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## Newsletter- August 1944

Prairie View State College

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*College Library*

VOLUME XIV NUMBER 12

NEWS LETTER

AUGUST - 1944

PRAIRIE VIEW STATE COLLEGE  
PRAIRIE VIEW, TEXAS

## A. CALENDAR -

## A. August - 1944

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| (1) Special Sermon to Seniors .. Dr I B Loud .....      | August 6     |
| (2) Graduation Exercises - 8:00 P M - Dr J M Drew ..... | August 8     |
| (3) Annual Regional Women's Club Meeting.....           | August 13-15 |
| (4) Annual Farmers' Institute.....                      | August 15-18 |
| (5) Intersession.....                                   | August 15-31 |
| (6) Area Vocational Agriculture Teachers Meeting...     | August 23-25 |

## B. September - 1944

- |                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Orientation Period.....   | September 5-19  |
| (a) Faculty.....             | September 5-10  |
| (b) Freshmen.....            | September 11-15 |
| (c) Registration, etc.....   | September 14-16 |
| (d) Civilian Protection..... | September 18-19 |

## B. FISCAL YEAR - 1943-1944 -

This Fiscal Year comes to a close August 31, 1944. In spite of the many detractors caused by the war, we are closing one of the most successful years in the history of Prairie View State College. We have lost to the armed forces many employees and male students but the enrollment has been heavy both for Regular and Summer Sessions.

## C. OUTLOOK -

Judging from the unusually large number of advanced requests for entrance the next year, we are of the opinion that housing of students will be our chief problem. Already Luckie Hall has been completely renovated and will be used to house Freshman young women.

## D. WORLD WAR VETERANS -

There is every indication that we may expect a large number of discharged Veterans of World War II. We have set up more than twenty trades courses for these trainees.

## E. THE LIBRARY -

We are pleased to announce that the contract for the New Library Building will be let on August 18, 1944. It will cost \$200,000 and will be located near the Flag Pole.

F. THANKS --

The General Education Board of New York has made a conditional offer of \$30,000.00 to Prairie View State College for equipment and books for the new Library provided the institution spends a like amount for these items. The Board of Directors has authorized this amount to be earmarked to meet this gift.

G. CONGRATULATIONS --

Born to Mr and Mrs C M Mickens a fine baby girl.

H. COMMUNITY CHEST DUES --

There are a few employees who have forgot to pay their Community Chest dues. May we ask that this obligation be closed out this month?

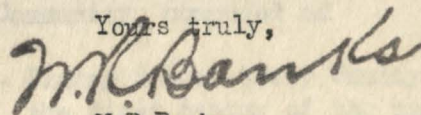
I. AND FINALLY --

"Formal Education is to make not only men and women who shall be equipped in both physical health and moral strength to sustain that character against the stress and strain of an active life and to apply their intelligence to the practical bread and butter affairs, as well as to the spiritual things of a complex civilization".

----- Roark

I am

Yours truly,



W R Banks  
Principal

WRB:c

THE COLORED ZION COMMUNITY  
HART COUNTY, GEORGIA

Its Origin -

At the close of the Civil War, a great many former slaves chose to remain in the employment and on the farms of their former masters as wage earners and share croppers - another method of extending slavery; and, there were others who had a desire and an ambition to be property owners and home makers. The local circumstances made it necessary and advisable for those who desired to begin life on "their own hooks" to seek isolated or "pocket" locations for farms and homes agreeable to and sanctioned by the prevailing white public opinion of that section. A cluster of free Negroes in any section of the South, at that time, living under their own guardianship with a desire for property ownership and the exercise of their citizenship rights and responsibilities was looked nervously upon with questioning, for it was not conducive to the development and perpetuity of that new form of slavery, which would inevitably follow the present pattern of farm wage earners, share croppers and the one crop system. Under the leadership and inspiration of William Banks, fourteen emancipated slaves purchased farms in 1870 - just seven miles from where they were freed in Hart County, Georgia - three miles and a half south of the town of Hartwell. William Banks was a skilled mechanic and also a minister in the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. Almost concurrent with this settlement, he established a church under a brush arbor which was named Colored Zion, becoming the hub of the Colored Zion Community. Jabe Banks, his eldest son, my father, after spending five years in Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia began teaching rural schools in Anderson County, South Carolina, just across the Savannah River, from Hart County, Georgia and there he and my mother married in 1878. After the birth of their first son, Jabe Banks was invited to come over and establish a school at the Colored Zion Church, which he did in 1881. It has been called the Colored Zion School until now and has been taught by some member of the Banks family for 62 years. Later the Colored Zion Cemetery was laid out just in the rear of the school in which most of the pioneer settlers and their descendants have been buried. And thus the beginning of the Colored Zion Community, composed of

- (a) The Colored Zion Church - Sunday School every Sunday, preaching the first Sunday of the month by an absentee pastor and the Annual Revival the first Sunday in August when church members renew their faith, new members "Join the Church" and hypocrites lie.
- (b) The Colored Zion School - One to six teachers; enrollment 50 to 300; and, terms six weeks to eight months.
- (c) The Colored Zion Cemetery -
- (d) A segregated area of Negro farm owners, renters and share-croppers producing cotton mainly, some corn, wheat, oats, potatoes, cane and gardens.

The Advent -

At 3:00 o'clock A.M. on August 8, 1881 Granny Nancy, my mother's great aunt, delivered my parents second child - to become the brother to twelve children - and he was named Willette Rutherford Banks, "Scrap" for short. This coming was in the dramatic and momentous era of the South which was rocked and torn by the birth pains of a New South. Significant events and thought processes were being crystallized under the heat of human passions and strained emotions. The Hayes and Tilden struggle had left its mark; the "Force" and Civil Rights Bills had been before Congress which drew the concentrated fire and attack of the South; and, the Negro's participation in politics and government was unmistakably making the South "solid".

Ben J Hill, Robert Toombs, Joseph Edmondson Brown and Alexander Stephens were the brilliant and astute fore-runners of the peerless and aggressive Henry W Grady, Hoke Smith and Thomas E Watson of Georgia. It was Henry W Grady who defined the pattern and interpreted the place of the Negro in the South and sold it "lock-stock-and barrel" to the North in his famous speech - a classic of all times - The New South in New York City in 1886 - in which he plead for the complete segregation of the races in the South but equal justice for Negroes. This pattern was given unqualified sanction and endorsement by Booker T Washington in his famous Atlanta speech in 1895 and from then until death he was designated by white America as the "Undisputed Wise Leader of his Race". The implied idea was encouched in these words of Washington:

"In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."

Although Henry W Grady died in 1889 - Sunset at Noon, age 39 years - in spite of the cause and views in which he invested the best genius of his nature, the South 60 years later was pointed out as the number One Economic Problem. Thus have my entire life and philosophy been thrallled, tempered, colored and motivated by the repercussions of the social, economic and political forces unloosed in the South the first 20 years of my life. The Colored Zion Community has its counterparts throughout the South.

And Finally -

On May 1, 1944 just 62 years after the eventful Advent, I visited my mother who still lives in the Colored Zion Community at the age of 85 years. I found the Church, School and Cemetery still there, the Cemetery evidenced, because of its growth, a more definite function. Most of those owners have lost their farms; the homes and out buildings were run down and dilapidated; soil erosion has brought the fertility of the lands below subsistence levels; those living there barely make a descent living, suffering from poor health and malnutrition, inadequately clothed and poorly housed, and in consequence, bound by a community inertia.

I left for Texas with these questions puzzling me:

- A. What did the Colored Zion Church and the Colored Zion School do, in these 62 years to help those people to lift themselves to higher planes of economic and social security and enduring happiness?
- B. What did they do to make them more substantial and productive and better citizens - better farmers and give them better health and a firmer and more realistic grasp on those fundamental virtues and graces that make for a strong, dependable, forward looking and worthy people?

I am satisfied in the conviction and knowledge that the citizens of the Colored Zion Community could have found a more satisfactory solution to their life's problems if that Church and School had been alert and sensitive to their needs to the end of coordinating and integrating its teaching and preaching more functionally with their life problems.

"Prairie View State College, Prairie View, Texas has gone forward with the philosophy that the education of Negroes must have for its objectives the making of a worthwhile Life and a respectable Living. To these ends, the institution plans and strives -

1. to serve the Colored citizens of Texas at the points of their greatest needs, and
2. to bring the students' training into closer relationship with life's occupations and problems".