

John Merrick

John Merrick was born on September 7, 1859 in Clinton, NC. He received his education at a Reconstructionist school. He later married Martha Hunter Merrick and they had three daughters and two sons together.

Mr. Merrick began his career as a brickmason in his hometown. While working in the brickyards, he learned the art of barbering and was able to open several barbershops in the Durham area. Later, in 1898, he was one of the founders of North Carolina Mutual Life, the oldest and largest African American life insurance company in the United States. He also had several other business ventures, including Mechanics and Farmers Bank, Bull City Drug Company, and the Merrick-Moore-Spaulding Real Estate Company.

As successful a businessman as he was, he is best known for improving the health and education for the African American communities in Durham. For these reasons, he is considered to be a great American and honoree for Black History Month.

Sources: <http://northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/john-merrick-1859-1919/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Merrick_\(insurance\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Merrick_(insurance))