

B/N - BLAKE, Evon

# Veteran journalist Evon Blake dies

VETERAN journalist and publisher, Evon Blake, C.D., Ph.D. (Hon.) is dead.

Mr. Blake died in the University Hospital in Kingston yesterday after a period of illness. He had been ailing for the past six years.

On Thursday, Mr. Blake was admitted to the Port Antonio Hospital in Portland, and was transferred by helicopter to the University Hospital on Friday.

Born in Salem, Clarendon, February 12, 1906, son of Joseph Blake, farmer, and Cottilda, his wife, Mr. Blake was educated at Tabernacle Elementary School and Government Farm School (later known as the Jamaica School of Agriculture) at Hope in Kingston.

He also studied at night classes in Colon and LaSalle Extension University in Scranton, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

He had just completed his third year and was on his way home when, instead of taking the tram car, he was attracted by a ship in the Kingston harbour, and stowed away on it, thus finding himself in Colon, Panama where he spent 13 years.

He moved on to the very remote San Blas as an Overseer from there, took the journey back home where he joined the Jamaica Constabulary Force. But this was only for a short while during which he worked as Spanish interpreter-translator and political undercover operator.

His next move was to **The Gleaner** on Harbour Street in Kingston as crime reporter. Between 1928 and 1929, Mr. Blake was a columnist for **The Star** and the **Herald** of Panama City.

In 1938, he decided to free-



**Evon Blake**

lance for the **Jamaica Times** (weekly) and **Jamaica Standard** (daily). But in 1939 he founded his own publication, **Spotlight Newsmagazine** and, said his wife Viola, "from then he never looked back." Later he left that company and founded **Newday Newsmagazine** in direct competition to **Spotlight**. Eight-and-a-half years later, **Newday** was closed and Evon Blake retired to Long Bay, Portland from where he worked as a **Gleaner** columnist and **Star** feature writer.

He was later to publish **The Best of Evon Blake**, a compilation of his best **Gleaner** columns. His crowning glory, however, has been the very colourful pictorial, **Beautiful Jamaica** which has gained international recognition.

He has authored three short stories for **JAMAL** in addition to writing a number of novels.

The recipient of **Seprod Gold Medal** for Journalism and the **Jamaica Institute's Silver Medal**, he retired from active journalism only three years ago.

He is survived by wife Viola, children Barbara, Jean, Paul, Peter, Michael and Marian.