

Ushers land

homes and out of trou-

T. Vanhoy of the N. y Patrol yesterday re-otal of only five auto in rural areas of the turday and Sunday—oll for a long holiday

: accident investigated trol brought personal one-car mishap when the U. S. 74 median Station WOHS about Sunday. Driver of the harged with driving nfluence and the pas-he auto was charged : drunkenness. Neither ospitalized.

ALITIES DROP

New Year brought ent from Sgt. Vanhoy raffic fatalities in the ing 1966 mounted to from 21 highway rted for 1965.

f the 1966 fatalities rural areas, while lked up two traffic g the year and Kings ecoreded one. Biggest the death toll on highways came for elby which dropped " record in the state on in 1965 with eight two for the year just

Gains Dixon "An Unrealistic Social Reformer"

Dr. Zeb Wright Brilliantly Probes Mind of Cleveland's Thomas Dixon

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: "Thoma Dixon: The Mind of a Southern Apologist".

Six years of scholarly work went into the 328-page bound volume thsat 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-



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Cleveland New Year under fed Voting Ri voked loca census bro ney Gene. than 50 p Clevelande November, Cleveland Chairman gins the I concrete p: and moder istration r porating re ing — gene pal and sch a central re

ing all elect

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Scott Dal in at 8 pow a.m. Sunday honors as

101 1966.

the 1966 fatalities in rural areas, while killed up two traffic during the year and Kings recorded 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 fatalities to two for the year just ended.

Shelby City Police made 24 routine arrests over the weekend, according to Chief Knox Hardin, although the force stayed busy answering many calls to disturbances which did not result in actual arrests. Two auto accidents were marked on city records 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 pessimistically "next weekend we may have 60 arrests".

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

Cleveland County Sheriff's Department 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-

MEMORABLE EVENT

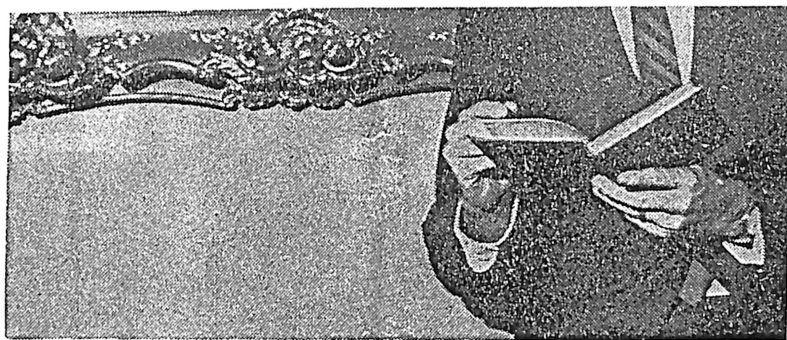
While Zeb Wright was back in his native county for a new year's holiday weekend with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Lee Wright, he described in intent tones and lucid words a memorable event which took place when he was a 16-year old eleventh grader at Number Three High School.

Winning an award for producing 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 association membership had also been invited.

Arriving at the Rogers Theater 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 auditorium and watched the silent movie "The Birth of a Nation".

"All my life I had heard stories 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 a brutality to the Negro that I had neverseen before in Cleveland county. I think my young mind was bothered by this discrepancy. . ."

A short while later as a Gardner-Webb College student Zeb Wright was working in the li-



CLEVELAND RE-VISITED — Dr. J. Zeb. Wright of Charleston, W. Va., author of "Thomas Dixon: The Mind of a Southern Apologist", is seen, above, in the Thomas Dixon room at Gardner-Webb College library. The 34-year old Cleveland native is an authority on Dixon, famed author and playwright, who also was born in Cleveland county. Oil painting 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 county setting. Gardner-Webb now owns five of the original oils used to illustrate Dixon's novels and the damaged paintings have recently 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 answers 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 Clansman"?

In August, 1966—15 years later—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 pictured in most contemporary thought but was "a liberal in the reformist tradition".

mind of a man who had an exceptional academic background and brilliantly 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 archives are Dixon's beautifully prepared and intellectual sermons. The New York Times carried 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 became areas of science. Yet I

TAX LISTING BEGINS

But for Clevelanders tempted o droop into New Year's dol-
trums there's a reminder that
oday begins an exceptionally
usy period as normal activities
f the New Year galvanize into
ction.

The annual tax listing chore
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

Average Fellow And Thrifty!

oliday Spendthrifts! 000 Takes 33 Years

uch.

At the 7 percent rate, the av-
age Shelby family would be
ving approximately \$42 a
onth, based on its current in-
me.

If it banked or otherwise in-
sted this money and received
erest at 5 percent, compounded
arterly, it would achieve the
0,000 objective in 33 years, ex-
t for the taxes payable on
interest received.

n many other areas of the
ntry, where incomes are be-
the local level and the
ount that can be saved is
smaller, a greater length of time
ould be needed to accumulate
000.

n the average, in the State
North Carolina, a period of
years would be required and,

brary the day it was moved from
a Quonset hut location to the
Dover Memorial Building. "I re-
member unpacking the gaudy
paintings that were used to il-
lustrate Thomas Dixon's "The
Clansman" from which the "Birth
of a Nation" movie was adapted.
Again I was shocked and trou-
bled," he recalls.

These two events set Zeb

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 divi-
dends.

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 set aside last year.

"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 prevail-
ing ideas of the age and state in
which he lived. He was never a
Southern demagogue like a Till-
man. He was a reformer and a
liberal in the best 19th century
tradition," says the scholar who
is now supervisor of social stud-
ies with the W. Va. State De-
partment of Education.

The Wright thesis draws out in
detail how the "Mind of a South-
ern 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 inferior-
ity which he had not recognized
before—thus became a strict seg-
regationist. Negro racial infer-
iority 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 re-
patriate 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

have not found one novel in
which he displays the erudition
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

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 busi-
nesses was obtained by a phys-
ical count for the Dun & Brad-
street Reference Book for Jan-
uary, 1967.

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

Dun & Bradstreet is an inter-
national business information
agency which has been celebrat-
ing its 125th anniversary. Found-
ed 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 mil-
lions businesses and their cur-
rent credit ratings in its Refer-
ence Book which is continually
being revised and is published six
times a year.

PEELER DAVE DOWNEY

bert

FROM PAGE 1)

for his three- but favors this dure to less con- voters who now parately for gen- and municipal or es. In some cases one place in the ; but have to re- o a quite differ- : for the municipi-

ter registration ctions within the e practical, says the use of dif- gistration cards who qualify to more than one or example, an general elections Shelby Precinct ster one time to to vote in the , City of Shel- otes and in the strict.

NDARIES

is system work essary to alter y lines so that ctions precincts ard boundaries- g units would

ct voting boun- ferent elections been a source umber 6 Town- mple, General lines follow a as divisions in But City of ow entirely es the

Dr. Zeb

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

found in his other works," Wright continues.

This leads the Peabody College social history specialist to the conclusion that Dixon's novels are polemical works written with the express purpose of affecting the thinking of millions of people. "They have no literary merit but Thomas Dixon used his skill at story telling to affect people's thinking. And he was more brilliant in this than in anything else he ever did. He never wrote a book or play without a message."

"I admire Thomas Dixon more than anything in the world. I would have loved to have known him. I can admire him because, once logically arriving at a conclusion even though today it is known to be fallacious, he was

Public

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

ping to a modest pace. Tag business reaches a feverish pitch again one week prior to that Feb. 15 deadline when the office usually stays regularly jammed during the 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. hours, says Hopper.

Hopper terms the new white and green tag color scheme this year as "a trial run" with a decision to be made later if this will become the new color standard for N. C. tags. Reflectorized plates have been stressed to make an auto or truck more visible from the rear during nighttime driving.

Proposed

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Planning Board. The Charlotte to make a countywide

brave enough and strong enough to suggest a remedy to the problem. In my research I previewed 100 standard American history texts. And, if they mentioned Dixon at all, he was deemed either an arch-conservative or a racist. I don't think he was either," answers Wright.

NO PERSONAL ANIMOSITY

"In his entire career there was no evidence that Dixon had any personal animosity to the Negro. During the last 10 years of his life, with the single exception of his wife, the only persons he allowed to care for him were Negroes. At his funeral his Negro housekeeper sat on the first row in the family section. And history bears out that Negroes adored Thomas Dixon who was a courtly gentleman," tells Wright.

Thomas Dixon's "racist" novels may well be the outgrowth of several experiences that affected an erudite and educated Cleveland when he moved to the North. "When confronted by world opinion on race, he felt he had to defend what was happening in the South. And he dwelled on an intellectual solution too long," says Wright.

It is an irony of fate that the young man who has specialized in Thomas Dixon has at times also been cast in the role of a Southern "apologist". As a teacher who has taught in four states and in Europe, Zeb Wright himself has often been pinned to the wall with searching questions about happenings in the south, with friends pointing the finger of guilt at him for happenings in Mississippi.

It has been a relatively short

journey in years for Zeb from his native Cleveland to an A. B. at UNC-Chapel teaching years at Winston and Gastonia, an M. A. degree Peabody College in Nashville, Tenn., years of teaching in Europe, then teaching at Peabody. His last assignment prior to receiving his doctorate was as a social studies teacher and a chairman involved in teaching gifted students at Evanston Township High School in Evanston, Ill., one of the great educators among the nation's secondary schools.

13th CHILD

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

"Two people here really were interested in the world beauty. They are Carolyn Wright (Mrs. Mason Gaston) and Ann Miller (Mrs. Clyde Mitchell Owensboro, Ky.), both of whom taught me piano. I would play in the fields all day and give concerts at night. And after I discovered Shelby Public Library when I was about eight years old, I proceeded to read every book available."

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