Miss Powell reigns over Russell Hi Valentine Ball

LAWRENCEVILLE, Va. —Miss Mary Powell was chosen "Miss Sweetheart" of the recent pre-Valentine Ball, sponsored by the New Homemakers, at James Russell High School here.

Misses Barbara Short, Shirley Hopson and Mary Gomez were Miss Powell's attendants. The high school orchestra, directed by Z. E. Holmes, played the dance music.

H. Leslie Giles presented each attendant with a corsage of red roses. Miss Powell was given a corsage of red roses accented with hearts. The band dedicated "If I give My Heart to You" to the Sweetheart and her attendants.

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AMONG RECENT visitors at the school included G. X. Cowley and L. S. Bucher, state education officials from Richmond.

Mr. Cowley, assistant secretary of secondary education, met with the school administrative officers and observed the science and government classes.

Mr. Bucher, supervisor of music, made several suggestions to improve the music courses taught here during his visit.

Harlem Y debs go horseback riding

NEW YORK — The Dubs 'n Debs of the Harlem Branch YWCA met early Saturday morning to go horseback riding. Those who participated included:

Misses Eleanor Burke, Evelyn Rawles, Eleanor Huggins, Ruth Collins, Barbara Poinsett, Mary Jones and Ruby Telcon.

Also Jack Miller, Harold Jervey, Melvin Frazier, James Williams, William Rowe, Chris Gowan, Rufus Myers, Winston Brown, Curtis Reed, Albert Curley, Raymond Collins, Lawrence Taylor, Staff advisors included Mr. and Mrs. Henry Tanniar and Mrs. Elmyria S. Hull.

The basketball team, the Y-Debs, is having a grand season. "D.C." Reed is captain. Fred Robinson is club president.

Calypso king performs for Princess Meg

PORT of SPAIN, Trinidad — Vernon J. Robert, Calypso composer known as the "King of the Calypsos," was royally honored when he gave a command Performance before Her Royal Majesty, Princess Margaret of Great Britain in the governor's palace during her recent visit here.

Robert first attracted the attention of the princess whe she heard him singing in a preview of the carnival, which included the folklore of the island.

Two days later she asked that he give a repeat performance in the governor's palace. Her Majesty was pleasantly surprised when he sang a song which he had written especially for her, entitled:

"Welcome to Princess Margaret."

With this song he permanently established himself as a royal favorite. The troubador sang several verses of his ballad.

2 southern women praise the NAACP

NEW YORK (ANP) — Two prominent southern white women recently praised the work of the NAACP. Expressing their views in recent publications, the women, Miss Lillian Smith and Mrs. Sarah Boyle, came out for integration.

Miss Smith of Georgia, in her new book, "Now is the Time," said that "the entire work of the legal committee of the NAACP will go down in history as a superb example of the American way of correcting wrongs in a spirit of reason and goodwill."

Miss Smith is also the author of "Strange Fruit," a novel with a colored theme. Meanwhile, Mrs. Boyle, writing in the Saturday Evening Post of Feb. 19, supports her article and its title, "Southerners Will Like Integration."

LAS VEGAS SMASH!—Wild Bill Davis today is the owner of one of the proudest achievements in the annals of entertainment. The verstile star and his trio have been signed to an unprecedented two-year contract to appear at the plush Moulin Rouge in Las Vegas, Nevada. Money involved is said to reach well up in the five-figure bracket.

Theatrical Whirl

Dot Donegan Josh White Harry Belafonte Annisteen Allen

Televiewers who held their breath as **Dorothy** and **Gwendolyn Harris**, the Bennett College twins, built up their fortune by $1350 on last Saturday night's "Two for the Money" video show, might well have breathed easier had they known something of their background. . . . Natives of Greensboro, N. C., the twins were members of the National Honor Society and the Crown and Scepter Honor Society while in high school. . . . Although identical and, as they told Shriner during the pre-quiz interview, "are sometimes mixed up by our own father," the **Misses Harris** also boast individualism to a considerable degree. . . . **Dorothy** likes dramatic work as an extra-curricular interest, while **Gwendolyn** is inclined toward modern and ballet dancing. . . . **Dorothy** is majoring in elementary education and plans to teach. . . . **Gwendolyn's** field is Sociology . . . **Gwen** is the more conservative and retiring of the two. . . . **Dot** is the more outgoing and, according to intimates, "loves to talk" . . . When these differences are brought out, the Bennett College public relations office tells us, **Dorothy** pertly suggests: "We have different tastes in young men, too."

Joyce Bryant, hoping to enlarge the opening in her throat, and thereby enrichen her voice, has a throat operation scheduled at a Gotham hospital. . . . Roy Hamilton got the kind of chance for which singers are constantly hoping, when he appeared on Friday night's "Strike It Rich" TV program as guest star. . . . . Roy used the spot to plug his new recording, "If Each One Will Teach One". . . . . worked in nicely with the Brotherhood Week theme. . . . . Annisteen Allen's newest, "Fujiyama Mama," is a catchy thing, with its clever lyrics and Oriental sound gimmicks in the background. . . . The Whirl's a pushover for background, anyway. . . . "Medic," the highly entertaining television feature, has reportedly bought a "Negro Doctor" segment to insert into one of its early slots to depict the work of the colored physician and surgeon. . . . And isn't it great that, judging from the "Dragnet" series, Los Angeles police department never has any trouble with colored people?

But Jack Webb, who is the guardian angel of the whodunnit feature, has signed **Ella Fitzgerald** to a role in the forthcoming production by his outfit. . . , its to be called "Pete Kelly's Blues". . . . The film, "Seven Angry Men," depicting the trials and tribulations, plus the unparalleled heroism of abolitionist John Brown, makes its world premier on March 30, at Osawatomie, Kansas. . . . that was where he was engaged in his first major battle on behalf of freedom. . . . They say **Billy Williams**, the quartet man, has erected a gold name plate on the front of his newly-purchased country home in New Jersey.

Note to readers of the Whirl: There are hundreds of persons seeking home addresses of show business personalities every week. . . . for obvious reasons, the entertainers request that their addresses and phone numbers not be given out promiscuously. . . . To the Hartsville, S. C., reader who asks where and how she can get a picture of the late Johnny Ace, the column suggests that she contact the Duke Record Co., 2809 Decatur St., Houston, Texas. . . . Speaking of Johnny Ace, his death has figured in the rapid climb of Varetta Dillard over the past month. . . . Her recording of a number called "Johnny Is Gone," dedicated to the deceased tunesmith, has caught on in the Southwest where Ace was best known, and is now well up on the-most-played-in-juke-box listings.

A three-year contract calling for at least one starring film a year, has been tendered **Dorothy Dandridge** by 20th Century-Fox. . . . it's the first time a colored artist has ever been signed to a long-term pact as a star . . . Others, like **Lena Horne's** with Paramount, and **James Edwards'** with MGM, were one-picture-at-a-time deals. . . . **Dotty**, incidentally, is winding up her first night club engagement since her "Carmen Jones" score. . . . at Denver's (Colo.) Park Lane Hotel. . . . Billboard, the trade sheet, reminds that at this time ten years ago the top tune was "Rum and Coca Cola," in case you're interested. . . . five years ago, BB continues, it was "Chattanooga Shoeshine Boy."

Vivacious Vivian Cervantes is doing the fill-in for lovely Damita Jo in front of Steve Gibson's Red Caps. . . . reason: Damita Jo, who by the way is Steve's frau, is infanticipating. . . . The intimate Black Orchid Room (Chicago) is getting a taste of Josh White, and liking it. . . . Josh is handing up a personalized medley that ranges from "Frankie and Johnnie" through "Molly Malone" to "Strange Fruit," and back to "Outskirts of Town". . . . Touching all the bases and going to the other extreme, the Whirl lifts the following from Harlemite Major Robinson's scribblings. . . . A ladies auxiliary hired dancer Beverly Douglas to entertain at their annual benefit show. . . . but the gals "chickened out" when they took a sample look at Bev's shake routine. . . . "too, too sexy" they shuddered.

Roy Eldrige and his cohorts opened what promises to be a lively engagement at Zardi's in Los Angeles. . . . **Roy's** trumpet has a way of stepping up the tempo wherever it blows. . . . Those Dorothys have a way with 'em. . . . **Dot Donegan** answers **Dot Dandridge's** contract-signing feat with one of her own. . . . **La Donegan**, apprised of **La Dandridge's** inking by Darryl F. Zanuck (for 20th-Fox), let it be known she recently affixed her signature to a 10-year deal with Gotham's swank Embers Club. . . . under its terms, **Miss Donegan** does a minimum of 24 weeks a year at the spot, with the club expressing a preference that it be on the basis of four bookings annually, with each being a stand of six weeks. . . . or more.

Sister Rosetta Tharpe is rocking the Village Vanguard. . . . British Broadcasting Company is trying like mad to woo **Lionel Hampton** and his aggregation—SAM LACY.

Sigmas meet in Lynchburg

LYNCHBURG, Va. — The Beta Psi Chapter of the Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority was guest of Soror Arlene W. Clinkscale Saturday night at its regular meeting. Basileus Lula H. Stewart presided.

Soror Ollie C. Henry, chairman of the card tournament, reported plans had been completed for the tournament to be held on March 28, at the YWCA on Monroe Street.

Anti-Basileus Elizabeth Cobbins, gave a report on the activities of the recently organized Aurora Club. Other reports were given by Sorors Ethel W. Paige and Mary M. Pullen.

• • •

VISITING SORORS present were Mable L. Raulhoc, members of the Alpha Beta Sigma chapter in Portsmouth; Lula Thompson and Dorothy L. Ghee, members of Alpha Zeta chapter in Pettersburg.

Also present was Aurora Doris Fleming of Danville and Denis C. Clinkscale.

Present were: Sorors Lula H. Stewart, Delphia M. Slaughter, Mary M. Pullen, Elizabeth Cobbins, Ethel W. Paige, Ruth T. Woody, Ruby M. Herdon, Luella D. Jones, Hermoine Smith, Ollie C. Henry, Dorothy J. Meade, Mary G. Allen, Lessie E. Carter, and Naomi S. Mason.

Hazel Scott booked

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. —The new auditorium at the Fayetteville State Teachers College will be the scene of an extraordinary musical performance when on March 18, **Hazel** Scott, pianist, appears in concert.

A Lucky Photo worth $5 to the person whose head is encircled is in this and every edition of the Baltimore AFRO-AMERICAN. Look for it.

Tuskegee Choir to open UNCF air slate

NEW YORK (ANP) — Tuskegee Institute's choir will be heard Mar. 20 over the ABC radio network in a special program devoted to the United Negro College Fund convocation scheduled for New York on that date.

The program is one in a regular weekly series which showcases the choral groups of the 31 UNCF member schools.

Also to be heard during March will be the choirs of Texas College of Tyler, Tex., March 6; Huston - Tillotson college of Austin, March 13, and Wiley college of Marshall, Texas on March 27.

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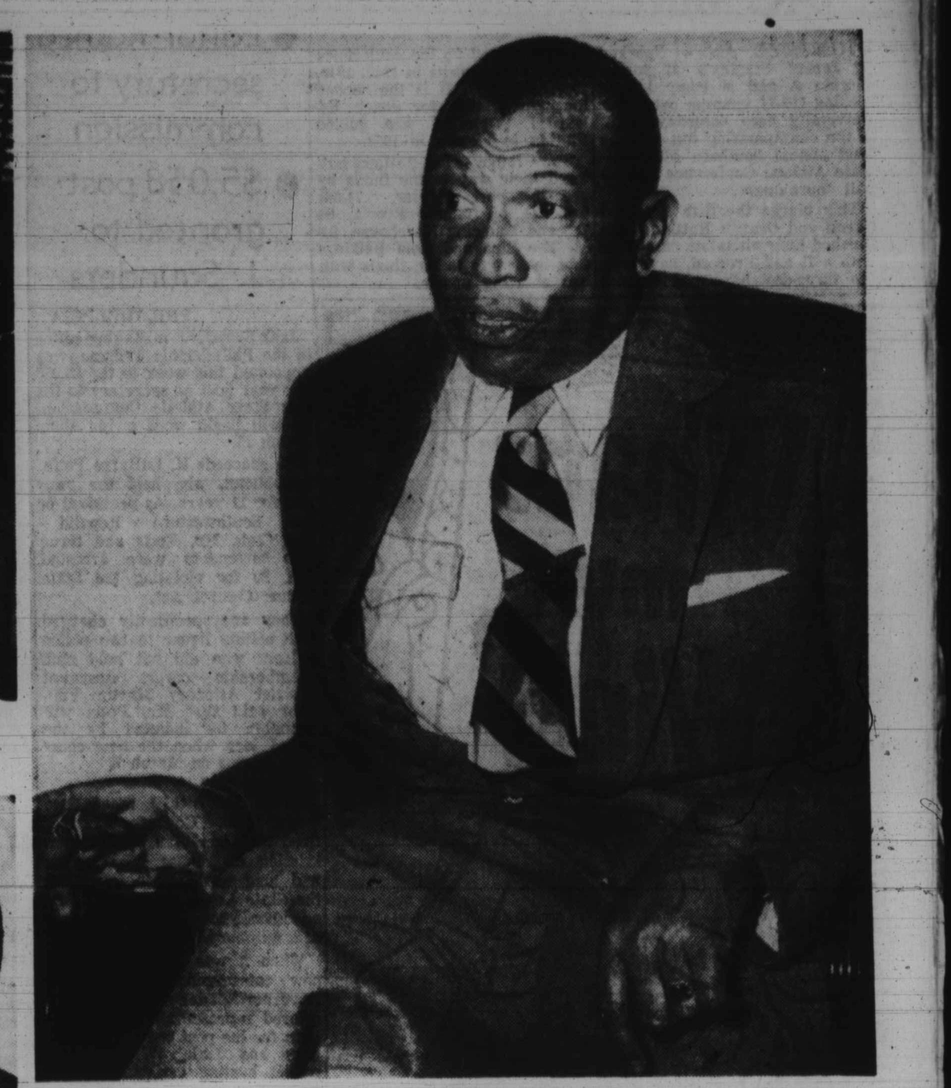
Slurred Minority Firemen Launch Counterattack

DEFEND THEMSELVES—About 60 colored firemen attended a press conference arranged by Rep. Adam C. Powell (Dem., N.Y.) in the House Office Building to refute charges made against them by white fire department officials in hearings before the Davis subcommittee.

PRODUCES FIREMEN'S MANUAL—Sgt. H. Y. Dowling of Engine No. 27 produced the firemen's manual at the press conference which contained a clause that members of the fire department while in uniform should refrain from the use of "harsh and abusive language." Congressman Powell, after hearing the sergeant's statement, commented that under the reported clause the District commissioners could punish Battalion Chief Elmer F. Stein for using the derogatory term "n - - - - r" in testimoney before the Davis Committee.

DENIED REPORT—Three firemen denied at the press conference that they sought transfers from a previously all-white unit to an all-colored unit. They were, from left, privates: Samuel Jefferson, Paul Galloway and Ivan Elmore.



COUNTER-ATTACK — Capt. Joseph Briscoe of Engine No. 4 flatly refuted charges of white fire department officials that colored firemen displayed cowardice at big fires. Said Captain Briscoe: "In my 34 years experience as a firemen I have never seen a member of the department, colored or white, display cowardice."

Bare integration plan's weaknesses

60 firemen tell newsmen inside of department issue

By AL SWEENEY

WASHINGTON

The 112 colored members of the fire department, led by Capt. Joseph Briscoe of Engine No. 4, are not going to take lying down the slurs, innuendos and allegations hurled in their direction by white bigots.

In fact, last Wednesday, in Hearing Room 1324 in the Old House, at a press conference called by Rep. Adam C. Powell (Dem., N.Y.) about 60 colored firemen stood on their feet to be counted as favoring "complete integration" in the department.

The 60 firemen attending the meeting comprised nearly every colored fire fighter who was off duty.

• • •

CONGRESSMAN Powell called the conference to refute testimony that had been given before the House District Subcommittee of Rep. James C. Davis (Dem., Ga.).

The testimony was given during two hearings on a bill sponsored by Congressman Davis which seeks to "dis-integrate the fire department."

During the hearings before Congressman Davis, only white officials of the fire department who are opposed to integration, have been heard.

• • •

ALTHOUGH, COLORED firemen have sought to testify before the committee, their requests had been ignored.

Battalion Chief Elmer F. Stein stirred up resentment against the pro-segregationists cause by using the term "n--r" while testifying.

Battalion Chief Paul Grisso testified that he "didn't trust colored firemen."

He stated that he had "push colored firemen into a fire" on occasions.

• • •

HE ALSO TOLD the Davis subcommittee that "white firemen had to take the hoses from the colored firemen" because of their fear.

Chief Grisso stated that colored firemen were being "babied and coddled" by the officials of the fire department.

In an attempt to illustrate his point, he told of filing charges against a Pvt. Paul Lipscomb of Truck 15.

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THE BATTALION chief said that Private Lipscomb had reported late for work on six different times.

When pressed for the period of time the tardiness covered, he replied:

"Over about four or five years."

• • •

QUERIED HOW late the fireman reported, Chief Grisso answered:

"I don't have the record, but they were from five minutes to an hour."

The battalion chief said that Private Lipscomb was accused of insubordination to Capt. Z. O. Law, the commanding officer of Engine No. 15.

• • •

THE "INSUBORDINATION" grew out of Private Lipscombe's complaint about being detailed to work in the furnace room and complaining that his bed was not made by other men in the company.

Chief Grisso said that the private also was wrong in complaining to Captain Law about the markings that was put on the bed, linens and drinking cups of the company.

• • •

CAPT. GEORGE Tacey, president of the fire fighters local 26, told the Davis subcommittee that two colored firemen asked transfers from integrated units to all-white units.

With this as the background, Congressman Powell called upon the colored firemen to refute the preceding testimony point by point.

• • •

CAPTAIN BRISCOE, a veteran of the department, said flatly:

"In my 34 years in the department, I have never seen a fireman, white or colored, display cowardice at any fire."

The captain went to observe that most of the discontent in the department among both white and colored firemen seemed to stem from a change in the rating system of firemen.

The change, Captan Briscoe said, was instituted about the same time that integration order was issued.

He said under the new system, battalion chiefs are responsible for handing out the efficiency ratings of the firemen.

• • •

UNDER THE OLD plan, he explained, the captains of the various companies gave efficiency ratings.

"You can understand how the men feel about this system. The captains live with the men and know them more intimately than a battalion chief, who sees them occasionally," Captain Briscoe commented.

As for integration, Captain Briscoe said that he was for it.

He went on to explain that he came up in a segregated engine company, so his knowledge about the operation of a fire department was limited.

• • •

"UNDER INTEGRATION, our men can participate in the rotating plan and learn about the operation of a truck company, the rescue squad, communications, and the fire boat."

Captain Briscoe told the conference that white firemen are trained under the rotating plan.

• • •

SGT. H. Y. DOWLING of Engine No. 27, a 12-year veteran, told newsmen that there was an order issued by officials in the department which told the captains of the various units that no white private should be detailed to a colored unit.

Congressman Powell interceded to say whether or not this order could be interpreted as one designed to keep white firemen from being under the command of colored officers.

Sergeant Dowling replied that "must have been the intent of the order."

Sergeant Dowling exposed an apparent system of "brainwashing" the colored rookie firemen.

He explained that new men are assigned to previously all-white units. At the time of their assignment, if there is a colored fireman in the unit, the older man is detailed to an all-colored unit.

The sergeant pointed out that each unit is required to have five men on duty at all times and if two colored men were assigned at the same time they could probably break down the frigid attitude of the white men.

• • •

HOWEVER, under the "brainashing," the rookie fireman who is young, is apt to quit the job before enduring the "silent" treatment and abuse of the whites.

Sergeant Dowling said that if the department is completely integrated by breaking up all white and all colored units, the problem could be eliminated.

• • •

PVTS. IVAN R. ELMORE and Paul Galloway, who are assigned to Engine No. 5 in Georgetown, told the conference that they did not seek transfers because they to be assigned to all-colored units.

They said that they sought transfers because they wanted to be nearer home. They reside in northeast, while the fire house is located across town.

• • •

PVT. SAMUEL W. Jefferson of Engine No. 24, a previously white unit, said he sought a transfer long before the integration order.

The fireman asserted that he applied for a transfer to the fireboat because he had served as a petty officer wanter tender, third class, while in the Coast Guard.

• • •

CAPTAIN BRISCOE forcefully brought out that one of the big fears in the fire department among the white firemen of integration is that they would have to serve under colored officers.

He related that in 1947, former Fire Chief Clement Murphy installed a rotating plan of having captains serving as battalion chiefs.

Captain Briscoe, under the plan, served as battalion, chief for a period.

The plan was abandoned after a vigorous protest was waged by the fire fighters union, which is against integration.

• • •

CONGRESSMAN POWELL, in summary of the press conference, stated that he was making the following recommendations to Commissioner Spencer:

1-That integration of the fire department be accomplished both horizontally and vertically:

2-That the commissioners take positive action to reprimand Chief Stein;

3-That the commissioners issue a public statement stating that they do not condone statements made by Chief Stein and Chief Grisson which reflected on the courage of the colored firemen.

IN ADDITION, Congressman Powell said he was going to talk with George Meany, president of the American Federation of Labor, to discuss the racial policies of the D.C. fire fighters local.

Rep. Klein calls remark 'disgraceful'

- Says hearing witness ought to be cited
- Fire Chief justifies integration

WASHINGTON

Rep. Arthur Klein (Dem., N. Y.) termed the testimony of a fireman before a House Subcommittee, Wednesday, the most disgraceful statement since Hitler was in power.

The criticism was levelled at Pvt. E. E. Propst, a fireman, who testified in favor of a measure to segregate the firemen in the District.

Hearings on the bill are held by Rep. James C. Davis (Dem., Ga.).

Congressman Klein said that Private Propst "ought to be cited by the department."

"I don't believe a single word of your statement," Rep. Klein told Propst, aide to the chief of the First Battalion.

• • •

PROPST HAD made charges of insubordination, tardiness, cowardice and failure to pay debts against colored firemen, charges which he said he secured "from the official records of the department."

Congressman Charles C. Diggs (Dem., Mich.), a visitor at the hearing, told the AFRO afterwards:

"I think it's the most ridiculous thing I have ever witnessed," when asked his opinion of the hearing.

"The conclusions they have drawn from the statistics they have are utterly ridiculous," continued the young Michigan solon.

However, a fire official later repudiated the fireman's remarks.

• • •

"IT IS MY opinion that the integration of personnel in the Firefighting Division of this Department is in the best interests of both the department and the taxpayer," Fire Chief Sutton said in a prepared statement.

"Did you have any of this so called integration when you entered the department?" Davis asked.

"Yessir," replied Chief Sutton, "we sure did. Engine 7, truck 10 and Engine 13 were integrated. They had white officers with colored men."

HE SAID there was the same similarity then as exists today, except in the dormitories.

"DID THEY eat with the firemen and sleep in the same beds with them?" asked Rep. Davis.

"I have seen them sit down and eat with them," Chief Sutton answered. "I would say they did."

• • •

"WERE THEY integrated then as now under the order of Aug. 30, 1954?" Rep. Davis asked.

"I would say yes," was the fire chief's reply.

• • •

DURING THE hearing there were 21 colored firemen present in the committee room, with several of them in civilian clothes.

That they wanted to speak up in their own behalf was evident when several of them asked the AFRO reporter afterwards how one went about "getting on that order so he can testify."

Chief Sutton told Congressman Davis that he had discussed integration of the fire department with the District Commissioners "as far back as Commissioner Donohue."

He was referring to former Commissioner F. Joseph Donohue, who in Oct. 1952, issued an order for integration of the department, only to be forced into rescinding it by pressure from Rep. Davis and Rep. John McMillan (Dem., S.C.), chairman of the House District Committee.

• • •

CONGRESSMAN DAVIS took notice of the issuing of last year's order after Congress had adjourned and asked Chief Sutton:

"Did the timing of this order have anything to do with the adjournment of Congress?"

"No sir," answered Chief Sutton, "I gave it (his report on integrating the department) to the commissioners around the first of August."

He then explained the system used in effecting the integration. He said there were 14 colored firemen whom he called "overstaffed," and that there were understaffed white fire companies which needed men.

• • •

HE SAID he took the 14 colored firemen and put them into the seven white companies which were understaffed.

"There was no way to utilize them (the colored firemen)," he said.

"I thought over this thing for two or three years," the fire chief said, "and I didn't have any other alternative."

• • •

HE SAID he had heard the vote of the white firemen was against integration, but that he had not been given anything in writing.

"It had been your position over the years that you were against integration, wasn't it?" asked Rep. Davis.

"Back in 1916 when I was appointed, they were integrated," was Chief Sutton's reply, adding that there were then seven colored firemen in the department in mixed companies.

"WAS IT on the same basis as now" he was asked.

"Yes," was the answer. "When I went into World War One in 1917 they were integrated. When I returned, Engine Co. 4 on Virginia Ave., SW, was there, all colored."

He said he thought the reason this segregated company was set up was that some colored firemen wanted to become officers.

• • •

CHIEF SUTTON said that when he was appointed as a private in Engine Co. 13 in 1916 or 1917 he was detailed to Truck Co. 3, which had a colored fireman, Gibson, who was the driver of the truck."

Gibson later became a captain in command of Engine Co. 4.

• • •

HE SAID he had personally rescinded orders given by company officers which put into effect conditions which showed discrimination against the new colored transferees.

One of these orders had to do with the moving of a television set out of the sitting room of Engine Co. 5 at 3412 Dent Pl., NW, and the other with marking of coffee cups at Engine Co. 27, 4201 Minnesota Ave., NE.

Just then Congressman Diggs walked in and took a seat with the committee. He began making notes as Chief Sutton talked.

• • •

ASKED BY REP. Klein if he had observed anything which tended to show lowered morale as a result of integration, Chief Sutton said:

"The only evidence of low morale would be in moving the TV set or marking the coffee cups."

He said he would immediately discipline any fireman who refused to carry out an order in a fire company.

The fire chief discussed previous reports dealing with transfer requests made by colored firemen, and said there had been eight such requests.

All of them, he pointed out, were based primarily on a desire of the firemen asking for transfer to get into a fire house nearer where they lived.

• • •

REGARDING AN insubordination report filed against one colored fireman, Chief Sutton said he had ordered a deputy fire chief to investigate and this deputy had done so and recommended that nothing be done about the charge.

Congressman Klein commended Chief Sutton on his statements when the fire chief had concluded reading his prepared statement.

Mr. Davis adjourned the hearing to reconvene at the pleasure of the chairman.

Auto speeds away after smashing into store window

As an officer fired two shots, a black sedan sped south on Pennsylvania Ave. and vanished as it turned west on Pitcher St., after crashing into a plate glass window in the 1800 block Pennsylvania Ave., early Friday morning.

Officer George Hanson said he was patrolling in the 1800 block Pennsylvania Ave. when he heard the sound of breaking glass. An investigation showed the car had smashed into the front end of a hardware store.

When the officer approached the car, the driver put the car in reverse and sped away as the officer fired two shots.

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