

(Continued from Page 5)



him, and their members will not work by the side of him. The result of this is that he is practically debarred from all mechanical pursuits requiring skill. He can join the hod carriers' union only, and this is due to the fact that not enough white men can be found to do the work.... Besides being debarred from skilled labor, [Blacks] are not employed as stenographers, bookkeepers, or office men in any capacity except that of janitor. Not one is employed in the public schools, none are employed as clerks in stores or factories.

This was the environment in which a lodge of Elks was organized in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1898.

White American Elkdom arose in New York City in 1867 from an organization of actors known as "The Jolly Corks." After the death of one of the members, it was suggested that the social club be converted into a protective and benevolent society with a ritual and a new name. They chose the elk as their symbol because it was the largest existing species of the deer family found in Europe, Asia and America. With its huge antlers, weighing 50 to 60 pounds, it seemed ready and able to defend itself, its young and its home from all enemies. The elk was described as being "fleet of foot, timorous of doing wrong, avoiding all combat except in fighting for the female and in defense of the young and helpless and weak."

The name of the association was officially changed on February 16, 1868 and the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks was organized. A resolution was passed in the New York Lodge on January 1, 1871 providing for the Grand Lodge.

The original requirements by the Grand Lodge for membership in the Order simply stated that the applicant must be over 21 years of age. He was to state his name, age, business, birthplace, residence and personal references. In 1890, however, the membership was restricted to White men.

Racism Encounter

Arthur J. Riggs was born in Shelbyville, Kentucky on March 7, 1855. His parents were the slaves of a Camelite minister. Riggs' education was limited to one month and four days in a school for ex-slaves. Riggs said: "My ABC book, as it was called in that day and time, was laid aside and I was soon introduced to Old Beck, a stubborn mule, and the 'plow'."

Riggs helped L.H. Wilson to organize the Knights of Pythias Lodge in 1896, and served as Pythian Grand Chancellor of the

State of Ohio. Since the Pythians were well organized and had an apparently capable leadership, Riggs looked for openings for his brand of leadership elsewhere.

Late in the month of February 1897, Ar-

thur J. Riggs, a Pullman porter, met Benjamin Franklin Howard, an attorney of Covington, Kentucky, on the street in Cincinnati. For some time, Riggs had been thinking of organizing an Elks Lodge for Black men. Howard had been thinking the same

thing. Both men determined to form a fraternal organization for Blacks which would exactly duplicate that of the existing White Elks. Howard asked Riggs how they could get a copy of the ritual and necessary lodge

(Continued on Page 10)

**For 6 years running...
1986, '85, '84, '83, '82, '81,
Ford has designed
and built
the highest quality
American cars
and trucks.**

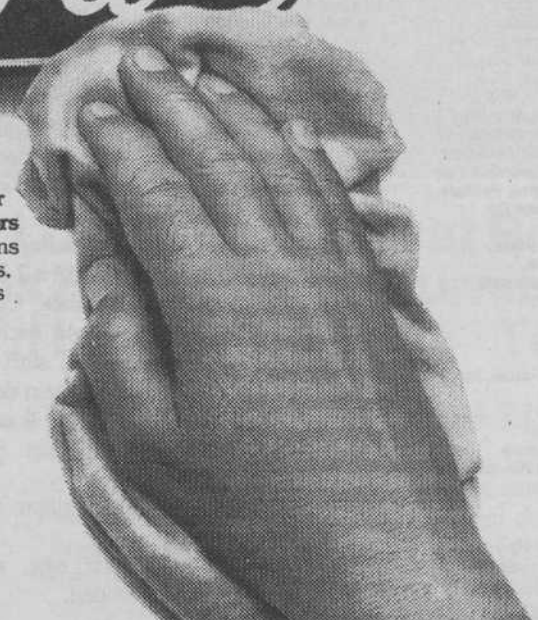
**No other company can
make this statement.**



Quality is Job 1.

Ford • Lincoln • Mercury • Merkur
Ford Trucks • Ford Tractors

Based on an average of owner-reported problems in the first three months of service of '86 models and in a six-month period on '81-'85 models designed & built in North America.



Buckle up — Together we can save lives.