

The Black Press

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plagued with money problems very early on. Sporadic issues popped up whenever there was enough money

to do so. Sometimes weeks would go by without a paper.

After secretly saving a little money by the age of 12 and buying a copy of "The Columbian Orator," young Frederick Douglass began to learn that knowledge is power and words can be used as weapons.

The "Orator," a collection of essays on freedom, democracy and courage, helped Douglass develop an interest in writing his own feelings on the cruelty of slavery. Born a slave, he would experience the horrors of racism as a small child, never knowing his white father and being sent away from his mother as

a slave at the age of seven.

Raised by a white couple who denied him access to newspapers and books, young Douglass would find ways to sneak reading material into his room. He would also peek at books and newspapers when the family was out. Slowly he began learning more about slavery, racism and the many forms of discrimination practiced in America. He vowed to help change all that.

On Dec. 3, 1847 Douglass completed a long and difficult journey from runaway slave to newspaper editor. Founding the *North Star* with M.R. Delaney, he was quick to make

their point:

"It has long been our anxious wish to see, in this slave-holding, slave-trading, and Negro-hating land, a printing press and paper, permanently established under complete control and direction of the immediate victims of slavery and oppression."

Treated cruelly for years as a slave, Douglass was not about to sit back and be passive. He continued his verbal and written assault on this prejudiced nation, using his paper to lobby for black empowerment and political empowerment for his race. By the early 1850s, he had become

one of the most influential black leaders in the nation and had changed the publication's name to the *Frederick Douglass's Paper*. Separating himself from some earlier editors who may not have had the clear and distinct direction that Douglass did, his message was short and to the point:

"In respect to the Church and the government, we especially wish to make ourselves fully and clearly understood. With the religion of the one, and the politic of the other, our soul shall have no communion. These we regard as central pillars in the horrid temple of slavery. They

are both pro-slavery; and on that score, our controversy with them is based."

Devoting his life to the abolition of slavery and the fight for equality regardless of race, Douglass became a reformer, author, and orator. Driving home a strong argument regarding job discrimination he wrote:

"Every hour sees the black man elbowed out of employment by some newly arrived immigrant whose hunger and whose color are thought to give him a better title to the place."

Ron Weber continues his look at the history of the Black Press in next week's edition.

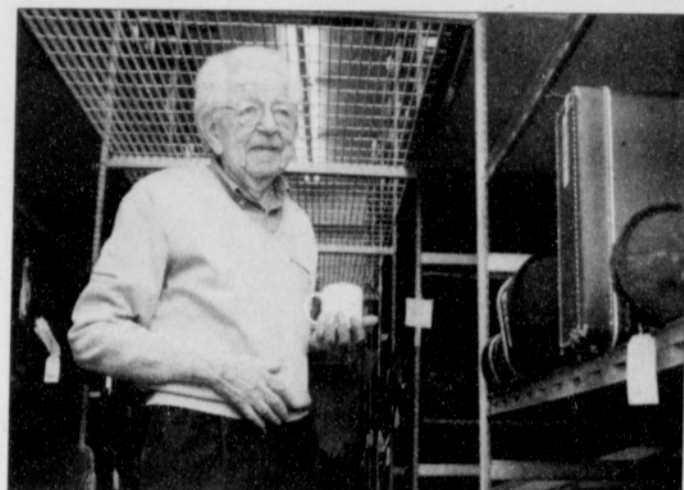
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PHOTOS BY DAVID PLECHL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVERS
Lou "Toby" Tobin, longtime owner of H&B Jewelry & Loan Co., looks over the guitars in hock at the back of his downtown store. Tobin has opened a new store on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

The Dealmaker

continued ▲ from Front

Louis.

"He was a good golfer," Tobin said. "Naturally the champ had to win."

Tobin served his country in World War II.

He was among the first ranks of soldiers to storm the beach at Normandy. It was a bloody battle that left scores of Americans dead.

"Somehow I was among those that walked ashore," Tobin said. "A lot of them didn't make it."

Tobin also has warm memories from his war years.

On leave in the south of England, he just happened to run into golf great Bobby Jones with two generals from the army.

Tobin let the trio play, and after Jones teed off, he came over to thank him for being so polite.

"That's one of the things I have never forgotten" Tobin said.

The new store on Martin Luther King has far exceeded anyone's expectations.

"We have a lot of customers out of north and northeast Portland so we figured it was time to take our business to them," Tobin said.

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