

TUGALOO

a novel by

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Copy # 2, Part VI.

A NEW FORD AND AN OLD TABLE

Sam admitted he had one, but he hadn't planned to. That same year, 1958, Sammy's oldest sister, Laura, graduated from the Business School at Fisk University. Sam, Bernice, Jacklyn and Lucy drove up to Nashville to see Laura get her diploma. Then they all drove home together. Sam was driving a 1956 blue Ford sedan that he got in a famous trade a couple years earlier.

Emjay, eyesight failing in 1948, had given the old 1936 Ford V-8 to Sam. It was in perfect condition and Sam kept it that way. He expected he would always have it.

But one day in 1956 a strange, well-dressed, white man drove up to the farm in a big, chauffeur-driven, black car. This was Gregory Felton, a famous opera singer. Introducing himself to Sam, he said that he was a collector of automobiles. He was a native of Alabama with an estate in New York and a winter place south of Fairhope where he had almost every model Ford from 1908 on, but he needed a 1936 V-8 in fine condition and he had heard in Montgomery that Sam Johnson of Tugaloo had one.

collection. When he saw one he wanted to buy it.

Finally, Mr. Felton offered a thousand dollars for the car. Sam accepted at once. Mr. Felton also agreed to have a good man who had cleaned up the old car paint it and then return it to the property of Mr. Herbert J. Hirsch, owner of the car.

Sam admitted he had one, but he hadn't planned to part with it, especially because it had been a gift from a good, old friend and relative. He showed the car to Mr. Felton. It was exactly what the collector was looking for.

Mr. Felton made no bones about it. "I've been looking all over the country for this model. I've seen quite a few but they're all in such bad shape they would have to be completely rebuilt."

They talked a while, then Mr. Felton offered to trade a brand, new Ford sedan for the old car.

Sam hesitated.

Mr. Felton said, "You know, these cars which I have collected will always be carefully maintained and sheltered and when I die, the

The giddy girl tried driving the new car. She quickly drove down a back street and tried parking, backing back and forward in a used lot. It stalled several times beautifully.

This had all taken a couple hours. Then he went back to Woolworth's to get the ladies. They were on the curb looking for the old 1936 car.

collection will go to the state museum in Montgomery."

Finally, Mr. Felton offered a thousand dollars and the new Ford. Sam accepted at last. Mr. Felton also agreed to have a small metal plaque attached to the old car saying, "This car was originally the property of Mr. Mordecai Johnson Trowbridge, owner of Tugaloo Plantation, Tugaloo, Alabama."

That's how Sam got another memorial for his good old friend Emjay. Saying nothing about the trade to anyone, Sam arranged to meet Mr. Felton at the Selma Ford Agency next day. That night he asked Bernice and his mother Sadie to drive into Selma with him in the morning. He would tend to some business and they could do some shopping.

In the morning, he let the ladies out at Woolworth's, then went to the Ford Agency. Mr. Felton was there, already excited to be getting the car he had looked for for so long. Mr. Felton told Sam to pick out a car from the new models on the lot. Sam quickly picked out a gleaming dark-blue sedan.

Then they went to see Mr. Brownlow at the First Southern Bank. There was no trouble about Mr. Felton's checks since he was a famous singer and in town for a Community Concert. Mr. Felton wrote a check to pay for the new Ford and another \$1000. check for Sam. They exchanged ownership papers and car keys, then shaking hands, they parted.

Sam gingerly tried driving the new car. He took it down a quiet back street and tried parking, moving back and forward to get used to it. It smelled good and drove beautifully.

This had all taken a couple hours. Then he went back to Woolworth's to get the ladies. They were at the curb looking for the old 1936 car.

He parked next to them and honked. Imagine their surprise when he said this was their new car! They thought he stole or borrowed it. But they got in, and he took them to the appliance store. He told them they should go in and each buy a new refrigerator and a new washing machine!

Had he robbed a bank? They couldn't believe what was happening! Then he told them the story of Mr. Felton. At last they believed him though it didn't sound like the reality of poverty they had known most of their lives.

So they got the new appliances and life thenceforth would be easier and pleasanter at Tugaloo.

That memorable evening, Fortney, Sadie, Sammy and Jonelle came over for supper. The family had been eating from the kitchen table for two weeks while John had taken the big old oak dining table (with three leaves,) out to the shed to re-finish it. This was the legendary ante-bellum table rescued from Tugaloo House at the time of the fire in 1891. Fortney's grandmother, Lucille, who lived until 1920 and was their only link with the distant past, many times had told her grandchildren the story of the great, old table.

In about 1850 when she was a small girl, there had been a violent electric storm. The wind banged the shutters on the big house, then it was dark at mid-day. Great black clouds raced by. There were thunderclaps, streaks of lightning. Suddenly, a great crash--she thought her ears would burst, then the odor of burning wood.

Just as suddenly, the storm was past but they found that lightning had split a great ~~white~~ oak that grew near the mansion.

Lucille could still remember how upset old Master Mordecai had been when he saw the ruin of the great oak.

He told them he had sat with Chief Tugaloo under that tree in 1816. This had been a "pow-wow" tree for local Indians for many years. It was the largest tree in the vicinity, standing majestically on a rise at the edge of a clearing.

Here Tugaloo had agreed to sell the plantation lands to Mordecai, and Mordecai had chosen the clearing for the site of the plantation house. They had always called the tree the "Tugaloo Oak," or the "Pow-Wow Oak."

Mordecai, with tears on his cheeks, surveying the wreck of the historic tree had said, "We must save what we can!"

He had Lucille's great-uncle Maximus and some of the blacks cut the tree trunk length-wise into planks and timbers which were then stored in the barn to dry. In 1858, Maximus, master carpenter and cabinet-maker, had made the big table from this oak.

At Unterdorf's Emporium, Martha and Mordecai had seen a fine dining table from Pennsylvania which could be expanded with three detachable leaves to accomodate more guests.

Maximus copied this design, so the new table had six heavy, turned legs and a sliding mechanism to permit

insertion of the polished oak leaves. The finished, solid-oak table was so weighty that it was moved only with difficulty by at least four people. The family had found it simpler to leave the table extended rather than risk damaging the floor by removing the leaves. So it had graced the dining room at Tugaloo House until the night of the fire when, in hurried panic, it was rescued in its entirety, carried out through the French doors across the veranda and set down in the middle of the rose garden. Later, it was moved to the nearby overseer's house where they took refuge. So it would fit in a smaller room, the three leaves were removed and stored in the attic.

In 1900 Miss Jane died, leaving the table and other belongings to Lucille who continued to live in the old overseer's house until she died. After 1920, the table stayed there gathering dust. Occasionally farm families would live there and the table was not well-treated.

In the 1940's, Sam and Bernice, their family growing, brought the big table over to their own house. They supposed it belonged to Fortney now but he told them to take it. To lighten the burden, Sam removed the two middle legs and stored them in his barn. Some of the itinerant farm families had tacked worn oil-cloth over the top of the table and Bernice simply added a new layer.

The table was back in their dining room. Set on the table were some silver candlesticks that Lucille had caught up in the same auction of Antiques.

The children had been gathered for supper at the re-united table.

In 1956, when the table was near a century old, young John recognized what a real gem they had. The others thought of it as just a big table, solid and useful. John thought of it as a work of art. When he asked where the missing parts were, Sam produced the two center legs, then someone remembered seeing the old leaves in the overseer's attic.

Soon John was sanding and re-finishing the re-united table--removing the blemishes of a century of adversity. Repeatedly he waxed and buffed it. This was the kind of work he loved to do.

At last, gleaming with its new satiny finish, its beautiful grain showing once more as in the great days at the old mansion, the children worked hard and stayed out of trouble until the parents cautioned him to do.

So they had much to be thankful for that day. Sam stood by the table, his gray eyes looking around so his audience, happy family, Joyce and Lucy were passing good conversation and the dinner from the new refrigerator. Sam couldn't complain of anything with that meat from ear to ear. This had indeed been a good day for the Tugaloos Johnsons!

the table was back in their dining room. Also on the table were several silver candlesticks that Lucille had caught up in the fiery disaster of long ago.

Then while the big family gathered for supper at the rejuvenated table, they exploded with laughter when they heard for the first time the story of the new car.

Sammy slapped his father on the back several times over saying, "My old man, Wow! he's turning into a real horse-trader in his old age!!" John and the others shouted and laughed, looking admiringly at the stocky, work-worn figure at the head of the table. They were so proud of this simple, straight-forward man, their dad! And they knew Sam had not deceived or tricked anyone to get the new car. Fortune had merely smiled on them today.

In truth, Sam was not a good trader, not one for driving hard bargains. It was his simple reluctance to part with Emjay's old car that had won the exchange they were now celebrating.

Sam was strictly honest and the farm was in fairly good condition now because he paid all the bills, worked hard and stayed out of debt as Emjay had always cautioned him to do.

So they had much to be thankful for that day. Sam thought about it all, his gray eyes looking around at his handsome, happy family. Now Bernice and Lucy were serving garden strawberries and ice cream from the new refrigerator. Sam couldn't suppress an enormous wide grin that went from ear to ear. This had indeed been a good day for the Tugaloo Johnsons!

TUGALOO EXPANDS

In 1962 the County Board of Education announced that more of the old Tugaloo land would be sold at auction to raise money for new black schools. Matching funds were available from the state and federal governments.

Sammy was interested, especially in 240 acres of prime bottom land just east of their farms. This was former cotton land that they had leased from Emjay's estate for the county since Emjay's death. They had planted much of it to hay and pasture. They didn't think anyone else would want the land, but they couldn't be sure. It had no buildings or improvements aside from farm access roads and some old sheds.

They were in good financial shape since Sam owed only \$2000. on his mortgages. They talked with old Mr. Brownlow, the banker. The education fund that Emjay had left to Sam had now grown with interest to \$123,000. even though Annie and Frannie were both at Tuskegee now studying nursing. They both had part-time jobs like the other children had done in college, and it was costing far less to educate them all than Emjay had thought.

Sam and Sammy decided to pay the \$2000. mortgage immediately. Then they would own outright all their land with no encumbrances. This made Sam feel good.

Next they decided to bid \$24,000. for the county land. That would be \$100. an acre. Mr. Brownlow thought no one would bid over \$80. an acre and Sammy was especially anxious to get it. Sam felt they already had enough land but Sammy said, "No, they had to expand, and besides, this was part of Tugaloo Plantation and it should

be theirs!"

Later, when the bids were opened at the Selma Courthouse, there were four bids on that 240 acres but Sam's bid was the highest. The Tugaloo Johnsons had acquired another piece of their old plantation. Sam withdrew \$24,000. from the bank and paid cash for the land. Some of the white people in town wondered where a black farmer could get that much cash, but Mr. Brownlow said nothing and it remained the Johnsons' secret. Now they had 660 acres all paid for, and even the whites were calling the Johnson farm "Tugaloo Plantation."

Nobody could deny anymore that the main part of historic Tugaloo belonged to the black Johnsons and that they were an enterprising, prosperous family becoming well-known in the county.

JOHN COMES HOME

Young John had come home from Tuskegee in 1960. He had learned carpentry and cabinetry, for which he had a natural aptitude. He had studied some architecture but preferred to be working with his hands. For a few months he lived in the old Amos Green farmhouse making some meals on the big Eureka stove. But he usually had the evening meal with the family.

He was painting and restoring the house. He had an old pickup truck in which he would haul lumber and gallons of paint from Selma. They all thought if the old house were repaired, they could get a good rent for it. This would increase the income of the plantation, so Sam was paying for the material.

It was going to be a very pleasant place since the young forest was pushing up to the sky. Some of the pines were already six or eight feet high and growing rapidly.

John had removed, then re-built the sagging verandah on a new foundation. With new roof, new floor, new gingerbread, and all scraped and newly-painted, the verandah was now a glory to behold. One could sit there and look past the old magnolia trees in the yard to the new pine forest now covering the gentle hillsides. The ugly scars of erosion gullies were disappearing as Sammy had said they would.

MEET ROOSEVELT GARNER CALHOUN

Inside the old Green house John was systematically cleaning up, repairing, painting, sanding floors etc. with the help of family members who could **spare** the time. John had a friend named Roosevelt Garner Calhoun, a classmate from Tuskegee, who now lived in Selma where he was an agricultural extension agent for the government. Roosevelt would often come out for a day or a weekend to help John.

Roosevelt was from up north near Guntersville and the Tennessee River. He was lonely, not knowing many people in Selma. Then it became apparent that he spent so much time at the Johnsons' not just for his friendship with John, but because he found Laura very attractive. Laura was making a better salary in a Selma business office than anyone in the family had ever made. She was living at home, driving to and from Selma each day in a little 1951 Chevrolet. Her company sold agricultural machines. The manager had hired her two years earlier when she first returned from Fisk. He never had blacks in the office before and wasn't sure she could handle the job, but she had her Fisk diploma. She turned on her charm and could be as convincing as her brother Sammy. So the manager decided to give her a trial, since she was better qualified than any of the other

applicants.

It wasn't long before she was running the whole office and keeping the records. The manager was so pleased he had almost doubled her salary.

Roosevelt met her at the office one day and soon found she was a sister of his classmate John Johnson. So, whenever Laura was home, Roosevelt would appear mysteriously. And when Laura was working, Roosevelt seemed to have great interest in agricultural machines!

At first Laura wouldn't go out with Roosevelt. He was always asking her to go to dances and movies. But she was thinking of a boy she had known at Fisk, the son of a Nashville doctor. She hoped that boy, Roberson Mitchell III., would write or call. But apparently Roberson forgot about her when she left Nashville.

So now here was Roosevelt, a big, strapping, healthy black man, an athlete at Tuskegee, and he began looking better to her. She suspected correctly that he wasn't as smart as she was. But he was even-tempered, generous, a hard-worker, and he convinced her that he loved her desperately and would die for her. So finally in the autumn of 1960, Roosevelt and Laura were married and they became the first tenants of the restored Green Farmhouse.

Roosevelt and John had electricity run to the house for the first time, and then they installed an electric pump and water pipes to the kitchen and new bathroom. There was also a new septic tank for the drains.

The old Green Farmhouse had taken on a new lease of life. Laura loved to sit in the living room and watch the afternoon sun filtered

through moving magnolia leaves and then through the stained glass, as it glanced off her polished oak floors. The changes John had made in the old house were hard to believe.

They didn't have much furniture so they lived mostly in two or three rooms. John still kept one of the bedrooms while he was busy re-modelling an old shed into a wood-working shop with Spartan quarters for himself.

A NEW GENERATION

Within a year, both Jonelle and Laura had their first babies-- two boys.

Sammy and Jonelle named their little son Mordecai Trowbridge Johnson and because he was so healthy and always hungry, crying for food, Sammy said, "We should call him 'M. T.' for his initials and because his stomach is always empty!" The name stuck and he became little "Empty" Johnson.

Laura's baby became Roosevelt Kennedy Calhoun, reflecting family presidential preferences, but they called him "Kennedy," so he wouldn't be confused with his father. When Kennedy was a few months old, Laura returned to work since her boss said he couldn't get along without her. She and Roosevelt would leave Kennedy with Jonelle or Bernice each morning and drive into Selma to their jobs. Grandmas Sadie and Dora were both still living and they loved to baby-sit but Laura didn't want to impose on them since they were quite old.

ANNIE AND FRANNIE

At Sam's house only Jacklyn and Lucy were still home. Annie and Frannie would finish their nursing courses at Tuskegee in three years.

They both wanted to go to Meharry Medical School in Nashville for another four years to become medical doctors. Both had fine grade records and had paid a good part of their expenses with part-time jobs and scholarships.

Sam and Bernice had talked it over with Sammy, Laura and John and they all wanted to support the girls right through medical school if the school admitted them. Sam was pleased to see how Emjay's education fund was still over \$100,000 despite the withdrawals for land purchase and schooling. He thought it was magic how the interest would keep building the fund back up after they used part of it. This kind of magic, usually beyond the ken of the poor, is known and loved by the wealthy in the capitalist system. Happy he, who learns to live on the interest of his interest!

BROILERS

Tugaloo Plantation was quite prosperous once more. Many of Sammy's new ideas were in operation. They had mastered the tricky business of growing great

numbers of chickens for the broiler market.

Just after Sammy's family conference in 1958, they had built the first of the long, narrow chicken houses on a slope near Sammy's house. Now they had six with a capacity of 60,000 chickens. They had installed automatic feeding systems so that when someone pushed the right button, moving chains would pull the feed out of bins along low troughs where all the chickens could eat.

Sammy and Jonelle soon learned to keep them well-fed, healthy and growing. The Southern Pride Chicken Company of Selma would provide 20,000 White Plymouth Rock chicks at a time and then, after about ten weeks, pick up the broilers when they were ready for market. The company also provided the feed mash with necessary supplements, but the Johnsons could grow much of the feed on their own land.

Sammy wanted to double the chicken facilities, but the six new chicken houses would be built near Sam's house to lessen the danger of disease epidemics which could sometimes wipe out thousands of chickens in a few days. They had become experts at large-scale

chicken farming. Roosevelt, as extension agent, had helped them with advice and government pamphlets. He had been a constant help designing and building the chicken houses. They were all pleased to have this big, husky black in their family. The Plantation now had its own private, live-in, extension agent!

must have only the best at Tugaloo." The following year he had them artificially inseminated from a prize bull at the stock farm.

JERSEY COWS

A second important change followed Sammy's 1958 conference. One day some stock trucks drew up to one of the barns at the old Green Place. Sammy had visited a famous stock farm over in Montgomery County and bought twelve newly-weaned Jersey heifers. The heifers quickly recognized the barn as their new home and didn't seem to mind that it was leaky and drafty. Then the family had to do some quick fence-building and repair when the heifers showed a propensity for grazing in the new forest area, heedlessly stepping on baby trees.

The faun-colored young cows, elegant and beautiful with their dark eyes, became great favorites with Lucy

and Jacklyn who soon learned to care for them, driving them home in evening from the pasture, giving them corn, and later, when they started to lactate, learning how to attach the milking machine. Sam and the others had to learn all these new processes also. These were blooded animals. Sammy said, "We must have only the best at Tugaloo." The following year he had them artificially inseminated from a prize bull at the stock farm.

The Selma Creamery agreed to take all the milk. Jersey milk was premium with its high butter content.

Sammy wanted to build up the dairy herd to the capacity of the land. This would mean new barns and fences, growing corn and other feed grains, hayfields and pastures. There had been cotton here for 140 years but now they planted their last cotton crop.

Tugaloo had been transformed into a dairy and chicken farm!

Berry, the thinker, the ideal man, always wanted to make the Plantation bigger and better than the others tended to be satisfied as things were. Sam was especially amazed by the swiftness of his

TUGALOO EXPANDS AGAIN

In 1964 a rich white farmer, Beauregard Davis, suddenly died.

Davis had bought 640 acres of Tugaloo land at the county auction in 1962. This rich bottom land on the east of the latest Johnson acquisition had lain fallow because of Davis' illness.

Davis' widow, a Baltimore woman who knew nothing about farming or local custom, asked Mr. Brownlow to help her settle her husband's estate in the most expeditious way. She wanted to sell the land and return to Baltimore. They agreed that \$50,000 would be a fair price.

Mr. Brownlow, knowing the Johnsons had money in the bank, called Sammy to ask if they would be interested.

Sammy quickly answered, "You hold everything, Mr. Brownlow! I'll get my father and we'll come right over to your office!"

He found Sam and John tinkering with some farm equipment--they were all in their overalls--and when he had explained the situation, they jumped into Sam's old pickup truck and headed for the bank.

On the trip into town Sammy told them that if this land were advertised for sale, the white community would almost certainly not allow it to be sold to the Johnsons because part of the old Jim Crow system (now under broad attack across the South) was the general refusal of white landowners to sell good land to blacks.

Sammy, the thinker, the idea man, always wanted to make the Plantation bigger and better when the others tended to be satisfied as things were. Sam was repeatedly amazed by the audacity of his

son's ideas. Yet, they had proved to be good ideas that worked. Sam only needed to look at the prosperity around them to recognize that. He had learned to follow Sammy's lead most of the time.

Now Sammy said, "We must get that land. We won't have another chance like this!"

Sam overcame his natural inclination to be cautious. They all knew this was prime land.

Soon, in Mr. Brownlow's office, they decided to take \$20,000 from the education fund and get a bank mortgage for the remaining \$30,000. That way, Sam said, there would still be money for the children, and later the grandchildren, to go to college.

"Not one for wasting time," Sammy now urged, "Mr. Brownlow, can we get this all settled right now?" This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It must not be allowed to slip away.

So Mr. Brownlow asked Mrs. Davis to come to his office. They soon had the papers ready and signed, and then had the transfer recorded at the court house.

Sam's head was spinning from this sudden venture into high finance. Ten years before, his biggest financial worry had been scraping together the \$240. annual rent for his tenant farm. He felt a bit of nostalgia for those old days when things had been so simple. But he pulled himself together. He knew that Emjay had made things easier for them when they were tenant farmers. Now they must stand by themselves. They must be strong.

(1964) So the Johnsons paid Mrs. Davis that same day and almost doubled the size of their plantation. Sammy and John whooped with delight. Tugaloo Plantation was now 1300 acres-- maybe the largest black-owned farm in Alabama. Now Sammy was satisfied. He said that if they got more land they wouldn't be able to give it the careful, personal attention he felt yielded the best results. But they would make this, the best, the most fertile, and most productive 1300 acres in the United States!

Each year their herd of Jerseys was growing. They now had ninety young cows with a big crop of calves every spring--all registered blooded stock. He had selected several bull calves with the best characteristics to keep, and they found a ready market for any animals they didn't need. So he would sell the male calves for very good prices. The Selma Creamery could take all their milk production--making butter for the Atlanta and eastern markets.

Jacklin and Lucy would get a calf each spring to raise with special attention. When county fair time came, they would scrub and brush and manicure their animals so that repeatedly they won ribbons. Then Sam would buy back the animals from them saying, "If these are the best Jerseys at the county fair, we have to have them for Tugaloo!" So the girls were building their savings for college.

Sam had instilled in the children the idea of saving. He knew its importance. First they had their piggy banks, and when they had a sixth birthday, Sam would take them to Mr. Brownlow and give them five dollars to open their own account. The children were encouraged to keep adding to their accounts to pay for college. Sam didn't want anyone in his family to ever slip back into the poverty he had known most of his life.

TUGALOO IS BIG BUSINESS

After 1964 Tugaloo had become a big business with income from many sources. The Beauregard Davis land--640 acres which they now called the "East Six-Forty," had out-buildings and two old farmhouses. John was soon busy restoring and modernizing these houses for they discovered they could get good rents for them from officers with families from nearby Craig Air Force Base.

The family had lost Grandma Dora in April. They had all hoped to (1964) celebrate her 100th birthday but she died in her sleep at 99. She was buried next to Moses after a widowhood of seventy-three years!

Also, since Fortney had died in 1961, Grandma Sadie, now eighty, agreed to move over to Sam's house where there was plenty of room. This left Sadie's house and Dora's cabin empty.

Sammy decided the business of the Plantation was so large they needed an office. The old brick kitchen building of Tugaloo House was still standing, though derelict. Even the cows would go in there some days, but the walls were solid. They decided the old kitchen would be their new office, with Sammy and Jonelle moving into the old overseer's house where Lucille had died in 1920. Thus Sammy, who was the de facto boss of the Plantation, would be at the center near the office.

They hired their cousin, Willie Joe Johnson, the young married son of Uncle William, to come live in Sammy's former house. Willie Joe, like his father, was a fine carpenter. Also Sammy taught him how to tend the six big chicken houses on the hillside. Then Willie Joe and John worked together restoring and modernizing all the vacant houses. They enlarged Dora's cabin with a new kitchen and bathroom after setting it on a foundation. They painted Sadie's house,

then renovated the old overseer's house and the two farm houses on the "East Six-Forty." There was a great deal of building and painting that year.

The old brick kitchen made a beautiful office building. They installed new "six over six" windows, new doors, oak floors, roof and plumbing, and they cleaned the great stone walk-in fireplace where their slave grandmothers had prepared meals in the long-ago. When the beautiful office was ready, Sammy had little difficulty persuading Laura to give up her job in town and come run the Plantation's involved business affairs. She could be with her son during the day and give up commuting.

They had spent a lot on renovating but now they had four rentals which would soon pay for the improvements. Two black colonels, who didn't want to live in Selma, rented the farmhouses on the "East Six-Forty."

A black Air Force pilot, Major Farley Houston, rented Sadie's old house. He and his white wife were from Chicago and he didn't want any trouble with the southern whites in Selma who were always

Twenty-five year old Jud Littlefield, from Charleston, had played football for the Air Force Academy in Colorado. His football hadn't been his principal activity. He had graduated in the top third of his class. He had always tried to be a good student. This made probably crusading against "race-mixing." The Houstons had had three little boys who were soon fast friends with Willie Joe's children who lived just across the farmyard at Sammy's former house.

His mother was a retired teacher with a small pension. He was only three when he went to live with her. He is JUD LITTLEFIELD in a tiny room with slanted

ceilings and two dormers looking out to Charleston Harbor. This had been

his father's. Soon Dora's little cabin was rented by black Captain Jud Littlefield, a pilot and friend of Major Houston's. The plantation had a lot of monthly rental money coming in, although, Willie Joe, Laura and other family members got their houses rent-free. Three years old, he got out the 12

alphabetical wooden blocks and the cards and pictures that had decorated his father's room to help him learn the alphabet.

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Grandmother Littlefield also ran a little nursery school in her home. She would teach and care for about six or seven preschool children each day while their parents were at work. That's how she augmented her little pension. The parents would pay her five dollars a week for each child and she gave the children a hot noon meal each day.

Twenty-five year old Jud Littlefield, from Charleston, had played football for the Air Force Academy in Colorado. But football hadn't been his principal activity. He had graduated in the top third of his class. He had always tried to be a good student. This was due probably to the loving influence of his little white-haired grandmother who had reared him after his parents were killed in an auto accident.

His Grandmother Littlefield lived in a small white house with a gardenful of roses and azaleas surrounded by a black iron fence. She was a retired teacher with a small pension. He was only three when he went to live with her. He slept on an iron cot in a tiny room with slanted ceiling and two dormers looking out to Charleston Harbor. This had been his father's room. In the first year, his grandmother would often take him across the landing to sleep with her when he was frightened and lonely in the new surroundings.

She soon discovered that Jud didn't know the alphabet yet. "We have to get busy, Judson," she said. "Your father could recite the alphabet A to Z when he was just three years old." She got out the old alphabetical wooden blocks and the cards and pictures that had decorated his father's room to help him learn the alphabet.

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Her house had been paid for years earlier, but she was very careful about spending money since they had so little of it.

She did have one minor luxury--an old upright Chickering piano on which she would play little songs for the children to sing--"Baa Baa Blacksheep," and such nursery rhymes.

As Jud got older, she supervised his education carefully, making certain he did all his homework and that he had mastered each level of learning. She made learning interesting and attractive for him.

Jud had been a popular and athletic boy in high school, but what was less usual, he was also a scholar with consistently such high grades that he had little difficulty getting the appointment to the Air Force Academy. Of course, the white politicians of South Carolina were reluctant to choose a black boy for this honor, but a new era for blacks was dawning in the United States.

So Jud had gone to Colorado Springs where for four years he continued the careful and thorough study-practices he had learned, from his grandmother. He graduated with "flying colors," was commissioned, and now, here he was stationed at Craig Air Force Base and living in Dora's old log cabin.

One day Bernice and Sammy had been visiting Jud to see if everything was all right for him at the cabin. They noted the neat, frugal furnishings, the books. Then Bernice, with motherly concern, peeked into the refrigerator. There was a bit of cheese, some milk, two bottles of beer and that was all.

Then Bernice said, "It's just not right for a young man to have no more than a piece of cheese to nibble on!"

Jud laughed, "Do I look mal-nourished? I usually get my meals at the base."

He certainly didn't look mal-nourished. He was a muscular six feet two inches and 180 pounds. Even Bernice had to admit he looked well-fed. But she thought the boy needed some family life and good cooking so she said, "You come on over to our house this evening about five o'clock. We're going to have a nice dinner that will put some meat on your bones!"

It was December with Jacklyn home from Tuskegee for Christmas vacation. Jud, in uniform, came directly from the base. Bernice, her wide, brown face ringed with smiles, greeted him, introducing him to all the family.

Always boss in the kitchen, she next told Jud to take off his jacket so he could help Jacklyn peel the potatoes. Mashed potatoes for the big family needed lots of peeling. Soon he had a dish-cloth for an apron, a paring knife and a Christmas Tom and Jerry. With a mournful look Jud moaned, "I seem to get KP detail no matter where I go!"

Laura had learned the fine art of mixing a good Tom and Jerry from Roberson Mitchell III., her lost love at Fisk University. She was in the corner of the kitchen turning out this concoction and doing a brisk trade with her father and the young men of the family.

Sam, his brown face shiny and reddened by the warmth of

the kitchen and the rum, said with a wide grin, "I had doubts that Laura would learn anything useful up in Nashville but now I have to say she learned to mix a good Tom and Jerry!"

They laughed as Bernice pushed him out of the kitchen, saying, "We have too many cooks out here now!"

With Jud, Jacklyn was at first shy. He was quite the most handsome man she ever met. He had traveled a lot in the service, even in foreign countries. He was older, with a fine education and considerable experience and she felt at a disadvantage--a 19-year-old country girl who had never gone further than that trip to Nashville to see Laura graduate. At first, Jacklyn didn't know what to say to him, but in the great activity of the kitchen, they were soon laughing and talking over their potato chores.

For his part, Jud was much attracted to her and before the potatoes were all peeled and on the stove, they were the best of friends. During dinner, they couldn't keep their eyes off each other. The family were much amused by this evidence of love in bloom.

Later, Jud asked her to a Christmas dance at the base, and then, for the next three weeks they were together most of the time. It was a

whirlwind romance. Before the winter session began at Tuskegee, they got married so that they "wouldn't lose each other."

Since Jud wanted Jacklyn to finish college, she returned to Tuskegee, but there was much traveling to and fro, the eighty miles between the Institute and the little log cabin that winter. They had to bear being apart during the week. Now, Jud was paying her expenses.

Emjay's education fund was near \$100,000 once more since they had been adding plantation profits and interest. Frannie and Annie were nearing the end of their medical training in Nashville. They were earning their own way now as poverty-stricken interns. Only Lucy remained to be educated, but Sam was thinking of the grandchildren down the road. However, they decided to pay off the last \$30,000 mortgage they owed on the "East Six-Forty," thus saving the interest they had to pay the bank.

Now Sam really felt safe and secure. They owned outright the 1300 acre Tugaloo Plantation and it would take care of all of them.

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1965

THE LETTER

Early in 1965 Sam received a very fat letter from a legal firm in Boston, Massachusetts, named Peabody, Saltonstall, Grosvenor and Talbott. The letter was from Mr. Quincy Peabody, the senior partner of this famous, old firm of Yankee attorneys.

This is what the letter said:

"Dear Mr. Johnson,

I am writing you because the Creighton Investigating Firm of Boston have determined that you are a descendant of one Lucille Johnson, who lived at Tugaloo Plantation near Selma, Alabama in the Nineteenth Century, and of her son, Moses Johnson, who Creighton tells me, was your grandfather. They also tell me that your father, Fortney Johnson, is dead.

We have been searching for some months, checking documents, corresponding with officials etc., to clarify the clouded history of the Trowbridge and Johnson families.

I should tell you that a very dear friend of mine, (indeed, an old Harvard classmate, Class of 1900!) died two years ago. This was Geoffrey Moses Trowbridge. Mr. Geoffrey Trowbridge was my first client when I founded this firm in 1901. So you see, our relationship hasn't been ~~event~~ transitory. I first knew him at Harvard in 1896 when we were freshmen. I knew him to be an Alabama boy, to be sure, and he had a southern accent and impeccable manners, but he was always somewhat reticent when questioned about his family. I didn't pry. He always seemed to have plenty of money, but curiously, his parents or family never showed themselves, not even at commencement, which, as you know, is a family event.

He was a handsome boy at college with curly, brown hair, olive skin, and the most singular gray eyes. The Radcliffe girls swooned when they saw him! But I won't burden you with an old man's reminiscences. ~~other for 64 years, gone~~
Mr. Trowbridge in his subsequent career as ~~calling~~

and sailing from Long Island Sound up to Maine, importer and merchant, became quite wealthy. He married a New York City girl but they were childless and she died some years ago.

About 1960 Mr. Trowbridge asked me to keep a large manila envelope in my safe. In the event of his death, I was to open it. When he died, April 14, 1963, I followed his instructions and opened the envelope.

It contained his last will, drawn by a New York City attorney (probably because Mr. Trowbridge didn't want me to prematurely know his secret.) He named me his executor and enclosed a personal letter of explanation to me. I will quote most of this letter as it relates to the business at hand:

(Here followed the excerpt of letter from Geoffrey Trowbridge to Quincy Peabody.)

Beacon Street, Boston
Jun 4, 1960

Dear Quince,

We have known each other for 64 years, gone hiking in the Berkshires, the Adirondacks, sculling

and sailing from Long Island Sound up to Maine, belonging to the same clubs, seen wars come and go--but how well do you really know me? Maybe you suspected I had some secret having to do with my family. But you were courteous enough not to ask. Now the time has come for total candor.

I and my younger brothers and sisters were all born in a wonderful, brick, Second Empire house on a quiet street in Mobile, Alabama. I was born in 1878 at the end of Reconstruction. Our father was Jonathan Trowbridge, a Yankee from Vermont, who had come to Alabama with General James Wilson's Union cavalry toward the end of the Civil War. He would frequently make trips to what we knew as the "Plantation." We were curious about it, of course, but none of us was allowed to go there or know where it was.

We all adored our beautiful mother, ever a sweet and quiet woman with golden hair and pensive, gray eyes. She was always fashionably dressed in the manner of that time--silks, velvets,

bustles, long skirts and so on, because my father was wealthy and would buy these things for her. She loved him very much. She was much younger than he.

Our big house had a square tower and mansard roof with rounded, Italianate windows. We had an iron fence around our big, tree-shaded lawn, an iron deer standing near the porte-cochère, iron cresting at the top of the house, a great, square piano in the music room, and always three or four servants, so you see, we were not poor. But we had almost no friends or visitors.

As I got older, I began to piece things together. One day, when I was about thirteen, I came from play into the parlour where my mother and an older woman were crying and embracing. There was a buggy in the drive. The woman was wearing her hat with a black veil. There was something so familiar about her. She was beautiful. I was race-conscious enough to think that she didn't seem like a white woman.

Perhaps she was Spanish or Italian. Then I noticed her gray eyes--they were like mother's, like mine! ~~brother, Moses, who had just died.~~

When mother noticed me, she said quietly, a sob in her voice, "Come in Geoffrey. It's time you met your grandmother!" It was Grandmother Lucille Johnson and she had come down to tell my mother, Rose, of the terrible tragedy at the "Plantation." I then found out it was Tugaloo Plantation and that the great house had burned to the ground. My Uncle Moses, of whom I had never before heard, had died in the fire, and I had three little cousins, Fortney Johnson, Lilly and Fanny.

That's the only time I ever saw my grandmother and she was a remarkably beautiful woman as I remember after all these years. ~~Since then~~

That's also when the secret of our family became known to me. My mother Rose told me that Lucille, though three-quarters white, (a quadroon as they say,) had been a slave girl; that my

grandfather was Geoffrey Johnson who had owned Tugaloo Plantation briefly before being killed in the Civil War; and that my mother had a twin brother, Moses, who had just died.

She told me how my father had an older son named Mordecai Johnson Trowbridge who was then at Harvard, and that this half-brother's mother was Grace Lee Johnson, now dead. Then she said told me that my father loved her and all us children very much, but that he couldn't marry her since she was part-Negro. It was father's belief that we children could all pass for white since our portion of black blood was small. And indeed, we had always supposed ourselves to be white. ~~with subsequent good marriages~~

Now I began to understand our somewhat isolated way of life. We had no friends who came to visit, nor did we go calling on others. Since there were eight children in a big house and garden, we entertained ourselves pretty well. We didn't go to school, since father hired tutors for us until we were ready for college and then we were

sent north.

Father said it would be better for us if we passed for white and that was obviously true. We looked white--it would be foolish to try to be black. We were mostly white. Father said we must go north and make a clean break of it.

That was what broke our hearts. Father said we must not ever see our mother again. We loved her deeply, but she had lived with the problem a long time and agreed that in America, as it then was, it would be best if we went away and thought of her as dead.

So we went north, one by one, always to the best schools, with subsequent good marriages to white spouses. My brothers and sisters were all successful. I won't talk of them here.

When I was at Harvard, people would occasionally ask if I were related to Mordecai Johnson Trowbridge who had been a Harvard student from Alabama several years earlier.

I would answer, "No relation," because my

father had impressed on me the importance of total secrecy about the family.

In 1904, I wrote a letter to my parents begging them to meet me at the Louisiana Exposition in St. Louis. They agreed to come. It was a bitter-sweet re-union--joy at seeing each other again, but deep sorrow knowing it would probably be the last time. Mother was more beautiful than ever. I'm thankful I saw them once more. They both died within six years.

So now you know my secret. I am perhaps one-sixteenth or less Negro. The time will come in this country when people won't need or want to have secrets like that--when a person will be judged on his merits and not his skin-color.

Now we must come to the point of this lengthy letter. Since you have been my attorney all these years, you know that I have been quite successful in my business. I am a wealthy man by most standards--not in a garish way like some Texas billionaire, but in a good, conservative Bostonian sort of way. I have something over

four million dollars in assets as listed on
the adjoining paper.

I have thought about what to do with this
money. I have determined, as this will
stipulates, to leave the bulk of the fortune
to these black relations, descendants of my
Uncle Moses Johnson, who may still be living in
Alabama.

Years ago I had a private investigator check
this family. My black cousin, Fortney Johnson,
was still living on a tenant farm on the old
Tugaloo Plantation. Later, I heard that my
half-brother, Mordecai Johnson Trowbridge,
had deeded the plantation to the county.

Age is catching up with both of us, but I
ask you, if you survive me and serve as executor,
seek out these black Johnson relations. See
that they get this inheritance. I've lived in
New England so long that I'm filled with fervor
to help far-away blacks. But it's something
special with me. Imagine, my own cousin a
tenant farmer! Why did I wait so long to do

anything about it? It was all tied up with keeping the secret. Somehow, that doesn't seem important anymore.

You will please conduct the legal matters in a confidential way-- I don't desire any unpleasantness for the families of my brothers and sisters. They may still prefer to keep their secret. Therefore, no publicity.

(Here ended the excerpt of the letter from Geoffrey Trowbridge to Quincy Peabody.)

(Then Mr. Peabody resumed his own letter to Sam Johnson.)

Mr. Johnson, we understand that your father, Fortney Johnson, died in 1961.

Because of the magnitude of this estate, it's rather nearer five million than four--we suggest you select an Alabama attorney to advise and correspond with us. We will have to carefully determine what and how many eligible heirs are living. These will include all living progeny of the late Moses Johnson..."

That was the essence of Mr. Peabody's letter. Sam had an idea of its importance so he jumped in the

pickup truck and took it over to the new plantation office to consult with Sammy and Laura.

They read and re-read it as its meaning became clearer. It was a bombshell. They wondered if someone were playing a practical joke.

Fortney's two sisters, Lilly and Fanny had died several years earlier without children. So, if this letter were not a hoax, that meant the inheritance would be divided between Fortney's three sons, Joe, William and Sam, and perhaps their children. It was too overwhelming to believe. Laura, with her business training, understood it best. They decided to go show it to Mr. Brownlow and then get an attorney who could correspond with Mr. Peabody.

Later at the bank, they all went to Mr. Brownlow's office, waiting while he looked over the letters. He was bent in figure, bald and quite old, but still an astute banker and businessman. He made many little grunts and noises of surprise as he progressed through the letters.

He personally remembered Jonathan Trowbridge back before 1910, but Jonathan was not often at Tugaloo in

"Sammy said to please do so. Mr. Randolph told he could best come in an hour. So, thanking Mr. Brownlow, they all went for sandwiches and then proceeded to Mr. Randolph's office.

Junius Randolph had a single lawnmower tucked away in the sunroom here and old law books, but he had none of those later days. This letter answered a good many questions local people might have had about that original meeting between him and a Randolph, and his family.

When Brownlow finished reading the letters, Sammy said, "I think the first thing we must do is find a good attorney." ~~an educated citizen who had just arisen.~~

Mr. Brownlow returned, "You're quite right and I would have suggested you all go see Judge Josh Carter who used to handle legal matters for Mordecai Trowbridge. Unfortunately, Judge Carter is ill and about to retire."

He thought for a moment. Then his face brightened. "There is a young, black attorney who's making a reputation for himself. He's a Damn-Yankee (though he has a fine southern name,) but maybe that's what you need to handle this Yankee business! His name is Junius Lee Randolph and he's over in the Franson Building. Let me see--" Mr. Brownlow consulted a desk directory. "Oh yes, here it is--he's in room 412 at the Franson Building. Do you want me to call and make an appointment for you?"

Then Junius quickly read through the letters. "Very interesting story, and certainly a pleasant surprise for your family," he said.

Sammy said to please do so. Mr. Randolph said he could meet them in an hour. So, thanking Mr. Brownlow, they all went for hamburgers and then proceeded to Mr. Randolph's office.

Junius Randolph had a simple two-room office with some battered furniture and old law books. But both he and his secretary looked bright and quick. Junius, a tall brown young man with an engaging smile, greeted them with a handshake, seated them, and asked what he could do for them.

They explained that they needed an attorney to handle a new and unexpected situation that had just arisen. They showed Junius the letters. He whistled when he saw the name of the Boston legal firm.

"This is really remarkable," he said. "You won't believe it and I can't believe it, but this is the very same legal firm where I was a clerk four or five years ago. I know all these four august men--or at least I have passed them in the corridor! There are about twenty-five attorneys at the firm. The senior partners just sit back and do the really important things or what pleases them. I graduated from Harvard Law School in 1959 and I learned a lot working for Peabody, Saltonstall. I'm a native of western Massachusetts--Springfield actually, and my family got up there in the days of the Underground Railway. You may already have noticed my Yankee accent. I came down here three years ago to help in the fight for equal rights for blacks."

Then Junius quickly read through the letters. "Very interesting story, and certainly a pleasant surprise for your family," he said.

Sammy and the others liked the candid young man. They asked him if he would be their attorney. He readily agreed saying, "I have quite a few clients, but not many who can afford to pay. So I haven't learned yet to charge high fees. I'll do the best I can for you and charge you for time spent, at \$10 an hour. At the beginning this may be only one or two hours a week. Later there will be tax problems and surely Massachusetts, Alabama, and the United States government will all get into the act. When you have your inheritance you will probably still need an attorney as your affairs become more complex. As a matter of fact, I'm very surprised that Tugaloo Plantation doesn't have an attorney. Perhaps if I do a good job in this, you will consider me for the job of Tugaloo attorney."

Sammy and Laura exchanged smiling glances.

"The truth is," said Sammy, "We have talked a lot about that lately. When the Trowbridges owned Tugaloo, Judge Carter was their attorney, but now he's old and ill. And for us, Tugaloo has become a big and complicated business only in recent years. My father here likes to refer to himself as an 'old-fashioned dirt farmer who doesn't understand very much about what is happening at the plantation.' Only ten or twelve years ago our family owned no land. Dad and grandfather rented a couple small tenant farms--that's all. My father is modest, but he had a lot to do in laying the base for our success. The changes have come thick and fast and we have some trouble adapting to the new conditions. My family have lived at Tugaloo for 150 years, but owning it is something that

happened only recently."

"Since I've come here I've heard a lot about the 'Tugaloo Johnsons' and wondered when we would meet," Junius remarked. "The blacks hereabouts all admire you and the whites are envious. We would like to have you in our civil rights struggles. You could do a lot for our movement. We're planning a big voter-registration drive this year."

Sammy said, "We think we have been successful partly because we stay at Tugaloo and tend our own business. I know that sounds selfish, perhaps cowardly, when so many take chances, but we think we are vulnerable in many ways. If we are active in the movement, white firms such as the Selma Creamery and the Southern Pride Chicken Co. could cut off our business. We think the movement would not be served if we destroyed the economic future of Tugaloo. So, for the time being, we will help you financially, but we don't want to be openly associated with the black movement--perhaps later."

They left it at that. The Tugaloo Johnsons hired Junius Randolph with the understanding that if he did a good job, he would have a permanent client.

TUGALOO NEW FOREST

Most of the good ideas for building Tugaloo seemed to have come from Sammy, but one evening in the previous summer John came to Sammy with an idea of his own. The various renovations of old buildings were successfully completed and they had discovered that there was a market for good housing.

John said, "Willie Joe and I have been sitting on our hands for a couple weeks now--the building jobs are mostly tidied up. But I've been thinking. Why don't we build a few nice little new rental houses--maybe over along the edge of the forest near the old Green Place. We sure wouldn't have any trouble renting them. The location is very pleasant near the creek. The pines are really shooting up. Some of them are already twenty-five feet high. We may want to thin some of them out. But some little houses could be spaced in there with not much difficulty and so long as Craig Air Force Base is here, we could rent them."

Sammy was immediately interested. It seemed like a great idea. John and Willie Joe and a couple of hired workers had finished their building jobs. Why not keep them busy creating a new source of income for the Plantation? Sammy was a canny businessman. His general plan for the Plantation was to always maximize income, while guarding the fertility of the soil--keeping a healthy respect for nature and the environment.

This plan of John's seemed just right. They could keep the building crew busy for several years to come while creating new income, and they would build on the ravaged land of the old Green

Farm--land not much good for their main business of agriculture.

The idea was good from every angle.

Sammy, never one to lose time, rubbed his elbow for a minute, then turned his thoughtful gray eyes squarely toward his brother, "You just thought of one hell of a good idea! I'll meet you over there in the morning--say about eight o'clock and we'll go over that land and figure out where to put the houses. Tonight, if you have nothing to do, make a map of that twenty acres or so near the old Green Place, and since you are the nearest thing to an architect we have in the family, you might make up plans for several small houses. Then tomorrow we can decide where they will go and get started building!"

Things didn't go quite that fast and there was a period of planning, but Sammy typically could decide such things quickly and start acting. His decisions usually were the right ones given the circumstances.

The prosperity of the Plantation permitted them to hire some workers and equipment and proceed when ready. They picked a strip of eroded land on a gentle slope overlooking the new forest and a few hundred yards from the Green Farmhouse. A few of the new trees would have to be cut, but they felt they could place as many as twenty small houses there. John thought duplexes would be better because two units could share the same roof, foundation, and central wall. The men agreed this would be the best use for this bit of land. It would also give them the opportunity to re-contour the land, providing for proper drainage and stopping the erosion permanently.

They decided to first contour the land, filling in the gullies, using rented bulldozers. After choosing positions for the new

buildings, they would start construction on four duplexes and two detached houses, i. e. ten units. As the units were completed they would be rented. If they had difficulty renting them, they would suspend the construction program. On the other hand, some more could be built if there ~~was~~ ^{were} a market for them.

John was to be in charge of the project. First, he had the bulldozers do the re-contouring. Sammy insisted they push the thin top-soil to one side. After the contouring and installation of access roads, drainage, sewer and utility pipes, the top soil was spread on the top once more. Later they would haul in loads of chicken and cow manure to enrich the landscaping and garden areas, and it would all be carefully planted in grass and clover so that the soil would stay in place.

In some of his architectural books John found some plans for small houses and duplexes. They decided to build four and five-room units. He altered the plans somewhat for the situation and for esthetic reasons. John was hard to please and always did a superior job. Sammy had no qualms about that.

Within six months the first three units were ready. They were going to group four duplex units and one detached house around circular courts. John decided the duplexes would be of brick and the houses sided with cedar shingles.

Before the buildings were completed they had signed lease contracts with military families from the base. So John's idea was proving to be a good one. They continued to build more units until there were twenty. Then they stopped, feeling that more housing would spoil the rural atmosphere. They didn't want a city in the middle

of the Plantation.

Tugaloo Village, with its old general store and gasoline station, was only a quarter mile down the county road. Old Bart Gregory still kept the store and he was quite pleased with the new business coming from Tugaloo. The servicemen and their families did their shopping there.

The Johnsons decided to call their small housing development "Tugaloo New Forest." When they were renting they tried to get some white families. They finally had twelve black families, seven white or mixed families and a Dakota Sioux Indian sergeant whose wife was a Northern Cheyenne Indian from Montana. None of the children seemed to mind that their playmates were from different races. They had a wonderful time playing around their new homes.

Lucy would take them on tours of the dairy and chicken operations at the Plantation. Some of them were city people who had never seen cows or chickens up close.

Our chicken business and our creamery business could be cut off by bigoted whites that we have to trade with. I think Mr. Fairchild, the owner of Southern Pride Chicken Co., thinks about some things. He would really like to go back to slavery again. If old Ben heard I was in one of those marches, that would be the end of our chicken business. It would be hard to find another ~~new~~ supplier. Also we might get the Ku Kluxers out here when we've been lucky so far they have left us alone.

But we do support what Dr. King is trying to do. I've been giving Justice Randolph money for travel expenses. I'm convinced, however, that we can really win the majority here by insuring the financial success of the march. That means build business and stay

ACROSS THE GENERATIONS

(5) Lucy was also active in other more significant ways that year. It was a big year for protest marches and voter-registration drives. Lucy and many of her fellow high-school students were excited by the hope of gaining political power, better schools and living conditions for Alabama blacks. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and local black ministers were leading the non-violent movement. They wanted an end to the old Jim Crow system that had replaced slavery.

Lucy talked about the movement with Sammy, Laura, John and her father.

Sammy explained to her that the business of the Plantation could be greatly damaged if they openly supported the Civil Rights struggle. He said, "You and all of us know that blacks should be treated fairly and many things have to be changed. But if we went out there and paraded in those protest marches, the first thing that would happen is that our chicken business and our creamery business would be cut off by bigoted whites that we have to trade with. I know how old Ben Fairchild, who owns Southern Pride Chicken Co., thinks about these things. He would really like to go back to slavery days. If old Ben heard I was in one of those marches, that would be the end of our chicken business. It would be hard to find another buyer and supplier. Also we might get the Ku Kluxers out here when we've been lucky so far they have left us alone."

"But we do support what Dr. King is trying to do. I've been giving Junius Randolph money for their expenses. I'm convinced, however, that we can really help the movement best by insuring the financial success of Tugaloo. That means build business and stay

out of trouble."

Sam, John, Laura and Roosevelt thought this made sense.

Sam told how he had learned very young the importance of being what the whites called "a good nigger." When he was a boy, he had seen two black youths lynched by the Klan. The boys had been stripped, mutilated, and then their ruined, lifeless bodies hung from a bridge. Then the Klan burned crosses all over the county. Sam said, "I never hoped to see our family as well off as we are today. I say let's stay here at Tugaloo and mind our own business. The whites have always run the country. They won't give up. I say stay away from trouble!"

Impetuous and young, Lucy wasn't at all satisfied. She thought all blacks and friendly whites should stand together, march together, win freedom together! She was turning into a "Freedom Fighter." Lucy stormed out of that meeting with her family but later talked with her mother Bernice, and Grandma Sadie.

Bernice and Sadie, though not fervid church-goers, were nonetheless the two Johnsons most likely to go to church. On the occasional Sundays they would walk down the road to the little white-painted Garden of Gethsemene Baptist Church, they would hear the minister talk about the black movement for equality. It was from many of these little churches that Dr. King drew much of his support.

Bernice was now a short, heavy-set woman with a plump motherly face and gray hair drawn tightly back to a bun at the nape of her neck. She always wore an apron at home and was usually busy in her kitchen. A gold tooth enhanced the wide smile she kept ready for her family. She was a fine cook and was most happy when her family

would gather for big dinners.

Grandma Sadie, also short, was quite tiny at 81, though still quick and bright like a little bird. She had brought her dictionary with her when she moved into Sam's house. She liked to sit reading her dictionary like some old people sit reading the Bible.

They both listened sympathetically to Lucy as she told them how she felt about the civil rights movement and the need for everyone to rise up in Selma, Montgomery, Birmingham and Washington, D. C. "We should all be in Selma right now. There's a big voter-registration drive. Every black should register and vote, and maybe we could change the way our people live! There's going to be a march tomorrow on City Hall. Dr. King will lead it. I think we should be there." Then she told them what Sam and Sammy had said.

Bernice said, "Well, we feel just like you do about it, but your dad and Sammy have to think about the Plantation. Heaven knows we've been in poverty most of our lives and we've all had enough of that. You're too young to remember how I used to dress the girls in flour sacks, and the roof was leaking, and the porch falling down! Now if the Plantation lost the white business contacts, we might end up just like we were!"

But Grandma Sadie just took off her glasses and asked, "What time is that march tomorrow?"

"It's at ten o'clock in the morning, grandma," said Lucy. "All right," said Sadie, "We'll drive in at nine o'clock in the old Ford, just you and me. If Bernice or anybody else wants to come along, I reckon they're welcome!"

Lucy cried out with happiness, giving her little grandmother a

great hug.

Then Bernice exclaimed, "Well, I guess there's room in that car for me too!"

Next day, the three of them joined their first civil rights march. Grandma and Bernice dressed up for the occasion and marched near the front of the procession just behind the ministers. They all joined hands and sang hymns.

They got a lot of scowls from white people and some hoodlums threw bottles at them. The mayor refused to meet their delegation. But they got publicity. The reporters and television cameras were there.

Sammy was upset when he heard they had gone, but his grandmother said, "Sammy, you do what you have to do, and we'll do what we have to do!" That rather ended the discussion.

Next day, Sammy was doing business at the Southern Pride Chicken Co. Ben Fairchild came over to him and growled, "Sammy, I saw yore ma and grandma on TV last night, leadin' that bunch of rabblerousers down to city hall. You gonna do something about that?"

"Mr. Fairchild," Sammy answered, "I learned a long time ago I couldn't tell my mother and grandmother what to do. They always do exactly what they want to do."

"You know Sammy," Fairchild pursued with a scowl, "Around these parts it's the good negras that get the business. I wouldn't want to see nothin' happen to yore chicken farm."

Sammy fumed internally, but just gave Mr. Fairchild a smile, responding, "I reckon things will all work out for the best."

This sort of ambiguous statement was not typical of Sammy.

What did it mean? "The best" for whom? The whites? The blacks? Or everybody? Sammy hated playing a "Stepin Fetchit" role of shuffling feet and pretended deference for every white-trash redneck who looked at him.

After this exchange of words, Mr. Fairchild grunted and turned away. Business continued as usual between the Plantation and the company. Still, it was this kind of threatened possibility that was constantly on Sammy's mind. This was the way the white establishment had always exploited the blacks. The danger of losing his livelihood was always there for any black who raised his voice against injustice.

Sammy knew that the best way to protect their new-found prosperity at the Plantation was to diversify their sources of income. That's why they had built the new rental units. They were raising much of their own chicken and cattle feed and Sammy had encouraged his family and all the tenants to grow big vegetable gardens. With exchanges of garden produce and big canning bees, they managed to feed themselves well without spending much money. Their chicken capacity was now 120,000 at a time. They also were growing hogs for meat.

Sammy wanted the Plantation to be invulnerable to pressure from unscrupulous whites like Fairchild. Fortunately, Fairchild was making money on his business with Tugaloo, and so he did nothing further about his threats.

Dr. King had been arrested that day. He and some of the other leaders, including some northern college students who were helping, were in jail. These were the "outside agitators" who local whites

said "were destroying the paradise of good old Alabama, where blacks knew their place and all was harmony."

Grandma Sadie had narrowly escaped spending the night in jail. She had been rounded up with the others but the police let her go, to her chagrin. "Arrest me," she said! "Don't you see I'm one of the leaders?" The police laughed at her.

A big, red-faced policeman sized up her tiny defiant figure. She was ram-rod straight. Maybe she weighed 90 pounds. The sunlight glanced off her spectacles as she angrily shook her head at him. The pink rose on her black straw hat wobbled.

"You jes' git on home now, granny. You done caused enough trouble for the day."

Bernice was taking a somewhat more conciliatory part. She was thinking about how they would explain it all to Sam and Sammy. Then Lucy extricated them from the crowd. Getting back to the old Ford, they drove home.

On the way home Grandma Sadie said, "I haven't had so much fun since Fortney bought me an ice cream cone at the St. Louis Fair! Lucy, you be sure to let me know when the next event is scheduled. Your granny wants to be there!"

When they got home, they were all chuckling. That night they all saw themselves on TV. Sam looked very solemn. He remembered what had happened in the past to blacks who defied the white establishment-- killings, lynching, beatings, loss of jobs, general harassment. His mother Sadie had grown up in St. Louis and when she came south, she stayed on the farm most of the time. She hadn't really seen how

cruel the Alabama whites could be. She hadn't seen those young Negroes dangling from the bridge, the way he had back in the 1920s. Also he wondered if his mother was getting a little "tetched" from old age. But he knew that wasn't really so. She was just determined she was right, and she was leading Bernice into it. She said she knew Martin Luther King Jr. would lead them all to a new life of dignity and happiness.

But Sam said, "So far, all he's done in Selma is lead you to jail!"

The struggle was to get the blacks of the county and all over the South to register and vote. Whites often let a few "token" blacks vote--these docile middle-class blacks, being few, posed no threat. But most whites didn't want blacks generally to vote, and blacks traditionally were excluded from registering in various ways--by means tests, by literacy tests, poll taxes etc., and all administered by unscrupulous white officials.

Dr. King, with his Southern Christian Leadership Conference and allied groups, was determined to register blacks in ever-greater numbers so that they could make a real difference at the polls. They would elect blacks and friendly whites and change the injustices of racism forever.

The issues were being joined. Moderates, like Sam and Sammy, would have to take sides. Sammy knew this also, but he was trying to make the Plantation safe from white pressure. They must continue to diversify. With their income from many sources, they wouldn't be lost if one source were cut off. Until then, however, the Johnsons must avoid antagonizing the white community.

Sammy took another step that spring. They put in thirty acres of truck garden on some of their best bottom land, heavily fertilized. This was a "labor-intensive" kind of operation, but there were many blacks in the neighborhood glad to have summer jobs. They hired a crew. Jonelle, who, after Dora's death was the best gardener in the family, was boss of the big truck garden. They grew tomatoes and several kinds of melons which they readily sold by the truckload to the big supermarket chains.

The Plantation was making a great deal of money from many sources in 1965. The adding machines in Laura's office were working overtime adding the profits.

One day, Mr. Brownlow asked Sammy to visit him at the bank. Brownlow had some idea of how profitable the Plantation had become and he also had read the letters about their expected inheritance. He didn't waste time in telling Sammy that the Lusker Gordon family, which had owned the Selma Creamery for fifty years, had decided to sell out. They had a fine modern brick plant doing a brisk business. Mr. Lusker Gordon Jr., who had run the business, had suffered a heart attack and would retire. Gordon wanted to keep about a third interest in the business but would sell the other two-thirds. He would sell the two-thirds interest for \$650,000. Mr. Brownlow and some associates wanted to keep ownership of the creamery local, and besides that, they knew it to be an excellent investment opportunity.

"Since you do a lot of business with the creamery, we thought you might be interested in buying a share," said the old banker, fixing his bright eyes on Sammy.

Sammy considered, then asked, "How much would be available?"

Mr. Brownlow told him the bank could take a third and he knew a couple of others interested in a share.

Sammy asked who the associates would be. They included the present creamery manager. Then Sammy said, "If Tugaloo goes into this, we want a written guarantee that our dairy production will always be handled fairly and without prejudice. We don't want any interruption of our market. We will always treat the creamery fairly and we will expect the same from them."

Mr. Brownlow assured him there would be no difficulty about that.

After some further discussion of details, Sammy said that if his father and the family agreed, they would take 20% of the creamery, i.e. \$200,000 worth. He noted that this was a big undertaking for them. His father might shy away from it.

That evening, the informal "financial committee" of the Plantation, which meant Sammy, Sam, Laura, John, and sometimes others--met at the office and considered the proposal. Sammy had decided it was a very good idea, since it would protect the Plantation's market for milk, and, being a good investment in itself, would increase Plantation income. He had expected Sam to hesitate, but Sam just said, "You and Laura know if it's a good investment, so you go ahead!"

Next day, they arranged the financing and the deal went through quickly, before the big chain creameries even heard this profitable enterprise was on the market. Now Tugaloo owned a large minority interest in the Selma Creamery. Their milk market was assured. Indeed, they and the bank together had a controlling interest!

Junius Randolph drew the papers protecting the Plantation's right to a fair market at the Creamery.

At some businessmen's club, Ben Fairchild of the Southern Pride Company soon heard of what Sammy had done. He now knew that it was useless to threaten the Johnsons since if he cut off their chicken business, they would continue to be prosperous and eventually would find another chicken outlet--perhaps in Montgomery or Birmingham. Furthermore, Fairchild didn't want to lose the lucrative Tugaloo business himself. They were among the best of the farmers with whom he dealt. At Tuskegee, the young Johnsons had learned the importance of excellence. Some of Booker T. Washington's teachings still were emphasized at Tuskegee. He taught the students to love work and to try to do a good job, however humble the task might be. The theories worked at Tugaloo and Fairchild had to learn to live with the idea of blacks who couldn't be pushed around. To him, that was a bitter pill. Meanwhile, Sadie, Bernice, Lucy and others that they recruited, continued to march and protest.

GEOFFREY TROWBRIDGE ESTATE

In August, Junius told them there would be the first distribution of the Geoffrey Trowbridge estate. Even the Beacon Street building owned by Mr. Trowbridge had proved of great value. It had been sold for over a million dollars. This and the various assets totaled close to six million. Estate taxes, federal and state, and lawyers' fees and expenses were close to two million. They would receive four million and according to the will, it would be divided equally between Sam and his two older brothers, Joe and William, who were Montgomery carpenters. They would each get one and one-third million!

TUGALOO CENTER

Then Sammy got one of his greatest ideas. What if they were to build a great new building on the site of old Tugaloo House? It could be called Tugaloo Center, serving as a community center for blacks and whites alike--all the people of the neighborhood. They would have meeting halls, a gymnasium, a library and reading rooms, maybe even a medical clinic!

Junius, Sammy, Sam and the others considered the idea of a community center. Junius then said, "You know, if you create the center for philanthropic purposes as you have outlined, and you give a substantial part of your inheritance to that center, you can escape paying most of the tax!"

Joe and William came over from Montgomery for a weekend of conferences with the attorney and the family about the inheritance and the center proposal. They had lived away from the Plantation, their families, excepting Willie Joe, no longer there, but they agreed to help pay for the center which would be a memorial to all the Tugaloo Johnsons and Trowbridges right back to 1816--all their ancestors!

Since Sam's family were all closely concerned with the Plantation, he offered to pay the balance needed for the center, but only after the \$200,000 was paid that they still owed for the creamery stock.

The financial arrangements were complicated but Joe and William each finally got a million. Sam gave one and one-third million for the center, but by so doing, he avoided a substantial amount of tax and so had another \$500,000. He then paid off the creamery

~~TUGALOO CORPORATION COMPANY~~
loan. The remaining \$300,000 he added to Emjay's education fund. He said it would be an education and ~~and subsidiary, the Tugaloo~~ ~~construction company.~~ emergency fund for the future.

~~John would keep his building crew intact and they would do jobs outside the~~

~~Plantation~~ TUGALOO CORPORATION ~~would further~~

~~ensure the success of the Plantation and its people.~~

Junius and Sammy had been talking about incorporating Tugaloo Plantation. It should have been done earlier. The old, informal way of running things was not adequate any more. They made a formula for dividing shares in the corporation among family members.

The new family-held corporation would have three thousand shares at the outset. Seven hundred shares were held in reserve. One hundred shares each were given to Sadie, Bernice, Jonelle, Roosevelt, Willie Joe, Annie, Frannie, Jacklyn and Lucy. In recognition of their special contributions to the Plantation and its growth from the beginning, John and Laura each got 300 shares, and Sammy and Sam each got 400 shares.

Sam and Sammy modestly declined when the family wanted them to have a larger share.

~~Big Horn in 1876 in the last great days of the Lakota~~

~~Nation. He was a highly-respected warrior in his tribe,~~

TUGALOO CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

Next, they set up as a subsidiary, the Tugaloo Construction Company. John would keep his building crew intact and they would do jobs outside the Plantation. These outside incomes would further ensure the safety of the Plantation and its people.

Willie Joe, who was William Johnson's son, got \$200,000 from his father's inheritance to invest in this construction company. Willie Joe became a partner with John and they had money to buy equipment.

Over at Tugaloo New Forest, meanwhile, Sgt. George Points with his wife and two children had settled in one of the duplex units. The sergeant, a full-blooded Oglala Sioux from Pine Ridge Reservation southeast of Rapid City, South Dakota, was really George Points-His-Gun, a proud name inherited from his great-grandfather. Old Points-His-Gun had been at the Little Big Horn in 1876 in the last great days of the Lakota Nation. He was a highly-respected warrior in his tribe,

but he lived to see his people ground down in poverty, hunger and despair. Now, three more generations had been born on the barren reservation, each surrendering to the white men's diseases and alcohol.

To escape the chronic unemployment and frustration of the reservation, George had enlisted in the Air Force during the Korean War. He had found that the whites always laughed at his name, so he had shortened it.

He met his wife, Lizzie Two-Gun-Man, at an Indian Pow-Wow and fair in Hardin, Montana. Lizzie was a Northern Cheyenne girl in her last year at the St. Labre Indian School on her reservation. He was then stationed at the Malmstrom Air Force Base near Great Falls, Montana. He persuaded Lizzie to marry him. They lived a couple years at Great Falls in the late 1950s where Lizzie continued her education at the College of Great Falls. Now they had two sons aged seven and five.

Soon after they moved to Tugalo New Forest, Lizzie's younger sister, Minnie Two-Gun-Man, came for a visit. She was a fine-looking girl about nineteen, with the

(in a young and lively way) of his great-grandmother, Dora. John was very strange, but he knew it was because Dora had been part Creek Indian. John discovered that Minnie had come from Hartman to help him in the Civil Rights Movement. She would go into Selma or Montgomery high cheek-bones and high, narrow aquiline nose of her people. She wore her long hair parted in the center with two braids woven with beaded, leather thongs. Occasionally she would wear a beautiful buckskin dress she had made. But usually she felt more comfortable in old blue jeans and sweat shirts.

John Johnson, now a muscular and handsome 27, was living in his little apartment at the wood-working shop near the old Green Place. His family kidded him about being an old bachelor. But when John saw Minnie for the first time, he was quite smitten. She was different from anyone he had known, but somehow reminded him a little

of his mother. He had no trouble persuading her to let her use the truck in the morning, but with his older son as driver and chief shoveler. They worked alongside him and they brought over not one, but three horses. Then he would put in his little boxes for an impromptu meal, bacon, beans, cornbread, and some of George's home-baked bread. John loved the little fire-oven. It had the rich pine smell of the wood-working shop where John had made his bedroom, kitchen and bath all by himself. This had been one of Amos Green's sheds, but John had added a foundation. It was shaded by magnolia trees, while

(and in a young and lively way) of his great-grandmother, Dora. It was strange, but he knew it was because Dora had been part Creek Indian. John discovered that Minnie had come from Montana to help in the Civil Rights Movement. She would go into Selma or Montgomery to participate in its various activities. She was one of a group of northern college students who were helping, or, as the whites said, "agitating." She had completed a year studying agriculture at Montana State University in Bozeman, when she joined a group of friends coming to Alabama. The others were living in town.

One day, seeing John go by in his construction company pick-up, Minnie smiled and hailed him. She remembered John and Sammy had told the new tenants there was a great pile of composted manure near the old barns. The tenants were urged to use the manure. Minnie asked if she could use John's truck to bring over a load so she and Lizzie could have a good garden.

John liked talking with her. She was friendly, pretty, and had a northern accent, but different from Junius's New England accent. She had no trouble persuading him to let her use the truck in the evening, but with him going along as driver and chief shoveler.

She worked alongside him and they brought over not one, but three loads. Then he asked her to his little house for an improvised meal of stew, beer, tomatoes, and some of Bernice's home-baked bread.

She loved the little hide-away. It had the rich pine smell of the wood-working shop where John had made his bedroom, kitchen and bath at one end. This had been one of Amos Green's sheds, but John had re-built it on a foundation. It was shaded by magnolia trees, while

John had trained Carolina Yellow Jasmine (Logania) and honeysuckle vines to climb the dooryard trellis. Whiffs of their fragrance reached her as she looked over his shelved books--many on architecture and building.

She asked if John were interested in the voter-registration drive. He was a little embarrassed but told her that the prosperity of the Johnsons was a very recent thing. They were trying to insure its continuation at the moment so he and most of his family had decided to "keep a low-profile" in the Civil Rights Movement. None of them had ever registered or voted. They worked hard, minded their own business and left politics to the whites. Only ten years earlier, they had been very poor tenant farmers. To attempt to vote would arouse the wrath of the white community. The Johnsons wanted to be invulnerable to white persecution before they made a public stand for civil rights. John did think they might be registering soon, however.

"You should all register," she said. "Most of the blacks around here have great admiration for Sammy and your family. We think that if you register, everybody will follow along, and the whites can't do anything about it if you all stick together." Her black eyes shone in her serious face. She really believed what she was saying. John wasn't so sure. His experience had been different. The whites of Alabama, on the contrary, always seemed to think of a way to hold the blacks down. Maybe a time of real change had come for the South. But Sammy's plan was still to help the movement financially, but do nothing overt to stir up white hostility.

They talked some more. She told him of her family and life on the Tongue River Northern Cheyenne Reservation. She told him her father

kept some Hereford cattle not far from the site of the Little Bighorn Battle where General Custer's command had been killed. The Cheyenne and Sioux had been allies in those days.

He asked about her unusual name and she told of her ancestor, the warrior Two-Gun-Man, who had been a friend of the great Chief Dull Knife. She also told him of George's great-grandfather, the Oglala sub-chief, Points-His-Gun, who had fought at Little Bighorn.

When he walked home with Minnie that evening, he made a date to help her and Lizzie plant their new garden. After that, he spent much time at the Point's house and he showed Minnie about the Plantation. They got seeds and transplants from Jonelle for the garden.

This serious Cheyenne girl attracted him. He told her how he was part Creek Indian. His great-grandmother Dora had a large portion of Creek blood. And the Johnson blacks had often lived with the nearby Indians in the early days.

It had been a bit lonely living at the woodshop, but he had also been very busy. Now he started to think about marrying. This was the kind of girl he wanted--serious, right-thinking and pretty.

A few weeks later, when he asked her to marry him, she said she would if he would register to vote! Next day, he went into Selma where the white registrar asked the usual questions designed to stop ignorant blacks from voting. But John passed ~~easily~~ ^{no longer} and was registered reluctantly by the white officials.

When Sammy heard about this he said, "Well, I guess the time has come!" Then he and Grandma Sadie led a big delegation of all the

adult black Johnsons down to the registrar's office. With John's prior coaching, they all passed the test, to the chagrin of the registrar. Sammy had decided that now that they owned part of the creamery with their iron-clad guarantee of a market for their dairy output, they could risk the open stand of registering to vote.

Sadie, Lucy and Minnie were ecstatic. They hadn't been happy with the division within the family in the matter of registering. But now, counting John, they had ten new black voters. Their courageous move would also influence many other blacks who hesitated to take the important step.

Willie Joe and his wife, Myrna, had also registered. Soon, several of the blacks who worked in Jonelle's truck garden, and some of the builders who worked for John, were talking about registering.

TUGALOO CENTER

Meanwhile, large sums of money were starting to arrive as the Geoffrey Trowbridge estate was distributed.

The de facto "financial committee" of the plantation, namely Sam, Sammy, Laura, John and Junius, would consult and deposit these funds or invest them in short-term instruments.

The idea of a new Tugaloo Center was much alive. At first they considered having a building of modern design, but John, the "resident architect," so strongly favored re-building Tugaloo House approximately in its original form, that he won them over. They would make it fire-proof this time and alter the interior to suit the new purpose. John said, "Everybody knows it was one of the great houses of Alabama. We can't improve on that."

His enthusiasm was catching, but Sammy said, "That's a grand idea, but how do we know what it was like? It burned seventy-five years ago and no one living remembers it. We have no pictures or plans--just the old foundation and that covered with dirt and trees--only an archaeologist could be happy with it!"

John didn't give up easily. He asked them to give him some time--a month or two--and he would see what could

The old lady herself, tall and angular, opened the heavy, oak door. She had pine-cone pincers attached with a black ribbon to her dark-gray, silk dress.

John and Minnie were able to find some information about the plantation and Minnie thought she might be found. Then he and Minnie started searching and asking in local historical societies, museums and libraries.

The Selma librarian suggested they see Miss Belle Laidley Argent, who knew much of such matters. When John phoned her, she seemed ready to help him and said to come by at two P. M.

Because of local custom, he then told her he was a black man. He thought he heard her catch her breath, then she said, "I have known many black people all my life--maybe more blacks than whites. So you come over at two P. M.!"

Eighty-eight-year-old Miss Argent, whose mother's family had owned the Laidley Plantation from ante-bellum days, lived in one of Selma's old, square, brick mansions on Mabry Street near Sturdivant Hall. A wrought-iron fence surrounded her wide lawns and she had a collection of Confederate mementoes that would delight the most discriminating connoisseur.

John was a little apprehensive. He had seen these beautiful, gracious, old mansions, but blacks in years past would go there only as servants, and never through the front door. They rang the doorbell. In a moment,

the old lady herself, tall and angular, opened the heavy, oak door. She had pince-nez glasses attached with a black ribbon to her dark-gray, silk dress.

After John introduced himself and Minnie, they were led into a Victorian parlour with gleaming, brocaded furniture of another era, marble fireplace, family portraits, oil landscapes, thick carpeting with a floral pattern and bookcases overflowing with books and albums. Across the wide entry hall an open grand piano and harp seemed ready for a musicale.

John explained their hope to find a picture, plan or description of the Tugaloo Plantation mansion that had burned in 1891. His family had lived on that land for 150 years and they hoped to re-construct some of its history; (he didn't mention "to re-construct the house itself." That would have entailed too much explanation.)

Overcoming her natural reserve, Miss Argent was warming to them perceptably. These young people were interested in important things as she was. "I may be able to help you, but first, will you have some tea and scones? We learned to love them when we used to go to Scotland every summer, back a hundred years before you were born!"

John and Minnie quickly accepted and a moment later

Miss Argent nodded. "You can message me telling what do you know about Tugaloo House?"

underwent a quizzical inspection from a plump, black housekeeper who probably had never before seen Indians and blacks sitting in that sacred parlour. Miss Argent addressed the servant, "Camellia, I think I just noticed the odor of those fresh-baked scones!"

"Yassum! Yo' sho' did!"

"Well then, Camellia, I have two guests and we have some work to do, so please bring us a large platter of those scones with some tea and butter and cream. Young people have a large appetite, 'tis true, so bring out the whole batch!"

"Yassum! Ah sho' will!" Camellia smiled broadly.

Now Miss Argent was actually smiling at them. "You are Mr. Johnson, correct? But I have trouble with Miss Minnie's name."

Minnie laughed. "Everybody always does. It's an English translation of a Cheyenne Indian name. But you would have more trouble with the Indian name. My great-grandfather was called Two-Gun-Man and that is now our family name. But please, just call us John and Minnie!"

Miss Argent nodded. "That I can manage. But tell me, what do you know about Tugaloo House?"

Johnson's and then the crowridges, but after Grace Lee Johnson died, there wasn't much visiting. There was no

"Just about nothing," John responded. "Our family own the land now, that is, the central part of the old plantation where the foundation of the house is, and our ancestors came to Alabama in 1816 when Mordecai Johnson founded the plantation. They built the house a few years later."

John and Minnie were now having their first scones and discovering why Miss Argent was partial to these culinary treats.

"Have you ever heard of Jean-Louis Renaud?," Miss Argent looked toward John. He thought she looked uncommonly bright (and he was right.)

The French name sounded familiar, but John couldn't place it. He shook his head.

"Please have some more tea," she offered. "John, I'm quite an old lady despite appearances, (she downright grinned,) and it happens that I lived at Laidley Plantation as a girl. It's still there, of course, but we moved into town many years ago. I happen to remember when Tugaloo House burned down. I was fourteen or fifteen then. Our family had been friends with the Mordecai Johnson's and then the Trowbridges, but after Grace Lee Johnson died, there wasn't much visiting. There was no

longer family to speak of at Tugaloo." She stopped for a moment, embarrassed. "But that fire caused a stir at our plantation. I remember my grandfather said both plantation houses were built by the same builder and the plans were quite similar. He was worried that if Tugaloo could burn so quickly, then Laidley might also burn, so he had big cisterns of water installed at the top of the house for fire protection.

"I know that Laidley House was built by an architect who came from Charleston, South Carolina in the 1820's, and he built a number of big houses for planters in this area. His name was Jean-Louis Renaud. He would typically use timber from the site and burn bricks for each job if the right clay could be found. Many of the houses were in the Greek-Revival style which was all the rage then--pillars, porticoes, pediments etc., as Laidley is."

John interrupted, "Now I begin to remember hearing about Jean-Louis Renaud. It was in architecture classes at Tuskegee!"

"So you were at Tuskegee!" The old lady smiled. She knew it already. These guests were gente de razón educated people--the term came back to her from somewhere.

"In our family the girls kept scrap-books of memorabilia. My grandmother, my mother, my sister and I have always done that--even today I still add a few things. Much of it is nonsense, but after many years, some of it is important historically, at least to some people. We would always keep sketches, pictures and news clippings about the houses and families hereabout.

"My grandmother saved a good deal about when the Yankees were here and all their carryings-on! Once in a while there were obituaries or news stories referring to the very early days long before the War Between the States.

"I recollect a couple stories about Jean-Louis Renaud. It was in the 1930's. Let me just have a look in this album." She downright grinned again. "I have an album for about every five years!" She took a large, velvet-covered album from a shelf, placed it on a mahogany table for a couple minute's perusal. "Ah, here they are! You see, these two. One from the Selma Times-Journal and one from the Montgomery Advertiser!"

The clippings were dated in 1936 and told of the papers of Jean-Louis Renaud being given by a descendant to the Historical Museum in Montgomery. The Selma article

said that Renaud had designed and built many great houses in central Alabama in the great days of the Cotton Kingdom. These included Laidley and the much-lamented Tugaloo Plantation house which had been lost in a ~~burned~~ fire in 1891!

John was beside himself with excitement. "This is wonderful! What a find! We will drive over there to see what they have. I can't believe we have discovered so much so quickly! We had nothing to go on. The Trowbridge and Johnson records were probably all lost in the fire. Mr. Mordecai Trowbridge was the last of that family and he died some years ago."

Miss Argent looked sharply at John. "Young man, I recall perfectly well when Emjay Trowbridge died. My sister and I went to that funeral--it was 1950. The governor was there, and we all walked up to that beautiful Johnson family burial ground in the trees, up beyond where they say the old house stood. They said it had started as an Indian burial ground.

"We all admired Mr. Trowbridge though we didn't see so much of him in later years--he was always traveling about--Mobile, New York, Europe." She clapped her hands

at a large calico cat which had tentatively peered around a rich portière. The guests jumped and the cat beat a hasty retreat. "Excuse me, but that cat does like to come in here to scratch the chairs."

John now remarked, "If you were at that funeral perhaps you remember some little black faces. I was one of those! That's our burial ground also. All of our family are there since 1816. Mr. Trowbridge was a great friend of ours over the years. I can remember how upset my father was when Emjay died. We weren't sure we could get along without his help. We were tenant farmers on his land then, but have managed to buy some of the land since. We kids always went up there to the cemetery with my great-grandmother Dora. She was more than half Creek Indian and was almost 100 when she died last year. We would take care of the graves, plant flowers, and Grandma Dora told us about the old days. She said Chief Tugaloo himself was buried there!"

Mordecai bought the land from Tugaloo at the beginning." Miss Argent had been listening carefully. One could almost see her adding these bits of information to her scrap-book collection. "Tell me," she asked, "The

Cheyenne were on the plains, not here in the South."

"Oh," John responded, "We have built some little rental houses at Tugaloo. Minnie's sister and brother-in-law (from Craig Air Force Base,) live in one of them and Minnie came visiting. She's from Montana. When I saw her, we fell in love! I tell her it's because she reminds me of my Grandmother Dora! Anyway, we expect to get married soon!" Minnie smiled demurely, not at all like a fierce, civil-rights agitator.

Miss Argent grinned in her disconcerting way. "Be very careful with Minnie. If her father and brothers are Two-Gun-Men they'll come after you if you don't conduct yourself properly!"

When they left an hour later, they all felt they had found new friends. Miss Argent had told them how Argent meant money in French, but that her father, a handsome rascal from New Orleans, had the name but not the money when her parents were married. Her Grandfather Laidley opposed but did not prevent the marriage. The result was that her childhood had been a pleasurable progression from one resort to another--Saratoga, White Sulphur, Scotland, Havana, Biarritz, Monte Carlo, while her father

spent the Laidley money. Only about 1895 her mother had sent the wastrel packing and they moved to this house in Selma.

Miss Argent told them she would keep looking to find what she could about Tugaloo Mansion. She and the calico cat stood framed by the vines and gingerbread of her wide veranda as the guests walked to the ornate, iron gate at the front. They turned to wave.

For her it had been a delightful interlude. Being rich was all right, but being lonely in a mansion was not so enviable. She couldn't remember ever before entertaining black people in the parlour--certainly not Indians! But it had been fun! She had asked them to visit again. Times were changing!

"We have never had money to employ staff to properly record acquisitions as we receive them. When we don't know they are there, they are useless to the public beyond the fact that we are warehousing them for another generation. But that's all another story. If you want to come here any week day from ten to five, we will be happy to show you the Renaud collection. Understand, it is not arranged or categorized--it is just as we received it thirty years

ago!"

Within the week John and Minnie headed across the Pettus Bridge to Montgomery in his 1963 Ford. When they had made telephone inquiries to the Historical Museum, the curator at first said there was no record of Renaud papers but that he would consult with Mrs. Elvenia Cunningham who, though retired, came in occasionally as a volunteer. "She worked here in the early days--from about 1920 or so up to 1950. If anyone knows about acquisitions in 1936, she should know," said the curator.

A couple days later, the curator, Dr. Crawford Crump, had called back to say that Mrs. Cunningham had led them directly to the Renaud papers which were stored, uncatalogued in another building. "I'm afraid we don't know what we have here and it's a tragedy," said Crump. "We have never had money to employ staff to properly record acquisitions as we receive them. When we don't know they are there, they are useless to the public beyond the fact that we are warehousing them for another generation. But that's all another story. If you want to come here any week day from ten to five, we will be happy to show you the Renaud collection. Understand, it is not arranged or categorized--it is just as we received it thirty years

ago!" "I'm sure it's beautiful enough," Minnie admitted.

It was autumn of 1965. After the National Voting-Rights Bill had been signed by President Lyndon Johnson in August, many Dallas County blacks, including the Tugaloo Johnsons had registered. On the surface Selma seemed calmer although plenty of un-reconstructed whites were still fulminating.

That spring, Minnie had participated in the great march from the Brown Chapel across the Pettus Bridge and on to Montgomery. That was at the end of March. She had a fair knowledge of this highway having walked the fifty miles with protestors who came from all over the country.

Recalling the earlier aborted marches when state troopers and sheriff's deputies with shocking violence had turned the marchers back, beating them mercilessly, Minnie shivered. "This bridge scares me!"

John, always something of an architect, reminded her that it was really quite a handsome bridge with a high center arch to permit passage of river boats. "One of these days we'll go down below Water Avenue to have a look. You can't see it properly from the highway. You have to go down to the river edge under the soapstone bluff."

"Oh, I'm sure it's beautiful enough," Minnie admitted, "But now it has a bad name that will be hard to live down. It's something like Dachau in Germany. It was a pleasant, little, country town until the Nazis ruined its good name with their concentration camp. Since last March, people all over the world who never heard of Selma or the Pettus Bridge, have very negative pictures stamped in their minds. But then, all towns and people have good sides and dark sides."

John's seventeen-year-old sister, Lucy, the prime civil-rights activist of the family, had missed all the exciting and bloody fracases of March, having providentially broken her leg at the beginning of that month in a fall from the hayloft of the old Green barn. She had since recovered but felt she had been cheated out of the greatest event of her lifetime. Sammy had infuriated her by saying, "Thank God, you broke your leg just in time. Better to get your leg broken in the barn than get your head broken down at the Pettus Bridge!"

Sammy and his policy still prevailed at the plantation--hard work, tend to business, live quietly, let the whites have their way with politics. The plantation prosperity

Crumps in Alabama but I'm a Buffalo, New York Crump.

Actually some of the employees around here like to tell
must not be jeopardized by any of his family publicly
making stands for causes, however just, that would
irritate the white community and draw attention.

So Minnie, who was working part-time in the office with
Laura, had been the sole representative of the plantation
in those historic days. Now she was remarking how quickly
they traversed this route by car--less than an hour for
what had taken them more than four days to walk.

The Beatles were singing on the radio. Playfully,
John glanced sideways at Minnie and asked if she didn't
think it was about time to get married. After all,
they had all registered to vote and that had been her
stipulation.

In a lighter mood, she joked, "Maybe so, since we're
going to a strange town without a chaperon."

Shortly thereafter, they had arrived at the curator's
office and were explaining to him what they hoped to find.
John asked Dr. Crump if he were related to the famous,
late "Boss" Crump of Memphis who had ruled Tennessee
politics for many a year.

Dr. Crump laughed, saying he was always being asked
that. "No, I'm a northern Crump. There are some local

Crumps in Alabama but I'm a Buffalo, New York Crump.

Actually some of the employees around here like to call me "Boss" Crump!" He chuckled, then led them across a courtyard to an adjacent building where the Renaud papers were stored. He took the papers from a wide drawer to a broad, empty table. "You can look through the material here. Please keep everything in the same order, in the event that it is arranged some way. We don't know. Perhaps our staff will get to it someday. After all, we've had it for less than thirty years!"

His eyes twinkled. "When you are through or want copies of something, let us know. We close at five."

So they started looking. They discovered that the papers were in chronological order except that specific projects and related papers were gathered together in folders under the date of inception. The papers appeared to run from 1818 in South Carolina and up to 1858, with the latest on the top.

Such methodical arrangement made their task a simple one and they breathed thanks to Jean-Louis or his heirs for helping them in that way. They found the Laidley and Tugaloo folders near the bottom.

As he opened the Tugaloo folder, John felt a mixture

of reverence and ebullience. At the bottom was a torn scrap of spotted paper on which Jean-Louis had noted: "On September 20, 1820 dined at the Antrim Plantation and there met Mr. Mordecai Johnson and his wife. I had been attempting to persuade the Antrims to build a great house, but they were quite satisfied with their large, log house.

"The Johnsons, on the other hand, were already thinking of building, for, as they said, they had been living in tiny, dark cabins and Indian shacks for long enough at their plantation which is called Tugaloo. Since they had no specific plans in mind, I showed them my book of plans and urged them all to come over to Laidley, nearby, where I was just completing a new great-house in the Greek-temple style. ~~and Laidley. All fine specimens. There were~~

"Next day, they drove over. Mrs. Martha Johnson was particularly taken with the new house and begged her husband for one just like it. He immediately acquiesced. Then we entered into an agreement for my services"

In the next paper, Jean-Louis told of his first visit to Tugaloo in October 1820. He had talks with the owners, surveyed the site, investigated the availability of materials, and using Mordecai's slaves, started preliminary preparations such as excavation and creation of great

piles of lumber from the trees of the old forest.

Construction would begin in April 1821.

John was grinning ear to ear. "It's all here, it's all here!" Jean-Louis had meticulously kept the papers concerning the project and by great, good luck they had survived the years as the house itself had not. He copied his correspondence and kept the replies--letters to the owners, the suppliers in Selma, Mobile, New Orleans and Philadelphia. The plans were there and records about materials, labor costs, etc.

There were a number of notations about master-carpenter Solomon Schneider, and his replacement, Maximus, who belonged to Mordecai Johnson, and about Maximus' two younger brothers, Duke and Kader. All fine carpenters. These were names John had heard about in family legends. Also there were references to brick-maker Jack Grant, a free negro, and members of the Tugaloo household and various Tugaloo blacks who worked on the project. The house had been completed in 1822 but the Johnson carpenters had worked for Jean-Louis on other projects for several years.

The latest note in the folder was from 1849 when Jean-Louis had returned for a short visit and described the Tugaloo Mansion as he found it that year.

John's eyes were sparkling. "Look! See this Maximus? Remember our big, oak, dining-room table? I restored it and re-finished in 1956 before I left for Tuskegee. That old table was built by Uncle Maximus and not only that, but he sawed the wood from the great Tugaloo Pow Wow Oak that was hit by lightning in 1850! I can't tell you how many times we have heard that story and how important it is to the family. He's always called 'Uncle Maximus.' I'm not sure exactly how he fits in the family but he must have come from North Carolina as a young man when they migrated west.

"Oh, what a great find this is! It fills a void! So much we didn't know and wondered about. We must copy the entire Tugaloo collection so we can take it home to digest! And let's copy some of the Laidley folder too, for Miss Argent!" This they proceeded to do with Dr. Crump's assistance.

Before five, the job was done and they were driving west to Selma with their treasure. Dr. Crump had suggested they number the document copies as each was made so the sequence could be preserved. In future they would know if a copy was missing or out of place.

That evening, after supper at Sam and Bernice's house, the family appropriately gathered around the historic, oak table to examine the papers. Everybody was euphoric. These papers answered so many questions they had always had concerning the plantation.

Now they had not only the descriptions, dimensions and elevations of Tugaloo House which they had set out to find, but a wealth of information about their ancestors' life in that early time. All the stories that had come down to them by word-of-mouth, from Lucille, Dora and Emjay, could now be augmented with these written records.

The idea of re-building Tugaloo House so caught their imagination that they quickly abandoned the thought of any structure of modern design.

While this animated exchange proceeded, the phone rang. It was Miss Argent asking for John. She had found something that would interest him. She asked him to come by the following afternoon and not fail to bring Miss Minnie.

Next day at Miss Argent's, she showed them an old photograph she had found by accident in the back of an album. On the back of the picture was written "Tugaloo, 1867." Nothing more, but Miss Argent had done some sleuth

work, finding the place in the album where the photograph had originally been mounted. There her mother had written a lengthy caption in a spidery, Victorian hand: "May 1867, the day at Tugaloo when Grace Lee Johnson married J. Trowbridge. They are in the center and Millicent Laidley, Randolph and Estelle Laidley are at their left. At their right are the old Antrims who drove up with us in our carriage. It was a lovely day and a great crowd there with the house just filled with flowers. It seemed like the good, old days before the war. That's Mr. Unterdorf at the first pillar on their right, and Reverend Lansdowne from Selma, and some of Grace Lee's house servants that we always knew--that's Louise, Duke, Lucille and Augusta. They are standing with Maximus who was a master-carpenter in his younger days. Papa says that Maximus worked at Laidley one time in about 1851 when grandpa had the addition built on the house. *m happy you like this*

"Lucille is truly beautiful and they say Geoffrey Johnson, Grace Lee's brother, was the father of Lucille's twins before he got killed at Gettysburg. They certainly all have those remarkable gray eyes! Even Lucille!"

The photo was a good, partial view of the house with its four white pillars. In the foreground were some

blurred people and animals but those on the steps had managed not to move when the shutter did its work. Two white children are next to Lucille.

Miss Argent said, "Millicent Laidley was my mother. She's about seventeen there, and those are my grandparents."

"Wonderful," burst out John. "Do you know who this Lucille is? It's my grandfather's grandmother! That is, my great, great grandmother! She died at the old overseer's house at Tugaloo in 1920, but she's the one who told our family all the stories of the early days--she always lived in the Big House, until it burned, and she told of earlier times as well. And we still have those gray eyes! You should see my brother Sammy!"

"Yes, well good enough," Miss Argent rather sternly interposed, for she was involuntarily shocked by tales of ancient miscegenation. "I'm happy you like the photograph. It's a pleasure to be of use to someone at my age. Now will you ^{have} some more scones with me?"

"We certainly would be delighted to have some more."

Miss Argent rang a little bell she kept on a table. When Camellia appeared, the lady asked if there were any scones available.

"Dey sho' is, Miss Belle!"

"My guests and I would be pleased to have a platter-full
as we had, the first time they were here."

"Ah reckon yo' wants tea?"

"Oh yes, we must certainly have tea also."

Later, over tea, John recounted the results of the trip to the Montgomery museum on the previous day. He gave Miss Argent the copies they had made from the Laidley file and told her there was much more for anyone interested.

Minnie copied out the caption from the album, and they borrowed the valuable, old photograph to have it copied at a shop on Broad Street.

When the time came to go and John had thanked Miss Argent for her exceptional aid in his quest, she suddenly asked if they would like to hear a 'rendition.'

Mystified, they both agreed a 'rendition' would be pleasant. Thereupon, she rang her tinkling bell once more. Camellia appeared.

"Camellia, our guests would like to hear a 'rendition!'"

"Oh, Miss Belle, ah ain't 'customed to no public 'pearances 'ceptin' in da Baptist Church!"

"Now Camellia, we've practiced many times and this is my house, not the public." Then she led them into the

room opposite and sat down at the Baldwin grand. All the while Camellia was muttering little protests. But when Miss Argent started softly playing Go Down Moses, Camellia seemed transfixed and then in a beautiful ~~the~~ contralto began singing the old spiritual.

Their visit ended with that little, unexpected concert. Later, when they reached the front gate, they could hear from the open front door of the old mansion, way, but he hoped

"Go down Moses you rascals would be more circumspect

Way down in Egypt lan' or better still, he

Tell old Pharoah his house would be improved,

Let my people go..."

Mary and I arrived in Tuskegee in the autumn of 1909. With financial help from the self-renewing Johnson family education fund, Minnie was able to join Mary at Tuskegee to finish her college work.

At Christmas, the entire family gathered with friends at Sam's house around the fully-extended Togeloo Oak tree. Sam, still only Fifty-Five, was now the head of a numerous clan. They weren't sure how many were there, but only Lucy was missing and she had phoned from Pennsylvania. She was learning a lot in the north but she was unbelievably homesick. They were all cognizant of the great prosperity that

National events all had their echoes in Dallas County in the next few years.— The Civil Rights Movement, ~~bus~~, the assassination of Dr. King, the involvement of the nation in Vietnam.

Sammy had been just a little relieved when the family firebrand, Lucy, had won a scholarship to Haverford College in Pennsylvania. It was far away, but he hoped that when she returned, she would be more circumspect about her protest demonstrations, or better still, he hoped that race relations in Alabama would be improved.

John and Minnie had finally married in the autumn of 1965. With financial help from the self-renewing ~~old be~~ Johnson family education fund, Minnie was able to join ~~the~~ Jacklyn at Tuskegee to finish her college work. ~~she did~~

At Christmas, the entire family gathered with friends at Sam's house around the fully-extended Tugaloo Oak table. Sam, still only fifty-five, was now the head of a numerous clan. They weren't sure how many were there, but only Lucy was missing and she had phoned from Pennsylvania. She was learning a lot in the north but she was unbelievably homesick. ~~as he explained it~~

They were all cognizant of the great prosperity that

only recently had come to them, especially in this year of 1965. So after turkeys, stuffing, pork roasts, sweet-potato pies, biscuits and butter and jam, mashed potatoes, corn, nuts, peach cobblers, ice cream, chocolate cake and a few other edibles had been attended to, they called for a speech from Sam. He was glowing with bonhomie induced a little by Laura's Tom and Jerrys, but largely by seeing this great, happy, family gathering.

He stood. "As you all know, I ain't one to make no public speeches. I'll have to leave that to Sammy here, and all the young ones. But I will tell you a little about a good friend we had, and without him we would be as pore as any black folk in Dallas County. Anyway, it's Mordecai Trowbridge--that's Emjay Trowbridge. He died fifteen years ago. He was a white man and he owned Tugaloo Plantation, but he was also a relation of ours. One time in 1945 we was up in the Burial Ground, him and me, and he explained it all to me. He didn't have no family left since his sons had died up north 'way back about 1912. So as he got older, he begun to sort of think of us as family, which we was, as he explained it. "You all have heard of Lucille, my great-grandma that

died over to the old overseer's house in 1920? Well, Emjay done told me she was the daughter of Mordecai Johnson, who founded Tugaloo Plantation. He's the big tombstone up in the Burial Ground. But Lucille was part black so she was a slave and that was the law, but she was beautiful. Mordecai raised her in the Big House along of his white son, Geoffrey. Then, Geoffrey and Lucille was in love and had twins that was as white as they come, with yellow hair and gray eyes. Then Geoffrey went and got killed in the War Between the States. Now them twins was Moses and Rose. Moses was my grandfather that was burned to death when the Big House burned down in 1891. You've all heard that from Grandma Dora, how he saved Miss Jane Johnson but got burned up doin' it.

Geoffrey and Miss Jane had another sister that was Grace Lee Johnson. She married Jonathan Trowbridge and their son was Emjay. He was all white, so he inherited the Plantation. But you can see we was all related!

"As I said, without no family and him gettin' older, Emjay got more interested in us, even though he had helped us a good deal over the years. But your ma here will tell you how pore we was, bein' tenant farmers. Me and my pa,

Fortney we had us a couple of tenant farms and we just sort of scraped by, but I guess we was just too dumb to be unhappy about it. We never knew nothin' else.

"So in 1945 Emjay come up here one time from Mobile and Sammy here was about twelve just arunnin' around full of energy like always, and Emjay was tellin' me how Sammy looked just like Moses used to look back in 1875 and he thought of Moses like a brother but he was really more like a cousin, if'n you can figure all that out. Anyway, family resemblance, see? So Emjay says to me, 'You know, times is changin'. Black folks has to get ready for the future. I want all your kids to go through college!' Now he says, 'That sounds good, but it takes work and brains, and it takes money.' And you know what he done? He give us one hundred thousand dollars, just like that, for a college fund. He says when the kids get old enough, you take out some of that money and you send them kids through college, every one of them! Don't never think that a white man ain't never helped a black man. I didn't know nothin' about that kind of money and I tell you, it scared me. I didn't know nothin' about interest.

But Emjay says, we'll put this money in the bank and Mr. Brownlow, the banker, he's an old friend. Mr. Brownlow can help you.

"Then Emjay says to me that this here plantation should belong to the blacks as much as to the white, maybe more with Grandma Dora bein' half-Indian and all and havin' you might say, a good Indian claim!

"So that's the way it all started. We could send Sammy to college and each of you when the time come. Emjay done said, 'Education is the key to the future.' And I remember it like it was yesterday, him saying all these here things you've all heard over and over from me and from Sammy-- He said, 'Stay out of trouble; Mind your own business; Work hard; Keep your bills paid; Don't buy nothin' you can't afford; Make sure the kids gets through college!'

"Well, we done all them things and it ain't always been easy. But havin' that money in the bank made it possible to start buyin' land as well as sendin' kids to college. So, sure enough, and it makes my head dizzy to think about it all, but we bought back the plantation bit by bit. Now it seems we's doin' pretty good, but don't never forget we had a good friend that helped us more ways than I can

reckon. Now, that's where we's been and Sammy here
can tell you where we's goin' from here!" We know it will

The family applauded as Sam sat down. For example,

Now Sammy arose. "Thanks, Dad. This has been a banner
year for the Plantation and for the family. Last year we
knew nothing of Geoffrey Trowbridge up in Boston. Now
he has left us a sizeable estate. Geoffrey's mother was
Rose, twin sister of Moses, and daughter of Lucille. Friends
We must get someone to make a big chart so these family
relationships are clear to everybody. We know we are
black, but we are also somewhat white and somewhat Indian!"
The listeners laughed.

"It seems like ages ago, but when we learned of the
inheritance, we thought of building a new 'Tugaloo Center'
that would serve all the people of our part of the county.
It would have meeting rooms, a gymnasium, a library,
perhaps a medical clinic. This is too big a project to
hurry into. Everybody has had good ideas and we are
putting together a plan.

"John's idea to re-build Tugaloo House in its original
form now has the support of most of us. We want it to
be a memorial to all our ancestors. John and Minnie were

of trouble. Now the South is changing in all ways. We are clever and fortunate enough to re-discover the plans and description of the original mansion. We know it will need some altering for its new purpose. For example, the old house had fifteen-foot ceilings on the ground floor and twelve-foot ceilings on the second floor. We must think how to use that space effectively.

"John has been our pinch-hitting architect for our jobs at Tugaloo New Forest but he is consulting with friends at Tuskegee and Montgomery. We hope to find an experienced architect who specializes in this kind of restoration. We want it solid and fireproof this time. So this is our important project for 1966 and the years to come. This will take time.

"Now, about the rules of conduct that Pop just told us came from Emjay. I have heard them from Pop many times and you have all heard them like a litany from me many times. They are all perfectly valid and make a formula for success in life for anyone, especially black people making their way up from tenant farming.

"Lucy would get upset with me when I added the stricture: Let the white folks take care of politics. Emjay didn't say that but it was implied in Mind your own business and keep

out of trouble. Now the South is changing in this matter but you know the whites are dragging their feet. We all registered to vote this year. Who would have thought that possible even two years ago? But I'm still conservative, especially where the plantation is concerned. I feel now we must give the whites some time to get used to the changes.

"Junius here, and our little sister Lucy, are all for the millenium, right now, today. But I feel, in political matters, we must proceed with some caution and not risk what we have gained.

"I'm not a literary person, but I remember a quotation from Candide, by Voltaire, that is apt. 'We must cultivate our garden.' It's a recipe for happiness. Tend to your own business and don't be devastated when you can't change the world. Here at Tugaloo we have a very large garden-- 1300 acres and we may even buy more if we see the opportunity --but it's a garden large enough to keep us all busy and happy." Thus Sammy ended his speech.

When Lucy returned from the little Quaker college in Pennsylvania, she had not discovered that a distant relation, Kader's Tom, had been a student there long before. However, she had learned something of non-violence and 'friendly persuasion.' She was more mature,

less impetuous, but no less determined to change the world.

She set about altering Sammy's cautious approach to the Civil Rights Movement, for the battles were only partially won. Unknown to her, she was continuing the work started by Sophronia Ramsey, the tiny Quaker lady who, with her little collection of books, came to Tugaloo in 1817 and, unawed by the enormous task, started teaching black people to prepare them for a better life.

Up in the Burial Ground with Grandma Dora in the 1950s, Lucy had tended the grave with the unusual name, Sophronia, but she knew nothing of that valiant, much-loved lady.

Sophronia's name meant prudence. The dictionary tells us that word implies "caution in practical matters, provident care in management of resources, good judgment, wisdom in looking ahead." Sammy perfectly personified all these traits. His family leadership in these critical years of change had made a vibrant success of the plantation and their varied enterprises. The family had been lifted in twenty years from perpetual poverty to a new salient position in the black middle

class. Now, they must choose, as other new middle-class blacks across the country, what their conduct would be vis-à-vis the Civil Rights Movement and the great black under-class.

The barriers were down sufficiently so that some of them could live in fine neighborhoods, drive expensive cars, join clubs, sit on boards of directors, or get elected to public office. It would be pleasant to insulate themselves, to forget where they came from--to turn their backs on the black blacks who were still down there in ignorance and poverty at the bottom of the heap.

Until 1970, Sammy's "prudent" policy prevailed at Tugaloo. The Johnsons helped the Movement financially but avoided open adherence. That year Lucy returned from Haverford.

A few months later she married Junius Randolph, who had had his eye on her for some time. Sammy and the family agreed that Junius should have 100 shares of Tugaloo Corporation stock. Sammy said, "We have a live-in extension agent in Roosevelt Calhoun and now we will have a live-in attorney!" Minnie Two-Gun-Man,

John's wife, now home from Tuskegee, also got a familial hundred shares. So these four persuasive activists were thrust into the top council of the plantation. They managed at last to convince Sammy and all the Johnsons that they must participate openly and fully in the Movement.

Lucy employed every philosophical argument going back to St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, 13, 6.-"Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." (She omitted other verses telling the Hebrews, "Obey them that have rule over you and submit yourselves.") She quoted the United States Constitution, Abe Lincoln, Dr. King and a host of others to overcome Sammy's reservations. Sammy was, in truth, on her side and by 1970 felt the plantation was safe from bigoted whites.

Then, the Johnsons of Tugaloo, armed with economic independence, hard work and a righteous cause, became civil rights champions.

We will end our story there. In the years following, a new Tugaloo House rose on the plantation. Outwardly, it was the image of its great predecessor, imposing and

beautiful. But this time it was built of brick with frames of concrete and steel for both house and gleaming, white pillars. They built it next to the old, vaulted brick foundations which were partially exposed and presented to visitors as archaeological digs.

Several years later, the new center opened with the Tugaloo Pow Wow Oak table glowing as centerpiece of the library. The governor and the mayor of Selma were there along with numerous dignitaries and black and white friends including 97-year-old Belle Laidley Argent and Camellia, whom John had brought out from Selma. They had a group picture taken at the new entrance with Belle standing approximately where her mother had stood near a century earlier.

For the celebration, banquet tables were set up outside. As part of the entertainment, John and Minnie's twin sons, five-year-old Geoffrey and Tug, led their cousins in a spirited Indian dance, taught them by Minnie and Lizzie. The children had Indian costumes and went at it with a will. How extraordinarily like another happy festival in that same spot 150 years before! These children were half-Indian from their mother, and what from their father? If the reader has read this story faithfully, he will know that from their father, they were a rich, new amalgam.

One thing certain! They were from Tugaloo and they belonged to Tugaloo!!