

# Family Album Northwest

By Kathryn Hall Bogle

(This is the third in a series of reminiscences taken from the pages of the family album of Beatrice Morrow Cannady-Taylor. The pictures and the book belongs to Ivan Cannady, her son. Augmentation has been made, where it might be helpful, by Kathryn Hall Bogle to tell the story of a lady who once lived in Portland.)

Mrs. E. D. Cannady, in attacking racial prejudice "wore many hats" in the struggle. She used every avenue of communication open to her at that period to focus the attention of the white majority on the problems confronting minority persons in their midst.

In 1916 and 1917, *The Portland Telegram* and the *Oregonian* were publishing her letters to the Editor decrying public attitudes on the lynching of Black people. She pointed out that the lynchings went unpunished and even went unsought. About that time, also, we see the Cannady name connected with "Bill 304" in the Oregon legislature in which the designers sought to eliminate from the state constitution some objectionable clauses concerning the rights of Black people.

Mrs. Cannady spoke in many churches and won support for the cause she espoused. At the Lincoln Methodist Episcopal Church, 52nd and S.E. Lincoln Street in Portland the congregation voted unanimously to ask U.S. Senator Charles L. McNary to use his influence to pass the McKinley anti-lynching bill before Congress. The church congregation had just heard Mrs. E. D. Cannady, as associate editor of *The Advocate*, tell them why they should let their wishes be known in the country's capitol. Senator McNary replied by wire promptly and promised his support for the Dyer McKinley bill.

For the same bill, Mrs. Cannady spoke in the Willamette University Chapel in Salem. This time she was introduced as the Northwest director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. She gave her audience a history of this movement. From the "Willamette Collegian" we learn that the Alpha Phi Alpha sorority entertained for her at luncheon after which she held student conferences. She went on to address the Pi Gamma Mu fraternity at four o'clock, and then was the principal speaker at a banquet that evening for the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

As early as 1918, Mrs. Cannady was in correspondence with Roland Hayes, a tenor she had heard sing in one of her trips to the eastern seaboard. She thought he had a brilliant career ahead of him and urged him to come to Portland to sing in concert. Hayes declined at first because of the great distance to be covered and the uncertainties of drawing enough of an audience to make it worthwhile financially.

Mrs. Cannady promised the young artist \$150.00 for himself and his accompanist, Lawrence Brown, to perform in a joint recital. Mr. Hayes consented and was presented by Mrs. Cannady at the Masonic Temple in Pythian Hall. The concert was a success, and the next year Mrs. Cannady brought Mr. Hayes back to Portland, this time to the Little Theatre up on Twenty Third and Washington streets. Roland Hayes's concertizing was soon picked up by Ellison-White and a network of concert managers across the nation and around the world.



We noted that in Portland, when he came in 1918, Hayes was the house guest of the Cannadys because there was no hotel that would receive Black persons as paying guests.

The "largest mixed audience ever to gather in Portland" was the audience who, on the evening of Friday, July 25, 1919 came to hear Dean William Pickens, Yale student, noted author and lecturer; came at the behest of Mrs. Cannady.

Governor Ben Olcott flew in his plane from Salem to welcome Dean Pickens to Oregon. Governor Olcott came, the faded clipping says, in his "aviator" garments so as to keep his appointment time. Mayor George L. Baker was on hand to welcome Dean Pickens to the city. Mrs. Cannady had arranged it all very well. There were no vacant seats.



Mrs. Cannady (first row center) with a group of Bahai members in 1926.

Within five or six years, Mrs. Cannady had gained enough confidence to present J. Rosamond Johnson (author of "Lift Every Voice and Sing") and Taylor Gordan in concert at Portland's Public Auditorium. The event of April 4, 1927, was called "A Programme of Negro Spirituals." Seats went from 50¢ each to the choicest for \$2.20 (which included the war tax). The crowds came. Mrs. Cannady had conducted sales and advertising from her offices in the Macleay Building on Washington Street, and again she had managed well.

Spearheading action for the "Colored" populace, Mrs. Cannady, formally representing the (Oregon) Association of Colored Women's Clubs, threw herself into an effort to bar the showing in Portland of the film, "Birth of a Nation." The March 28, 1918, morning *Oregonian* records that "soon after the action by the City Council" (weighted against the barring by one vote) Mrs. Cannady "broke down and wept bitterly in the council chambers because she

had failed to get the picture stopped. She said she had gone for a week with little sleep and irregular meals and the strain was too great after her mission failed."

She lost that battle but won her war - for the theatre owner himself decided to show the picture but also decided to run it but one week. He made his announcement to the press beforehand and kept his word.

Within the time frame of the early 1920s, Portland was dotted with signs saying "We cater to white trade only," and in town, one (if one was Black) could shop in these stores but could not sit at most restaurants to have a bite to eat. Literally hundreds of signs were removed from eating houses and other places through the quiet efforts of Mrs. Cannady. Her method was to go to the authorities at the places and after a brief "conference," the sign would come down and when she left, the proprietors were "thinking."

Her speeches at colleges gained acclaim for her and her cause as many academics looked upon Mrs. Cannady as a "great personality, a keen mind, as efficient and well trained."

From Pacific College in Newberg, Oregon in 1929, Levi T. Pennington, President of Pacific College, writes: "I do not think of any of all my acquaintance, man, woman, white or Black, who has made more outstanding contributions to the improvement of race relationships than has Mrs. Cannady. In movements for civic, religious, social, industrial, or in-

ternational betterment, she is a figure of consequence -- She has spoken repeatedly in Newberg. We are always glad to have her before our college audience."

Dr. Norman F. Coleman, president of Reed College responded more than once to a call from Mrs. Cannady to be a speaker on the platform with her. Dr. G. Bernard Noble, then professor of Political Science at Reed, writes: "Mrs. Cannady has been very helpful to us from time to time in bringing to us leaders of her people who have contributed materially in promoting understanding and better feelings between the races -- She has herself visited us repeatedly at our request bringing helpful information and stimulating suggestions on the vital subjects of the relations between whites and Negroes. For this we at the college have been very grateful."

In 1929 the Portland Council of Churches nominated Mrs. Cannady for the Harmon Award for an "outstanding contribution toward improvement of race relations." The award did not come to her, but her local community was solid in their belief that Mrs. Cannady deserved it.

The Cannady album contains dozen of endorsements for Mrs. Cannady's nomination to receive this prestigious national honor. Riffing through the pages we see one letter written by Saidie Orr Dunbar, chairman of the Department of Public Welfare for the General Federation of Women's Clubs saying "all Oregon would be pleased with any recognition that Mrs. Cannady might receive for her unselfish service."

From J.J. Handsacker of the Northwestern office of the National Council for Prevention of War: "Mrs. Cannady has the ability to see things both in the large and the small and give herself equally to both."

From the Oregon Prison Association where Mrs. Cannady served as a board member, functioning on the committee for prison investigation and on the committee for Women's Interests, the Associated President, Mrs.



Millie Trumbull offers: "I have been in a position to watch her work and her services in this field have been invaluable."

From Portland Electric Power Company, Franklin T. Griffith, president of the company wrote: "Mrs. Cannady is an able and sincere woman. If anyone in Portland is entitled to the Harmon Award, I think Mrs. Cannady is that person."

From the City of Portland, Board of Motion Picture Censors, Eleanor T. Caldwell writes: "she has been invaluable to us" and "we have found her judgement of a very high quality."

From Bethel A.M.E. Church over the signature of the Rev. Daniel G. Hill we hear a sincere affirmation: "an outstanding character, an ambassador of good will between the racial groups. Inter-racial good will in the city today is a living tribute to her (Mrs. Cannady's) indefatigable efforts and service."

The First A.M.E. Zion Church and its pastor, the Rev. W.R. Lovell says of Mrs. Cannady: "she has been an untiring, unselfish and unassuming advocate of better understanding and better feeling between the races."

**Next Week:** More about this exciting lady of the 1920s.

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## WHY OREGONIANS ARE VOTING NO #7

"The mess in Iraq and Iran points out the need for having the nuclear option,"

says Mrs. Marjorie K. Lessey, Chairman, Women & Energy

"The fighting in the Middle East and the shut off of major oil supplies has resulted in leaders of the western world again agreeing that our energy needs cannot be met without nuclear power. Our very security depends on developing our own energy resources including nuclear power to replace OPEC oil. Measure 7 would deny Oregon the nuclear option. Join me in voting NO on 7."

Mrs. Marjorie K. Lessey, Chairman, Women & Energy St. Helens, Oregon



Oregon loses if Ballot Measure 7 wins. We lose the option until the 21st Century to use additional nuclear power when and if we need it. This means less energy independence and increased reliance for America on OPEC oil. Oregon jobs and growth are also at stake. Higher energy costs could result. Keep the nuclear option open.

### VOTE NO #7

The anti-nuclear ballot measure that would effectively ban an important energy resource.

Oregonians Against Banning the Nuclear Option, 607 Oregon Bank Building, 319 S.W. Washington, Portland, OR 97204. Co-Chairpersons: Mary Ropiequet, Dr. Bernard Spinrad. Treasurer: Richard Russell

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### FROM THE FRONT DOOR

BY TOM BOOTHE

From the front door, I wish to speak to the children of our community regarding education and the process of learning. Especially, the children between the age of (6) years and (18) years old.

- Children, knowledge and understanding is the basis of all you will ever be. However, you cannot have knowledge without LEARNING, and you cannot learn without allowing yourself to be taught.

Be willing to learn all you can - remember that every experience is a lesson; and a lesson remembered provides you with understanding.

- Understanding is to remember knowledge well enough to apply it in situations and circumstances as your savior.

- Learn to listen and be attentive and respectful to your family and teachers, for they all provide an opportunity for you to learn.

- Learn to know that your attitude is your most important asset. Keep it positive and it will serve you, allow it to become negative and it will destroy you.

- The single most important thing a young man or woman can do is to learn so to have KNOWLEDGE, so to UNDERSTAND. If you do this, when you are older you will have wisdom; and wisdom is like a good watch dog that will protect you and keep you safe and secure.

Children, you are the future.

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