Lonesome Hearts

by Albertine Ashe

(If you would like to correspond with a Lonesome Heart write a short letter to me, giving full particulars about yourself and the person you'd like to meet. Sign your correct name and address to all mail. Enclose 50 cents in coin and stamped, addressed envelope for publishing, forwarding for each address wanted or general handing: ALBERINE ASHE, AFRO-AMERICAN, Baltimore 1, Maryland.)

WANTS GOOD WIFE
I am a young man 27, 5 feet 11, brown-skinned and a Christian man. I'm looking for a Christian woman, 18-29 who lives near Philly.
MOODY

LONELY WIDOW
I am a loney Christian widow, 62, seeking a true companion, understanding and sincere. I like nice things and will do everything to make our life a happy one.
MRS. HOOVER

SEEKS CHRISTIAN WOMAN
I'm single, 43, brown-skinned, employed and a Christian with nice habits. I wish to meet a Christian woman around 35, with nice personality and habits.
THORNTON

WRITE TO CINDY
I am 24, looking for a good true Christian fellow for a husband. I enjoy church and would like to meet a nice man 26-30 who wants a nice woman.

SHE'LL BE TRUE
A true companion is seeking the same. I'm 42, 5 feet 7, light brown and not hard on the eye. I'm a lovely woman and an honest church woman seeking a kind, smart, honest companion, 45 who likes my type.
MARTHA

NOBLE FELLOW
A young man 30, employed, intelligent who likes nice things, church, and social functions wants to meet a fine young woman around my age and type who is sincere and lonely.
NOBLE FELLOW

GOOD PENNY
I'm a lonely woman 33, 5 feet 6, like clean sports and church. I would like to meet a fine honest man, 35-40 who is employed and likes my type.
MISS PENNY

LIKES FINER THINGS
I'm a lonely man 53, 5 feet 6, employed, sincere intentions, lover of the finer, nobler, and cultural things in life. I'm anxious to meet a nice body near my age and type who is willing to marry if suited.
SHADWELL

HONEST DIVORCEE
I'm a woman 38, tall, dark and I like sports, church and I'd love meeting a gentleman around 40, good reputation who wants an honest woman. Am divorced and have a fine son.
KATRINE

UNDERSTANDING ASHFORD
I want to meet a nice girl-friend, 26-39, nice disposition, sincere and nice. Can have one or two small children. Am 39, employed, understanding and willing to assume the responsibility of a good wife.
ASHFORD

WANTS OLDER MAN
I'm a woman 41 lonely for companionship, have nice habits, brown-skinned, and understanding. I want to meet a man 45-60 who is sincere and wants marriage and to get some place in life.
LOSSIE JAY

DOESN'T MIND KIDS
I'm 49, 5 feet 6, and my intentions are to find a good wife. If she has a small child, that is okay. I'm seeking a fine girl 30-40 possibly Filipino, sincere, devoted and understanding.
FILLMORE

NOTICE
Be sure to enclose 50 cents with your letter.

Let's Laff

Helpless Man
Two women were discussing their husbands in that indulgent tone appropriate to the subject. "Henry is perfectly helpless with out me," said one. "I don't know what would become of him if I went away for a week."
"John, too," sighed the other. "The way I have to look after that man! Why whenever he sews on buttons or darns his socks, I always have to thread the needle for him."

Tricked
At a golf club, a member was boasting about his strength when a puny fellow member bet him $25 that he could wheel a load in a wheelbarrow from the clubhouse to the street which the athlete couldn't wheel back. "You're on," said the boaster. A wheelbarrow was brought to the clubhouse. "All right," said the little guy. "Get in."

Don't Get Fresh
"I understand," said a young woman to another, "that at your church you are having small congregations. Is that so?"
"Yes," answered the other girl, "so small that every time our rector says 'Dearly Beloved' you feel as if you had received a proposal!"

Beg Pardon
"Taking anything for your hay fever?"
"Yes, I'm taking boxing lessons to wallop the first man who gives me free advice."

He Who Gets Slapped
I asked her for her hand.
What happened?
I got it—on the ear.

Loaded With Soap
There's the story of the couple who furnished a 12-room house with premiums redeemed for soap coupons. They showed a friend around, proudly commenting on how many coupons each chair, table or carpet "cost." At the end of the tour the visitor said, "But you've shown me only five of the 12 rooms—What about the other seven?"
"Oh, those," shrugged the householder. "That's where we keep the soap."

His Turn
After the first hole, the Englishman turned to his Scotch opponent.
"How many did you take?" he asked.
"Eight," replied the Scotsman.
"I took seven, so that's my hole." said the Englishman.
After the second hole, the Englishman asked the same question. This time the Scotsman shook his head.
"Na, na, laddie," he replied, "it's mae turn to ask first now."

Redeeming Virtues
Smith's pretty daughter had been taking voice lessons for two years but hadn't learned to sing.
"I don't understand it," said Mrs. Jones, a neighbor, to Mrs. Brown. "She's been taking voice lessons for two years and hasn't learned to sing a lick. Her teacher must be very stupid or inefficient?"
"Oh, no!" replied Mrs. Brown. "He's tall and good looking!"

Still Spry At 110...

TOLEDO, Ohio — Seventeen years ago Mrs. Hannah Davidson learned to read.
The unusual aspect of this feat was that it was accomplished in Mrs. Davidson's 93rd year. She will celebrate her 110th birthday March 4.
And longevity has not lessened Mrs. Davidson's keenness for living. An indication of this zest for life is that she insists on doing as many personal things as possible. In recent years, however, arthritis has slowed her down.

Mother Of 7
Mrs. Davidson was born in Ballard County, Ky. She married at 35, 20 years after she gained freedom from slavery. She had seven children, two still living. At present, she resides with a daughter in Toledo.
Aside from sewing and cooking, Mrs. Davidson's favorite pastime is walking, although she is not as active in this respect as she formerly was. She meets with an interracial group of aged persons once a month. And for an hour or so they have the time of their lives chatting about the past.
Mrs. Davidson attends to her own financial affairs, takes occasional trips to town and reads —with glasses, of course.
If you ask her for a formula for long life, she gives you a wry smile and turns back the question:
"What's the use of dying 'til you're ready to die?"

A New AFRO Magazine Feature

FAMILY PROBLEMS

By Ann Morris

Dear Anne Morris:
I am having trouble with a ten-year-old daughter, who is simply "too big for her britches."
She is sophisticated beyond her years, and her manners to us (her parents) are abominable. She is not obedient and she has an exaggerated opinion of the importance of clothes, even at this age.
Has good mind, is doing well in school, including music and dancing, and other than being a "brat," could be a lovable child.
I admit that this is more or less my fault, but even if it is my fault, what can I do to remedy my mistakes at this late date?
Mrs. NAR

Dear Mrs. N.A.R.:
I think you have your first problem by so our daughter in her true and by acknowledging your shortcomings in over-spoiling the child.

Frankly I believe in a certain amount of "spoiling" for a child. With all the pressures that our children have to undergo, they need assurance of knowing that they are loved and secure.

But the type of spoiling that lets a child grow up without discipline, without respect for the experience of its elders, and with too much regard for the frivolous things of life is a handicap, not a help to the child.

If I had your particular problem I think I would try to place the child in a new environment with children who are not so spoiled. If I found difficulty doing this, I would try to gradually induct her into a different group of playmates who are more down-to-earth.

She may rebel or try to lord it over these children at first, but children can be strict teachers. They will soon pare her down to size. On the other hand, a ten-year-old will not want to be different. She is likely to do a lot of conforming on her own part.

New Books

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN MUSIC by Aaron Copland, Popular Guide to Greater Musical Enjoyment, original publisher McGraw Hill, price 35 cents.

THE AGE FOR LONGING by Arthur Koestler, original publisher Macmillan Co., price 25 cents.

STRIPPED FOR MURDER by Bruno Fischer, An Illicit Fortune Leads to Murder, original publisher-Dodd, Meade and Co., price 25 cents.

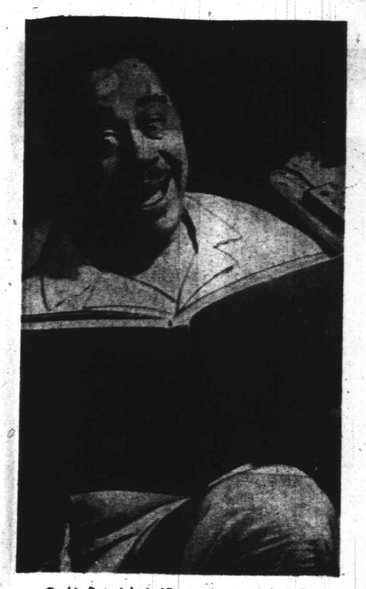
Arithmetic

ADD:
463 and 219
621 and 107
SUBTRACT
330 from 948
MULTIPLY
30 by 76
DIVIDE:
261 into 749

CAB CALLOWAY Overseas

AFRO writer in Germany finds famed maestro puzzled over GIs' cool reception of 'Porgy and Bess' European tour

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was written prior to the "Porgy And Bess" company's return to the U.S. The folk opera will open in Manhattan's Zeigfield Theatre on March 10, after a six-month tour of Europe.



On his first night in Vienna, Austria, Cab Calloway did some 'boning-up' on the town via a travel book.

By GOLF DORNSEIF

Cab Calloway is wowing the staid and conservative Britishers. Until recently, the blues master who gave "Minnie the Moocher" to the world was known to the average Briton only as America's hi-de-ho bandleader.

They pictured him as the prototype of the zoot-suited, frantic maestro whose band could blast out sounds to chip the paint off theater walls.

But since the opening of the American production of George Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" at the Stoll, London's biggest legitimate theater, Calloway is established in the United Kingdom as a suave, sophisticated artist. And Britions are goggled-eyed at his artistry.

His stage role as "Sportin' Life," a gambling, dope-peddling big city hepster, breathes wild life into the production. It's a tricky part. Bad handling of the flashy Catfish Row character would throw the whole production into a gaudy light. But with mischief in his eyes, grace in his steps and clever vocal interpretation, Cab lends the satiric touch so vital to the whole production.

Gershwin had Cab in mind when he created "sportin' Life." When the folk opera was produced in 1935 as a version of Dubose Heyward's "Porgy," Cab was at his peak in the band business, touring the country with sidemen like Chu Berry, Jonah Jones and Ben Webster.

Always A Vocalist

Calloway has tried his hands at drums and alto sax, but his forte has always been vocalizing. His first real hit was a rendition of Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'."

Since the 1930s — the Cotton Club days — the name of Cab Calloway has been a dance-band byword. His last big-band tour in '51 took him through most of South America. He then traveled a smaller combo around the Caribbean. Part of a cast of 75 and one billy goat, Cab departed the States last June. "Porgy and Bess" played two weeks in Berlin, Germany and two in Vienna, Austria, backed by the State Department.

The Communist press, unable to find fault with "Summertime," "Bess, You Is My Woman," "I Got Plenty of nothin'" and "It Ain't Necessarily So," directed its journalistic pot-shots at the black market in show-tickets which inevitably sprouted.

"Evidence of America's Exploitation Of The Colored Man," the Soviet-controlled dailies gloated.

But the fans cheered.

Hungry For Entertainment

"The evidence is overwhelming; Europeans are hungry for large-scale American musicals," Cab reports.

"The troops around Europe are so disciplined and trained they are almost . . . well . . . formal. Back home when we run into service men on the street or at stage doors they'll smile, extend a hand and start to chat about the time I played the TIVOLI, or the RIALTO, or whatever was the big showhouse of their home-town.

"Around here the boys in uniform hesitate, especially the colored ones. You can't help notice it," he said. "The contrast is difficult for an American performer to comprehend. What the heck kind of training are they putting the boys through around here?"

"Porgy and Bess" is an unanimous hit in London, and as long as the fans keep queueing, the show will run. Cab proposes to stay with it. But the Cab has additional plans. He is lining up a series of jazz concerts. He will feature English jazzmen and probably hit every large city in the British Isles in the forthcoming 12 months.

"I plan to introduce a lot of my own material, sing and emcee," he says. "My gal Ella (Fitzgerald) is making a trip to England in a couple of months, and she may join me in a concert series."

Things Different In Britain

Speaking about Germany and the Germans, Cab said: "I received lots of fan mail from both young and old people. May I tell all these fine music lovers how much we Americans admire their fight for freedom and democratic unity in Berlin and the Soviet Zone."

"As for the US Air Force units stationed in England, mutual understanding seems to be a little difficult." Mr. Calloway grinned. Then he showed me a small clipping of a British weekly which read as follows:

"I want to be a girl friend" forms were left by Women Volunteer Services, women at shops and offices throughout King's Lynn, Norfolk.

Girls, 18 and over, were asked to get their parents to sign so that they could be approved by the US Air Force and given a pass to dances and parties at nearby Sculthorpe bomber base.

But when the WVS workers went to collect the forms not one had been filled in, Mrs. H. Rutter, WVS-organizer and mother of three girls informed newsmen. "We are very disappointed," she said, "but we will try again. The idea was to end complaints that undesirable girls were visiting the airfield."

"I'm glad British girls don't need a pass to visit my show so far," Cab Calloway laughed. "After all I'm a dangerous big-city hepster."

Editor's Note: The U.S. Army is now integrated. Cab Calloway is quoted in the accompanying article, as saying our service men overseas do not get enthusiastic about him and other members of the cast of "Porgy and Bess," but what he mistakes for backwardness is actually disdain.

The AFRO said editorially last year when plans were being made to send "Porgy and Bess" abroad that it would be a mistake.

It is not the kind of play which is representative of colored people. Its minstrel-show language is not the kind of thing our boys who are serving in an integrated army want to hear and they're not going to fall over those performers who insist on giving them that kind of entertainment.

Our men in the armed forces have proved they can fight and live with other soldiers and a play which holds colored people up to ridicule sets them apart from their comrades and defeats the very purpose for which they are fighting.

The AFRO said in its editorial and it repeats here and now that those who are responsible for sending "Porgy and Bess" overseas are doing colored Americans a disservice because this vehicle pictures colored people as dope-loving, crap-shooting imbeciles. Our boys will give with proper enthusiasm if the performers are people like Marian Anderson, Dorothy Maynor, Hazel Scott, Billy Eckstine et al.

Across The Bridge Table

With ROBERT MATTHEWS

Freaks are contrary to the laws of nature, and freak hands in bridge are contrary to preconceived notions. There can be no laws governing freak hands, they are up to the discretion of the holder.

This week's hand is one of the once-in-a-million freaks, but unfortunately our East wasn't able to cope with the situation. The hand actually occured in a progressive bridge game recently, and the North - South players were able to fatten their scores appreciably through East's ineptness.

West, holding 19 points in high cards and distribution opened one club, North passing and East jump-shifting to two diamonds. West quickly announced his heart holding and East simply bid 2 spades.

Since all four suits had now been bid, West cast about for a possible no trump contract, temporizing with two no trumps, East re-building his diamond suit.

With slam visions whirling around in his noggin, West jumped into a Blackwood asking bid convention, eliciting the information that the East hand contained a single ace, through East's 5 diamond call.

West boldly went on to a small slam bid in clubs. North hid his pleased smile long enough to double, whereupon with the handwriting plainly on the wall, East covered himself with shame by passing.

The double by North represented the last opportunity for East to take the irons out of the fire. He should have realized the freak nature of his holding and charged forth gallantly to the rescue.

In the play, North opened with the heart deuce, and after a pause while declarer gasped in disbelief at the dummy spread, declarer took the trick with the ace, South going up with his king.

He then set about trying to minimize his loss, realizing that the diamond represented his sole entry to the establishable spade suit. Accordingly he led his spade deuce, North pouncing on the trick with the ace and returning another heart.

North-South vulnerable
West dealer

NORTH
♠—A 5
♥—J 7 2
♦—10 5 4
♣—J 10 5 4 3

WEST
♠—K 2
♥—A 8 6 5 4
♦—6
♣—A K Q 7 6

EAST
♠—J 10 9 8 7 6 4
♥—
♦—A K Q 9 3 2
♣—

SOUTH
♠—Q 3
♥—K Q 10 9 3
♦—J 8 7
♣—9 8 2

The bidding:

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 ♦	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♦	Pass
6 ♣	Dbl.	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: 2 of ♥

Across The Bridge Table

South now mechanically cashed three heart books, continuing the suit allowing North to ruff the fifth heart. North shifted to the diamonds, declarer cashing the ace and king, and being forced to ruff the queen.

He was unable to avoid loss of a club and the slaughter ended.

Observe how different the results might have been, had East the foresight to realize the potential of the hand. In a six spade contract with East as declarer, the hand practically plays itself. One need only lead the spade jack from the East hand, and allow it to hold if South declines to cover with his queen.

There must be a moral in this someplaces. Guess it could be: "A freak hand is not normal—you can't make normal responses."

Valley Of The Shadow

(Continued From Page 4)

had supervised each excursion into such indiscreet amorata; and had somehow engineered the picture-taking. Excellent shots, too, every one of them. The negatives were in a black envelope.

Paul confiscated the pictures, the negatives, and the bank-books. Then he hard Jenks coming, and hurriedly put the box away without locking it. Then he put the plant-tray back and scraped dirt over the handles. He had just put the box's articles in his inner coat pocket when the super came in.

But this time there was unadulterated anger in his bony face. The hackles rose on Paul's neck. His spine became rigid and cold. The only hot spot was the area where the pictures and bank books lay.

Jenks stood spread-legged in the doorway, his arms folded. "You fine the keys, boy?"

Paul made a sickly attempt at a grin. "Jus' foun' em." He held up the keys he'd gotten from the morgue attendant. "Reckon I'll be gettin' on back uptown."

Jenks uncrossed his arms, and his lean hand curled down toward the pistol. "I reckon you're staying a while." He drew out the .44 and leveled it at the pit of Paul's stomach. Paul's stomach did a flip-over. Before he could contemplate a new move, Jenks called back to someone over his shoulder.

A Newcomer

"Come on in, Miss Varney." Miss Varney came in around the super. She was a tall, svelte brunette, maybe twenty-two or three. and she was wearing a sequined velvet gown underneath a stone marten shortie. But not even all those clothes could hide the fact that she had all of the equipment of a burlesque queen; but a bearing and grace that was nothing short of regal.

Miss Varney was quite an eyeful; though, under the circumstances, Paul Ammons would have forgone the pleasure of viewing her.

In a cultivated sultry voice, she asked: "Who are you?" Then, seeing the keys in Paul's hand, "Where did you get Bill's keys?"

Paul swallowed hard. "I—explained to Mister Jenks."

Jenks' lip curled up in a snarl. "What happened to your accent, boy?" He moved menacingly toward Paul. "You knew the Swede was dead when you came here. Been dead over three hours. Miss Varney, I wonder they got the right s—k for that killin'!"

Miss Varney's pretty eyes narrowed. "There's something funny about all this."

Paul remembered something. The picture on Gundersen's chifferobe. "To Bill, with all my love — Lois." The rubber-banded stack of letters in the top of the desk—perfumed, orchid stationery which had come from Lois.

"It is funny, isn't it. You—coming for your letters, and me for evidence to clear my brother. The Swede had both."

For a fleeting moment, hate twisted the comely face of Lois Varney. "He was a dog—a loathsome beast of a dog . . ."

Jenks' pistol wavered. "I'm still waitin' for an explanation, boy!"

Paul said, evenly, "I'm Paul Ammons, reporter for the Brooklyn Voice, brother of the man being held for the Swede's killing. I think I got evidence enough to prove he didn't do it."

"But he must have," Lois said. "Bill and Ted were talking for weeks how they'd work over George Ammons if he ever showed up in the Club Velvet. George must have suspected something and beat Bill to the punch."

Paul shook his head. "Uh-uh. This was a double, double-cross.

Ted Barslow walked in at precisely that moment, brandishing a Colt automatic. "This is cozy," he said, kicking the door too, oblivious to the old .44 in the super's hand. "Nothing'll give me greater pleasure than gunning down the brother of the rat that killed my best friend."

CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK

By MARTIN M. MASTERS

She Is Mother To 500 Kids

Meet Mrs. William Aker, Connecticut housewife, who has cared for scores of foster children and who now leads her latest brood in a kids' choir that is the talk of New England.

A New London, Conn., woman who has raised more than 500 children in the past 20 years is now fostering a talented colored spiritual chorus.

When she was eight years old, Mrs. William U. Aker of 314 Broad st., left home because of difficulty with her stepmother. That was 40 years ago.

Now she is "mother" to 500 young men and women.

Mrs. Aker was brought up by a physician's wife with whom she found the love lacking in her own home. Because she was appreciative of the love and affection given her, she decided to spend the rest of her life bringing happiness to other unfortunate children.

At 13 she was married to Mr. Aker in Pittsburgh, Pa., and they came to New London about a year later.

She soon began taking youngsters into her home who needed help. Later she volunteered to take care of foster children for the State of Connecticut.

Mr. and Mrs. William U. Aker and two of their three grandchildren. She has provided a home and love for many orphaned children.

Mr. and Mrs. Aker and their talented family.

The Aker Chorus in harmony. They have been book ed for several concerts.

Funds Too Few

There is little remuneration, usually not enough to meet their needs. Each child gets a quart of milk a day. The $10 a week she gets for each child, Mrs. Aker says, is hardly enough to buy the milk.

It's the satisfaction of giving these children the care and understanding that she herself did not get that Mrs. Aker finds rewarding. Nothing, she says, can equal the response of the children when they find that somebody loves them.

To better prepare herself for her work, Mrs. Aker took extensive Red Cross training during World War I. Many of the children she has taken into her home have been ill and rundown. With patient care and love she has nurtured them back to good health.

"I love every one of them," she says.

Some of her "children" are now in Korea or in some other military theater.

"I don't know where they all are," she says. They regard her as their real mother and still bring their problems to her.

Recently one of her sons came to visit her. She could tell that "there was something on his mind."

Finally, he asked, "Can I get married Mom?"

"My children probably won't all turn out to be good," she feels, "but for every one that does I'll be thankful."

At the present time there are 12 children in the Aker home; seven foster children, three grandchildren and two other children Mrs. Aker is caring for.

Family problems are handled in a democratic manner. When a situation arises the family holds a round-table discussion. The children, Mrs. Aker says, are the judge and the jury.

The youngsters also share the household chores. Each one has a special duty. They really feel that they belong and are part of the family.

Watched Them Grow

Mrs. Aker has watched them grow from ill and insecure tots to confident healthy young people. The important thing, she maintains, is that they know they have someone who cares.

Seven years ago, Mrs. Aker discovered that she had a talented group of singers in her home. Every night after dinner Mrs. Aker and the children sat around the living room singing nursery rhymes. She soon found that the children harmonized well together.

Although she has never had any musical training, Mrs. Aker could tell that they had good voices. From nursery rhymes the group soon moved on to spirituals.

Mrs. Aker doesn't approve of ragtime, swing or bop, but she lets them choose their own music.

The Aker Chorus sings regularly at the First Baptist Church in New London. They have also appeared before audiences all over the state. Recently they were asked to sing at the Mt. Oliver Baptist Church in New York City, where they were heard by more than 3,000 persons.

8 Kids In Chorus

There are eight children in the chorus: Lillian, 11; Jean, 9; Antoinetta, 8; Kenneth, 7; Beverly, 6; Leona, 3; Franklin, 8; and Darnell, 11. Darnell is one Mrs. Aker's three grandchildren.

Five of the foster children are now taking music lessons and Mrs. Aker has bought a piano for them.

The chorus rehearses daily under the direction of Mrs. Aker. Her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Surgest Aker, handles the bookings for the group.

Mrs. Aker has devoted her life to children. She has found that a child's greatest need is kindness.

"It means so much to them," she says. "It makes no difference to me whether they are black or white—they are just human beings that need help."

Dred Scott—Freedom's Guinea Pig

This humble workman was the first U.S. civil rights test case—He braved Supreme Court Chief Justice Taney who looked upon colored Americans with scorn.

By RALPH MATTHEWS Jr.

Dred Scott, in 1857, was perhaps the most famous slave in this country.

After living on the free soil of Missouri for four years, the abolitionist son of Dred's first holder persuaded him to sue for his freedom.

The Missouri court rapidly gave Dred Scott his liberty but the Missouri Supreme Court changed this ruling and made Scott a bound man once more.

The case went then to higher courts, where finally the Supreme Court ruled, with an aged Maryland Chief Justice writing the majority opinion, that colored people "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect."

The Court stated further that the Constitution of the U.S. was never intended to include colored people.

These two infamous ideas as expressed by Supreme Court Roger Brooke Taney, the Maryland jurist, proved to be his undoing.

Americans, never before bothered by slavery, resented the Marylander's faulty and illogical thinking on the subject, and the hue and cry paved the way for nation-wide anti-slavery attitudes and ultimately, the Civil War.

Virginia Native

Dred Scott was born on a Virginia farm about 1795. In 1827 he was sent to Missouri where he was sold to Dr. John Emerson, an Army doctor, whom he served as valet.

When the doctor died, Dred passed to his widow who re-married. Her second husband was an anti-slavery Congressman of Massachusetts. Mrs. Emerson left Dred Scott and his family in St. Louis, where he hired out to work for five dollars a month.

In 1846, Henry T. Blow, son of his first owner, told Dred to sue for his liberty because of his having lived four years on free soil.

His case, approved first in a Missouri lower court then reversed by the State's Supreme Court, ran for several years.

Became Political Issue

The Republican Party, sensing a political issue of epic proportions, moved in to make the Dred Scott legal wrangle a test case. In 1856, the case of Dred Scott reached the Supreme Court of the U.S.

If Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney had not been persuaded by Dixie members of the Supreme Court to rewrite what would have been just a routine ruling against Scott's petition for freedom, his case might be buried in obscurity.

But the 79-year-old Chief Justice wrote an interpretation of his reasons for denying Scott's freedom, so reactionary in tone and so un-democratic in spirit, that the wrath of Northerners and Westerners was aroused.

Said Taney in part, the "unhappy black race" had no place in civilized governments "by common consent."

Sounding more like a demented race-baiter than chief judge of this nation's highest court, Taney further declared:

"(Colored people) . .regarded as beings of an inferior order; altogether unfit for to associate with the white race, either in social political relations; and so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect."

When the Constitution was written, said the old Chief Justice, the men who drafted it did not "embrace the colored race" in its guarantees of freedom and "by common consent" colored Americans were "excluded from civilized governments and doomed to slavery."

"Indeed," said Taney, "when we look to the condition of this race in several States at the time, it is impossible (that these rights and privileges as contained in the U.S. constitution) were intended to be extended to them."

To give to colored people, the rights provided by the Constitution, Taney stated further, "would be an abuse of terms, and not calculated to exalt the character of an American citizen in the eyes of other nations."

Taney wound up his diatribe by saying that Dred Scott could not be considered a citizen of the U.S.; having been a slave, and therefore had no right to sue for his freedom in a U.S. Court. His case then, was in error according to Taney and once again, Dred Scott found himself a slave.

The Republican Party capitalized on Taney's inflammatory remarks, especially his contentions that Congress never had any power to make anti-slavery laws, such as the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, the Missouri Compromise, and that these and all other federal restraints on slavery were therefore null and void.

Forced Slavery

Taney in effect, said the Republicans were trying to force slavery down the throats of voters in the North and West where slavery did not exist.

Taney's decision caused thousands of voters to turn Republican. In those days, such threats to a state's right to reject slavery, was a bitter issue.

The Republicans, with an election due in 1858, made Taney and his Southern political friends taste the dregs of their own poison, and by exposing to all the nation the pitiful plight of Dred Scott, succeeded in getting voters on their side.

It saved the day for the Republican Party and fanned the fires of the anti-slavery movement even higher.

If the old and reactionary chief justice from Maryland had resisted this opportunity to present an argument for the Southern 'white supremacy' clique, the case of Dred Scott might never have caused such a legal explosion.

When Taney wrote that colored people were inferior, he did not as was hoped, perpetuate the idea of slavery, but instead made the American Emancipation come that much sooner.

A humble worker named Dred Scott proved to be Dixie's nemesis.

Other Justices Disagreed

Although the history books do not make much ado about it, other justices of the Supreme Court did not agree with Chief Justice Taney's opinion.

Justice Curtis, for example, in his dissent argued that the case should be remanded for a new trial in the lower court because:

"That as free colored persons born within some of the States are citizens of those states, such persons are also citizens of the U.S.

"Every such citizen, residing in any State, has the right to sue and is liable to be sued in the federal courts, as a citizen of the state in which he resides.

"The plea to jurisdiction in this case shows no facts, except that the plaintiff was of African descent, and his ancestors were sold as slaves, and as these facts are not inconsistent with his citizenship of the U.S., the judgment of the Circuit Court overruling (his being a slave) was correct.

"I dissent, therefore, from that part in the opinion of the majority of the court, in which it is held that a person of Africa descent cannot be a citizen of the U.S."

Justice McLean in his dissent which likewise recommended a reversal of the lower court, said that:

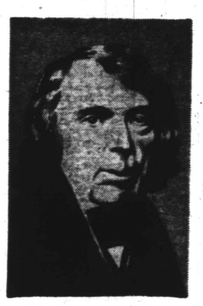
"The Supreme Court of Missouri refused to notice the Act of Congress or the Constitution of Illinois, under which Dred Scott, his wife and children claimed that they are entitled to freedom.

"If a State Court may do this, on a question involving the liberty of a human being, what protection do the laws afford? So far from this being a Missouri question, it is a question . . . where a right to freedom set up under the Act of Congress, and the decision being against this such right . ."

So spoke the two Justices who saw the huge errors of Chief Justice Taney's ruling. The history books, conveniently leave out their wiser arguments.

Dred Scott, soon after the Supreme Court decision, was released by his owner. He worked as a porter in Barnum's Hotel, St. Louis but died of tuberculosis in 1858.

He served as freedom's guinea pig.



Roger Brooke, Taney, Chief Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court in 1857 who in ruling against Dred Scott, said colored people had no place in "civilized government." This was the Maryland born judge's greatest mistake.

From an old painting of Dred Scott, who sued the U. S. for his freedom shortly before the Civil War. His case reached the Supreme Court where a Chief Justice who favored slavery ruled against him.

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WHO IS SHE?

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