

# The Voice

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"Dedicated to the promotion of the cultural, social and spiritual life of a great people."

**Melvin L. Shakespeare**  
Publisher and Editor

Business Address 2225 B Street Phone 2-4085  
If No Answer Call 5-7508  
Ruble W. Shakespeare..... Advertising and Business Manager  
Dorothy Green..... Office Secretary  
Mrs. Joe Green..... Circulation Manager

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**EDITORIALS**

The views expressed in these columns necessarily, a reflection of the policy are those of the writer and not of The Voice.—Pub

## Employment in Skills Rises in So.

ATLANTA. (ANP). The employment of Negroes in skilled positions in the south has progressed in a "very satisfactory" manner, according to Harold O. DeWitt, industrial secretary of the Richmond (Va.) Urban league, currently serving as acting industrial relations director of the league's southern field division.

His report on a survey conducted by the Richmond branch and published in the May-June issue of "New South," monthly bulletin of the Southern Regional council, gives some rather illuminating facts about the upswing of Negro employment above the unskilled level.

The report shows that 6,000 Negroes are employed as municipal workers in 16 southern cities, that Negroes in general hold over 110 different job classifications above the unskilled level.

However, he says the survey shows that no one city has opened up as many as one-third of these classifications to qualified Negroes.

"Negroes are employed by municipalities in such clerical capacities as mimeograph operator, clerk-stenographer, and cashier; in such service occupation as fireman, policeman bailiff, and dog-catcher; in semi-skilled occupations as paver and equipment operators; in skilled positions as foreman, painter and bricklayer; and in professional fields as social worker, physician, nurse and municipal judge.

In a breakdown by degree of

skills, the following totals were amassed from the 16 cities surveyed; managerial-professions, 71; skilled, 43; semi-skilled, 269; service and unskilled, 5,590.

The city departments employing the largest numbers of Negroes were, public works, 2,628; public utilities, 1,143; and health, 1,096. The smallest number were in the finance department—two only.

A special survey of Negro firemen disclosed that six southern cities have a combined total of 69—a number which includes six captains and four lieutenants.

DeWitt summarized the results of the survey by saying: "The history of employment of Negroes in the jobs listed has been very satisfactory. In most cases, the type of Negro applicant who is available is superior to applicants who have been employed previously. In addition, they are available in greater numbers.

"With the labor shortages developing in many areas due to mobilization and defense expansion . . . the greatest source of untapped labor in the south and in many other areas is the huge number of Negro workers who are working at jobs below their highest skill, or who are unemployed because of the undemocratic hiring practices of the region."



by **JAMES C. OLSON**, Superintendent  
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Major J. W. Pearman, a prominent territorial pioneer, described two early Fourth of July celebrations in reminiscence of Nebraska City which he wrote for the old settlers association of Otoe County in 1873, and which are published in the Proceedings and Collections of the Nebraska State Historical Society for 1907.

The first took place in 1853, the year before Nebraska territory was created. Pearman was at old Fort Kearney (or what was left of it), and decided to try to attend an Independence Day celebration being held across the Missouri River in Sidney, Iowa. The river was in flood, a condition which somewhat complicated travel. But let Major Pearman tell it in his own words:

"On the 4th of July Lafayette Duncan, myself, and seven Otoe Indians started for the highlands of Iowa in canoes. We left the foot of Main street early in the morning expecting to reach Sidney, Iowa, by 10:30 A.M. in time to take part in the celebration of that place. We aimed to go through the heavy timber directly opposite the city, but after paddling our way for a few hours we found we could not get through on account of the driftwood afloat.

"We sent the Indians back, tied most of our clothing around our neck and started afoot for the Bluffs, a distance of about eight miles, at which place we arrived about dark, traveling in water from two to eight feet deep.

"We arrived at Sidney at 1:00 A. M. on the 5th to find the celebration all over and the people in bed."

The next year, Nebraska City

held a Fourth of July celebration of its own. As Major Pearman described the occasion:

"The 4th of July being near at hand, it was determined to have a grand old barbecue, and every one set to work doing what they could to make it a success. Arbors for eating, speaking, and dancing were erected near where the Seymour house now stands. Everybody was invited far and near. There were at least one thousand persons present, Atchison county, Missouri, and Fremont county, Iowa, furnishing most of the white people, while our own locality furnished many whites and a host of Indians. Dancing and eating commenced about one o'clock of the 4th and wound up by a 'big injun' dance on the evening of the 6th. And be it said to the credit of the earlier settler of Otoe county, not a drunken man was

seen nor were there any disturbances of any kind during this three days' barbecuing."

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