

Black History Month

Continued

yet history nonetheless; people who knew of black valor in World War I, of droves trekking North for opportunity, of more than ten thousand protesting white violence in that Silent March down New York City's Fifth Avenue. They were folks possessed with, as Rampersad wrote, "a growing sense of certainty that black America was on the verge of something like a second Emancipation."

for Porgy and Bess

By JANUS ADAMS

On October 10, 1935, the curtain of

Broadway's Alvin Theatre ran up on George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*. The show's success was shared by two African American women in leading roles - Anne Brown as "Bess" and Eva Jessye behind the scenes as the show's choral director.

So arresting was the voice of Anne Wiggins Brown that the folk opera based on the novel *Porgy and Bess*. Significantly, as culturally Black as *Porgy and Bess* was, with its story of life on Catfish Row, all of the show's creative credits (contracts and royalties, too) went to whites: Du Bose and Dorothy Heyward for the novel and the show's book; George Gershwin for the musical score; his brother, Ira Gershwin, and Du Bose Heyward for the libretto. But the authenticity of he voices, sonorous and rich, came from the choral arrangements by African American composer Eva Jessye - the same woman of African descent. I am a Black woman. And

I am happy to be exactly as God made me."

for Press (Black)

By TONYA BOLDEN

*Black Dispatch*. This firecracker was launched in 1915 by one of Oklahoma's most indefatigable civil-rights leaders,

Roscoe Dunjee, brother of historian Drusilla Dunjee Houston. By midcentury, *Black Dispatch* had national readership, and its publisher was well-known for his stinging, winning editorials.

*Chicago Defender*. This was the brainchild of Robert Sengstacke Abbott, who was born on St. Simon's Island, Georgia. Abbott, who had a trade (printing) and a professional degree (law), started the newspaper in 1905 in his

landlady's kitchen with twenty cents and a little credit. A decade later, the paper had a circulation of about 250,000 with deep readership in the South.

*New Amsterdam News*. It was founded in 1909 by James H. Anderson, and in 1936, it was purchased by two doctors, Philip M.H. Savory and Clilan Bethany Powell (New York's first black radiologist), who became its editor-in-chief and the force behind the

# Meet Onnie Mae Cain

Born in Selma, Alabama she posed for this photo at approximately 20 years of age in 1947. Mrs. Cain was the proud mother of seven children. All of her children migrated west to Oregon. One of her daughters, Christina Cain, celebrates 23 years working for the Portland Development Commission. Christina is, in turn, passing along her family history to her own young daughter, Adriana. Onnie Mae would have wanted it that way.

Throughout the month of February, PDC employees will remember the rich heritage of African-Americans. The Commission is dedicated to working with the community to make our city a better place to live and work for all citizens.



Annie Wiggins Brown and Todd Duncan in "Porgy and Bess," 1935.

kmhd for the love of jazz

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