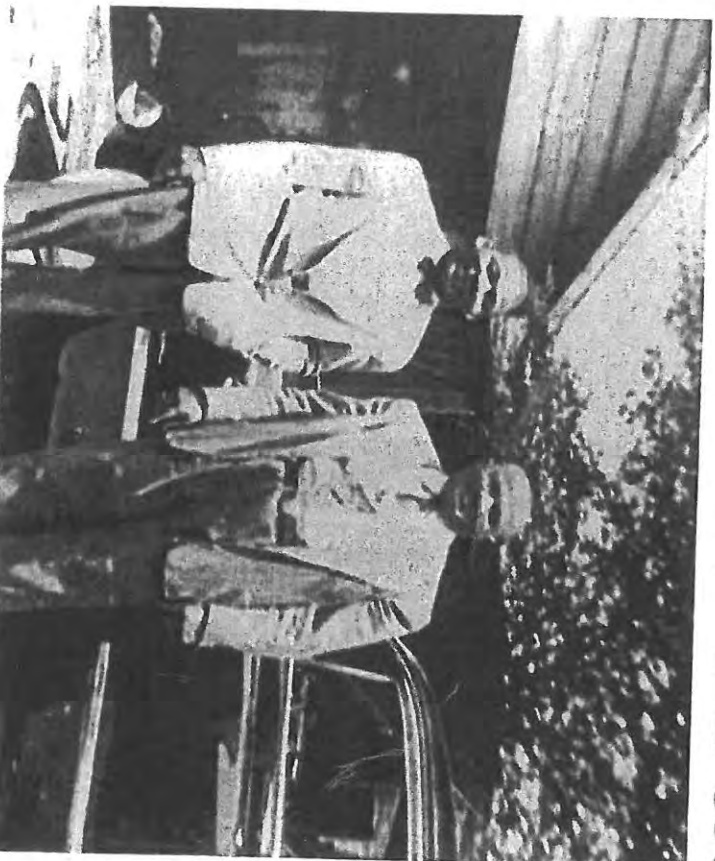


MILK in NJ

The Untold Years



Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute

Letter to Raleigh Bryant on behalf of Walter McCall (OCT 15th 1956)

Mr. Raleigh Bryant, Clerk
The First African Baptist Church
23 Montgomery Street
Savannah, Georgia
Dear Mr. Bryant:

.....I am sure that within the next few weeks you will begin thinking of calling a pastor to succeed the noble pastorate of Dr. Gilbert. I would like to suggest to the pulpit committee the name of Walter R. McCall.....I can say all these things without reservation because I know Rev. McCall very intimately. For more than ten years he has been one of my most intimate personal friends. We were classmates at Morehouse College and Crozer Theological Seminary.....

Sincerely Yours,

M.L. King Jr.

New Jersey Local Boards, Committee, N. J.

Township of Apple Shade County of Burlington
State of New Jersey

1

Complaint for
 Refusal to return, withhold, surrender or
 a public place, etc

Burlington
County of.....

.....

Street as his Residence.

those

James J. Fawcett - Chief Engineer, Lewis & Clark
of Cumberland Island in Indian Territory
and Cumberland River
1840-1841-3

for the title and sections violated.

ordinance has not violated, insert

Subscribed and sworn to before me this
12th day of May 1979

19..50.

~~Twenty 25.000 in~~
Name and official title of person administering

the path:

Principles of the syllable

"In the case of a violation of an ordinance, see the following: "may be sentenced to appear and that this court may award judgment pursuant to the terms of the ordinance where indicated."

TEXT ON NEXT PAGE

City Policewoman

Charges N. J. Inn Keeper With Bias



MISS PAULINE LEE

Rigid Race
Laws Get OK
In Africa

Pretty Girl
Says Youth
Should Be

Philadelphia Tribune, June 20th 1950 (page 2)

N.J. Inn Keeper Held After Four Charge Refusal

MAPLE SHADE, N. J.—Municipal court magistrate Percy Chapman held Ernest Nickles, in \$500 bail, on two counts at a hearing Thursday night, in complaints filed against him by Walter McCall, Crozer Theological Seminary student, and three other Negroes who were allegedly refused service last Sunday night, in Nickles' cafe on Rt. 5-41 and Main St. here.

The other complainants were Mrs. Pearl Smith, Philadelphia police-woman, Miss Dorla Wilson, a Philadelphia social worker, and Michael King, another theological seminary student at Crozer seminary, Chester, Pa.

W. Thomas McGinnis, Middletown attorney who represented the cafe

owner, was unable to convince the magistrate—of innocence of his client, although Nickles stated he served Negroes in his place of business. The attorney urged that the public be given both sides of the story. He said his client testified in court that the four Negroes wanted to purchase "package liquor to carry out," which he was not permitted to sell at that late hour. The "misunderstanding" arose over that, the attorney explained. Just why Nickles would fire a gun, as he was alleged to have done, could not be satisfactorily explained to the court.

Three white witnesses, who were patrons in the place at the time of the trouble, volunteered to testify in behalf of the complainants, and appeared at the trial.

The police-woman and her companions contacted the president of the New Jersey Conference of branches of the NAACP, and were represented at Thursday night's hearing by Attorney Robert Hart Johnson, legal aide of the association. Johnson is an assistant prosecutor at the Court of Common Pleas in the county of Camden. Dr. James B. Wiggins heads the N.J. A. A. C. P. branches.

— Building for Congress —

Philadelphia Tribune June 1950

City Policewomen Charges N.J. Inn Keeper with Bias

Maple Shade, N.J. - A Philadelphia police woman, together with a social worker, and two college students, lodged complaints against a cafe proprietor of this borough early Monday morning for violation of the state's civil rights act when he allegedly refused to serve them and became abusive. The man, Ernest Nickles, proprietor of Mary's Cafe on Rt. S-41 and Main St., was also charged with brandishing a gun and using obscene language.

Mrs. Pearl Smith, the police woman, of 735 N. 40th St. Philadelphia, and Miss Doris Wilson, same address, a Philadelphia child care worker, in company of Michael King, Atlanta, Ga., and Walter McCall of South Carolina, students of Crozer Theological Seminary, Chester, Pa., entered the place, they said, and asked to be served. According to statements made to Dr. Ulysses Wiggins, President of the state conference of Branches of the NAACP, they were ordered out by Nickles.

"When they did not leave, the man allegedly ran in the back and obtained a gun which he fired in the air out the front door, saying, 'I would kill for less than this.'"

The group said several white patrons in the place attempted to calm the man and asked that the negroes be served. According to the police woman and her companions, these people volunteered to appear against Nickles should they press charges.

Leaving the establishment complaints were filed at police headquarters. The police were said to have obtained the gun from the man when he was taken to the police station. At a hearing held Monday morning Nickles appeared with his attorney, a Mr. McCall of Morristown who asked for a continuation of the hearing. Thursday evening was set by Municipal Judge Percy Charlton.

Robert Burke Johnson of the legal staff, of the NAACP, was contacted by Boyd Eamon, president of the Burlington County Branch. Not familiar with the legal procedure in New Jersey, the offended visitors, all highly reputable persons, were put in contact with Dr. Wiggins by the Rev. Lloyd A. Burros, pastor of the Zion Baptist Church, Camden. Rev. Burros was called by the men, both of whom were his schoolmates at Crozer Seminary. King and McCall are in this section to assist Dr. Ira DeA. Reid with summer work at Haverford College.

N.J. Inn Keeper Held After Four Charged Refusal

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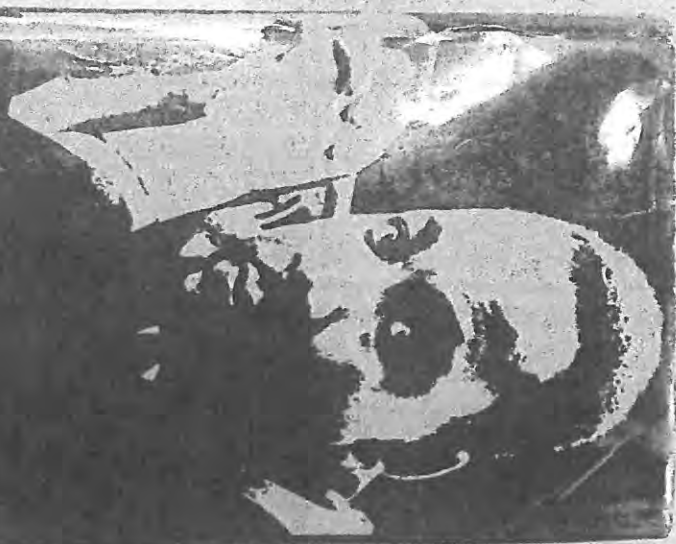
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Pearl E. Smith (right)



The King family and Walter R. McCall at the Crozer Theological Seminary commencement service in May 1951. Photo and permission courtesy of Christine King Farris.



Martin Luther King, Jr.

His life, martyrdom and meaning for the world

WILLIAM ROBERT MILLER

small Northern group that had been using Gandhian methods since 1942. He was more familiar with the approach of the NAACP, whose legal staff under Thurgood Marshall had fought so many steps toward freedom through the courts.

King's Morehouse classmate, Walter McCall, had followed him to Crozer a semester later. During this period, they often double-dated, and one evening, they went for a drive across the Delaware River to New Jersey. When they came to the village of Maple Shade, just east of Camden, McCall said, "Man, I'm getting hungry." "There's a nice-looking place just up ahead," said one of the girls. "Suits me," said King, and he pulled the car over to the side. They went in, seated themselves at a table and waited for service. "Looks like we're being ignored," said McCall after a while. "Looks like it," King replied. "It also looks like we're the only Negroes here."

"What should we do? You want to go somewhere else?"

"No, let's see this through." The girls agreed. The proprietor, at first vague, finally made it clear that he had no intention of serving them. "I think the best thing would be for you to leave," he shrugged and walked away. The two Negro couples continued to sit, and the proprietor returned. "I want you out of here," he said, reddening. They continued to sit without moving. The man, growing increasingly agitated, began to rant. He had a pistol. Lunging out the door, he fired it in the air. "I'll kill for less!" he shouted.

The young men saw their dates to the car and drove off. They returned, however, with a policeman who arrested the now frightened restaurant owner. They approached a number of the guests. "Did you see what happened?" Martin asked one opera-faced couple. "Er . . . no, we didn't see a thing," the man replied. "Sorry." Finally, the two Negroes found three white students from the University of Pennsylvania who agreed to testify.

The Camden branch of the NAACP filed suit against the restaurant proprietor under the New Jersey civil rights law, and the NAACP attorney assured the Crozer men that they had a good case. But in the end, the witnesses backed down and refused to testify, and the suit fizzled out. Clearly the courts could provide no simple remedy. At a minimum, legal action had to be augmented in some way. Why, for example, had the white students had second thoughts, and what could have been done to prevent this? What!

this precisely where Gandhi came in? Although the episode was over, the questions it raised hung unanswered in a corner of Martin King's mind.

His mind was in high gear as he worked to maintain his average during his final year. The curriculum included the psychology of religion, social philosophy, Christian ethics. In this context, King studied Reinhold Niebuhr, the American theologian who had begun as an exponent of Rauschenbusch's social gospel but who had, in the thirties, abandoned pacifism to expound what he and his colleagues called "Christian realism." As Martin pondered Niebuhr's critique of pacifism and nonviolence, he began to realize the extent of his own growing commitment to those ideals. At first, Niebuhr left him in a state of confusion. He found in Niebuhr's writings "extraordinary insight into human nature, especially the behavior of nations and social groups." Above all, Niebuhr reminded him that human motives are complex, that man has a capacity for monstrous evil as well as a potential for good. In the end, Martin felt that Niebuhr's stress on man's sinfulness was excessive, his rejection of pacifism in the name of realism unwarranted. Martin remained a theological liberal, but he felt that he emerged from his study of Niebuhr with a more realistic kind of pacifism, free from the perfectionist optimism that had troubled him in Rauschenbusch and others.*

June, 1951, brought the attainment of King's objective—he was now a seminary-trained clergyman with a Bachelor of Divinity degree. In addition to being class valedictorian, he won two prizes, the Pearl Plafkner award for outstanding scholarship and the Lewis Crozer Fellowship of \$1,200. The latter was applicable toward graduate study at whatever institution he chose. As a graduation present, his father gave him a green Chevrolet.

Some of the people back home remonstrated with young King upon his return to Atlanta that summer. "You've been in school

* In fairness to Reinhold Niebuhr, it should be pointed out that his views over the years have been broader than those of his interpreters pro and con. At various times, he endorsed the use of violence in labor struggles while holding firm to nonviolence in international affairs, later urged armed resistance to fascism, went on to commend King's followers for their blend of perfectionism and realism, and most recently strove to end the war in Vietnam.

1970 interview of Walter McCall by Herbert Holmes for the King Archive oral history project.

McCall

16

McCall:

Oh, yes.

Holmes:

Have you participated in civil rights activities?

McCall:

The first civil rights struggle that King had ever been in was with me. It was in Maple Shade, New Jersey, in 1950 I think. We went into a restaurant one night and to my amazement it was a discriminating type of place and the man refused to serve us. The man shoved a 45 in my face while King and our guests were seated at the table. As a result of what took place, I brought a suit against the man. King and I served as our own defense. It was the first time that we had ever been in any kind of civil rights struggle. The Attorney General for that section of New Jersey, Johnson, was a dear friend of mine. He provided counsel for us and we won our case in the preliminaries. Then it was taken to the Grand Jury. We couldn't be our plaintiff and defendant at the same time. It just happened that the young white boys who were there and were to testify against the owner discovered that their parents had brought pressure against them and they couldn't appear. As a result, we just dropped the

**City man
housed
activist**

By the People of the State of
California

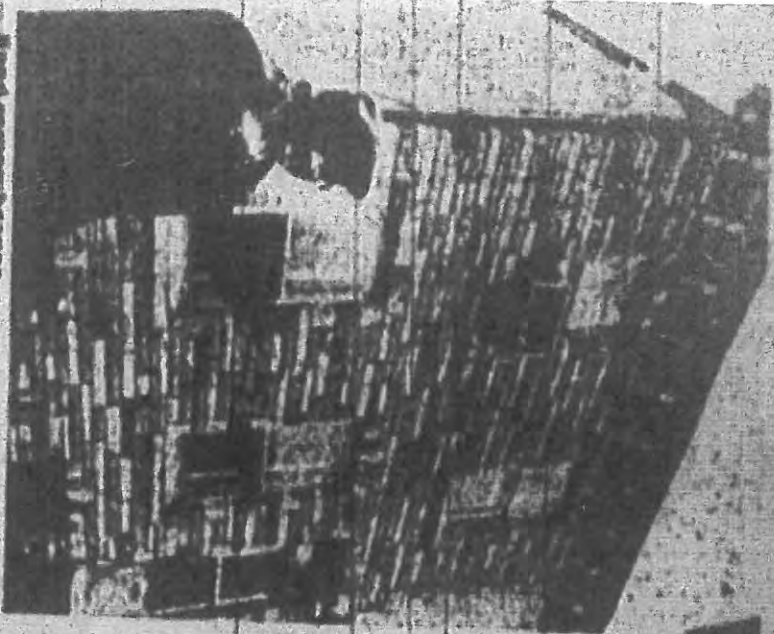
CADDOG — Tucked away in every nook and cranny of the living room, bookshelves were shelves of happy memories — the wares, grown children, a dozen grandchildren, and a world of happy memories. "The little ones of the family."

Paul's late daughter, the 41-year-old partner of a South Carolina family, described his feelings about his losses. Here, a house guest, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Yesterday was the anniversary of King's birthday. The Baptist preacher from Alaska, former head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Nobel Peace Prize winner, spoke here. He was 54 years old.

Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Smith, 1000 N. 1st St., St. Paul, Minn., are the authors of "The Story of the Great Lakes," published by the Lakeside Press, Chicago, Ill.

ANNOUNCED BY CITY PAGE 26



World environmental issues ... *Editor: First paragraph by the author*
Geography: Half of Canadian Northerners are a young
Martin Luther King Jr. lived in his home while attending
a theological seminary in Birmingham.

Struggle on Jaws for Hand

MLK in Camden 1981

City man housed activist

By Eileen Stilwell

Of the Courier —Post

CAMDEN — Tucked away in every nook and cranny of the living room bookcase were photos of happy memories — three wives, seven children, a dozen grandchildren and a world famous civil rights leader who “fit in like one of the family.”

That’s how Benjamin Hunt, the 81-year old patriarch of a South Camden family, described his feelings about his former live-in house guest, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Yesterday was the anniversary of King’s birthday. The Baptist preacher from Atlanta, former head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Nobel Peace Prize winner, would have been 52 years old.

Hunt, a small, gentle man, recalled that his relationship with King began about 1950. At the time, the civil rights activist, who was tin his early 30’s, was an honor student at Crozer theological Seminary in Chester, Pa.

“This was a really busy house then. You could hardly get a word in at the dinner table,” said Hunt scanning the spotless living room in the brick row house he has called home since 1945.

Today, the retired printer and boilermaker lives alone. Two years ago, his third wife died and he has outlived four of his children.

“In those days, anybody was welcome in this house. It had what we called a swinging door. My cousin, Walter, was King’s friend and the two of them lived in the back room upstairs on and off for two years when they were in school. He got along just fine with everybody and fit in like one of the family.”

Hunt says most of the memories of King’s stay in Camden remain with him, since his cousin, Walter McCall died young. Once King left the area to begin nearly two decades of non-violent confrontation, Hunt never heard from him again.

“King didn’t smoke, drink or carry on while he lived here,” recalled Hunt. “He was smart and I just knew he was gonna be a great man.”

One incident involving King as a young man Hunt remembered well. He said King and a group of boys stopped at a bar in Maple Shade en route from the Jersey shore to Chester. The bartender refused to serve them because they were black.

“The boys kept this from me for a long time because I was very strict, but sooner or later I found out,” said Hunt. “Just some of the details are missing,” he added.

“At some point on that night there must have been a fight over this and the boys ran away. But the cops caught them and locked them up. It was King’s idea to call a doctor who was very active in civil rights to get them out. I don’t know if this is so, but I always think that what happened that night may have started to change him into the leader he was.”

Mountain summer resort.

✦ **Dr. Ulysses Wiggins**, New Jersey NAACP president, turned down an offer to serve as a member of the new U. S. delegation at the United Nations



DR. U. S. WIGGINS

The regular president of the Camden, N. J. Branch of NAACP is pictured in his quarters.

✦ **A. Philip Randolph**, president of AFL Brotherhood

FROM THE WORK BENCH

Dr. Ulysses S. Wiggins: A Pioneer Leader Of Great Determination Firm Manner

CAMDEN, N.J. — For Dr. Ulysses S. Wiggins the end is far from the beginning. Indeed, there may never be a termination to the cumulative effect of the mortal part of his existence. He has placed his mark on the City of Camden, his name has significance throughout New Jersey and his national influence as an NAACP board member helped give reality to the dreams of his forebears.

The start for Dr. Wiggins was in Americus, Ga., where his parents had been born in slavery. Some hint of will to overcome handicaps for himself and for others that was a part of Dr. Wiggins can be gotten from the fact that his father, Randall Wiggins, became "a merchant and a planter who owned the plantation on which he was born a slave."

In the quiet of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church the colleagues of his lifetime were gathered for Dr. Wiggins' funeral, but for me that event was overshadowed by recollections of a testimonial dinner given for him a few years ago. Also, my mind was busy with thoughts about what Camden was like before his personal leadership made it shake off many of the racial patterns that would have been more appropriate in Camden, Ala.

Testimonial at main hotel

The testimonial was given at the leading hotel in Camden and it seemed that almost everyone who

was important for any constructive reason was in attendance.

Although most of the accolades were voiced because of his work in civic betterment, his medical achievements were eloquently noted by a massive number of his patients who were present and in good health. A substantial number of them had been delivered by him as babies and he had prescribed for them ever since that day of admission to the world.

Someone recently asked me whether or I have noted any changes in the floors and members of the NAACP in recent years. I answered that there is a difference, although it is difficult to define. Perhaps part of the difference can be explained by the fact that the sting of raw, senseless segregation was more acute among the friends of freedom as Dr. Wiggins was growing into manhood.

Began practicing in 1928

He became a practicing physician in 1928 when almost all hospitals, north and south, were bastions of racial discrimination. Before that he had been a student at Lincoln University, Pa., where colored people were segregated in a third-rate motion picture house in the nearby town of Oxford, even though Pennsylvania had a civil rights law forbidding unequal treatment in places of accom-

My Favorite Quotation

"Why then, can one desire too much of a good thing?" — Shakespeare (Submitted by Mrs. Edith Berryman, Lynchburg, Va.)

modation and amusement.

As late as 1941, when he became president of the Camden Branch of the NAACP, discrimination was widespread in the places of employment, in hotels and in restaurants. One of the stormiest meetings I have ever attended took place in Camden when the U.S. Government opened discussions with employees of the New York Shipbuilding Company about insuring fair employment policies. I was a government official at the time and much of the rough stuff was staged to impress me with the possibility of dire consequences that would follow fair employment.

I was not impressed by the hoodlun behavior of some who were at that meeting. Although I had not met Dr. Wiggins at that time, apparently he was not intimidated either because he headed a successful drive to get colored workers into skilled jobs in that company and many others.

Fought segregation in schools

He waged other highly successful campaigns to end segregation in the Camden schools, to increase employment for colored citizens in state agencies and to pass state legislation against employment bias and other forms of racial discrimination. He

played an important part in the revision of the Constitution of the State of New Jersey.

In the national NAACP circles he was a hard driving force for total use of Democracy's tools. He could always be counted upon to get votes for federal legislation, raise funds for court fights and support constitution at exercise of the right to protest against wrongdoing.

For him, there was a never ending campaign to get broad base support for the organization and an equally durable campaign to see that all levels of complainants got help from the NAACP.

Man of great determination

He was a man of firm manner and great determination. Neither illness nor temporary setbacks seemed to discourage him. For those who like to think of the colored people of the United States as a monolithic and poorly led group of Americans, Dr. Wiggins offers a reassuring example.

He helped to change the face of the nation for the better without knowledge of curing whether he would get favorable press reports. He did not need television cameras to win recruits for freedom regiments.

I am not worry about whether there will be a replacement for him in Camden, in New Jersey or on the national scene. His kind of life always inspires at least one and often many others to carry on.

King's Camden dispute was crucial

As I listened to radio reporter Fulton Lewis Jr. in the early 1960s, he was commenting on the national news of the day and touching on the significant report of a U.S. Senate committee dealing with civil rights and the committee's principal witness, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. According to Lewis, Dr. King, when questioned, explained why he had taken such an unusual interest in civil rights.

Dr. King pointed to an incident that occurred when he was a seminarian and was staying with a friend in Camden. They and others one evening went out and stopped at a place in a "suburb of Camden," where they sought to buy "refreshments," but were rudely refused and threatened by the proprietor.



Then and Now
W. Thomas McGann

This past May, during the commencement of Duke University at Durham, N.C., at which Coretta Scott King was awarded an honorary degree of doctor of human letters, I was reminded of the incident referred to by Rev. King. I represented the proprietor of the tavern where King and his friends, another seminarian and two women, sought to purchase a six-pack of beer on a Sunday night in June of 1950 in Maple Shade.

As a result of what occurred, my client was charged with a violation of the New Jersey Civil Rights Statute and unlawful use of a gun, Section R.S. 10:1-5 and R.S. 2:176-155 respectively. The incident occurred on a Sunday night, but probably past midnight. Rev. King or his seminarian friend sought to purchase a six-pack, but the defendant, Ernest Nichols, refused to serve him because he felt the purchaser was endeavoring to get him to violate the law against the sale of package goods on Sunday. Because they were well-dressed and spoke politely, Nichols said he was suspicious of what they were asking him to do, and really believed they were trying to entrap him.

The defendant reacted belligerently and wrongly overreacted. Nichols refused to serve them anything and reached under the bar.

W. Thomas McGann was a county and Superior Court Judge from 1955 to 1976, serving in nine counties. He is of counsel to Begley, McCloskey & Gaskill in Moorestown.

to get his gun, and then went outside and shot the revolver in the air. The complainants resented this egregious behavior and went to the local police station and preferred charges against the defendant. The matter was heard before the magistrate who was the sitting municipal judge. The judge, Percy Carlton, heard the preliminary evidence and determined that because the apparent illegal jurisdiction and the defendant should be held for the grand jury of Burlington County. The complainants were represented by counsel, and the defendant was held on \$500 bail for the grand jury.

Unfortunately, nothing ever came of the charges because the complaining witnesses never appeared before the grand jury even though they were notified and asked to be available. Accordingly, the case was not processed.

Turning point

This whole wrongful event, however, did have a good aftermath. If we can believe Fulton Lewis's news report, it caused Martin Luther King to take an unusual interest in the abuse of civil rights. It led to a historic and significant crusade and campaign against racial abuses and deprivations that have since, for the most part, been changed and hopefully cured, if not fully, at least to the point that African-Americans and other minorities have by changes in law and in policy been accorded their just rights and equal protection of the law.

Martin Luther King's assiduous efforts and courageous campaign through his natural ability as an orator and as a persistent advocate of peaceful pursuit of a noble cause — brought about a revolutionary change in civil rights.

In this respect he was like Mohandas K. Gandhi, and also reminded one of the efforts of Daniel O'Connell, the great Irish emancipator for civil rights who, like Rev. King, was an outstanding orator who pursued a policy of peaceful practice and determined dedication. Like Dr. King, he was arrested and convicted, 190, but his conviction was reversed on appeal by the House of Lords because of his underlying policy of nonviolence.

Dr. King philosophically subscribed to Mohandas Gandhi's "satyagraha," i.e., a form of passive resistance rather than violence. His dream was one of advancement of good relations where all could live as brothers.

All of these honorable historical advocates of civil rights knew instinctively that elemental natural law and morality, aside from the politics of the day, underlay their prescriptive programs for civil rights and elemental justice.

Future American history cannot be written without according to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. his significant role in making the United States a more civil nation, and as a man who sought to promote domestic tranquility so his "dream" would come to fruition.

Continued on page 27

King's Camden dispute proved crucial to cause

Continued from page 6

Of course, there are still problems with racism, but that is not unexpected because of human frailty and ignorance. You find it affecting not only African-Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, but other groups, too. It will never be wiped out completely, but at least with thinking, fair-minded people, racial quality gradually has and is being lifted. We are at the point where people of good will hold racial bigotry in low esteem and as anti-social. And it all may have begun — at least a part — in a "suburb of Camden."

Notes and analysis articles are also welcome. These longer, technical writings are subject to editing. Shorter articles have a better chance for publication and should be in the range of 1,000 to 1,500 words. Omit footnotes.

Response letters will be accepted until 10 a.m. the Tuesday before the date of publication. Letters and articles may be sent to the editor of New Jersey Lawyer.

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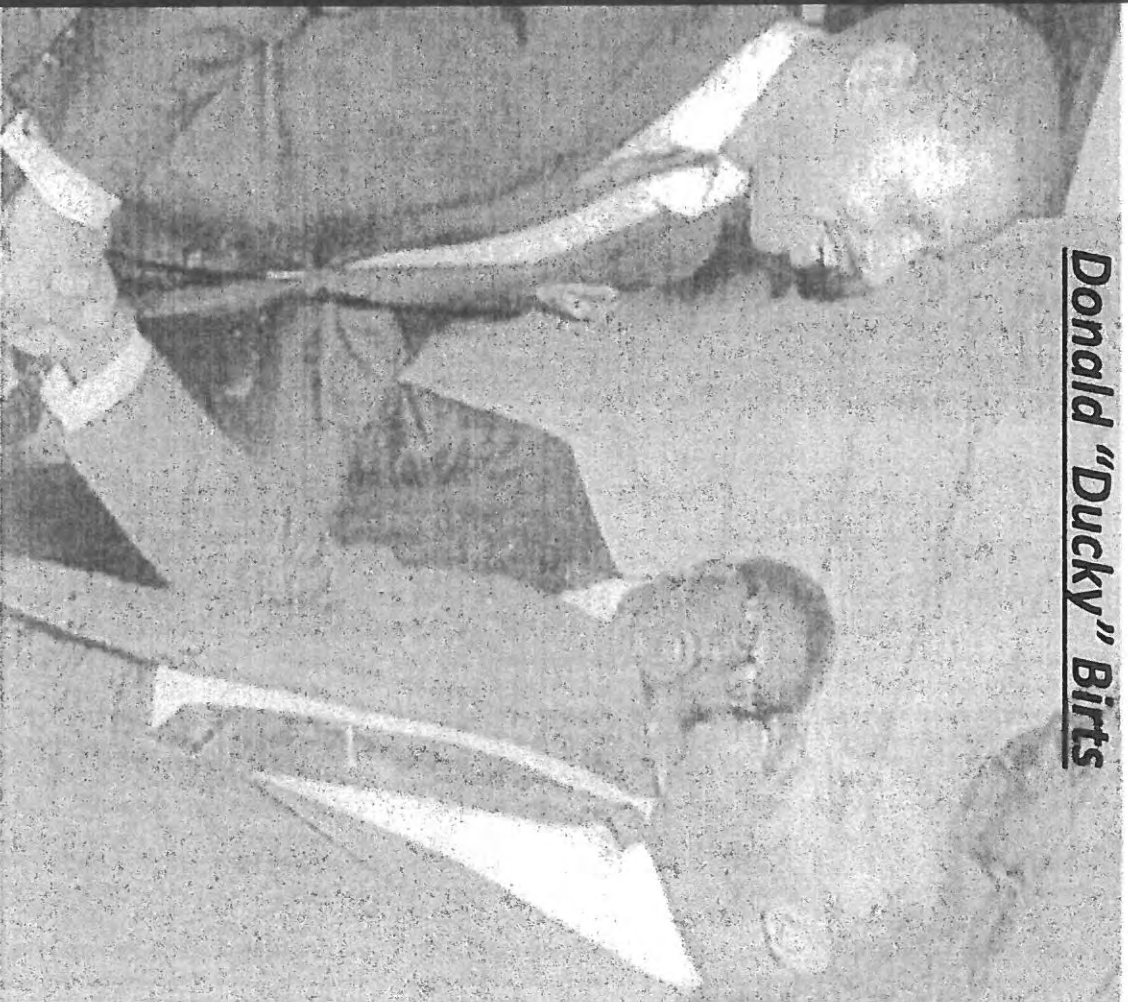
The career of the HONORABLE ROBERT BURK JOHNSON, L'27, reflects a distinguished example of excellence in scholarship. He earned the Bachelor of Arts in Education from Lincoln University in 1924. The following year he applied to the University of Pennsylvania Law School and was accepted on a probational basis. In order to gain admittance into the law school, Judge Johnson was expected to meet three requirements. The first two—that he complete undergraduate school and receive a recommendation from that college's dean—presented no problem. However, the third requirement—that he be in the top ten percentile of the class, which he was not—almost kept him out of the school. Judge Johnson recalls that the Dean of Lincoln University wrote another recommendation to the Law School's Dean assuring him that "young Johnson" could have ranked in the upper ten percentile of his class if he had so desired. Proving these words to be true, Judge Johnson went on to become one of only two black students in the Law School's one hundred and ninety-one year history to serve as an associate editor of the Law Review. After graduation, Judge Johnson practiced law in Philadelphia from 1932-1936; from 1936-1966 he practiced law in Camden, New Jersey. It was while practicing in Camden that he played a role in an event that perhaps was instrumental in kindling Martin Luther King, Jr.'s interest in the civil rights cause. According to the 1950 county records, a young theology student named "M. L. King, Jr." and three of his companions were involved in an incident in which they were denied service in a cafe because they were black. Johnson was contacted by the N.A.A.C.P. to represent the four. Aware of a recently enacted civil rights law in New Jersey, he filed a complaint with the county prosecutor alleging discrimination. The complaint eventually was dismissed because the witnesses failed to appear. Needless to say, in 1950, the name "M. L. King, Jr." held no special significance for Johnson and after the dismissal, the case soon was forgotten. It was years later, when Judge Johnson read a passage from Dr. King's book, *Why We Can't Wait*, that he connected the earlier event to the famous slain civil rights leader. In that passage King states that he became interested in the civil rights movement when as a theology student he was refused a drink in a cafe in suburban Camden.

In discussing the role of the black judge, Judge Johnson recognizes that "I owe an allegiance to my people; I feel I can demonstrate that allegiance by doing the best job possible - that is by seeing to it that the people who come before me whether black or white, rich or poor, receive justice." Understanding the dimensions of society, which often places black people in the midst of the judicial system, Judge Johnson adds, "as one who has lived as long as I have with my people, I am cognizant of the social and economic handicaps which besiege us; yet... I do not believe poverty and [social or political] disadvantages are justifications to commit crime. Individuals have to be held accountable for their actions. My role as a black judge is to see that this is done in a fair, equitable and dignified manner." Judge Johnson was appointed to the bench of the Camden County District Court in 1966. Proving himself to be a most able and skilled jurist, he was elevated to the Camden County Court in 1971, and subsequently in 1972, he became the first black in New Jersey history to be appointed to the New Jersey Supreme Court. Out of the five clerks who have served with Judge Johnson during his tenure on the Supreme Court, three have been black. Two of these individuals were actively recruited through the Judge's contacts with Rutgers-Camden Law School. In 1974, Judge Johnson reached the age of compulsory retirement and was required to step down from the bench. Not one to quickly settle into the comfortable inertia of retirement, he continued to take an active part in the legal community. He served in the dual capacities of special counsel for the Fidelity Bank and Trust Company of New Jersey and as a Commissioner for the Delaware River Port Authority. Fortuitously, in 1975, the law in New Jersey changed and Judge Johnson had the distinction of becoming the first judge over seventy-five to be recalled to active service by the New Jersey Supreme Court. He remained in service until January of 1978. Judge Johnson is presently of counsel to the law firm of Freeman, Zeller and Bryant in Camden, New Jersey.

Jeanette Lily Hunt



Donald "Ducky" Birts



DEANAL HONORABLES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1601

DEANAL HONORABLES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1601

Daniel Sanders
Historic Preservation Office Administrator
903 Box 420
300 East State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625-1070

Dear Administrator Sanders,

As a Camden City resident, when I drove through the city I was not only the great potential Camden has but also the city's unique and rich history. From the old RCA Building to the New York Shipbuilding Company and the Wash Wharves, Camden City has an amazingly powerful history that grows stronger as new historical sites are found and restored. That is why I urge you to consider designating the former residence of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at 753 Walnut Street in Camden, a historically valuable landmark worthy of preservation.

Martin Luther King Jr. lived at 753 Walnut St. while he attended Crozer Theological Seminary, on his path to achieving his Bachelor's in Divinity. King's residence at this house is both well documented and remembered.

In 1960, while King stayed at the house in Camden, King was denied service in a Maple Shade bar called "Mary's Cafe" and threatened with violence. King filed a police report, which listed the Walnut St. address as his residence but ultimately there were no legal repercussions for the owner. Dr. King's effort in this case appears to have been foundational in shaping Dr. King's approach to civil rights. Later in his life as the nation's most prolific civil rights leader, Dr. King opted to use civil disobedience to combat systematic racism instead of seeking police assistance, quite possibly relying on the lessons learned from this formative failure.

Not only is this site historically significant through its association with this incident in Maple Shade but statistically there is a developed plan for the site should it be protected. The City of Camden has agreed to donate the plot next to the house, and the current land owner of the vacant apartment is also enthused about the project. President of the Camden County NAACP, Columbus Francis would like to see the building used as a museum and office space for his chapter of the NAACP and Rutgers University-Camden's law school has offered to set up a non-profit for the property preservation.

I know that with historical designation and the effort of the community, the home at 753 Walnut Street can be a physical reminder of the profound role that Camden played in the shaping of our nation's greatest civil rights leader, Martin Luther King Jr. I urge you to give full consideration to designating 753 Walnut Street in Camden as historical site, worthy of preservation.

Sincerely,


Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CAMDEN
NEW JERSEY

DANA L. REDD
MAYOR

August 14th, 2016

Mr. Robert Craig
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Historic Preservation Office-New Jersey and National Registry
P.O. Box 420, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420
Re: 753 Walnut Street, Camden NJ

Dear Mr. Craig,

On behalf of the City of Camden, I would like to provide this letter of support for Mr. Patrick Duff and his efforts to obtain historic designation of the property located at 753 Walnut Street, Camden, NJ. Mr. Duff is leading a grass roots initiative to seek this status for the property on behalf of the property owner.

As you may know there is abundant evidence that places Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. living at this address, on and off, for a period of two years. This evidence links the property and the City of Camden to Dr. King's very first civil rights action which took place in Maple Shade. The evidence that he lived in this home includes a signed document which states Dr. King's address is 753 Walnut Street in Camden New Jersey and two witnesses, whom are featured in a newspaper article from 1981. In addition, the testimony of Donald Duckey Hirts who says Dr. King told him that he lived on Walnut Street in Camden.

The first civil rights event of Dr. King was also attended and helped by Dr. Ulysses Wiggins, head of the Camden NAACP, and Mr. Robert Burke Johnson, one of the first African American Judges in the State of New Jersey. The Philadelphia Tribune also published two articles in late June 1950, documenting this event. This ties Dr. King's beginning of civil rights directly to Camden New Jersey and two figures whom are already recognized for their contribution to the City and the Civil Rights Movement.

The City of Camden has such a powerful history and that unique legacy must be preserved for future generations. I would like to ask for your consideration regarding Mr. Duff's application and offer my support. If you should require any additional information from my office, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Dana L. Redd
Mayor

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