

The Clark Virtual Museum NEWSLETTER

February 7, 2024

The Clark Virtual Museum

"More Than A Museum, We Honor The Life and Legacy of Our Ancestor"

What's New

New Exhibits!

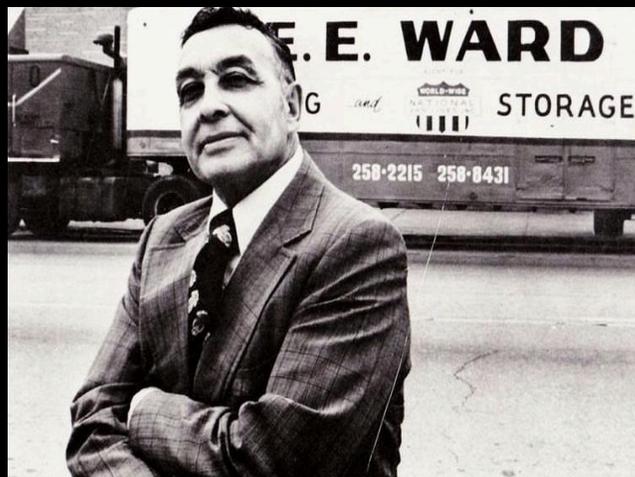
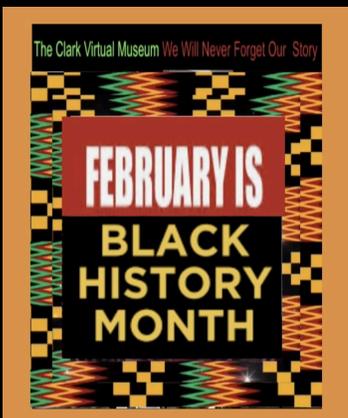
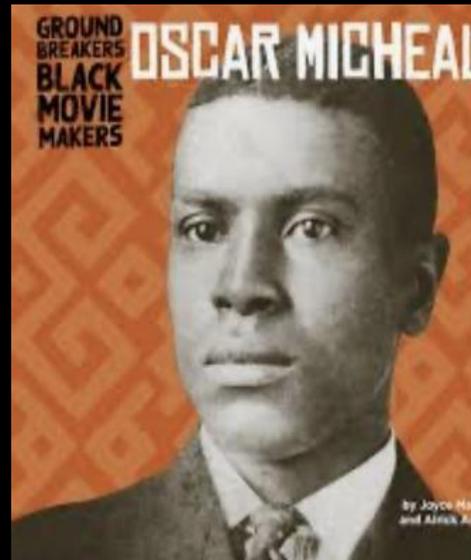
- Carter G. Woodson - Why Black History Month Is In February!
- The Clark Virtual Museum's new exhibit "E.E. Ward Moving and Storage Co., The Oldest Black-Owned Business in the America'
- The Clark Virtual Museum's new exhibit "Oscar Micheaux, The First Major Black Film Director and Producer in the U.S."
- Donate To The Historical Markers Fund of the ILBPP!

The Conquest

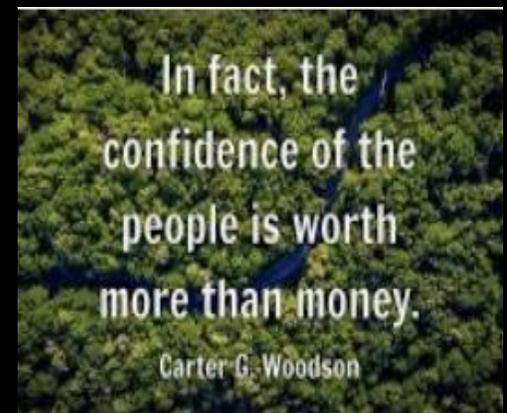
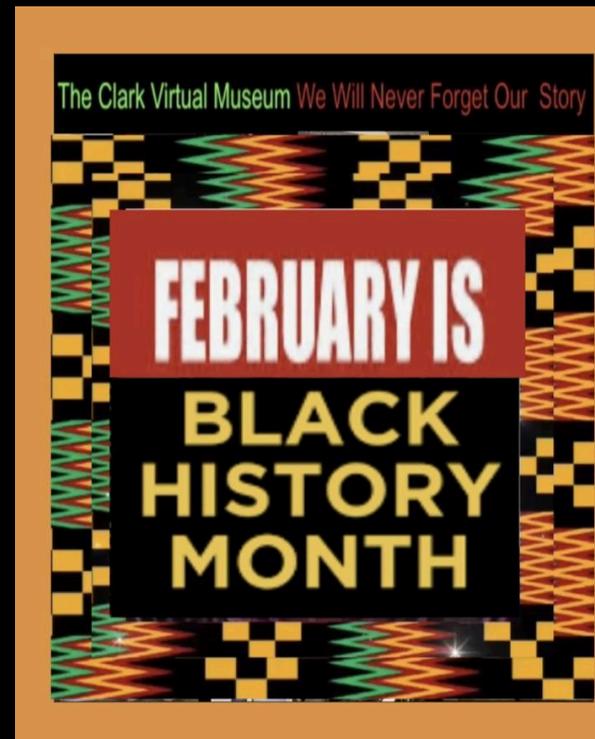


The Story of a
Negro Pioneer
Oscar Micheaux

Introduction by Levarthen Dorsey

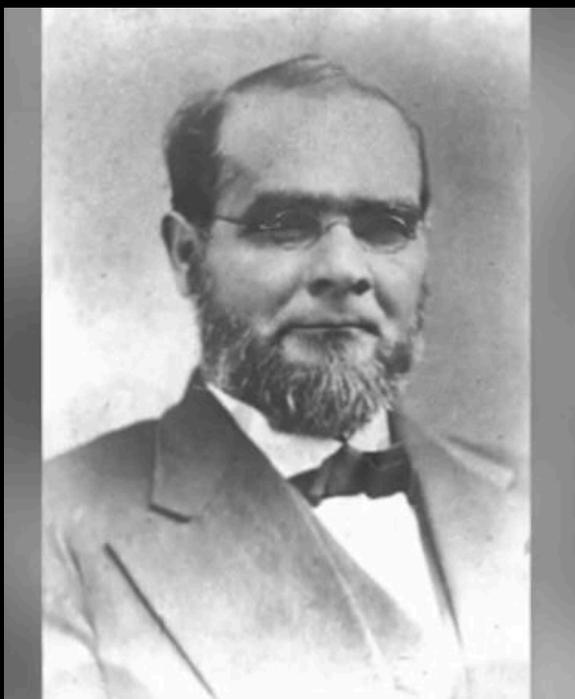


Carter G. Woodson - Why Black History Month Is In February!



If you've ever pondered the question "Why do we celebrate Black History Month in February?" The answer is Carter G. Woodson! He was a Black historian, author, journalist, and the founder of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH). Woodson established Negro History Week in 1926. The second week of February was selected because it coincided with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. As popularity of Negro History Week grew, it expanded from a week to a month.

E.E. Ward Moving and Storage Company, The Oldest Black-Owned Business In America



William Ward, a Black man founded E.E. Ward Moving and Transfer Co. in Columbus, Ohio. It is the oldest Black -owned business in the United States. The company sprung up from a site on the Underground Railroad. William Ward's father was a Conductor on the Underground Railroad. In 1842 John T. Ward began hiding runaway slaves in his Ohio home. After the abolishment of slavery in 1865, there was no longer a need to use the site as an Underground Railroad station.

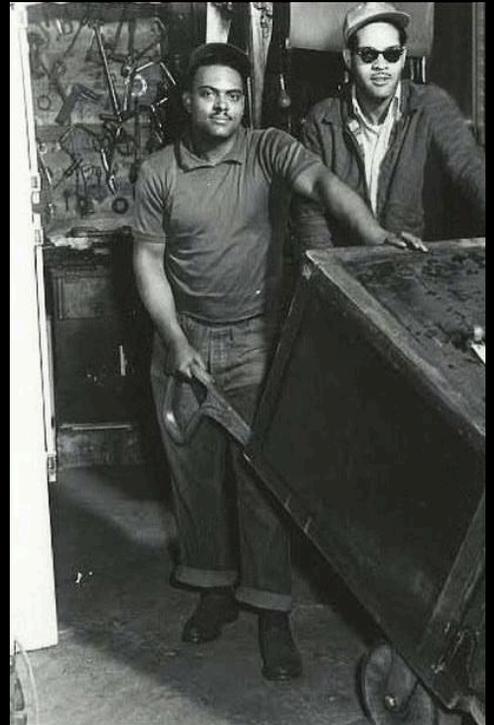


E.E. Ward continued on pages 3.

E.E. Ward continued from page 2

In 1881 William Ward founded E.E. Ward Moving and Storage Co. under humble beginnings, having just two horses and a wagon. The Ward family continued to own and operate the business for more than 100 years. William Ward's great grandson Eldon Ward ran the company from 1945 to 2001, before turning it over to his God son, Brian Brooks.

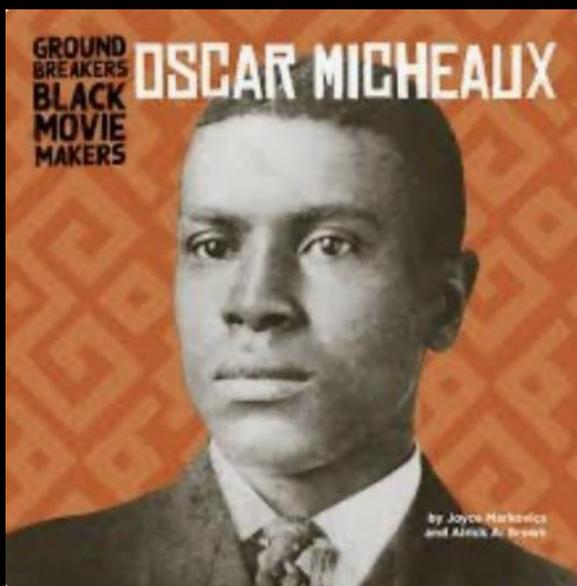
Brooks has expanded operations to a full-service moving company partnering with American Van Lines. Today E. E. Ward Moving and Storage Co. transports throughout the United States; and is recognized by the Department of Commerce as a National Legacy Business.



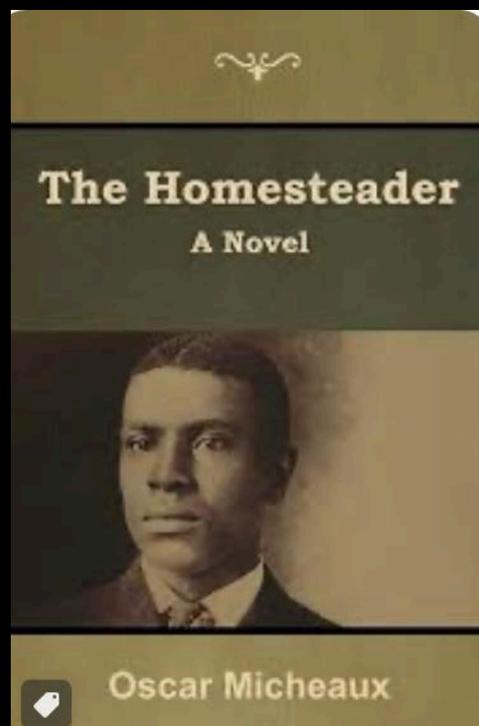
On right: James B. Ward, Marie Ward Smith, Dolores Smith W
Harold E. Ward and in front: Eldon W. Ward



Oscar Micheaux, The First Major Black Film Director And Producer In America



Oscar Micheaux was the first major Black American film producer and director. Micheaux's independent films helped change the perception of Black identity in the film industry. Micheaux was born January 2, 1884 in Metropolis, Illinois. In the early 1900's Micheaux worked as a Pullman porter on the railroad trains. By 1906, he had saved up enough money to purchase a farm in South Dakota. His experiences as a Black farmer became subject matter for his literary writing. Micheaux was a self-published author of articles and books, One of his first articles was published by The Chicago Defender, and another by Woodruff Press. Micheaux's first book, published In 1913, was *The Conquest: The Story of a Negro Pioneer*. His second book, *The Forged Note*, was published around 1914. In 1918, Micheaux's novel *The Homesteader*, attracted the attention of Lincoln Motion Pictures, who offered money for the rights to make the book into a film. Micheaux refused the offer and decided to make the film himself.



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Micheaux continued from page 4



Micheaux, launched his career as an independent filmmaker and producer in 1919. His silent film, *The Homesteader* was the first major independent Black film. It told the story of a Black settler on the South Dakota frontier. Between 1919 and 1948 Oscar Micheaux wrote, produced, directed, and distributed more than 45 silent features and talkie films. Micheaux produced most of his films on a shoestring budget, with the production funds often coming from his own pocket.

Micheaux's so-called "race" films starred all-Black casts and frequently dealt with racial issues and white prejudice. His films contradicted the negative stereotypes of how Blacks were portrayed in the mainstream film industry. Micheaux's films appealed to Black audiences and featured gospel, mystery, gangster, and adventure themes. Micheaux's most acclaimed films were *Body and Soul*, *Harlem after Midnight*, and *Within Our Gates*.

Micheaux was one of the few black independent filmmakers to survive the sound era. He was able to make the transition into talkie films largely because of his tenacity, charisma and talent for promoting his work. Although Oscar Micheaux declared bankruptcy in 1928, he continued to find new investors to finance his work. Micheaux would distribute his completed films by hand to waiting theaters to secure financing for his next project. More than 700 theaters were part of the "ghetto circuit" of Black audiences.



Donate To The Historical Marker Fund!

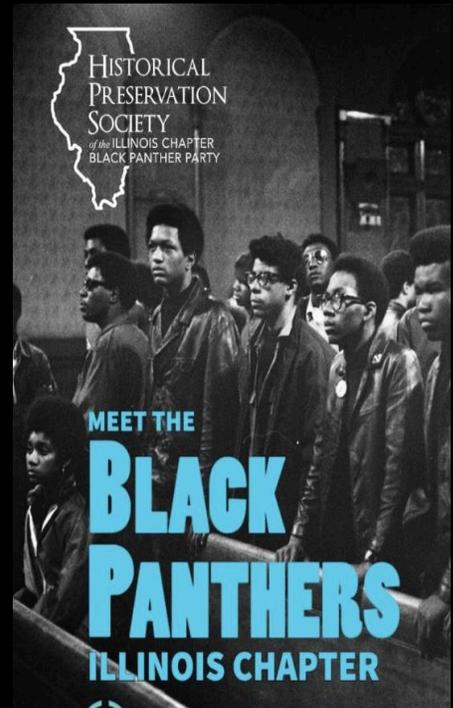


LANDMARKING SUCCESS!
HISTORICAL MARKER FUND
 ILBPP.ORG

31%
\$5,042.67 / \$16,250
 34 Donations

DONATE TODAY
 HELP US REACH OUR GOAL!

Help place historical markers at significant sites of the Black Panther Party in Chicago.



BLACK HISTORY: Help place historical markers at demolished Black Panther Party sites in Chicago!

The Historical Preservation Society of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party has successfully achieved a Thematic Listing for the Black Panther Party in Illinois on the National Register of Historic Places. Your donation will help us order and install historic markers at key Black Panther Party Locations in Chicago.

Please donate today!

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For more information contact us via email:
clarkvirtualmuseum@yahoo.com

Thank you for your support!

Rose X (Clark) Morris,

Founder and Curator of The Clark Virtual Museum

