

LOST AND FOUND

The Incredible Life and Times of (Miss) Layle Lane

BY JACK SCHIERENBECK

Jack Schierenbeck was surprised at the response he got when he included a paragraph about Layle Lane in one of the installments of "Class Struggles," his history of the United Federation of Teachers. Readers, who were fascinated by what they'd read, called and asked where they could find out more. Schierenbeck had to confess that he didn't know. All the information he had been able to find was included in the brief paragraph. Surprisingly, there were no books or articles about Lane, and her contemporaries, people who could have talked about her, were gone. The trail seemed to be cold.

But Dan Golodner, AFT archivist, was convinced that Lane would make a great subject for an American Educator article, and he suggested some sources in AFT's own archives and in the Layle Lane Collection at Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center. Ultimately AE tracked down a man who had not only known Layle Lane well but had done extensive research on her life. Without Professor Leonard Bethel's 400-page manuscript, his taped interviews with many of Lane's friends and associates, and his own recollections, all of which he generously shared, the article that follows could never have been written.

—Editor

HER GRAVE in Cuernavaca is marked only by a number. That's just how cruel time has been to the memory of Layle Lane. You can picture Mexican families celebrating the annual Day of the Dead and wondering, as they walk by her grave, what poor forgotten wretch lies buried there.

If only they knew.

By the time she died at 82, on Feb. 2, 1976, Miss Lane, as she liked to be called, had lived a life that defies neat summary or easy description. High school teacher, civil rights pioneer, teacher unionist, Socialist activist, political candidate, lifelong pacifist, adventurer, and humanitarian, she counted as friends and

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political comrades-in-arms the likes of A. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin, Eleanor Roosevelt, Ralph Bunche, Pearl Buck, W. E. B. DuBois, James Weldon Johnson, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Margaret Mead.

Not that Layle Lane sought the limelight. The fact is, she never lost the common touch: finding time to run a summer camp for poor, inner-city kids on her Pennsylvania farm, and, in her retirement, helping Mexican street children. At the age of 60, she boarded a tiny freighter and traveled alone halfway around the world.

Still, it's a wonder that so little acknowledgment of what she accomplished remains in the public record—mainly fragments, like AFT convention photos of her and her committee (the one that was chiefly responsible for AFT's amicus curiae brief in *Brown vs. Board of Education*); her name on literature for the 1941 March on Washington; a newspaper photo of her smiling and holding the document that put an end to segregated locals in the AFT. Unlike Woody Allen's fictional hero Zelig, who is inserted into film footage showing the great events of his time, Layle Lane's picture is mysteriously missing from the great events in which she participated and helped to shape.

The story of her life might have been lost for all time were it not for Leonard Bethel, who was "one of her boys" at her summer camp. (See "Miss Lane, as we all called her . . .," page 10.) Now a Rutgers University professor in the Department of Africana Studies and an ordained Presbyterian minister, Bethel has made Layle Lane's life no small part of his life's work. He did the heavy digging, uncovering this incredible woman's legacy, and because of him, her accomplishments will not go unsung.

"I was in awe of her," says Maida Springer-Kemp, who at 90 recalls meeting Lane in the early 1930s on 125th Street in Harlem as the older woman was organizing a boycott of local merchants who engaged in discrimination. "I felt proud to be walking alongside her as she patiently explained to people that 'If anyone denies you your citizenship, you should deny them your hard-earned money.'"

By then Lane was already a political fixture on the



*A portrait of Layle Lane
as a young woman,
probably in the 1920s.*

Harlem scene, noted for her persistence and eloquence. "She was brilliant and so articulate," remembers Springer-Kemp. "She was such a lady, gentle but strong. She knew who she was."

Lane refused to be cowed by what the American system would have a black woman believe about herself. "She never bought into what America tried to force upon you, that you were a second-class citizen. That no matter how educated you were you were less of a person. Layle was small but we all thought she was 10-foot tall," says Springer-Kemp, who went on to become an aide to A. Philip Randolph and the director of education for a garment workers union.

"She was a remarkable woman, soft-spoken and with a quiet dignity about her," says Harry Fleishman, one-time national secretary of the Socialist Party, author of a biography of Norman Thomas, and at 86 one of the few people still alive who knew and worked with Lane. "Definitely, one of the smartest people around, absolutely brilliant and articulate. Layle had a full sense of her own worth and didn't want to be treated with kid gloves or as a token. Nor would she kowtow to anyone. Yet she was well-liked and would try to bring people together."

The granddaughter of free blacks, Layle Lane was born on Nov. 27, 1893, in Marietta, Ga., the fourth child of the Rev. Calvin and Alice Virginia Clark Lane, a former school teacher. The son of a North Carolina carpenter, Calvin Lane had gone north to Connecticut to attend the Hartford Seminary. His brother Wiley had been the first African American to graduate from Massachusetts' Amherst College—and one of the first to be elected to Phi Beta Kappa,—and he went on to teach Latin and Greek at Howard University. Calvin, who was ordained a Congregationalist minister, was sent to Marietta to build a church and school, which he did with his own hands.

Unfortunately, he wasn't as handy when it came to persuading the local people, most of whom were Baptists or Methodists, to join his church. Strong-willed and outspoken, the Rev. Lane would never have been mistaken for a charmer. Of course, it didn't help that he had picked up a New England accent at the seminary and was very light-skinned to boot. At any rate, although his school for girls—which daughter Layle attended for nine

years, learning to speak and write with ease and elegance—wasn't a complete failure, Calvin Lane never lived down the tag of "outsider."

A love of language and a facility with it were not all that young Layle learned from her father. From him she inherited a tight-laced personal morality and a strong belief in self-help, combined with a passion for social justice. Although Lane would sever her ties to the church—some even thought she was an atheist—many would later describe her as the "most Christian" woman they'd ever met, indeed "a saint." It's no surprise to hear her talk, in one of her journals, about how "abstract sermons are and only one solution—Christ—rather than the practice of Christ within."

Calvin Lane taught her that the life of a black freedman in the slave South had only been so free; how it was a crime "to teach colored children anything from books and also for colored people to have books in their homes." And he wrote down an account of one terrifying night, when white vigilantes searching for runaway slaves found books instead.

Her father also remembered how, in the years after the Civil War, missionaries came to town and taught the ex-slaves how to read. She learned how they banded together to protect those good samaritans from the violent and vengeful nightriders.

And he recalled hearing a Baptist preacher-turned-Klansman tell a public gathering that "God Almighty never intended a nigger to be the political equal of the white man."

"It was the Klan," he wrote, "who drenched our state with rivers of Negro blood because brave Black men dared to vote." (See "The Story of the Rev. Calvin Lane," opposite page.)

Layle Lane was spared the worst. Being a "preacher's kid"—what James Farmer, Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) founder and fearless Freedom Rider, dismissively called a "PK"—Lane grew up in the security and relative comfort of the black middle class. Her hands never bled from picking cotton. She never had to stand all day at a textile loom or scrub some stranger's floors.

That said, growing up in the turn-of-the-century South, she surely knew the terror of having to live on the rim of the volcano.

"If it is necessary, every Negro in the state will be lynched...to main-



Alice Virginia Clark Lane, Layle Lane's mother.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LEONARD BETHEL

The Story of the Rev. Calvin Lane

Layle Lane's father lived through the time when African Americans gained their freedom and citizenship and then, in a few short years, lost most of the rights they had won. Calvin Lane apparently hoped to write a history of the Reconstruction, but this account of his early life and times seems to be all that remains of the project. Although Rev. Lane wrote this close to the end of his life, the experiences he recounts must have been part of the Lane family lore as Layle Lane was growing up, and it's easy to see her own sense of the preciousness of education, as well as her pride and dignity, in her father's story. "The Story of the Rev. Calvin Lane" is in Howard University's Layle Lane Collection, and it is printed here for the first time with the permission of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LEONARD BETHEL

The Lane family, c. 1895, with Layle Lane sitting on her father's lap.

—Editor

MY PARENTS were free colored people. They were born around 100 years ago; to be exact, my father was born in 1828, my mother in 1834.

The forebears of my mother were thrifty people, and by hard work in odd hours had earned sufficient money to buy their freedom from slavery. It is but charitable to say that there were some humane slaveholders. The freedom of my father and his sister came in a different way. Like Paul of old, they were freeborn. In those years, the status of the mother determined that of her children. The mother of my father was of the white race, while his father was a slave. There were more than a few such children in the early years of the 19th century.

Our state was North Carolina; it was one Southern state that took

some account of such prospective citizens. A constitutional amendment provided that all children so born should be taken from their mothers at 5 years old and bound to a taskmaster until 21 years old. To safeguard the rights of these children, some stipulations in the binding papers were the following: They were to have a home, and to be taught to work. They were to have two years' schooling, education in the three R's, reading, writing, and arithmetic.... In the case of boys at the proper age, they were to learn a trade and at 21 be set free, given two suits of clothes, a horse, bridle, and saddle. Such was thought an adequate equipment for a young man to become a useful and helpful citizen of the state. This plan worked well.

Many of the taskmasters were humane men and lived up to their obligations. Others were not humane and often sold their charges to slave traders, and such children were not freed until the Emancipation Proclamation. I have heard the stories of not a few old people who had vivid recollections of how they were cruelly sold into slavery and made to serve hard and long in bitter bondage.

The taskmaster of my father was of the better sort. He did set his charges free when they were of age. However, my father never got his schooling nor anything else due him. When he was born, the feeling was already growing that free people among the slaves were a rather dangerous element. Something must be done about it. Some wise and good men who wanted right to prevail were puzzled to know what to do. One measure was the organization of the American Colonization Society that sent some to Africa.

THESE COLORED children were no longer permitted to go to school with the whites. All their constitutional rights were thrown to the wind. Old people of 20 years ago in speaking of it would say, "the Constitution fell." That occurred in my state in 1835. Colored people charged that action against the Democratic Party, which was the party in power in the state. "The Constitution fell," and it became a misdemeanor for anyone to teach colored children anything from books and also for colored people to have books in

(Continued on page 46)

tain white supremacy” the governor of Mississippi declared in 1907. Indeed, an average of 100 blacks a year were lynched in the United States between 1898 and 1918. During the 1890s, the voting rights that African Americans had gained during Reconstruction had been systematically and in broad daylight stripped from them, so that by 1910 black citizens in every former Confederate state could no longer vote.

Courts were no refuge. By 1896, a few years after Layle Lane’s birth, the races were separated down to the smallest detail of life—drinking fountains, swimming pools, schools, even morgues and cemeteries—as the doctrine of “separate but equal” became the law of the land. Florida and Kentucky actually went so far as to make it a crime for a white to teach a black. And in a South Carolina textile factory, black and white workers were forbidden by law from using a door, stairway, or even window at the same time.

Who knows how big a role this poison played in Rev. Lane’s decision to leave Georgia and move to Knoxville, Tenn. But with the coming of age of his oldest son, it isn’t a stretch to think that the threat of violence and intimidation was becoming too close for comfort.

Knoxville, 200 miles north of Marietta, had been a stronghold of Union sympathizers who had opposed Tennessee’s secession in the Civil War. Although it was segregated, the more liberal and cosmopolitan Knoxville should have been an improvement. We’ll never know. What we do know is that a few years later Rev. Lane picked up the family and moved to Vineland, N.J. At Vineland High School, 13-year-old Layle had her first taste of integration. A good student, she was the school’s first black graduate.

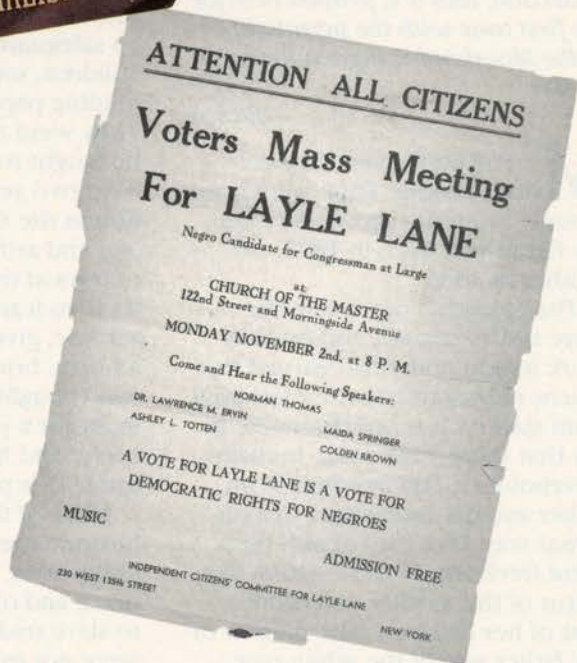
She then followed her father and another uncle to Washington, D.C.’s all-black Howard University. Founded in 1867, Howard, for most of its first century of existence, drew the cream of the American black middle class. Layle thrived, graduating in four years with a degree in history and English.

Next stop: Harlem. Arriving in 1916, she rented a small apartment in the hope of landing a teaching job in the city’s public schools. At a time when even a high school diploma was rare, you’d think employers would have been eager to hire the polished, well-spoken minister’s daughter with her degree from a prestigious college.

Think again. As one black minister put it at the time: “The young colored men and girls who are graduating from high schools, the normal schools [teaching academies], and the colleges don’t want to be



Campaign brochures for two of Layle Lane’s runs for office, both in the 1940s. (Top) For New York State senator. (Left) For New York City comptroller.



(Above) A poster announcing a rally in support of Layle Lane’s candidacy for New York State congressman-at-large. Norman Thomas, the most prominent American Socialist of his day and a friend of Layle Lane, is the featured speaker.

COURTESY OF THE MOORLAND-SPRINGARN RESEARCH CENTER, HOWARD UNIVERSITY

COURTESY OF LEONARD BETHEL

waiting maids and porters or elevator operators, and yet this is about the highest they can hope for in this country."

The degree from Howard wasn't enough. Turned down, Lane went back to school for a year—to Hunter College—earning a second undergraduate degree. Then, intent on teaching high school, she enrolled at Columbia for a master's degree.

We know very little about Lane's early years in New York. Still, the 24-year-old must have felt she'd finally made it home. In Harlem, Lane found herself in the right place at the right time: at the epicenter of an explosion of black intellectual and artistic creativity.

This tiny 2½-mile by half-mile strip would become the "mecca of the New Negro." By the hundreds, if not thousands, black America's best thinkers, writers, poets, artists, sculptors, and musicians flocked to Harlem. Artists like poets Langston Hughes and James Weldon Johnson, writers Claude McKay and Zora Neale Hurston, and musicians Eubie Blake and Fats Waller would create a new, more daring, self-aware, heady, sensuous, and radical black sensibility. They called the result the Harlem Renaissance.

But there were two Harlems—one bursting with promise, the other exploding with problems. Lane had followed the same road north as hundreds of thousands of ordinary black Americans in what became known as "the great migration."

The lure was jobs. A steep decline in European immigration, coupled with the drafting of 4 million men into uniform in 1917, had created an acute labor shortage.

So black people went north—to Chicago's meat-packing houses; to the coal mines of West Virginia and Pennsylvania, the automobile plants of Detroit, and Pittsburgh's steel mills; and to the waterfront, warehouses, and factories of New York.

Mind you, the doors weren't open all the way. More often than not, blacks got no higher than the bottom rung of the job ladder—but at least they were *on* the ladder. It was, as more than one observer put it, "Negro Heaven."

But by 1919, with white men returning from overseas and ready to reclaim their jobs and with war production shut down, the boom ended and with it the need for extra bodies. As the last hired, black workers became the first fired. Where they could, says historian Philip Foner, light-skinned blacks actually posed as Italians and Slavs, complete with foreign-sounding accents. By 1919, about the only work available to African Americans in the North was as strikebreakers, which many took, albeit reluctantly.

The sorriest chapter in the country's labor movement was its almost century-long callous mistreatment of black workers. With rare exceptions, labor unions and the American Federation of Labor were "whites-only" places. When a few blacks were allowed in, they were segregated into so-called Jim Crow locals. (Decades later in the 1950s, Layle Lane would play a key role, first in desegregating the AFT's Washington, D.C., locals and then in banning segregated locals from the AFT.)

Prominent labor leaders publically endorsed the idea of wholesale deportation of blacks "back to

Africa." AFL president Samuel Gompers even refused to take a stand against lynchings, lamely offering that it was a matter of the South's "internal affairs."

"Whatever the tactics, the result is the same for the mass of white workingmen in America," wrote Lane's future friend and mentor, W. E. B. Du Bois for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1913. "Beat or starve the Negro out of his job if you can by keeping him out of the union; or, if you must admit him, do the same thing inside union lines."

Still, with the chance to escape mob violence, a caste system based on race, and a fast-disappearing rural economy of sharecropping and tenant farming, southern blacks kept coming. And coming.

And coming.

Tiny Harlem burst at the seams as the new arrivals crammed three and four families to a tenement apartment, when they could get one, at twice the going rate. Others took refuge wherever they could, in cellars, garages, even stables.

To the newcomers, most of whom had never been beyond their rural county line, every day in this new world was a survival course. On the teeming streets, black Harlemites faced a police force that was all white and all too often brutal. Its public hospital and private clinics were a scandal, as tuberculosis—the scourge of the city's poor—more often than not meant a death sentence. As for Harlem's public schools, they were among the city's oldest, most overcrowded, most dilapidated, some dating back to the Civil War.

Just what was running through the mind of this 5-foot-2 genteel minister's daughter who despised liquor and moral license, we'll never know. A quarter century later she would write of Harlem: "It would take a superhuman race not to be physically affected by poverty, discrimination, and all the social ills of an underprivileged area."

Twenty-four-year-old Lane certainly was "affected" and acted. Within weeks of arriving in New York, she joined 10,000 others in a "silent march" down Fifth Avenue to protest the cold-blooded murder of more than 100 blacks in East St. Louis, Mo., in July 1917.

It was just the first in a lifetime of protests. From foot soldier to field general, throughout the next half century Lane would play a role in all the epic battles for racial, social, and economic justice. Courageous and persistent, she managed to overcome the double whammy of race and gender and to leave a legacy so packed as to seemingly defy the basic laws of time and space.

Consider this partial roll call: Elected first black female AFT vice president... Led AFT's successful fight to rid the union of segregated locals in the South... Ran five times as Socialist Party candidate for political office, including three times for Congress... Organized citizen support for the all-black sleeping car porters union... Founded a Pennsylvania farm co-op during the Depression to grow food for Philadelphia's poor... Helped plan and organize the 1941 March on Washington to open up defense industry jobs to blacks... Urged teachers at the 1942 AFT national convention to study "Negro history" as a way to remove the "stone wall" separating them from black children... Helped orga-

“Miss Lane, as we all called her...”

IT'S BEEN almost 50 years since a “summer romance” with a much older woman took hold of Leonard Bethel and never let go.

It was the summer of 1952. Just as she had for every year since 1929, Layle Lane would leave her Harlem home and open up her Pennsylvania farm—and her heart—to 25 or so city kids. For eight weeks these boys from the rough and tough streets of Harlem and North Philadelphia would learn another way of life.

For this was no dude ranch. Sure there would be swimming and hiking, reading and singing, and plenty of Miss Lane's homemade ice cream. But there would also be work—baking bread, picking the vegetables and fruit for their meals, even helping build a stone wall and road that snaked through the 30-acre property.

Lane believed in the dignity of work. But she was after more than growing food or building stone walls. “La Citadelle,” she hoped, would cultivate something far more important. She had named the farm to memorialize the Haitian slaves who had revolted from their French masters in the 1790s. La Citadelle was the name of the coastal fortress stronghold they built to preserve their independence from invaders who might once again try to enslave them.

In this summer school, “her boys” would be encouraged by word and deed, according to Bethel, “to speak proper English, read avidly, have a physically clean appearance, speak always in the interest of the little man, and live by value and principle rather than what was expedient and popular.”

For Bethel, it was a lasting impression. “Nothing affected my life more than the strength and character of Layle's program for educating youngsters on the farm,” he wrote in his unpublished 400-page manuscript about Lane.

In the summer of 1952, 14-year-old Leonard and his older

brother, Wayne, were counselors at Lane's camp, following in the footsteps of their mother, Anna, who had been a counselor some 20 years before.

In 1952, Layle Lane was 59 years old and nearing the end of her high school teaching career. But if she was slowing down or showing her age, you could have fooled young Leonard. Though only 5-foot, 2-inches tall, she cast a long shadow. This was a working farm and Lane's management style was decidedly hands-on—and she didn't mind getting her hands dirty. There she'd be, out in the broiling summer sun, wearing an ankle-length knitted skirt and a large straw hat, working in the field alongside the boys.

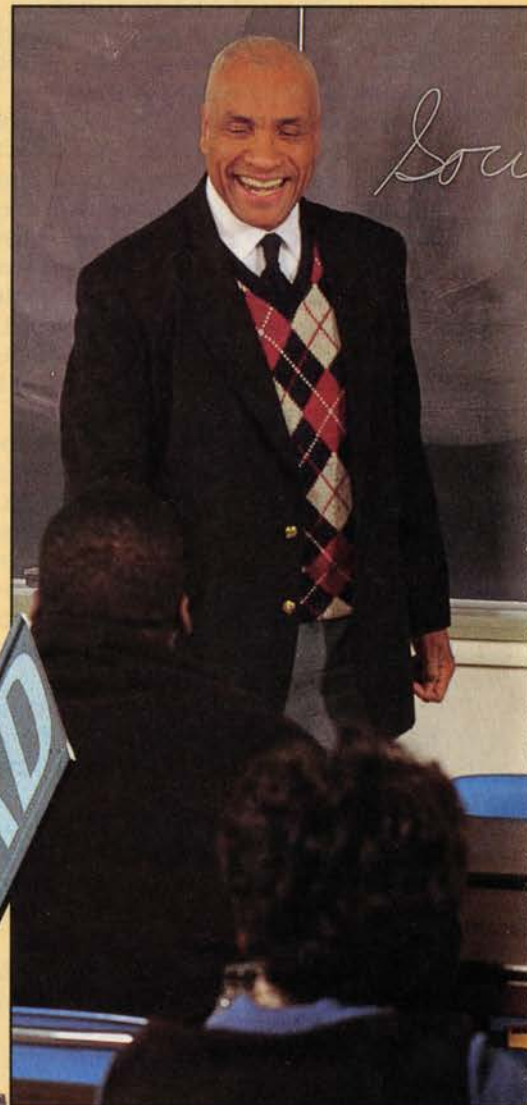
She was a great believer in the power of example, and she expected nothing less than exemplary conduct from Bethel and the other counselors. “Miss Lane would never stand for any sort of vulgarity. There would be no cussing, no four-letter words, and definitely no use of the N-word,” said Bethel in a recent interview.

He ought to

know since he found out the hard way. He tells the story of how Miss Lane overheard him calling one of the boys in his work detail who was slacking off a “nigger.” Lane called Leonard aside and delivered a tongue-lashing he's never forgotten.

“She said, ‘Never call a member of your race, or a member of any other race, an abusive racial slur! It is a sign of

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICK ROMANENKO/TRIUMPH UNIVERSITY



PHOTOGRAPH BY DON BOOKER

ignorance and weak character. You, as a counselor, are a leader. A leader must be an example of strength and strong moral character.”

To make sure Leonard got the message, she not only docked his pay but made him go without supper for the next two evenings. Instead, he would have to make a meal out of what what Southerners call “pot liquor”—the cooking liquid left from preparing greens like collard or kale.

“That’s your supper,” Bethel recalls her saying, setting down a tall glass of vile-tasting stuff. “I sat there for a couple of hours trying to get it down.”

Did any of the boys refuse to listen or take their medicine? “I never saw any of those boys buck her,” Bethel replies. “They’d never heard anybody speak like her, so elegant, so refined. Besides, Miss Lane wasn’t one of these go-sit-in-the-corner type of disciplinarians. She’d go eye-to-eye with those boys. And she’d win the argument every time.”

There would be other lessons. Like the time Miss Lane’s brother-

(Top left) Leonard Bethel, today, in a classroom at Rutgers University where he teaches. (Left) A sign on the street named for Layle Lane in the suburban neighborhood near Doylestown, Pa., where La Citadelle was once located. (Below) Layle Lane with some of the children at her summer camp.



in-law, Mr. Collins, a member of the Communist Party, showed up at the camp with a gun and asked Leonard and his brother if they wanted to learn how to shoot. Of course they said “yes,” and off they went. It wasn’t more than a few minutes when Leonard saw Miss Lane coming up the path with fire in her eyes.

She hauled off and slapped the much taller man right across the face. Stunned, Collins tried to explain, saying that he meant no harm but that the boys had to learn how to protect themselves. “There’s a revolution coming, and these young men need to know how to fight the white racists,” Bethel remembers him saying.

Miss Lane would have none of it. “I don’t want you teaching these boys any of that garbage. You leave now. Get off my property.” And Collins did.

Lane wasn’t always a pacifist, though. Bethel recalls the time she looked the other way when one of the boys needed some special attention. Her campers were all tough kids, but one boy in particular was trouble. Miss Lane had taken him on as a special project. But he was bullying the other boys, especially the younger ones. Leonard and the other counselors had tried talking some sense to the boy but nothing was getting through to him.

So Leonard came up with the idea of giving the tough guy a dose of his own medicine. He approached Miss Lane with the idea of challenging the boy to a boxing match. Normally she was opposed to any sort of violence, but this time she gave the idea her blessing, just as long as the other boys didn’t find out. She didn’t want to set the wrong example. “Beat the hell out of him, Leonard,” Lane said.

As it turned out, the boy was game. “I told him that if he wanted a piece of me to meet me at midnight at the wall. He was a big boy, over 6 feet, who had grown up on the streets of Harlem, and he gave me a good fight. But I beat him till he dropped. He didn’t give us any problems after that.” □

nize a nationwide protest by the Workers Defense League against the execution of a black sharecropper who had killed his white landlord in self-defense... Helped organize a solidarity network to oppose World War II internment of Japanese-Americans... Played a key role in the successful six-year fight to pressure Presidents Roosevelt and Truman to integrate the armed forces... Headed the AFT committee that rallied national support for the Supreme Court’s landmark 1954 school desegregation ruling....

“Layle Lane more than any other classroom teacher that we know of is responsible for the recent Supreme Court decision against ‘separate but equal’ education,” Fanny Simon, Teachers Guild and later New York City’s United Federation of Teachers mainstay, said on the occasion of a 1954 lunch in Lane’s honor. A friend of Lane’s since their college days at Columbia and a fellow teacher at James Monroe High School in the 1920s, she could have been allowed a bit of overstatement. But it was AFT’s Democratic Human Relations Committee, with Lane at its head, that was largely responsible for the “friend of the court” brief urging the Supreme Court to outlaw segregation in the public schools, in the now landmark *Brown vs. The Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas*, case. A position taken by no other teacher union.

Throughout the 1950s, Lane was also a leader in the bitter and complicated battle to end “Jim Crow” teacher unionism, which still existed in AFT locals in the South, and, as head of the union’s Democratic Human Relations Committee, she wrote “Debits and Credits,” a monthly column about social justice for the *American Teacher*. But the column, a balance sheet of brief items illustrating advances along the road to equality for all citizens, as well as stumbles and retreats, made plain her strong belief that social justice must be colorblind.

Biographer Leonard Bethel says Lane was a fierce believer that education, especially language arts, was “the first step toward political, social, and economic power and independence.”

“Most oppressed are the least active in bringing about their own salvation, chiefly because they have al-

ways been deprived of the weapons needed to secure it," Lane wrote to a friend in 1934. And her prescription for helping the kids we would now call "at-risk" is as current today as it was when she wrote it in the 1940s:

Smaller classes are a "must" for all schools, but especially for those in the underprivileged areas. It is important that these smaller classes be in the first six grades, for then it will be possible to discover those physical and mental handicaps which set a child apart from his group and which later develop into antisocial behavior. Along with the smaller class, additional teachers will be needed to work individually with those who need particular attention.

Education, however would be but a "first step." For whatever her belief in the transforming power of education, Lane was not from the "education-conquers-all" school. Although a teacher and AFT vice president, she resisted the temptation to narrow the fight against poverty to improving access to education. For her, even the bloody fight for racial justice didn't address the deeper and more systemic injustices of class inequality. "Neither education nor race equality butter any bread or pay rent," Lane said. "Only an opportunity to work at decent wages will do that."

Like many on the left in the 1930s and '40s, she believed the Great Depression had proven that capitalism was programmed to self-destruct and that from its ashes some form of totalitarian nightmare would emerge. Only a "democratic socialism" could save the world from the "barbarism" of Stalin or Hitler.

"The misery and needless suffering caused by poverty made me a Socialist," Lane wrote in her diary many years later, "the kind of person many look upon as a wild-eyed radical or else one who wants to reduce everyone to the same level..."

"It is essential," she wrote in another diary entry, "to make people aware now not only of the real nature of Socialism but its fundamental difference with Communism.... It means a society of diversified ownership...with no extremes of rich and poor."

Lane's pragmatic brand of "democratic socialism" required that the government, in her words ensure "a planning of our eco-

nomie life to provide jobs for all able-bodied adults.... [O]nly when this is done will there be a basic attack on the problems, not only of Harlem but of all New York's underprivileged areas."

It is this faith in the redemptive power of good jobs that led Lane to throw heart and soul into what would be called the March on Washington Movement. In late 1940, President Roosevelt, much to the chagrin of isolationists in Congress and pro-Nazi sympathizers in the country at large, was rearming the nation for the inevitable war against Hitler. Rearmament meant jobs, lots of them—except for black workers, who even in the North couldn't crack the all-white defense industry. Brooklyn's defense contractors were typical. According to a 1941 survey conducted by the National Urban League, only 234 of 13,840 workers at 72 defense plants in Brooklyn were black.

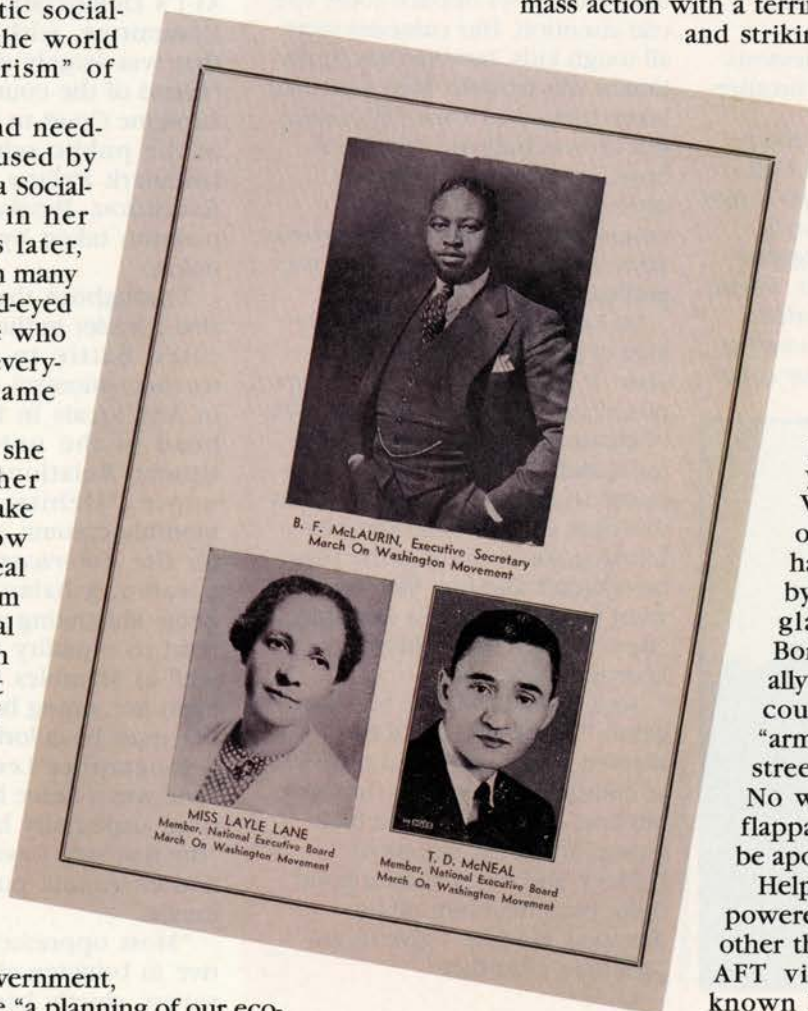
Leading the fight to force the federal government to open these jobs to blacks and desegregate the military altogether was A. Philip Randolph, head of the country's largest union of black workers, the 35,000-member Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. To force Roosevelt's hand, Randolph and a tiny inner circle of advisors had come up with a plan to have 10,000 blacks descend on the nation's capital and stay there until justice prevailed.

"We call upon you to fight for jobs in National Defense," proclaimed the organizing committee for the march. "Negroes can build a mammoth machine of mass action with a terrific and tremendous driving and striking power that can shatter

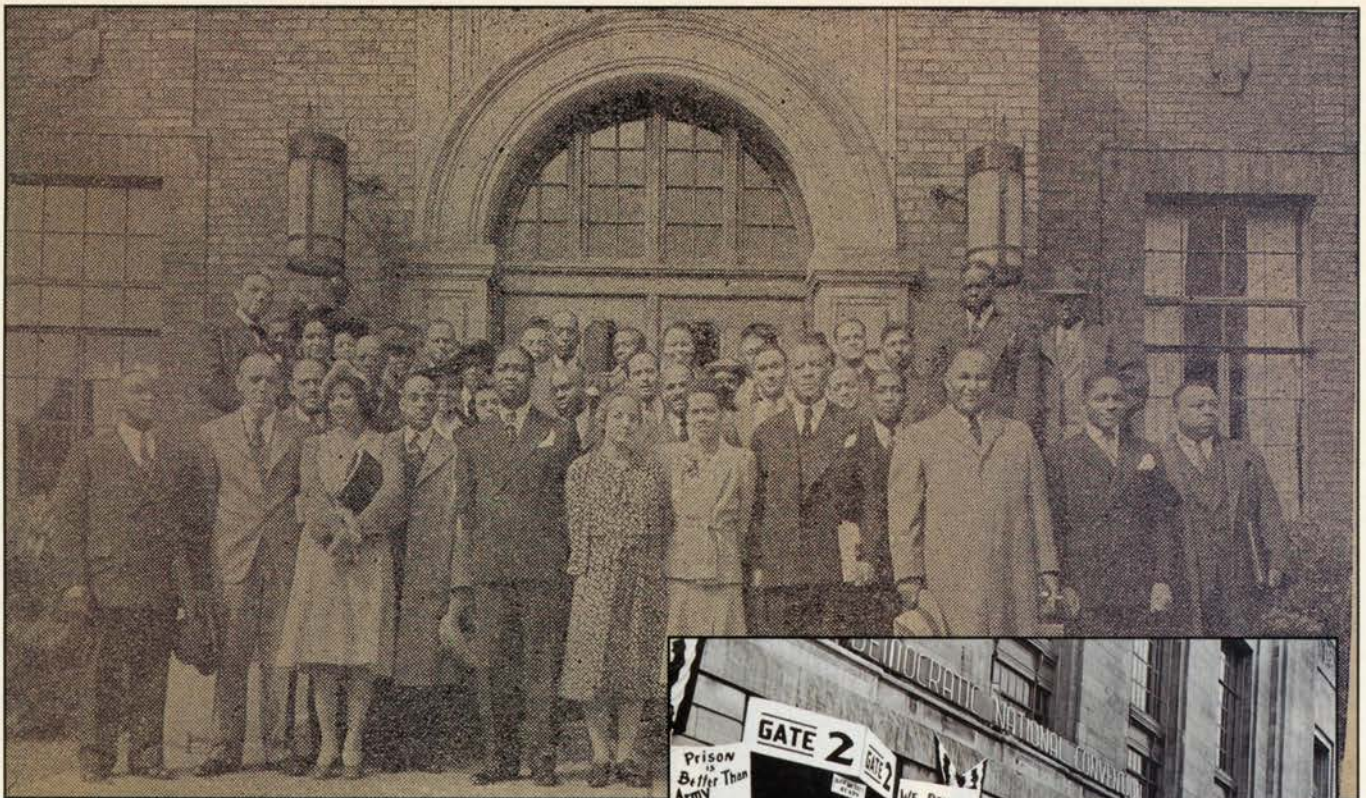
and crush the evil fortress of race prejudice and hate, if they will only resolve to do so and never stop until victory comes..."

Randolph knew very well that such a massive display—the number of prospective marchers had now exploded to 100,000—would be as unwelcome as it was unprecedented. Only nine years before, in 1932, World War I veterans—part of a so-called Bonus Army—had been violently roused by Army troops led by Douglas MacArthur. And the Bonus Army had been virtually all white. What would the country make of an all-black "army" camped out across the street from the White House? No wonder the ordinarily unflappable Roosevelt was said to be apoplectic.

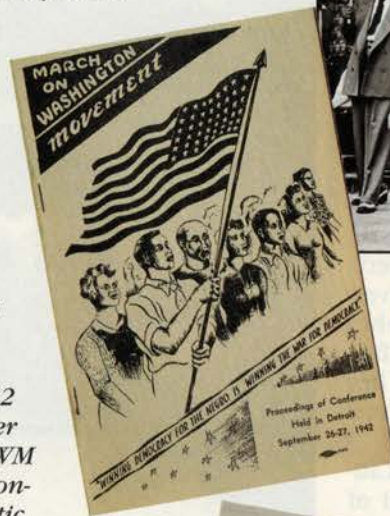
Helping mastermind this high-powered squeeze play was none other than Layle Lane, by then an AFT vice president. She had known Randolph since the mid-



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After President Roosevelt signed the 1941 executive order banning discrimination in federal defense factories, the March on Washington organizing committee continued, as the March on Washington Movement (MOWM), to fight for equal rights, with a focus on expanding fair employment and desegregating the armed forces. (Above) Layle Lane (front row, center), shown with other delegates to a MOWM conference in 1942. (Right) The cover illustration for the proceedings of the 1942 conference. (Bottom) The cover illustration for a piece of MOWM literature. (Above right) Demonstrators at the 1948 Democratic Convention calling for the desegregation of the armed forces. This goal of the MOWM was finally achieved in 1948. (Opposite) Layle Lane, with other MOWM officials, including Benjamin McLaurin, shown in the program for the "We Are Americans Too" Conference in 1943.



1920s, when she had organized a citizens' committee to support Randolph's drive to organize the all-black sleeping car porters against the rabidly anti-union Pullman Car Company.

Besides, they were neighbors at Harlem's Dunbar Apartments on 150th Street. Opened in 1928 at the apex of the Harlem Renaissance, Dunbar House, with its beautiful flower-filled courtyard designed to encourage mixing and mingling, drew the leading figures of the black intellectual and cultural elite, the likes of Countee Cullen, James Weldon Johnson, W. E. B. Du Bois, Walter White, Claude McKay, tap dancer extraordinaire Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, and the actor-singer-activist Paul Robeson.

Lane and Randolph saw a lot of one another. Both had fathers who were ministers. Both were Socialists. Both liked a good argument. In the early 1930s, Randolph attended a twice-monthly study group that Lane hosted; also present was a young Harlem minister and future congress-

COURTESY OF THE A. PHILIP RANDOLPH INSTITUTE



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF BROWN BROTHERS



COURTESY OF THE CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

sional powerhouse — Adam Clayton Powell Jr.

Were Lane and Randolph more than comrades in arms? Lane biographer Bethel doesn't think so. Randolph was devoted to his wife. And Lane, beautiful though never glamorous, did not want for gentlemen admirers: fellow Dunbarite W. E. B. Du Bois and Howard University Professor Ralph Bunche, the first black Nobel Peace Prize winner, were among the smitten. But Bethel maintains that the only room for a man in her life was already filled by her ailing father, who lived with her and her sister until his death in 1939.

"Her father became her life," said Benjamin McLaurin, good friend of Lane's who was also an official of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and close associate of A. Philip Randolph. "She sacrificed all her pleasures and social desires to support him and to look after him."

At any rate, by the spring of 1941 Lane was caught up in the feverish climate surrounding the looming summer March on Washington. She was 47, and her more than 20 years of teaching, writing, public speaking, and organizing made her an invaluable asset. Whether it was working behind the scenes or working the streets—the teetotaler even invaded Harlem's saloons with leaflets—or addressing a jam-packed rally of 18,000 in Madison Square Garden, the biggest civil rights rally up to that time, Lane's public star never shined brighter.

Just how bright can be seen in the fact that she was



DUNBAR APARTMENTS, THE MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, THE WURTS COLLECTION

(Top) The Dunbar Apartments in Harlem, where Layle Lane lived for many years and where she met and mingled with other figures of the Harlem Renaissance, such as poet James Weldon Johnson, civil rights activist Walter White, and singer Paul Robeson. (Above left) A. Philip Randolph, another tenant of the Dunbar Apartments, as he looked at about the time he and Layle Lane first met. (Above) An entrance to the interior garden courtyard of the Dunbar Apartments.

deputized to accompany Randolph and two other men to meet with Roosevelt in the White House in June 1941. Although, according to historian Philip Foner, they were faced with a lecture on why the march was "bad and unintelligent," and, Randolph later said, with a

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOL. CIII...No. 35,176

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NEW YORK, TUESDAY, MAY 18, 1954

LATE CITY EDITION

Fair and cool today. Mostly sunny, continued cool tomorrow.
Temperature Today—Max. 69, Min. 42
Tomorrow—Today—Max. 69, Min. 42
Friday—Max. 69, Min. 42
Sat. & Sun. Max. 69, Min. 42

FIVE CENTS

HIGH COURT BANS SCHOOL SEGREGATION; 9-TO-0 DECISION GRANTS TIME TO COMPLY

IN THE
Supreme Court of the United States
October Term, A. D. 1953.

No. 1

OLIVER BROWN, ET AL., Appellants,

vs.

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
TOPEKA, KANSAS, etc., ET AL. Appellees.

APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
DISTRICT OF KANSAS.

ADDITIONAL BRIEF OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION
OF TEACHERS AS AMICUS CURIAE.

JOHN LIGTENBERG,
234 N. La Salle Street,
Chicago 2, Illinois,
Counsel for American Federation
of Teachers, Amicus Curiae.

SILVA M. BOWCHARDY,
Homer Building,
Washington, D. C.,
Of Counsel.

(Above) The New York Times headline announcing the Supreme Court decision in Brown vs. Board of Education. (Right) The cover of AFT's amicus curiae brief supporting school desegregation. (Below) Layle Lane (first row, center), chairman of the AFT Human Relations Committee, which was chiefly responsible for the amicus brief, with members of the committee.



COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

COURTESY OF THE MOORLAND
SPRINGARIN RESEARCH CENTER,
HOWARD UNIVERSITY

COURTESY OF AMERICAN TEACHER



SPEAKER AT THE Human Relations Committee luncheon of the American Federation of Teachers convention, Tuesday noon was Dr. George S. Counts, left, professor of education at Columbia university. Shown with him is Layle Lane, chairman of the committee and a New York city teacher.—Star photo.

Teachers Union Bans Segregation in Locals

Layle Lane at the 1953 AFT convention with President George Counts. She is holding the amendment to the AFT constitution outlawing segregated locals.

A constitutional amendment outlawing local unions whose members are segregated by race or color was adopted at the American Federation of Teachers national convention Tuesday afternoon in the Hotel Pere Marquette. Passage of the amendment came on the heels of an address by Dr. George S. Counts, Columbia university professor, pleading for a more realistic approach to American ideals.

Hearing committee reports in the afternoon business session, convention delegates turned down a recommendation by the executive committee to not adopt the civil rights amendment proposed by the Boston teachers union. The committee reported that the amendment banning locals who segregate by race or color might do "more harm than good" at this time. Only one delegate from Georgia favored non-conference. He said the amendment would eliminate his local which has been with the AFT for many years. Several other delegates, however, strongly pleaded for its adoption stating that the time for the AFT to take positive action is now.

Witness the 28 months he spent in jail as a conscientious objector in World War II, a sentence to a chain gang for a Freedom Ride in 1947, and an openly gay lifestyle in days when that made someone a target for FBI blackmail.

display of FDR's legendary charm, Randolph was unmoved, telling Roosevelt, "I'm sorry, Mr. President, the march cannot be called off."

But because Lane and her colleagues had made their case in the Oval Office, the march never happened. Less than two weeks after the meeting, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 requiring that no defense contractor "discriminate against any worker because of race, creed, color or national origin." And with it the landmark Fair Employment Practices Committee was born.

More important was the role the planned march played as an inspiration for the emerging Civil Rights movement. In recent years, the words March on Washington have come to mean the 1963 event, especially Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. But there are many who think that the dream, indeed the modern civil rights era, can be directly traced to the march that never was.

Among Randolph's young lieutenants was a 29-year-old whose name would become synonymous with the civil rights struggle in the decades to come—Bayard Rustin.

Mentor and friend to at least two generations of civil rights and peace activists, including AFT presidents Al Shanker and Sandra Feldman, Rustin's career highlights include being the first field secretary of the Congress of Racial Equality, organizer of the 1955 Montgomery (Alabama) bus boycott and the 1963 March on Washington, and later director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute. His leading-man good looks and elegant manner hid an iron will and an absolutely indomitable spirit.

All this is a mat-

ter of public record. What isn't known is the pivotal role Layle Lane played in Rustin's life—which has been missed by Rustin biographers. "Actually it was through Layle Lane that I met Mr. Randolph," Rustin said in a 1978 interview with Leonard Bethel. Rustin told of first meeting Lane in 1938 when he was assigned to Benjamin Franklin High School by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to teach evening classes of English to the foreign born, mostly new arrivals fleeing Nazi Germany.

"I had no real experience [teaching]," Rustin said. "I knew nothing about making a lesson plan. I knew nothing about [teaching] basic English."

To save his job, Rustin sought out Lane, the school's only black teacher. Although she had a reputation as a "disciplinarian," Rustin had been impressed that Lane "was always warmly greeted by the kids" and they "wanted to get into her classes."

For the next five to six months the two worked together. "Several evenings a week she used to help me draw up lesson plans," Rustin recalled. "She taught me essentially how to use a blackboard and how to involve people in the learning process."

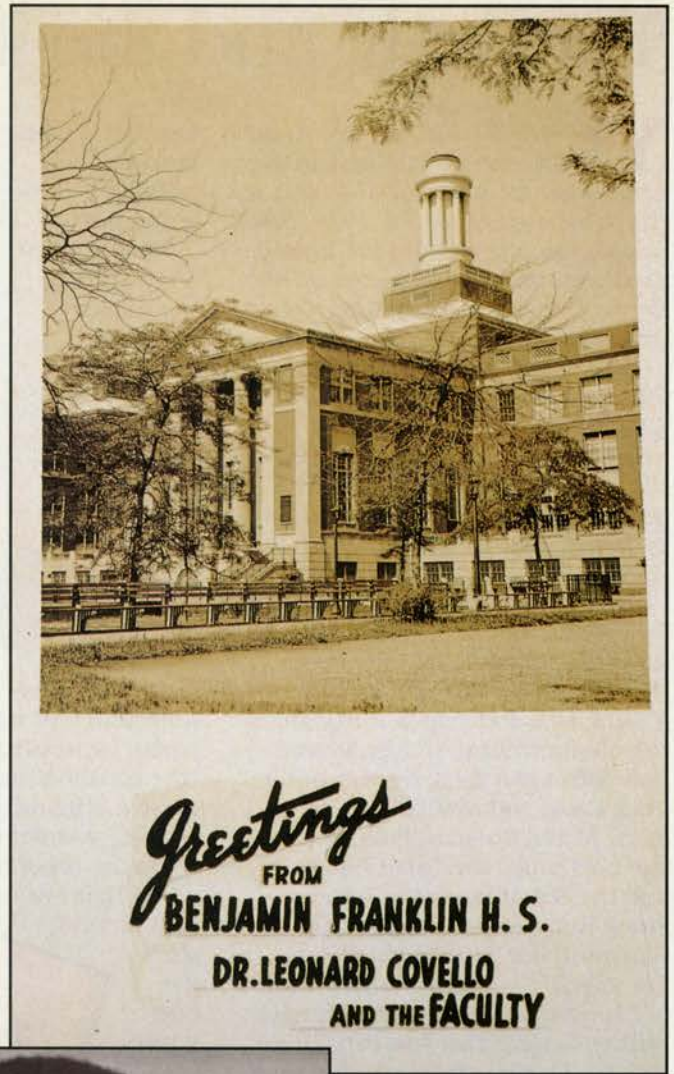
Rustin's lessons, though, weren't limited to the finer points of pedagogy. "She would tell me about what was going on in the Civil Rights movement, none of which I knew," Rustin said. "She was deeply involved in it. Anything that had to do with the Civil Rights movement, the human rights movement, the fight against anti-Semitism, the plight of the sharecroppers...."

"She looked upon me as a youngster who needed some guidance, and she was very helpful to me." Part of that help was ditching Communism. "I was a member of the Young Communist League and that distressed her to no end.... She wanted me to meet Mr. Randolph." It would be two years before Rustin got around to that. "When I told him I had worked with Layle Lane, he was delighted."

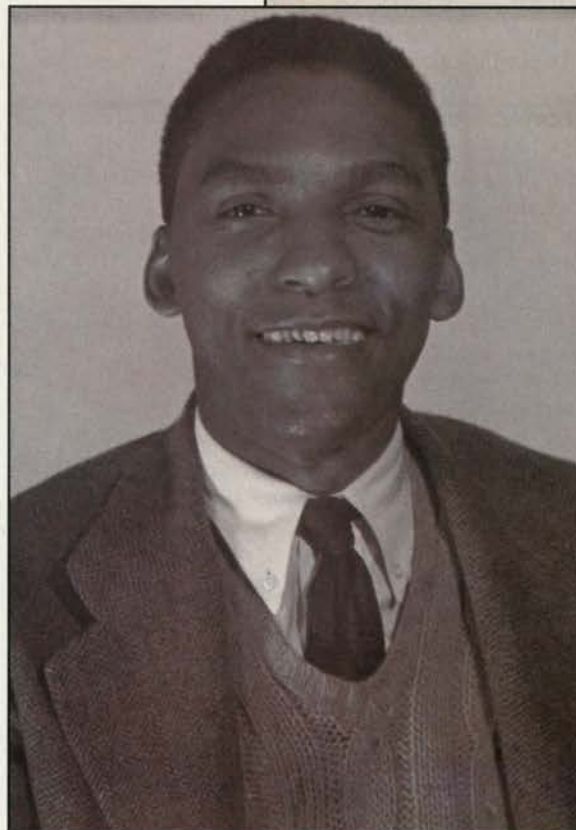
As for Lane, Rustin said: "Layle was totally devoid of any racial, religious, or ethnic prejudice... she had a great faith in people's ability to change."

"I never knew anyone other than Mr. Randolph who I respected more than Layle Lane."

Sadly, Bayard Rustin's snapshot is all that remains on record about Lane the classroom teacher. We know she taught history at James Monroe High School in the East Bronx, beginning in 1925 and that she moved to Benjamin Franklin High School, a newly formed school in East Harlem in 1934. She was the first African-American teacher to be hired by Leonard Covello, who went on, during the years Lane taught at Benjamin Franklin, to create a flourishing multiracial and multiethnic school,



Greetings
FROM
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN H. S.
DR. LEONARD COVELLO
AND THE **FACULTY**



(Above) Benjamin Franklin High School (now Manhattan Center for Science and Math Careers), where Layle Lane taught from 1934 until she retired. (Left) Bayard Rustin, c. 1940, at about the time he and Layle Lane met.

COURTESY OF THE MACORLAND-SPINGARN RESEARCH CENTER, HOWARD UNIVERSITY

COURTESY OF THE BAYARD RUSTIN ESTATE

The Lady and the Tramp Steamer

YOU HAVE to give Layle Lane credit—she certainly had flair, not to mention curiosity and a thirst for adventure. In 1953, few people her age would have considered traveling halfway around the world by ship on anything other than an ocean liner.

But she was one of a kind. Instead of booking passage on the *Queen Elizabeth* or any of the other floating palaces of the day, the 60-year-old, recently retired school teacher climbed aboard the cargo freighter, the SS *Flying Arrow*.

The tiny tramp steamer would be Lane's home for the next four months as it made its way across the Atlantic to Lisbon, Genoa, Casablanca, and Tripoli, through the Mediterranean to Alexandria and Beirut and then, by way of the Suez Canal and Arabian Sea, to Karachi and Bombay. From there the boat sailed the East China Sea and the Sea of Japan to Canton, Hong Kong, and Yokohama before it crossed the vast Pacific to San Francisco.

Lane kept a daily journal. It goes without saying that you can tell a lot about people from reading their diaries. Everything from their basic humanity and petty vanities to what foods agree with them. Lane eats the same meals as the crew, and she asks little in the way of creature comforts, except for clean restrooms. That turns out to be her biggest complaint—she declares one Third-World john “most disagreeable.”

She writes of passing the time—and, oh, there was time to pass—crocheting, taking pictures, studying Spanish. But what jumps off the pages is this woman's huge appetite for life. She's just voracious to learn, to explore, to try almost anything once.

Nothing escapes her gaze, including the variety of techniques dock gangs use in loading and unloading cargo—she is particularly annoyed at a group of Sudanese workers for showing so little pride in their work. Yet she's the first to worry about the safety and com-

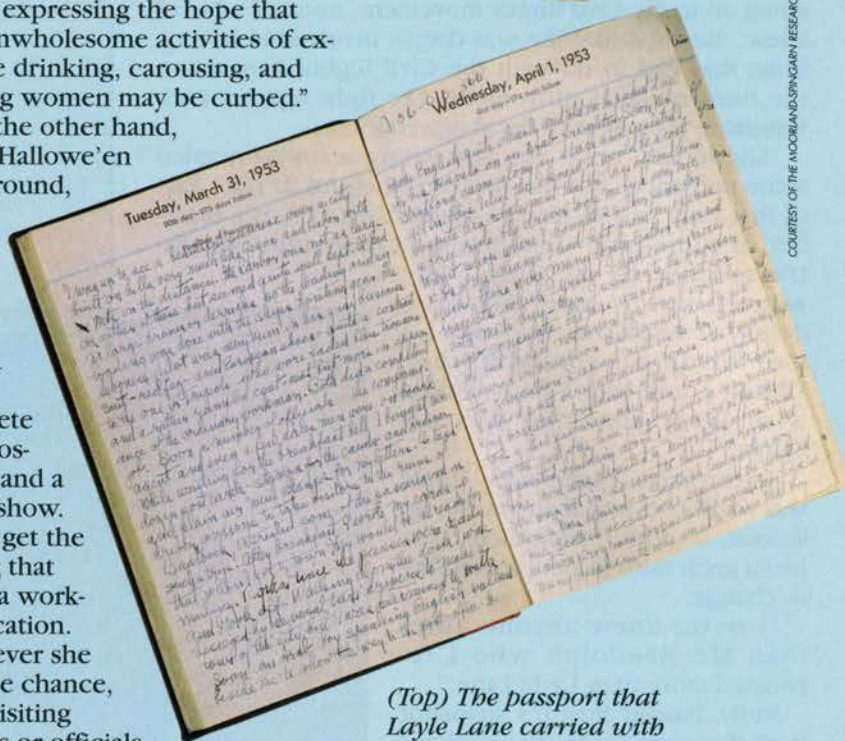
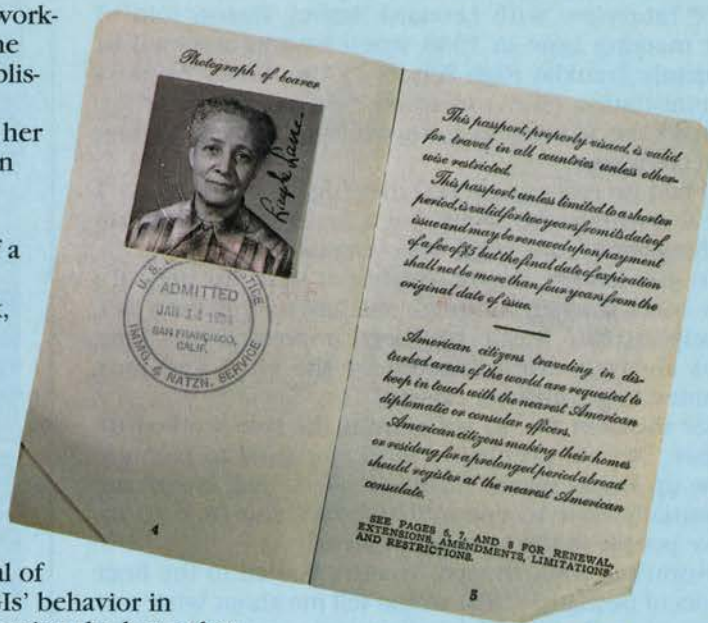
fort of the workers when the weather is blistering hot.

She's got her warts. When she thinks she's been done out of a \$10 traveler's check, she stewes for days. Proper to the point of being puritanical, she is especially critical of American GIs' behavior in Japan, expressing the hope that “the unwholesome activities of excessive drinking, carousing, and abusing women may be curbed.”

On the other hand, when Hallowe'en rolls around, she's the one who organizes a party, complete with costumes and a talent show.

You get the feeling that this is a working vacation. Whenever she gets the chance, she's visiting schools or officials or attending prearranged meetings with other Socialists. On one of these occasions, she gets into an argument with a Saudi who is convinced that the Jews control the world. Lane sets him straight, pointing to the Morgans and Rockefellers as proof that his theory just doesn't hold up.

All in all, you come away with the impression that Layle Lane was a serious traveler. Very serious. □



(Top) The passport that Layle Lane carried with her on her voyage.

(Above) A couple of pages from her travel journal.

COURTESY OF THE MORLAND-SPRINGARN RESEARCH CENTER, HOWARD UNIVERSITY

famous for its outreach to the surrounding community. We know, too, that she and Covello were friends as well as colleagues, but the rest of the picture—a career spanning more than 30 years as a high school educator—is either lost for good or buried waiting to be unearthed. Piecing together the fragments of Layle Lane's life, you see, is very much a work in progress.

Her formal teaching career drew to a close in 1953. The years of non-stop, almost frenetic obligation had caught up with her. Forget about the teaching, the politics, the rallies, the conferences, the articles to write—at the same time, she was responsible for keeping the summer camp going and overseeing the operation of a working farm. It was time to lighten the load. First, she would do what she had never found time for: take a trip around the world—or at least half way around. (See “The Lady and the Tramp Steamer” on the facing page.) Then she would retire to Mexico.

She had visited there in early 1954 and found the climate and the lush tropical vegetation agreed with her. Besides, as she later told a friend, “it was cheaper”—a teacher's pension in those years didn't buy much in the way of extras.

In letters to friends, she wrote about wanting to be free of so much responsibility, to look after her health, and finally have some peace of mind. But old habits die hard. No sooner was Lane settled in Mexico City and later in nearby Cuernavaca that she began to write the script for her final chapter.

It didn't take long for the sight of ragged and malnourished children, begging and rifling through heaps of garbage for something to eat, to bring out the old organizer in her. With what little savings and pension money she had, Lane took not only to feeding the children but to teaching them “proper” Spanish.

And Alice Marsh, friend and fellow teacher, saw the Layle Lane she had always known when she visited Lane in Mexico in 1958:

I remember how we chanced to meet a Mexican woman. She rushed up to Layle and kissed her, then turned to me and said, “She is a saint.” I felt the same way about Layle. She lived what she believed and quietly and consistently did whatever she could to enhance the lives of those with whom she came in contact.

When Layle Lane took her first trip to Mexico in 1954, at the age of 61, she knew no Spanish. By 1963, after taking courses at the National University and studying on her own, she was writing letters and articles in Spanish—as well as teaching the children on the street. She even wrote a widely distributed pamphlet advising workers of their rights under the Mexican Constitution, while also champi-

(Right) “Mexican Workers, Here Is Your Magna Carta,” the cover page of a Spanish-language pamphlet Layle Lane wrote after her retirement to Mexico.

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oning the cause of prisoners' rights. At the time of her final illness, she was working on a history of Mexican slavery.

A prolific letter writer—often penning as many as 15 a day—she kept after friends to send her newspaper clippings and was forever commenting about U.S. and world politics, education, race relations, and everything else under the sun.

Why didn't she write a memoir in which she reflected on her own life and times? In a 1975 letter to the director of the Howard University archives, apparently answering a request for something like that, she demurred. No more inclined than ever to put herself in the lime-light, she said her preference would be to write about her father and her Uncle Wiley. That would give students to come a chance to “learn that the struggle for full and complete citizenship started long before their time and they are just a link—tho' an important one—to achieve a fuller life.”

Besides, by 1975 her health was rapidly failing—so much so that she was apologizing in her letters for making mistakes: “I'm forgetting how to spell very simple words.”

In January of 1976 Lane suffered a stroke, her second. Just days later, in a letter to her sister, Teresa, she wrote:

I'm almost helpless, as I can't walk without help or do the simplest things.... Pray that my death may come soon. Hope all is well with you—as ever Layle.

Five days later she was gone.

Her last letter—like all her correspondence for many years—carried the following lines by a long-forgotten author: “If we have moved up at all out of the darkness, it is because the few dared to walk in the sun.”

Few were more daring. □



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pensatory effects for at-risk students. However, we still do not know why this is so.

As for the social benefits of small schools, more research should be done on the long-term effects of these benefits. For example, if students who attend smaller schools are more likely to vote or be employed and less likely to be in jail 20 years later, then small schools will be seen as an engine that improves social capital across the board. Having schools that are safer and graduate more students may be good enough. □

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THE STORY OF THE REV. CALVIN LANE

(Continued from page 7)

their homes. Several years before the Civil War, such free colored people had no rights that were respected by anybody, and they themselves were not at all surprised by the Dred Scott decision.

Such were conditions when my parents set up their home shortly after the middle of the last century. They both felt keenly the wrong of not being allowed to learn from books. They determined that they would have books, and that so far as was in their power their children should attend school if it ever became possible in their state. About 1857, they secured through a druggist of our town a spelling book, a hymn book, and a Bible. It was my mother's burning desire that her children learn at least to read hymns and the Bible. The books were zealously guarded under lock and key in the most sacred place in our home.

BEFORE MY father took to himself a wife, he purchased an acre of ground and built his own house, for when he reached his majority he apprenticed himself and became a leading contractor and builder in his community. Our home, like most homes of that day, had heavy blinds outside and darkened curtains inside. It was not easy to see a light from the outside.

One night, my parents brought out the books, and my father and two older brothers were trying to learn the English alphabet from the standard spelling book of that day. Suddenly there was a loud rap on our front door. My parents knew at once who was there. Quickly my mother gathered the books and put them in their accustomed place while my father opened the door and gave a hearty welcome to his most unwelcome visitors.

In walked seven white men, all well known. They said, "We've come to search this house." Nobody dared to say, "You shall not do it." Silence was golden under the circumstances, for each of the intruding men had a long rifle. The fact was our home was a station on the Underground Railroad. My parents had shielded at night a few colored

They walked back to the open fire, threw the spelling book and hymn book into it, and stood guard while the books burned.

people who were making their way to Canada and to freedom.

FOUR OF the men went to other rooms in the house to make sure that only the family was in the home. The others proceeded to find anything of value not in sight. My father had made a small chest in which to keep valuable papers. They ordered him to unlock this box. The papers in it were thrown out; a three-cent coin was found. My mother asked them, please, not to take that as some friend had given it to her first baby; it was thrown back into the box. Then they walked into the bedroom. A small trunk was there. They commanded Mother to unlock this trunk. It was done. The clothing was thrown out piece by piece. At the bottom, they found the books.

After further search of the house, they walked back to the open fire, threw the spelling book and hymn book into it, and stood guard while they burned. The Bible was carried off, for they were too deeply religious to burn it. As they were leaving, they threatened violence to our home if ever books were found there again. I recall now how my mother used to choke and shed fountains of tears when she used to relate the story of this cruel treatment at the hands of those marauders.

In a year or so after such treatment, the Civil War began. Everybody knows its outcome. In about two years after this war ended, missionary teachers came to our town. I am not sure that the American Missionary Association sent them. The colored people, however, received them with open arms and grateful hearts. Those were dark days for those sacrificing teachers

of Negroes. About 100 of the colored women and men banded themselves together in squads of 10 and took turns many a night in safeguarding those teachers in their homes. These Negro guards gave threatening night riders to understand that their dead bodies had to be trampled over before harm could come to those teachers.

EVERYBODY COULD have books who could buy them, and all the colored people were determined to send their children to school not with the idea, as some have cruelly charged, that these parents wanted to educate their children above work. That sort of charge never had any basis in fact. Neither was there ever any maudlin sentiment on the part of the early friends of Negro education about raising Negroes above any and every sort of honorable labor. Such a charge as that has only been made when it was desired to placate some Southern opposers of Negro education, that education to the Negro which makes of him an upstanding contender of every national right freely accorded to every white citizen. As time went on, my brothers who stood by and saw their first spelling book burned but were too young to understand why, finally graduated at Howard University. One of them took two years' postgraduate work at Amherst College, became a teacher and finally professor of Greek at Howard University. His unbounded ambition for scholarly attainments and determination to serve his fellows in helpful ways broke him down early in life, ere he reached two score years.

Well do I recall that when our town's paper announced my

brother's graduation from Amherst, the poor and almost illiterate person who carried off the Bible on the occasion of the night's outrage on our home sent my father word that if he would come out to his house, three miles into the country, he might have that Bible. Word went back at once that more books, especially Bibles, were in our home than were wisely used, that one was not needed, and my parents were glad to let him keep that one as his waybill to Heaven. In a few months after that, the same poor fellow on a snowy night was prowling in a most untoward place, stumbled, fell into a little ditch and died. Snow covered his dead body, and almost a week passed before it was found.

OUT OF such marauders as searched our home and burnt our books, grew the Ku Klux Klan of our state during the Reconstruction period. There was a Baptist preacher in our state named Dixon, "the father of the more famous Tom Dixon who wrote 'Leopard Spots.'" "Elder" Dixon left his pastorate, and henceforth gave himself to the beneficent (?) work of the Klan. He became a fanatic because of the 14th and 15th Amendments.... When I was a small boy, this Negro hater came to our town, and I heard him in a public address say, "God Almighty never intended a N- to be the political equal of a white man." So far as this writer believes, Dixon was the organizer of the Klan. I do know that under his leadership, with the above slogan, the Klan drenched our state with rivers of Negro blood because brave black men dared vote at elections. □