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CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS: DR. JAMES BOND



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CENTRAL & EASTERN KENTUCKY — James Bond was born enslaved in 1863 on the Anderson County farm of Preston Bond. After the Civil War, James, his mother and his brother, Henry, moved to Knox County.

Bond graduated from Berea College and received a divinity degree from Oberlin College.

He served as a minister in Tennessee for a time and then took a fundraising job with the Lincoln Institute in Shelby County, Ky.

His age disqualified Bond for chaplain duty in World War I, but he worked with soldiers through the YMCA at Camp Zachary Taylor in Louisville. He later was the first Kentucky director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation. Founded in Atlanta in 1918, the commission opposed lynching, mob violence and the peonage system. Through outreach and education, it worked to educate white Southerners about racial abuse. Bond helped bridge racial differences in Kentucky through open lines of communication, although he (and the commission nationally) still worked within the segregated system of Jim Crow.

Bond died in 1929 at the age of 65. His influence and heritage provided an example for his descendants. His son — Horace Mann Bond, a college professor at Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn., and later Fort Valley State University in Georgia; and grandson, Julian Bond, a founder of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), civil rights leader, politician, and educator — continued his legacy.

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