

# GREAT BLACK WOMEN

## This Week—Marion Anderson

Marion Anderson born in 1908 of parents who had formerly lived in Virginia.

Marion's father died when she was a very young child. She was the oldest of three girls.

With no father in the home its quite understandable that the family knew hardship. Marion spent much time caring for her two younger sisters. It was a happy home she lived in though poor. There was always company around, Church members on Sunday, neighbors and friends the rest of the week.

Music was a favorite form of fun around the Anderson home, even when the girls were very young. The three of them would spend much time singing. They all had rich, full voices, however Marion's voice was the best.

When Marion was eight years old the Mrs. Anderson had saved enough money to buy a piano. Marion did not dodge her household chores even though she spent much time practicing and singing.

Marion sang in the children's choir, however her voice was so impressive that she was soon invited to sing in the adult chorus.

As choirs go, there was some rumblings. Some refused to yield their places to youth and others made threatening remarks, but Alexander Robinson, an understanding man with a great combination of skill, and a deep appreciation of natural voices was able to keep everyone reasonably contented. At the same time he was able to give Marion every opportunity possible to bring out her natural talent. He nurtured the young, tender beautiful voice as one would nurture a beautiful rose. Marion's voice developed beautifully under his direction.

Concerts were given for her by many church auxiliaries. She soon became famous among the Black Church social circles. All

this while she was yet in school. Suppers, cantatas, plays or pageants, Marion Anderson was the headliner.

By the time she finished High School Marion was famous in and around Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Choral Society a congregated group of singers sent her to a well known white contralto, Agnes Reifsnnyder. Here Marion studied and learned many fundamentals of good singing. From here she went to study with Boghetti a celebrated teacher who, when he heard Marion wept in appreciation.

Boghetti entered her in a contest in 1925 with three hundred singers. Marion was a winner. From this as winner she was to be a guest solist with the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra in Lewisohn Stadium. As a result of this she was started in her way to fame. In 1930 she received a Rosenwald fellowship and sailed for Europe where she studied for the next four years.

The place chosen for her debut, her great test, was the Paris Opera House. Every available seat and every foot of standing space was taken. She enraptured the audience with her singing. They thundered their approval upon her completion of her repertoire which had been sung in English, Russian, French and German. All of this, however, lost itself in tumultuous acclaim as Marion sang Negro Spirituals.

Her mother seated in the center of the opera house blinked back the tears as she realized her joy...she felt too, that Marion's father, dead these many years, was also happy.

In 1935 on December 30th Marion made her American debut. This acclamation was followed, later by an unfortunate experience. At the height of her career, in 1939 she was not allowed to sing in Convention

Hall, owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution. This incident in the Nation's Capital brought forth the nation's leading lady to champion against such prejudice and bigotry. Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt had a platform before the monument to President Lincoln. Thousands of people gathered in eloquent respect to hear the voice of Marion Anderson as she sang Negro spirituals.

Miss Anderson has given upwards to sixty concerts a year. She has toured Europe, Asia and South America as well as the United States with her music. She extended her activities in 1955 when she fulfilled a life long dream, that of singing the role of Ulrica in Verdi's A MASKED BALL. This great contralto made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera House, thus in 1955 she became the first woman of the Black Race to become a member of the company at the famous old Opera House.

Many honors have been placed upon Miss Anderson, among them the honors received when the U.S. States Department sent her on a tour of the far east in the fall in 1957. In this position of ambassadress of good will Miss Anderson made friends in remote corners, where otherwise this country had been regarded with suspicion. On this tour she traveled forty-thousand miles to twelve nations.

We give tribute to a great lady, who has entered, and passed through her hall of fame, leaving an indelible mark, one that will be remembered for generations to come.

Miss Anderson has been called "the world's greatest contralto," in fact, Toscanini, after having heard her sing, once said to her, "a voice like yours is heard once in a hundred years."

### Wedding date set Sunday

Mr. and Mrs. Warren Robinson, Sr. long time residents of Portland announce the marriage of their son Warren L. (Robbie) Robinson, Jr. to Miss Paulette Hinton, Sunday October 4, 1970 at 3 p.m. at Bethel A.M.E. Church, 5828 N.E. 8th Avenue. The wedding ceremony will have a few invited guests of the family with the public being invited to the reception at 4:30 p.m. at Bethel A.M.E. Church.

Warren Robinson, Jr. is working on his master's degree at University of Oregon. His father Warren Robinson, Sr. is a Medical Research Assistant for the Oregon Regional Primate

Center. Robbie's mother is employed as a resource aide at Portland Residential Man Power Center.

Miss Hinton is a Junior attending the University of Oregon majoring in Business Education. A vivacious 5'4", 19 year old who plans to continue her education.

Congratulations and continued success

Mr./Mrs. Stanley Cage

Congratulations on your first issue. Hope you continued success.

Keith and Molly Burns

Best Wishes to you and much success on your endeavor.

Mr./Mrs. William Spencer



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### Blacks buying fine jewelry

Black people are showing a greater interest in fine jewelry than ever before. This is according to a nationwide consumer survey commissioned by Union Carbide Corporation, a major producer of synthetic gems.

Black people are saying that economically, they are better able to afford fine jewelry items that they want and may have wanted all along.

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