

From Robert S. Abbott To John H. Sengstacke: Able Leadership Key To Defender Success
DR. METZ T P LOCHARD
The Chicago Defender (National edition) (1921-1967); May 7, 1960;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Defender pg. S2

The Chicago Defender: **From Robert S. Abbott To John H. Sengstacke** ***Able Leadership Key*** ***To Defender Success***



ROBERT S. ABBOTT

BY DR. METZ T. P. LOCHARD

There are few incidents in the evolution of American journalism as dramatic and revealing as the rise of THE CHICAGO DEFENDER. Founded in 1905 by Robert Sengstacke Abbott, under circumstances that would have deterred a less doughty spirit, the Defender leaped with one bound from obscurity to national reputation and prestige.

This phenomenal development was the result of a leadership that was perceptive enough to grasp the significance of unfolding events and grapple with them with all available intellectual resources.

Abbott had both the gift of prophecy and the power of discernment. He knew enough American

and European history to evaluate the tragic events that preceded the European crisis in 1914, in which the United States became involved a few years later. All of his predictions in the Defender came to pass. MOVED 50,000

This was the newspaper that moved fifty thousand oppressed people between 1916 and 1918 from the sweat and toil of the boll weevil-stricken South and

the paternalistic white overlords to the "freer air" of the North. And Robert S. Abbott was the man behind the call to the "promised land" that resounded throughout the southern Negro world.

The Chicago Defender, circulating in some cities from work-worn hand to hand read in secret away from resentful white eyes, was the beckoning instrument.

The time in history was important. The plantations were waning, northern factories under wartime boom were scrambling for workers, immigration from Europe was cut off, and stories of earlier migrants to the North were beginning to rekindle the hope of freedom in the long-beaten souls of black folk.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

READY FOR ROLE

Abbott saw that the DEFENDER, too, was ready for its role. He had tried out his headlines, his satirizing cartoons, his direct style of appeal to the

masses, his techniques of protest and group control.

Editor Abbott had

dreamt of the scattering of Negroes from the South. He envisioned their physical movement out of the suppressive, exploitative shackles of the slave-tradition gutted South as the first step for the "Race's" claim to the freedom that Emancipation was intended to give them. It was theory packed with drama, and he had the imagination to use dramatic means to synchronize it with the ebb and flow of history.

He labeled the movement the Great Northern Drive, the Negro's push

for self-realization just as the Hindenburg Drive was the Western Allied push for victory in 1918. He set departure dates; he showed pictures of the best homes, schools and parks in Chicago next to pictures of the worst in the South; he gave abundant space to job offers and news about the happy people who had already arrived here.

A BAD PLACE

The South was a bad place, Abbott told them, and flooded his columns with vivid descriptions of the most distasteful aspects of living in Dixie. Abbott dared to articulate in print what Southern Negroes were afraid to whisper. He gave them courage to acknowledge their dissatisfaction, some sense of security that others were championing their cause and could give them protection in the city that was the home of the DEFENDER.

Headlines blazoned the call North. Poems sang the theme-song of migration. The CHICAGO DEFENDER became the herald of glad tidings to the restless and the discontent. Adventure in a big new city, where a man would be considered a man, was the message. The response was a mass movement with the fervor of a religious crusade.

The DEFENDER had given Negroes dignity;

they breathed the strength of solidarity in reading about their group and their common interests in fighting discrimination. Abbott had succeeded in a gigantic project of exerting group control to express protest, for indeed the Great Northern Drive had changed sharply the course of history. Negroes were less attached to the poverty-bound agricultural economy; the migrants laid the groundwork for more economic

From Robert S. Abbott To John H. Sengstacke: Able Leadership Key To Defender Success

DR. METZ T P LOCHARD

The Chicago Defender (National edition) (1921-1967); May 7, 1960;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Defender pg. S2

self in the distorted perspective of a social problem. His shadow, so to speak, has been more real to him than his personality.

But while the minds of most of us, black and white, have thus burrowed in the trenches of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the actual march of development has simply flanked these positions, necessitating a sudden reorientation of view.

BOLD BREAK

Sengstacke's task is to have the Negro of today seen through other than the dusty spectacles of past controversy. The weekly Defender was too slow a mechanism to achieve that purpose. So Sengstacke made a bold break with the "weekly" publishing traditions. He has firmly established the DEFENDER as the first successful Negro daily to exist in a major Northern

and the Negro press the greatest power instrument of its people?

Riots and lynchings twisted Abbott's heart, and his mind was throbbing with impulses to fight back the daily assaults upon a helpless people. The dastardly Atlanta riots, which came the year after his paper appeared, prodded Abbott with their horror. And, watching these riots as the vile manifestations of everyday discrimination and hate against Negroes, he developed a theory and a plan for solution which called for fearless militancy in protesting against wrongs, so that, with a sensitized mass population of Negroes, America would eventually be unable to avoid granting equal rights and opportunities.

WHAT HE SOUGHT

His advocacy of a working relationship between science and government was as sound and valid as the present-day political scientists'. He laughed at the American system of

"liberty regulated by law," when left to the distortion of local prejudiced interests. He wanted the national government to guarantee the free exercise of rights. At the same time, he envisioned a scientifically controlled, missionary-like movement in the South to explode the myth of racial superiority.

The zeal with which he set about his task from the meagre beginnings to the day when his paper became the pacemaker for the Negro press hardly would have been exercised by a man who did not feel constantly the sores and humiliations of caste in America. His experiences from the day he was born in 1870 until his death in 1940 found their expression in Abbott's personality, which shaped the course of the DEFENDER.

However, long before his passing he had infused his nephew, JOHN HERMAN SENGSTACKE, the present publisher and editor of the DEFENDER, with the same self-sacrificing zeal and devotion to the cause of equality and human rights.

WITHOUT FEAR

Sengstacke stepped into his uncle's shoes without a trace of emotion of fear. But what was a problem to Abbott is today a task to young Sengstacke. For generations in the mind of America, the Negro was more of a formula than a human being — a something to be argued about, condemned or defended, to be worried with or worried over, harassed or patronized, as social bogey or a social burden. The thinking Negro even has been induced to share this same general attitude, to focus his attention on controversial issues, to see him-

metropolis. In so doing he has opened unprecedented potentialities for Negro publications.

He made his historic 1956 announcement that the Defender would publish a daily and embark on a \$1,000,000 expansion program at a time when most of the nation's Negro and white newspapers were suffering circulation losses and conducting drastic retrenchment programs.

Many leaders friendly to Negro journalism viewed the young publisher's venture with cautious skepticism, and opponents of the free Negro press gleefully hoped that the Defender had "overstepped its bounds."

TOP ENGINEERING

Behind the announcement, however, were years of careful preparation and planning. Less than three years after the daily emerged, the publishing world stood amazed at this



JOHN H. SENGSTACKE

top - flight journalistic progress of the DAILY DEFENDER, publisher Sengstacke.
 Satisfied with the progress of the DAILY DEFENDER, publisher Sengstacke.
 See SENGSTACKE, Page 12

Sengstacke Says:

(Continued from Page 2)
 stacke purchased the million-dollar Michigan Avenue structure, built to house a skyscraper, and now the radiant new home of the DEFENDER.

The only Northern daily in Negro life is not only here to stay, but its restless founder and publisher is methodically preparing for spectacular growth.
 'DATE WITH HISTORY'

Nowdays when men have made rockets to reach the moon and are preparing to land on other distant planets and stars, he who fails to venture is lost indeed. "Our people have a date with history, we've got to move to meet it," says the DEFENDER publisher.

The son of a Georgia minister and printer, Sengstacke followed his graduation at Hampton

BOUND FOR THE PROMISED LAND

BY MR. WARD

From Florida's stormy banks I go,
I'll bid the South good-bye;
No longer shall they treat me so,
And knock me in the eye.
The Northern States is where I'm bound,
My cross is more than double—
If the Chief Executive can be found,
I'll tell him all my trouble.

Thousands of boys have gone before,
And enjoying their Northern lives,
There's nothing at all they can deplore,
So they wrote their wives.
Thousands of others are clamoring to go,
To join the glorious sop,
But the Recruiters failed to take one
more,
The Crackers made them stop.

Arise ye Darkies, now a slave,
Your chance, today, has come;
Hold up your head with courage brave,
'Cause times are changing some.
God is punctual to His word,
And faithful to his dating,
Humble prayers is what he heard,
After years of anxious waiting.

All before this change was made
They took me for a fool.
No respect to me was paid,
They classed me as a fool.
For centuries past I was knocked and
cuffed,
And imposed by Southern "Whites;"
For fifty long years they've had me
bluffed
And robbed me of my "Rights."

Thousands of us are taken North,
From Georgia; and below;
This chance affords the greatest draught
That we've ever had before.
O! praise the Lord, each house and
steeple.

Let us have a glorious dance:
What a blessing to our people
If they'd take a solemn chance.

The South declared, in bloody figures,
To reject me, as a neighbor.
They class me a trashy "nigger,"
Just fit for common labor.
Everybody's welcome in the Southern
States,
The Jew, the Greek, the Turk,
But if I enter within their gates,
I must ask some boss for work.

Anybody that does the work I do,
They're paid four dollars per day,
But I'm paid and steal some, too,
Just half that pay.
I'm a trashy mess,
I'll take the deal,
I'll go to work for less,
When I steal.

I'll work at a place,
I'll work for my boss,
I'll work against my race,
I'll work for a horse,
I'll work for a knot of it.

If me and a cracker should have a fight,
And he knocks me in the jaw,
It's counted to him as being "right"
According to "Cracker" law.
But if I swing on a "Cracker's" jaw
With all my feeble might,
Right from that will start a war,
And I'll have the State to fight.

All they've sown against the "nigger."
They'll reap as sure as you're born.
Their time is out, they can't grow
bigger!
They've dragged my race to scorn.
Yes, we will rise up, bye and bye,
And make the "Crackers" sink below,
Big tears shall drop from each one's eye,
They've been warned of this before.

My people are really great on earth,
There's none no greater found;
He's been a slave from his birth—
The South has kept him down.
He's not allowed as other men
To speak up for his rights,
Do—he's shut up in a pen.
And tortured by the whites.

We have many noble men,
But the South has held them back.
The South was never my people's
friend—
They've kept them in a sack.
Yankee land! My future home.
O, how I long for thee:
Upon thy bosom let me roam
And feel that I am free.

We are God's own chosen people,
And in h—l their foes shall hop.
They're climbing daily to the place
Where they will be on top.
All men look alike to God,
No matter how large they've grown;
All are subjects to his rod,
And reap what they have sown.

I would rather the cold to snatch my
breath,
And die from a natural cause,
Than to stay down South and get beat
to death,
Under cruel "Cracker" laws.
They tried one time to exert their "Will"
These derved old gopher diggers,
They asked the government to pass a
"Bill"
And rid the South of "niggers."

HASTEN ON, MY DARK BROTHER;
DUCK THE "JIM CROW" LAW.
NO "CRACKERS" NORTH TO SLAP
YOUR MOTHER.
OR KNOCK YOU ON THE JAW.
NO "CRACKERS" THERE TO SEDUCE
YOUR SISTER.
NOR TO HANG YOU TO A LIMB.
AND YOU'RE NOT OBLIGED TO CALL
'EM MISTER,
OR SKIN 'EM BACK AT HIM.

Now, why should I remain longer South,
To be dogged and kicked around?
"Crackers" to knock me in the mouth,
And shoot my brother down?
No! I won't; I must leave today
No longer can I wait,
Recruiters fail to take me 'way,
I'll find a way to catch a freight.

WHY THEY LEAVE SOUTH: THE LYNCHING RECORD FOR 1916

The Chicago Defender (Big Weekend Edition) (1905-1966); Jan 6, 1917;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Defender

pg. 1

WHY THEY LEAVE SOUTH

THE LYNCHING RECORD FOR 1916.

In view of the widespread discussion of the causes back of the migration of Negroes to the North it is timely to consider the lynchings for the year just closed. I find according to the records kept by Monroe N. Work, head of the Division of Records and Research of the Tuskegee Institute, that in 1916 there have been 54 lynchings. Of those lynched, 50 were Negroes and 4 were whites. This is 4 less Negroes and 9 less whites than were put to death in 1915 when the record was 54 Negroes and 13 whites. Included in the record are 3 women.

Fourteen (14) or more than one-fourth of the total lynchings, occurred in the State of Georgia. Of those put to death 42, or 77 per cent of the total, were charged with offenses other than rape. The charges for which whites were lynched were murder, 3; suspected of cutting a woman, 1 (this a Mexican).

The charges for which Negroes were put to death were, attempted rape, 9; killing officers of the law, 10; murder, 7; hog stealing, and assisting another person to escape, 6; wounding officers of the law, 4; rape, 3; insult, 2; for each of the following offenses one person was put to death: Slapping boy; robbing store; brushing against girl on street; assisting his son, accused of rape, to escape; entering a house for robbery or some other purpose; defending her son, who in defense of mother, killed man; fatally wounding a man with whom he had quarreled; speaking against mob in act of putting a man to death; attacking a man and wife with club.

Lynchings occurred in the following states: Alabama, 1; Arkansas, 4; Florida, 8; Georgia, 14; Kansas, 1; Kentucky, 2; Louisiana, 2; Mississippi, 1; Missouri, 1; North Carolina, 2; Oklahoma, 4; South Carolina, 2; Tennessee, 3; Texas, 9.

MIGRATION

Latham, W J

The Chicago Defender (Big Weekend Edition) (1905-1966); Aug 26, 1916;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Defender

pg. 12

MIGRATION

BY W. J. LATHAM
Jackson, Miss.

I have read several articles recently from the pen of Race leaders, advising the Negroes against going to the north for employment. I am thoroughly convinced that this advice is wrong, however honestly and well intended it is being given. These leaders give reasons why the Negro should stay in the south, but none of them give any good reason why our people should not go to the north for work. There is no reason that they can give. If it is profitable for the Chinaman, the Japanese, the Italian, the Pole, the Scandinavian and other foreigners to come to America for work, why should it be not profitable for the Negro to go to the same field for employment?

In the first place, there is but little work, at the present, for us in the south, except growing cotton; and cotton growing is so unprofitable under present conditions, that those who stick to it do so under starvation conditions. There is more cotton raised than the world has ready use for. The cotton grower is unable to hold his crop and make his own prices, therefore the speculator fixes the prices, and the grower is the loser. Why then keep our people raising cotton for which there is no profitable market when he is needed in the mines and factories and farms of the north and west, producing the things which the world most needs?

The northerner has not known the value of him as a laborer. He has never given us a chance; but now, that the door is open for him to prove their worth as a laborer, a skilled mechanic, by all means he should make the proof. He has the chance of a life to prove to the nation that he can do any sort of labor better than foreign

labor. If he makes good this opportunity he will keep his place against all foreign labor.

Through this migration to the north and west, he has a golden opportunity to learn. He will get new ideas of life; new ideas of agriculture and manufacturing; new ideas of civilization; new ideas of a larger world. Many will return home when the weather gets cold, but they will bring back with them these ideas and impart them to the folks at home. Others will come and go, and in this manner develop themselves as they could not otherwise do.

The man who travels is the man who learns most. The sons of Ham got into the jungles of Africa and were satisfied with the native products, and hence remained in dense ignorance. But the Caucasian roamed from place to place, followed the sun in its westward course, and are the enlightened people of the globe.

In the early days of our American civilization Horace Greeley said to the young man, "Go west!" The white man has gone westward until he has reached the east. I say to the young men of my race: "Go west! Go east! Go north! Go south!" Go everywhere the sun shines! Go everywhere there is found an opportunity to make a living and develop this wonderful world of ours.

Boy's Failure to Aid in Crop Harvest Causes Lynching

Blackbear, Ga., Nov. 1.—The lynching of Sandy Ray, seventeen-year-old lad, by a crowd of white men of this city has been described by an eyewitness to the affair and one who was outdistanced by the mob when they took the boy from the jail here and speeded to Waycross the place where the body was found hanging to a tree near the Atlantic Coast Line shops, riddled with bullets. Ray was accused of criminally assaulting a 3-year-old white girl. The charges were untrue, and the physician called to attend the girl stated that there were absolutely no evidences of violence on the child's body. She was cheerful and happy, and entirely innocent of the doctor's mission.

Frame Up Charge

A porter in a local barber shop stated to an investigator that he had heard the mob plan the affair, and that had feeling was aroused against Ray when he failed to help a white farmer harvest his crop. Ray is said to have refused to work for the man because several attempts had been made to whip him with a cowhide. Sandy Ray's father had been farming for this same white man all the year and had made a good crop, and was to receive as a share something in the neighborhood of \$400. The fact that Ray's father was to receive such a

large amount angered the whites and they ran the entire family out of town. Sandy failed to leave in time. It was at this time that the "rape" charge was framed up and Sandy was thrown into jail.

Had Jail Keys

When it was learned that Ray was behind the bars, the mob made its way to the bastille and searched each cell carefully for their victim. No storming of the jail was done; they had previously obtained the keys. An army slacker who was in the jail at the time, but who was released next day, declared that a crowd of white men came to his cell and he steered them away by saying, "White folks, it wasn't me." After going to about three cells they finally located Ray, and someone in the crowd suggested shooting him. Others objected on the ground that the death would not be horrible, and the punishment would not be of a severe nature. He was dragged from his cell and spirited away in an automobile. Bits of Ray's clothing were found on the roadside where the automobiles traveled from here to Waycross.

The verdict of the coroner's jury was that "the victim came to his death at the hands of unknown parties," and the body was ordered cut down from the tree and prepared for burial. Ray's family having been driven from here, are now residing in Waycross.

Thousands Flee South; Fear Mob Rule

By WALDO TYLER

Columbus, Ohio, Dec. 15.—Tearing away from the association of a lifetime in the South, stealing away from eagle-eyed overlords, eluding the lyncher, the oppressor, hundreds of sturdy workers of the South are leaving for points North. The movement is especially noticeable from here.

No Southern state is being missed in the grand exodus. Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, Kentucky, North Carolina— from them all the laborers on the plantations are fleeing, as though in one rapid, concerted, organized effort. The effect is astounding, unbelievable.

Flock to Ohio

Ohio has had its due share of these refugees. During the last three months thousands have come to such points as Dayton, Cleveland, Youngstown and Cincinnati. From these cities they have spread to industrial centers. Pittsburg has been a haven for many, Detroit for others.

Immigrants to this state come from the states directly south and from the coastline states. Gulf states are forcing their laborers to seek freedom in Missouri and Illinois. The Illinois Central railroad is being gorged by the men and women in flight.

NEW EXODUS FROM SOUTH A BIG ISSUE

Bad Living Conditions, Dyer
Bill Failure and Jim
Crow Are Causes

Noticeable increase has come to the exodus since the failure of the Dyer bill to pass. I met one fellow in the station here. He had come from South Carolina. His name was Elijah Jones. He told me that he had left his home at night with such of his worldly goods as he had been able to get together because of threats white people in his district had made against him. He knew that when the measure failed to get by it would be all over with him. I showed him a paper stating that the supreme court had upheld the Jim Crow law in Mississippi, thus affecting other states where it was in vogue. He shook his head, declaring that supreme court or not supreme court, that was one law he could not and would not respect. He was mad. Many others coming up like him are mad. He is being forced to start all over again in life.

The Klan is without doubt having its effect on the migrants. They are not superstitious. They are not afraid of white sheets and pillow slips. The menace they see goes further than that. They see actual physical threats. They have noticed the surrender of authority in towns all over the South to the masked mobs. They have noticed Texas and Louisiana go mad. They have heard of executives of states vainly rallying against the Klan. They know that something much more serious than has yet been attempted must be done to make their lives and their property safe from the so-called "Invisible Empire." They declare that although the Klan may be in Northern states it has no way of being as powerful in the North as in the South. In the North, they say, the organization exists in spite of the law; in the South it exists with the law.

Thousands Flee South; Fear Mob Rule: NEW EXODUS FROM SOUTH A BIG ...

Tyler, Waldo

The Chicago Defender (National edition) (1921-1967); Dec 16, 1922;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Defender

pg. 1

Governor's Statement

Patterson, governor of Tennessee, is widely awake to the stream of people leaving Southern districts. He calls upon white Southerners to treat their non-white neighbors better. He tells them that they need the workers of the Race. He pleads with them to stay their hands for the sake of the farms and plantations.

Governor Patterson says: "The situation calls for most careful consideration. This whole matter should at once be investigated by our Southern service associations. Chambers of commerce, boards of trade and other associations should at once take cognizance of the current reports.

"The Negro ought to be treated with greater justice than he receives. The white man who robs him or takes advantage of his ignorance to impose upon him is a dishonor to his race. To do so is to injure the Negro, but it injures the white man more.

"I am a Southern white man, with an ancestry wholly Southern, but I know that some of us have had the wrong philosophy in regard to the Negro. He is a man and is entitled to the rights of a man. To squeeze him in a trade, to get out of him all he can give and return nothing is worse than robbing the land.

"The Negro should be better clothed and better housed. And we should be ashamed to let him live sometimes under worse conditions than our cattle.

"The Negro deserves this, North and South, and that he doesn't always get it is a reproach to both sections and to any Christian civilization that tolerates it."