

THE CRUSADER

LOOKING BACK

By.. Mabel R. Williams

The Negroes in Monroe existed and prospered, in a sense, when the railroad was in full bloom. During the days of hard dirty labor, and coal-burning locomotives, the district known as "New Town" sprang into life.

"New Town" was the place where the Negro railroad workers struggled to make homes for their families. Because of the constant falling of cinders from the smoke stacks of the steam locomotives, this was not a desirable spot for the white populace.

Most of the people in this neighborhood and their children were born in this area. Their roots are deeply embedded here.

The residents can recall with pleasure the blowing of the lunch whistle at noon each day and again at the end of the work day. One remembers, the long past scenes of these men, having completed their days' work, trudging along, tired and weary, but proud of being able to even half way provide for their loved ones.

One can start on any street in this now designated, "slum area" and find most of the homes owned by Negroes. These homes are not fancy, but livable. They were built or bought by struggling Negro workers.

Many of these homes now house the widows of these men, who receive skimpy pensions from the results of their under paid, overworked husbands.

The railroad has all but gone, and with it the incomes that meagerly supported these families. The soot and cinders have gone along with the annoying noises of switching engines. A new super

highway skirts the perimeter of the area and lily-white industries are close by and easily accessible from here.

In short, "New Town", or North Monroe, as the whites prefer to call it, has become a highly desirable location.

The city fathers realize this fact and have hastened to make use of it by declaring it a slum area while some of Monroe's most blighted districts have been overlooked.

If and when this plan is fully adopted, what will become of the families who have worked so hard in the past to prepare homes out of their meager earnings? What will become of the widows of the overworked, underpaid Negro laborers? What will happen to those who are not able to start over again to build new homes or to pay for others?

All of the property appraising and relocating of Negroes will be left entirely to the white officials; and I shudder to think what will happen to the displaced persons who will be at the mercy of these ruthless obdurate white supremacists.

THE CRUSADER: Weekly Newsletter
410 N. Boyte St.
Monroe, N. C.
Phones: AT 3-5434 AT 3-4777
Editor & Pub. Robert F. Williams
Business Mgr. E. A. Johnson
Circulation Mgr. M. R. Williams
Subscription: \$4.75 yearly
\$2.50 six months
Bundles of 50 or more, 6¢ apiece

HELP US BUILD A PEOPLE'S
JOURNAL. WE DARE PRINT THE TRUTH
READ THE CRUSADER

0 0 4 0 4