

# Selected Writings and Speeches of James E. Shepard, 1896-1946: Founder of North Carolina Central University

Lenwood G. Davis



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James Edward Shepard was an African-American leader between 1900 and 1947. He was, however, more than a race leader. Shepard was a minister, politician, pharmacist, entrepreneur, world traveler, civil servant, businessman, one of the founders of North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company (the world's largest African-American Life Insurance Company), president of the International Denominational Sunday School Convention, one of the founders of Mechanics and Farmers Bank of Durham, President of the North Carolina Teachers Association, and a visionary.

Dr. Shepard was active in several social and fraternal organizations. He was Grand Mast of The Prince Hall Free and Accepted Masons of North Carolina, Grand Patron of the Eastern Star of North Carolina, and Secretary of Finances for the Knights of Pythia. He was on the Board of Trustees of Lincoln Hospital of Durham, the Oxford (NC) Colored Orphanage, member of the Executive Committee of the North Carolina Agricultural Society, and Field Superintendent of Work Among Negros for the International Sunday School Association.

He was also an educator, historian, and scholar. He was founder and president of North Carolina Central University, the first State-supported Liberal Arts College for African Americans in the United States.

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