Since his days as a Cleveland county farm boy J. Zeb. Wright of Charleston, W. Virginia has had a unique fascination with another great Clevelander — Thomas Dixon who was an author, actor, N. C. legislator, lawyer, playwright and motion picture producer.

Now as Dr. J. Zeb. Wright the 34-year old educator has completed his doctoral thesis: "Thomas Dixon: The Mind of a Southern Apologist".

Six years of scholarly work went into the 328-page bound volume that illuminates Thomas Dixon—his life and works—from a new and refreshing viewpoint. And it seems promising at this moment that the doctoral thesis may be published as a book—bringing the name of still another Cleveland author into national prominence.

MEMORABLE EVENT

While Zeb Wright was back in his native county for a new year's holiday weekend with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Lee Wright, he described in intent tones and lucid words a memorable event which took place when he was a 16-year old eleventh grader at Number Three High School.

Winning an award for produc...
The 1966 fatalities in rural areas, while
media up two traffic
raining the year and Kings
routinely one. Biggest
in the death toll on
and highways came for
of Shelby which dropped
"worst" record in the state
population in 1965 with eight
injuries to two for the year just
finished.

Shelby City Police made 24
routine arrests over the weekend,
according to Chief Knox Hardin,
who }the force stayed busy
answering many calls to disturb-
ances which did not result in
actual arrests. Two auto acci-
dents were marked on city rec-
ords Saturday and Sunday, with
only one mounting to more than
$100 damage.

Hardin quickly attributed the
low holiday arrest total to the
bad weather and added pessimis-
tically "next weekend we may
have 60 arrests".

Coroner Ollie Harris' rounded,
but 1966 with a relatively quiet
month of December. He reports
only three deaths involving any
kind of violence or unusual cir-
cumstance during the month—
one auto fatality in December,
one suffocation victim and one
death at the county jail. "A pret-
y good report and a real quiet
Christmas and New Year's," says
the veteran coroner.

Cleveland County Sheriff's De-
partment late yesterday similarly
reported a "dull weekend" with
the usual arrests for public
drunkenness, driving under the
influence and non support. No
unusual violence or accidents
spoiled the relaxed weekend hol-
iday setting.

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his native county for a new-
year's holiday weekend with his
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place when he was a 16-year old
eleventh grader at Number Three
High School.

Winning an award for produc-
ing more cotton per acre than
any other 4-H or FFA boy in the
county, he was invited to attend
a Saturday morning showing of
a movie—name undisclosed—to
which the local ministerial asso-
ciation membership had also
been invited.

Arriving at the Rogers The-
ater bright and early, the young
farm boy discovered that he was
not only the sole teen-ager to
appear for the special showing
but there was only one minister
who had accepted the invitation.
The two, along with the theater
operator, sat in the vast dark au-
ditorium and watched the silent
movie "The Birth of a Nation".

"All my life I had heard stor-
ies of the famous Dixon family
of Cleveland county—with all
five Dixon children having their
names appear in a single volume
of 'Who's Who In America'. But
I was troubled by 'Birth Of A
Nation'. I saw truth in this movie
but I also saw an unkindness and
brutality to the Negro that I
thought but was "a liberal in
psychology when they first be-
ned in most contemporary
settings. "Vet I
read them articles on his
mentiments and brilliant logical mental
processes. Dixon was an incisive
thinker, an articulate speaker, a
liberal minister of the gospel in
the best New England tradition
and a superb writer," expounds
the young Ph. D.

"In the Duke University ar-
chives are Dixon's beautifully
prepared and intellectual ser-
mons. The New York Times car-
rried front page articles on his
sermons. He was a scholar and a
student of history who wrote very
sophisticated books on theology.
He specialized in sociology and
psychology when they first be-
came areas of science. Yet I

CLEVELAND RE-VISITED — Dr. J. Zeb. Wright of Charleston,
W. Va., author of "Thomas Dixon: The Mind of a Southern Apo-
ologist", is seen, above, in the Thomas Dixon room at Gardner-
Webb College library. The 34-year old Cleveland native is an au-
thority on Dixon, famed author and playwright, who also was
born in Cleveland county. Attached in the background is an
original done by C. D. Williams to illustrate "The Leopard's
Spots", Dixon's first novel and one which has a Cleveland coun-
ty setting. Gardner-Webb now owns five of the original oils used
to illustrate Dixon's novels and the damaged paintings have re-
cently been restored by experts. Dr. Wright holds in his hands
"The Negro Question" by Cable, one of the many volumes in
Dixon's fine personal library bequeathed to the college and one
which contains a brief handwritten essay penned by Dixon, giving
his comments on the book.

Wright on a search to find an
swers to questions: Was Thomas
Dixon one of the most brilliant
people who ever left Cleveland
county? If he were, how could he
interpret race relations in the
way that the movie and pictures
illustrated? What motivated him
to write a book like "The Clans-
man"?

In August, 1966—15 years lat-
er—Zeb Wright brilliantly states
the answers to these questions in
this doctoral thesis.

It is significant that he arrives
at the conclusion that Dixon was
not an arch-conservative as pic-
tured in most contemporary
thought but was "a liberal in
the reformist tradition".
The average Shelby family would be on their way into New Year's dol rums there's a reminder that today begins an exceptionally busy period as normal activities of the New Year galvanize into action.

The annual tax listing chore (CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

822 Businesses
In Cleveland,
Reports D & B

Cleveland county officially has 822 retailers, wholesalers and manufacturers making up its population, reports R. C. Adams, district manager of the Dun & Bradstreet Inc., Charlotte office.

The new figure of 822 businesses was obtained by a physical count for the Dun & Bradstreet Reference Book for January, 1967.

This information indicates an increase in the total number of businesses in operation in Cleveland. The January Dun & Bradstreet report for Cleveland in 1966 listed 778 businesses. The news released yesterday indicates an increase of 44 new local business operations during the 12-month period.

Dun & Bradstreet is an international business information agency which has been celebrating its 125th anniversary. Founded in 1841 in New York City, the Dun & Bradstreet organization now includes nearly 240 offices in the U. S. and abroad. Today the firm lists nearly three million businesses and their current credit ratings in its Reference Book which is continually being revised and is published six times a year.

PEELER PAY DROPPED

But for Clevelanders tempted to drop into New Year's dol rums there's a reminder that today begins an exceptionally busy period as normal activities of the New Year galvanize into action.

The annual tax listing chore (CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

Average Fellow And Thrifty!

Holiday Spendthrifts!

1000 Takes 33 Years

At the 7 percent rate, the average Shelby family would be saving approximately $42 a month, based on its current income.

If it banked or otherwise invested this money and received interest at 5 percent, compounded quarterly, it would achieve the $50,000 objective in 33 years except for the taxes payable on the interest received.

In many other areas of the country, where incomes are below the local level and the amount that can be saved is smaller, a greater length of time would be needed to accumulate $50,000.

34 years.

For those local families that find it possible to put $40 a month into such savings, the $50,000 fund would be created in 34 years. Their actual cash savings in that period would total $16,320. The remaining $33,680 would come from dividends.

The $75-a-month saver would reach the $50,000 point in 25 years. He will have put $22,500 away in that time and received $27,500 in interest.

Just how much a family can save depends upon its particular circumstances and upon how much it has left after taking care of its basic necessities.

According to the latest figures, total savings by individuals in the United States this year will amount to $25 billion. This is about $3 billion below the amount just put aside last year.

The Wright thesis draws out in detail how the "Mind of a Southern Apologist" dealt with the race issue in three distinct phases of his life.

First, as a 16-year old Wake Forest College student Dixon was a liberal—believing that the free Negro must be made a full and active participant in American democracy.

By the time Dixon was in his late 20's and early 30's he had become influenced by pseudo-Darwinian theories and began to recognize a basic Negro inferiority which he had not recognized before—thus became a strict segregationist. Negro racial inferiority was a line of thinking to which almost all scientists agreed circa 1900, tells Wright.

And it was in his late years in the 1930's when Dixon became obsessed with his project to repatriate Negroes back to Africa as the ultimate solution to the race problem. This solution would end what he thought to be the danger of mongrelization of "the highest manifestation of God, the Anglo-Saxon man."

PUZZLING

"Most puzzling is that these ideas could have come from the

A liberal says that we don't have to live with what we have. We can change—even undergo drastic changes. None of Thomas Dixon's ideas fitted the prevailing ideas of the age and state in which he lived. He was never a Southern demagogue like a Tillman. He was a reformer and a liberal in the best 19th century tradition," says the scholar who is now supervisor of social studies with the W. Va. State Department of Education.

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from page 1)
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Dr. Zeb
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social history specialist to the
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but Thomas Dixon used his skill
at story telling to affect people's
thinking. And he was more bril-
lant in this than in anything
else he ever did. He never wrote
a book or play without a mes-
sage."

"I admire Thomas Dixon more
than anything in the world. I
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Public
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Hopper terms the new white
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Proposed
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It has been a relatively short
journey in years for Zeb
from his native Cleveland
and to an A. B. at UNC-Chapel
Hill during his teaching years at Winston-
and Gastonia, an M. A. degree
Peabody College in Nashville,
Tenn., years of teaching in
Europe, then teaching at Pea-

13th CHILD
Throughout these years
Wright has never forgotten
early life as the 13th child
close-knit family. He believe-
that the loneliness of a
life breeds the sensitivity
appetite for literature and an
tendency to "takes you away from
hours of labor".

"Two people here really
me interested in the word
beauty. They are Carolyn W.
(Mrs. Mason Gaston) and A.
Miller (Mrs. Clyde Mitch-
Owensboro, Ky.), both of
who taught me piano. I would
in the fields all day and at
concerts at night. And aft-
discovered Shelby Public Lib-
when I was about eight
old, I proceeded to read a
book available."

And as a child who picked
and picked cotton less than 10 miles from
Dixon acres where young Zeb
farmed briefly (and his
farm life) Zeb made a game
of his love of literature. He
members to this day his sis-
Faye recounting the book "