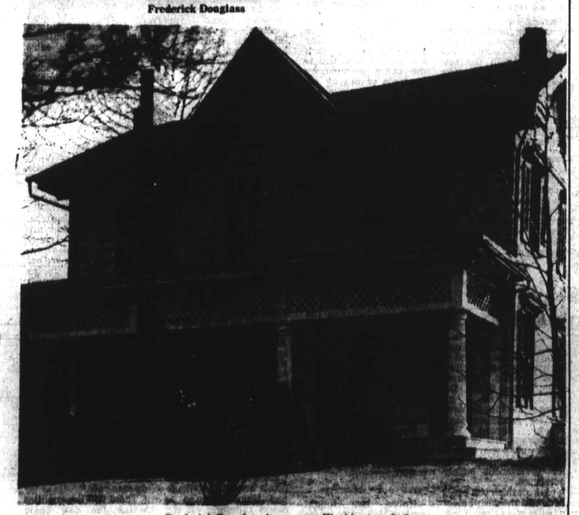
Of course, serving in the Army will give you more than just money to help you through school. You'll develop discipline. You'll learn responsibility. You'll mature. And have a better idea of what you want.

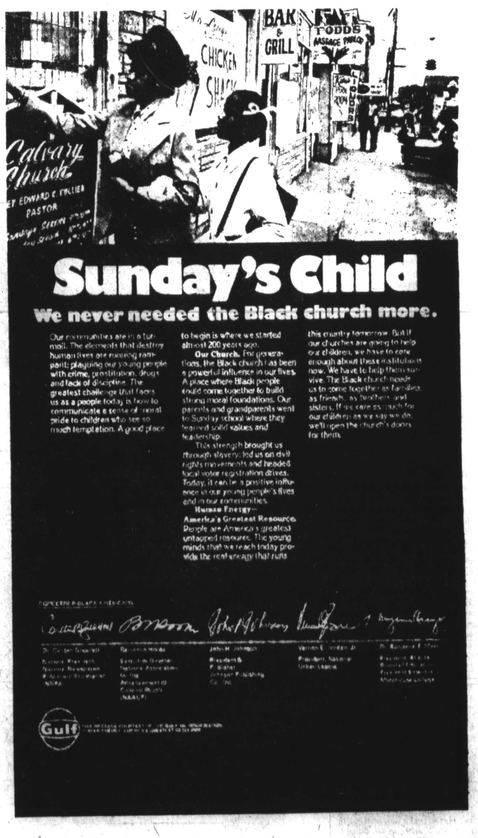
For more information, call your local Army Representative. The address and phone number are in the Yellow Pages under "Recruiting." Or call the number below toll-free.

Call your Army Representative at 800-431-1976.



Frederick Douglass



Frederick Douglass home near Washington, D.C.

In Oella, Md. is Mt. Gilboa, the church of Benjamin Banneker. Still standing today, the building is on the National Register of Historic Places.