COLUMBUS, OHIO AND THE
GREAT MIGRATION

A Thesis
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for the Degree Master of Arts

by
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Introduction

One of the consequences of America's involvement in World War I was a redistribution of the black population, a process which was further facilitated by the increased urbanization and industrialization of the country. This redistribution involved primarily the movement of rural, Southern blacks to northern, urban areas and ultimately involved such a large number of individuals that reverberations from the movement were felt in both the cities in which the migrants settled and the communities from which they migrated.

This migration was not stimulated by a single, isolated event, but was precipitated by a number of events and circumstances in both the North and the South. Despite the recognition that the migration was stimulated by a number of interrelated factors, it is generally accepted that one of the primary motives for migration was a desire for economic improvement.

Even before the United States became a belligerent, the country was supplying the Allied war effort. With the formal entry into the conflict in April 1917, came a massive effort by government and industry to supply the nation's own military while continuing to aid the allies. Eager to fill positions created by this demand, thousands of blacks
headed for the industrial centers of the North.

The migrants who came to Ohio were motivated by the same forces which impelled blacks to go to other states. Akron, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Youngstown and Columbus attracted the bulk of the state's newcomers as these were the cities in which employment opportunities were greatest. From 1910 to 1920 the state's black population increased by 57 percent.¹ By comparison states like Pennsylvania and Michigan experienced increases exceeding 200 percent while others, like Illinois and Indiana experienced relatively modest increases of only 67 and 55 percent respectively.² Such figures indicate that the more industrialized areas attracted the migrants. Pennsylvania was the heart of the nation's steel industry and also the terminal of three of the country's largest railroad systems. Likewise, Lansing and Detroit, Michigan were attractive to migrants due to the need for laborers in the numerous industrial enterprises in these cities.

Since Columbus was not a major industrial center in the prewar period, its black population experienced neither the absolute nor proportionate gain as the populations of Ohio's more industrialized cities. Yet Columbus was affected by the migration as hundreds of Southern blacks came to the city seeking to take advantage of the opportunity wartime production offered for their economic advancement. This sudden influx of migrants created problems which the city
was not prepared to deal with. Prior to the migration there were no organizations or agencies to deal with the welfare problems of the city's blacks, but subsequent to the migration both state and local agencies were created to deal specifically with the problems of Ohio's urban blacks. Another consequence of the migration was the development of a "link" between Columbus' black and white community as the city came to the realization that its black population could no longer be ignored. Efforts to help the migrants adjust to life in the city demanded the resources of both communities, and it was also during this period that the city came to realize that the well-being of the black community had implications for the well-being of the city as a whole. Finally, the migration led to the further economic and social development of the black population, thus making the black community a more viable part of the city. Therefore, viewed as a whole, the Great Migration had a positive effect upon the city of Columbus, especially in relation to the establishing and developing of its black community.

Very little is known concerning the early experience of blacks in Columbus and Franklin County, but it is apparent that blacks have resided in Columbus since its founding as Franklinton in 1787. Before Ohio was admitted to the Union in 1802 there was considerable debate concerning the status of blacks in the state. By the time Ohio was ready for statehood, the position blacks would occupy was clearly outlined in the state constitution. Ohio would be a free
state, and blacks were free to settle in the state. Yet the law stipulated that blacks were not to have any part in the government of the state. They were not expected to carry out any civic duties nor were they to enjoy any of the rights of citizenship.\textsuperscript{4}

Initially the number of blacks in Ohio was very small, but as time passed the black population grew and by 1807 concern over this increase warranted the passage of a law limiting the settlement of blacks in the state. Under this law any black wishing to settle in the state had first to produce two whites who would post a $500 bond to insure his good behavior and also agree to support him is there should come a time when he could not support himself.\textsuperscript{5} Whatever the impact of this legislation upon black settlement in Franklin County, the black population continued to increase so that by 1860 out of a total county population of 18,554, 997 were black.\textsuperscript{6}

The end of the Civil War and the subsequent adoption of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution radically changed the lives of America's blacks. The last three decades of the nineteenth century saw a substantial increase in the number of blacks residing in Ohio. Blacks migrated to Ohio for various reasons following the war but foremost among these was to escape the racial oppression they faced in the South. In Ohio blacks could at least expect equality under the law. The state legislature enacted laws which forbade racial discrimination in public
accommodations and in public schools. Furthermore, the state legislature passed anti-lynching legislation in 1896 which served to make the state even more attractive to black settlers. The situation was such that by the turn of the century blacks had "full citizenship status under the law" in Ohio.  

The vast majority of the blacks who migrated to Ohio prior to the Civil War settled in the southern portion of the state, but after the war those blacks who settled in southern Ohio along with numerous blacks from the southern states began to move northward into central and northern Ohio. Columbus was not unaffected by this late nineteenth century migration as its black population increased from 997 in 1860 to 8,201 by 1900.  

Because of white hostility and, to a certain degree, limitations due to economic factors, blacks were not able to settle in all parts of the city. For the most part blacks were confined to a section known as the East Long Street District. (See Appendix I) This black neighborhood was established in Columbus before the Civil War, and by 1900 the bulk of Columbus' black population resided here.

The white population of Columbus in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was primarily native born native Ohioan and was generally hostile to the blacks. According to one contemporary, "feeling against Negroes is bitter in the extreme."  

This hatred was expressed in various ways in the city as blacks experienced difficulty
in securing housing and jobs, were discriminated against in public accommodations, and were denied justice in the courts.

With virtually no economic base in the city, blacks were forced to accept the lowest paying, least desirable jobs available. As a result there was almost no middle class among Columbus' blacks. Not until after World War I did such a class of any consequence emerge.

The massive black migration to Columbus associated with World War I occurred largely within the six years from 1914 to 1920. Columbus' black population increased from 12,739 in 1910 to 22,181 in 1920. This increase came almost entirely in the years after 1914 and especially after 1917 when the country entered the war.\textsuperscript{10}

The activities of Columbus' blacks in the year immediately preceding the United States' entry into the war and in the years immediately following the armistice resulted from the rapid increase in their number. The coming of the war and the subsequent migration of a large number of blacks to Columbus represent an episode in Columbus' history which scholars have largely ignored. This study will focus upon Columbus between 1916 and 1920 in order to determine what impact the Great Migration had upon the city and how the city responded to the migrants.
The Migrants

The mass movement of blacks from the South to the North and, to a lesser degree, from the East to the West was by no means a new phenomenon. Prior to the Civil War there was a small though constant stream of blacks leaving the South for settlement in the North. These blacks' arrival in the North meant that some northern cities already had sizable black populations prior to the Civil War.

The end of the Civil War, however, sparked the beginning of a period of significant black migration. Many former slaves asserted their new status by leaving the place where they resided as slaves. To many, the very essence of freedom lay in the fact that they could move about at will. For some, the move was only a few miles, but others chose to make their home in other states. It has been estimated that at least 4 percent of the South's black population changed states of residence in the first fifty years after the war, and a considerable number of these blacks came to northern states.11

Other periods of significant migration include the movement of blacks to Kansas in 1879 and to Texas and Arkansas in 1888-89. The movement to Kansas, or the Kansas Exodus as it is often called, involved primarily blacks from Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Tennessee, and North
Carolina. This migration ultimately involved as many as 25,000 blacks. Stirred by the speeches of black leaders like Benjamin "Pap" Singleton and Henry Adams, thousands of blacks flocked to Kansas in an attempt to escape the hard times brought on by an agricultural depression in the lower Mississippi Valley.¹²

The migration to Texas and Arkansas was due largely to the availability of cheap land in these states. This movement differed from the Kansas Exodus in that it was a movement of individuals rather than a mass migration. Yet an estimated 35,000 blacks eventually took part in this movement.¹³

Though neither of these migrations involved the movement of Southern blacks to the North, the black populations of northern cities increased rapidly following the Civil War. The first fifty years following the war saw the black population rise by 11.2 percent. During roughly the same period Columbus' black population increased a total of 95.5 percent.¹⁴ This increase was almost entirely at the expense of the South since few blacks lived in the rural areas of Ohio or any other northern state.

The Great Migration, like the earlier migrations, was stimulated primarily by economic conditions. However, this migration differed from the earlier migrations in that it encompassed such a large number of blacks. It differed also in that it transplanted thousands of rural people to urban areas where their presence created complicated problems
that many northern cities found difficult to deal with.

Determining the number of blacks who came to Ohio or Columbus between 1916 and 1920 is virtually impossible. A Cleveland newspaper reported that 10,000 blacks came to that city during 1916 and 1917.\textsuperscript{15} In Columbus one welfare agency reported that 5,000 blacks came to the city in 1917 and 1918 alone.\textsuperscript{16} The Department of Labor estimated that between 400,000 and 500,000 blacks migrated north during the Great Migration. Other sources estimated that as many as 800,000 blacks were involved in the movement.\textsuperscript{17} Such figures indicate that the migration was without precedent. Ohio's black population increased 60 percent between 1910 and 1920.\textsuperscript{18} At the same time Columbus' black population experienced a 57.5 percent increase.\textsuperscript{19} In 1910, 46.4 percent of Columbus' blacks were born in states other than Ohio; by 1920 this figure had risen to 60.8 percent. Those blacks who came to Columbus during the 1916-1920 period came primarily from eight southern states: Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and West Virginia.\textsuperscript{20}

Social, political, and especially economic factors were responsible for the movement of blacks during the World War I period. The social and political injustices to which Southern blacks were subjected in the early decades of the twentieth century are well known and need not be discussed in detail. Confronted with jim crowism, lynching, racial discrimination, the share-cropping system, disfranchisement
and other forms of social injustice, many Southern blacks left for the North in an attempt to find better conditions. Yet, the grievances blacks had against the South in 1916 were not new and from this perspective blacks had no more reason to leave the South than at any other time since the Civil War. It would be an error to dismiss racial discrimination and other forms of maltreatment as factors prompting blacks to leave the South; yet such factors did not constitute the main impetus. Rather, the economic situation in the North and South, more than anything else, provided the reasons that thousands of blacks uprooted themselves and headed north. Prior to World War I employment opportunities for blacks outside of Southern agriculture did not exist in sufficient quantity to stimulate any sizable migration. The labor shortage created by the war provided such a stimulus.

Further examination of the factors giving rise to the migration reveals that these conditions may be grouped into two categories, those "pushing" blacks out of the South and those "pulling" them to the North. The South experienced a labor depression in 1914 and 1915 which was further complicated in 1915 and 1916 by the ravages of the boll weevil in the states of the deep South. Making matters still worse, unusual floods in the summer of 1915 left thousands of blacks homeless and destitute. These were further complicated by a dramatic drop in the price of cotton. The meager crop
which survived the weevil was sold at a low price because the war in Europe disrupted the cotton market. The entire population of the agrarian South was affected by these conditions, but blacks, already at the bottom of the economic heap, found the struggle even more difficult. To many, migration to the North seemed a plausible solution to their problems.

Another force which pushed blacks out of the South was the activities of the labor agents. These men were employed by Northern industrialists to go into the South and recruit black workers. This business was very lucrative for the agents as some were paid a dollar for every black worker recruited in the South. The tactics employed by the agents included distributing literature; attending church services, where it was reported that one agent recruited a minister and his entire congregation; and handing out railroad tickets to blacks congregating at railroad depots.

The agents were not popular with local Southern employers as their activities sometimes resulted in the depletion of an entire area's black labor force. Such was the case in Tifton, Georgia in December 1916. Labor agents were active in the city and vicinity for several months but had skillfully eluded the local authorities. One night in early December nearly 50 blacks boarded a northbound train and over the next few weeks as many as 25 left the city daily. Other Georgia cities like Columbus, Valdosta, and Thomasville experienced similar situations in 1916.
Ohio industrialists were especially adept at recruiting workers through the use of labor agents. Agents from Cleveland firms carried pictures of the homes of wealthy blacks which they distributed among the poor blacks in some southern districts. They enticed blacks with the promise that they could expect such accommodations if they came to Ohio. The Columbus Malleable and Ohio Malleable Iron Works also employed the service of agents in the South.

The propaganda of blacks newspapers and magazines also played a significant role in prompting blacks to leave the South. Foremost among these publications were The Crisis and the Chicago Defender. One editorial in the Defender read:

The Defender invites all to come north. Plenty of room for the good, sober, industrious man. Plenty of work. For those who will not work, the jails will take care of you. When you have served your 90 days at hard labor you will then have learned how to work. Anywhere in God's country is far better than the Southland. Hansen was with Perry[siū] white at the north pole. No pneumonia there. He still enjoys life in Brooklyn, N. Y. Don't let the crackers fool you. Come join the ranks of the free. Cast the yoke from around your neck. See the light. When you have crossed the Ohio river, breathe the fresh air and say, "Why didn't I come before?"

The Crisis carried similar editorials and help-wanted advertisements throughout 1916-1918. The Defender proved so effective in recruiting blacks that local officials banned it in some Southern cities.

Pulling blacks to the North was an acute labor shortage
brought on in part by the reduction of the number of immigrants to the United States. One immediate result of the outbreak of war in Europe was the reduction by two-thirds of the number of European immigrants. In addition to the slow down of the European immigration, almost 100,000 men returned to their native countries to fight, leaving vacant positions which blacks were eager to fill. The war created new industries and required the construction of munitions plants and the expansion of already existing factories in order to meet the domestic and European need for matériel. This situation resulted in a shift within the still existing labor supply. The better positions in the munitions plants and other concerns went to white workers, which produced a scarcity of common laborers. The need for workers to fill these unskilled positions served to pull thousands of blacks from the South.

Better wages also attracted blacks. In 1915 the average Southern farm laborer earned 75 cents a day while various industries in the North offered an average of $2.50 to $3.75 per day and in some instances as much as $5.50 per day. While the higher cost of living in the North undoubtedly diminished the wage increase to some degree, the attractiveness of higher wages was, nonetheless, sufficient to entice laborers from the South.

The characteristics of the migrants varied from year to year and from one location to the next. In 1916 and 1917
the largest group of migrants was young, detached males. The young, unattached migrated more often than any group and males more often than females. Still, a large number of single women migrated as they were attracted by job opportunities in factories or as domestics. The laboring man also comprised a considerable part of the migration. These men were often married and either brought their families with them or sent for them as soon as they found employment. Women from broken families also joined the migration. These were either widowed or divorced and generally brought children with them as they were in many cases attracted by the better educational system in the North.31

Determining specific characteristics of the migrants who came to Columbus is rather difficult as the agencies which dealt with the migrants did not record very specific data. Nevertheless, it is possible to make some broad characterizations based upon the available information. A comparison of 1910 and 1920 census data gives a picture of the age composition of Columbus' black population, but except for females in the 25 to 34 age group, reveals no significant changes in the percentage of the population each age group composed in the two years. (Tables 1&2) In both years the largest age group was between 25 and 34 with only a slightly higher percentage in this group in 1920 than in 1910. The increase in females in the 25 to 34 year-old group could be a result of migration, but job opportunities
for female migrants outside of domestic work were somewhat limited. The migration to Columbus was obviously somewhat a mixture of all classes of migrants. Some came as individuals and some as family groups as this excerpt from the Columbus Dispatch reveals:

   Many Negroes come to the city from the South. Fifty per cent of Columbus' increase in eight years is due to them. They come to Columbus wholly ignorant of the conditions they must face and equip with an education which costs an average of $1.60 per man during his lifetime.
   Typical family from Georgia...four people, possessions in a basket, two old telescopes and a quilt; clothing is unfit for northern climate; attracted by report of jobs ranging from six to seven dollars a day.

A survey of the Champion Avenue District in 1924 reveals specific information regarding the migrants who settled in this neighborhood. Though the Champion Avenue District was not the largest black neighborhood in the city or the area in which most migrants settled, the survey remains useful in that it gives a microcosmic view of the migrant population.

The survey included information for 188 households and 788 persons all of whom were classified as migrants or non-migrants. Individuals who had been in the city six years or less were classified as migrants. Tables 3 through 7, Appendices II through VI, summarize the findings of the survey.

Nearly one-third of the adults in the area had lived in Columbus less than five years and only 11.2 percent of those not from Columbus were native Ohioans. Of the
remaining 87.8 percent, 82.8 percent were migrants from Southern states. (See Tables 3 and 4.)

As a group the migrants were relatively young. Among the non-migrants only 50 percent were between the ages of 15 and 50 while in the migrant population over two-thirds or 67.7 per cent fail into this age bracket. (See Tables 5 and 6.) In a normal population 50 per cent will be in the 15 to 50 age group while two-thirds of the remaining population is younger than 15 and one-third more than 50. There were few old(over 50) people in the migrant population. (See Table 5). Only 4.4 percent of the migrants were 50 or older, in the non-migrant population this group comprised 13.5 percent of the total. Over one-third (38 percent) of the migrants were 20 to 29 years old while only 17.2 percent of the non-migrant group was in this age range. This is a clear indication that the migrants, as far as this sample is indicative of the norm, were younger individuals. The rather high percentage of children (14 and under) in the migrant group suggests that migrants to the neighborhood came as families.

The survey suggests that employment opportunities for women were not very extensive as only three job classifications are given and only seven women in the neighborhood were employed outside these areas. Among the males, non-migrants did not tend to hold the lower level positions. The percentage of laborers, porters, and janitors among the
non-migrants is somewhat high while the migrants tend to hold positions with the railroads and in the building trades. (See Table 7).

The migrants received mixed reception from both the black and white communities. The black community of the city prior to 1916 consisted largely of Ohio natives who had been in the city for a number of years. The migrants who came to the city before 1916 were generally few in number and easily assimilated. But the Great Migration changed the composition of the black population and the rapid influx caused a change in the attitudes of some of Columbus' black and white residents.35

Among whites there prevailed three attitudes concerning blacks in general and the migrants in particular. There were those who were hostile to the coming of the Southern blacks. They tolerated the presence of those who were already in the city, but advocated the complete separation of the races in all affairs. Further, they believed that the migrants represented the "bad" element in the black race and that their presence in the city might foster unrest in the black community. After all, they reasoned, the blacks who came north were those who were not content to remain "in their place" or they never would have left the South. Once they crossed the Ohio River they expected better treatment and indeed some might be bold enough to demand it.

A second and smaller group of whites was those who
believed that blacks should have equality under the law and in public institutions but that in other areas there should be separation of the races.

✓ Finally, there was a small group of whites which believed that all should enjoy the full rights of citizenship equally. Several from this group joined with the city's blacks in forming organizations to help the migrants adjust to life in Columbus.

Among the blacks there were the older, more established residents who resented the coming of the migrants, fearing that their presence would result in more discrimination. They did not think that it was prudent for the city's blacks to form their own organizations as this only represented a form of segregation. They viewed the migrants as shiftless and lazy and, as one black resident stated "wished someone would stop the negroes [sic] from coming up from the south [sic] and make those go back who have recently come." This opinion was obviously held by a minority within the black community. Many more of the established black residents joined with the small band of liberal-minded whites to establish institutions and organizations which in no small way led to the assimilation and adjustment of the migrants to the city.
The Migrants Arrive

The migration of thousands of rural blacks to northern cities both created and further complicated already existing problems. This was especially true of housing. Upon arriving at his or her destination the first problem the migrant faced was that of securing shelter if such arrangements had not already been made. Some employers, especially those actively recruiting labor in the South, provided housing for workers. The railroads and steel industries both established migrant housing programs. The Pennsylvania Railroad had an extensive camp system as did the Carnegie Steel Company in Pittsburgh. In 1917 over 6,000 men were housed in facilities provided by these employees. However, the majority of the migrants did not come North under prior arrangements and were forced to find housing wherever and as best they could. In most cases, as in Columbus, the site was the already-established black districts of the city in which they settled.

The majority of the migrants to Columbus settled in the East Long Street district. (See Appendix I). Within this district the heaviest settlement was southeast of Union Station in the Spring and Neilston Street neighborhoods. Another area within this district which attracted migrants was on Front Street in the area between Fulton and Goodale
Streets. Other areas which attracted migrants included; the West Goodale Street neighborhood, the Southgate Addition, the East Fifth Avenue community, the Champion Avenue district and the South Seventh Street section. These were low-rent districts and all were located either near the downtown area or adjacent to the factories where the migrants were employed. The housing in these neighborhoods was the worst in the city.

Many of the migrants who came to Columbus had made no preparation for lodging or securing employment before they reached the city. Some had relatives or friends in Columbus but did not know how to locate the relative or friend. Thus the need to aid the migrants in securing housing and employment was realized very early. The Columbus chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) took the lead in providing this aid. In March 1917, when the migration was at its peak, several representatives from churches, schools, the Spring Street (Colored) Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and the NAACP met to consider aiding the newcomers who were pouring into the city. Dr. William J. Woodlin, an officer of the local chapter of the NAACP and a member of the board of directors of the Spring Street YMCA, spearheaded the activities. Some of those attending the meeting included Cordelia Winn, International Secretary of the YMCA; Anna V.
Hughes, director of a local nursing school; Elsie Mountain, a social worker; R. Doyle Phillips, pastor of Grave Baptist Church; J. J. Williams, a local realtor; Nimrod B. Allen, Executive Secretary of the Spring Street YMCA; E. W. Moore, and Eliza Johns.41

This assemblage created the Federated Social and Industrial Welfare Movement for the Negro out of which grew the Federated Social and Industrial Welfare League. The officers of this organization included: Dr. William J. Woodlin, President; Mrs. Cordelia Winn, Vice-President; Miss Anna V. Hughes, Secretary; and Rev. R. Doyle Phillips, Treasurer. An executive staff consisting of a general secretary and a social worker was also created.42

The main purpose of this organization was to aid the migrants and improve the general condition of blacks in the city. One of the first actions taken by the organization was to place a Travelers' Aid Worker at the Union Station to assist migrants as they arrived. By October the League had stimulated enough interest within the community to attract volunteers to do Traveler's Aid work at the station. By the year's end the League reported that 2,036 trains had been met, but made no report as to the number of persons aided.43

The Federated Social and Industrial Welfare League became the main instrument of assistance for the migrant. The League's purpose was to act as a referral agency taking
on cases only when no other agency existed to handle the case. The problems of the migrants were many, causing the League to become involved in activities ranging from securing employment for the migrants to burying the husband of a "mentally deficient" woman.\(^44\)

Since other Ohio cities were also affected by the migration, in 1917 the state's black leaders called for a state-wide meeting in Columbus to consider the problems of the migrants. The mayors of various Ohio cities appointed delegates to the conference and on July 12 a delegation of about 700 black and white representatives met in Columbus. At this conference the Ohio Federation for Uplift Among Colored People was created. The purpose of this organization was to cooperate with local welfare agencies in dealing with the migrants and to create agencies for this purpose where none existed. In keeping with this purpose the organization established or cooperated with agencies in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Urbana, Piqua, Troy, Chillicothe, Springfield and other cities.\(^45\) By mid 1919 this organization had dissolved. This dissolution was apparently due to the fact that during the early part of 1919 the migration to Ohio lulled. This early dissolution may also point out that, unlike the organization created in Columbus, the state-wide organization had no long-term goals and was only created to give short-term attention to a problem which actually needed more lasting attention.
Securing housing was the most immediate concern of the migrant and the League was very instrumental in aiding the newcomers in this pursuit. There was a Traveler's Aid worker at the Union Station, but it was apparent that one individual could not effectively carry on the work involved. So volunteers were secured to take over the task of meeting migrants at the train station and the original Traveler's Aid worker was placed in charge of general traveler's aid work.46

The duty of the Traveler's Aid worker was to meet the migrants as they arrived and, in instances where the addresses of friends or relatives were known, to direct the person to the address. Those who did not have relatives or friends were directed to homes of individuals secured by the League for temporary lodging and given assistance in finding permanent housing. The League set up a Housing Committee, which was chaired by J. W. Williams, a real estate dealer. Williams purchased and leased several flats which were used to house the newcomers. Though the source of the funds for the leases and purchases is uncertain, it is probable that Williams financed this venture as part of his private business since it is very unlikely that the organization could afford to make such expenditures. Further, the financial statement for the year makes no reference to any such purchase or lease.47 This does not, however, minimize the importance of this activity for it is further
indication of the extent to which Columbus' established black community became involved in aiding the migrants.

The League's activities did not end with helping the migrants secure housing. Aware of the poor condition of the housing in black neighborhoods and the exorbitant rent blacks were forced to pay for this substandard housing the League listed among its planned activities for 1918 a campaign to get city officials to enforce housing ordinances in black neighborhoods and condemn buildings which were unfit for occupancy. They planned also to secure the interests of capitalists and corporations in the building of modern homes for the city's black residents.48

In the summer and spring of 1918 the League continued its work among the migrants, but in the meantime began to look into the work carried out by the National Urban League among migrants. Elsie Mountain, the League's social worker, was sent to the National Urban League's convention in Detroit. In her report to the Welfare League's board of directors she recommended that the Welfare League become affiliated with the National Urban League. In response to this recommendation Eugene K. Jones, executive director of the National Urban League, was invited to Columbus to further explain the work of the organization. After Jone's visit the Welfare League became the Columbus Urban League.49
Employment

Once the migrant was housed, the next priority was to find employment. Once again the Welfare League stood ready to offer assistance. The League was instrumental in placing blacks in positions which had previously been closed to them. League members wrote, phoned, and visited prospective employers. As a direct result of the League's activity, over 300 women were placed in factories in Columbus while others were placed as domestics, waitresses, and precep- resses.\footnote{50} Nimrod B. Allen was in charge of placing the men who applied to the League. The men were placed in positions in the factories and steel plants.\footnote{51}

Prior to the war black laborers in Columbus were almost entirely engaged in service activities such as yardmen, hotelwaiters, hack drivers, delivery men and domestic servants.\footnote{52} In 1910, 26.5 percent of Columbus's black laborers were employed by industry. By comparison, in 1920, 42 percent of Columbus' black labor force was engaged in manufacturing and mechanical industries.\footnote{53}

The Industrial YMCA, a branch of the organization which was responsible for coordinating activities among industrial workers in the wartime emergency, was active among black workers in the city. Some employers maintained ties with the YMCA allowing the organization to carry out
activities among its employees upon company premises. The case of the Buckeye Steel Castings Company offers an example of this. The Industrial YMCA carried out work among its black constituents through special committees which acted through a general service committee. At Buckeye Steel the Athletic Committee and the Thrift Committee sponsored activities for the company's black employees. The YMCA sponsored picnics, fellowship suppers, Bible studies and other recreational activities for Buckeye Steel's black employees. Allowing such an alliance between the black employees and the YMCA suggests, to some degree, the interest of the company in maintaining a satisfied black labor force.\(^5^4\)

In spite of the progressive attitude of some employers, other Columbus employers refused to employ blacks except as janitors. The following is a partial listing of employers who hired both black and white workers showing the percentage of the work force which was black in 1920.\(^5^5\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Total Number Employed</th>
<th>Black workers as percentage of total labor force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bonny-Floyd</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckeye Steel Castings</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnegie Steel</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus Iron-Steel</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Glass</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffery Manufacturing</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Keever Starch 65 46
Kilbourne-Jacobs -- 10
Winslow Glass 200 50

By 1918, even with the hundreds of migrants who had come into the city, there was still a labor shortage, especially of skilled workers. In spite of this shortage blacks experienced difficulty in securing the better positions. Skilled black workers were often, because of their color, placed in unskilled positions while the jobs for which they were qualified went unfilled. The great majority of the migrants were, however, unskilled and filled the less desirable positions.

In spite of reports to the contrary, black laborers apparently experienced some difficulty with unions in Columbus. Most unions in the city were affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) which had a tradition of racism. Apparently the policy of AFL locals was not to exclude blacks. The Columbus Federation however, urged blacks to form their own unions arguing, however fallaciously, that blacks could better serve their own purposes through a separate organization. One migrant stated, "I tried to join the Asphalt Workers' Union but I can't get in. They tell me to join the Hod Carriers Union [most of the city's hod carriers were black and the union's membership was 95 percent black.] I'm an asphalt worker, not a hod carrier." But even in instances where unions were willing
to accept blacks there was a decided prejudice against a
certain class of blacks—"the colored agricultural illiterates from the South."\(^59\) For instance, Thomas J. Donnelly, secretary-treasurer, Ohio State Federation of Labor, advised Charles E. Hall, Supervisor of Negro Economics in Ohio that native-born black Ohioans should be allowed membership in the unions and that he did not believe that the white locals would offer too much resitance to such membership. Yet, Donnelly stated: "I do not think that the colored agricul-
tural illiterates from the South are adaptable to skilled industry and membership in unions of skilled white workers."\(^60\) He suggested that perhaps a few of the migrants could be placed as common laborers in semi-skilled positions and there-
by become eligible for union membership, but, by and large, according to Donnelly, modern technology led to a situation where workers needed more brains than brawn. Until they became "more intelligent," the migrants had nothing to offer organized labor.\(^61\) If Donnelly's attitude is indicative of the prevalent views, then the plight of the migrant in relation to union membership is apparent.

The federal government was also concerned about the employment of blacks during the wartime emergency. In considering the employment situation of blacks Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson noted the problems the migration had created in northern cities. To deal with this situation and to aid in a more efficient application of this large
labor reserve, the position of advisor on Negro labor with a Director of Negro Economics was created in the Department of Labor. On May 1, 1918, a black professor from Fisk University, Dr. George E. Haynes, was asked to fill the position. Dr. Haynes served as an advisor to the Secretary of labor on matters affecting black workers.\textsuperscript{62}

To facilitate his duties Haynes visited several states where the problems of black workers were particularly acute. In addition, the Department of Labor called twelve state conferences of representative black and white citizens to discuss the problems of black workers. Ohio was among the twelve states in which conferences were called and on August 5, 1918, the Conference on Negro Labor convened in Columbus. The conference was attended by state and federal officials, private citizens, and representatives from private agencies. Elsie Mountain of the Columbus Urban League attended the meeting and served as co-chairman of a committee which was formed to look into the employment problems of black women. F. L. Hagerty, professor of sociology at Ohio State University, presided at the conference and the closing address was given by James M. Cox, governor of Ohio. In his address Cox stated that he had had a brief conference with Haynes who had assured him of the importance of the meeting. He stated also that blacks were needed on the battle front and the home front if victory was to be won in the war. According to Cox, "the colored man [was] here, and here to
stay" and his office was ready to offer whatever assistance was necessary to lead to full and efficient use of black labor in the war effort.\textsuperscript{63}

In each of the twelve states where conferences were held State Negro Worker's Advisory Committees were created. The Committee in Ohio was under the direction of Charles E. Hall who reported directly to the Director of Negro Economics, Georger Haynes. Twenty-five local, county, and city committees were set up in the various centers in the state where large numbers of black workers were employed.\textsuperscript{64} One of the first activities of these local committees was to survey the labor conditions in their respective areas.

A summary of the report submitted by the Columbus committee indicates that the situation in Columbus was such that local industries were employing large numbers of black workers, and one garment manufacturer complained of there being a shortage of black women who could operate sewing machines.\textsuperscript{65} Congress failed to appropriate funds for the organization in 1919, thus ending the work in Ohio and elsewhere.\textsuperscript{66} This failure to continue funding the organization indicates, at least to some degree that the government was interested in black labor and the condition of the black labores only to the extent to which they could aid in the war effort.

After the Armistice of November 1918, blacks were no longer needed in many of the positions they held during the war. Rather than directing the efforts of the organization
toward helping black laborers in peacetime and helping to place those who became unemployed after the war, the organization disbanded. Nevertheless, during its short existence, the organization was instrumental in placing blacks in positions and in addressing the special needs of black laborers. The work in Ohio was especially significant in that it served to coordinate activities of state and local organizations involved in aiding black laborers.

Unemployment among blacks workers rose in the post war period as the readjustment to a peacetime economy caused a recession in 1920 and 1921. Blacks are generally the first to lose jobs in times of depression or recession and the 1920-21 recession was no different than others. In Cleveland and Cincinnati unemployment among blacks in the post war era was rather widespread, but the situation was not as bad in Columbus even though several Columbus firms revealed that black workers would be replaced by whites in 1920.67

The migration affected the economic position of Columbus blacks in still another way for the number of black-owned and operated businesses in the city increased considerably. Other than a few barber shops, saloons, and restaurants, there were no black-owned businesses in Columbus prior to the war. However, the migration expanded the black consumer market and higher wages gave these consumers considerable purchasing power. Such factors made the development of black businesses more feasible, and during the period the
Adelphi Loan and Savings Company, the Columbus Industrial Mortgage and Security Company, and the Credential Mortgage Company were opened in the city.\textsuperscript{68} In addition blacks opened their own movie theater as they were generally either barred from or segregated within the white-owned theatres. Black professionals such as doctors, dentists, and morticians were also attracted to Columbus, creating for the first time a business and professional class among blacks.\textsuperscript{69} By 1920 there were 11 attorneys, six dentists, six pharmacists, two drug stores, and six podiatrists among Columbus's blacks.\textsuperscript{70}

Attesting to the increased number of black professionals in the city was the formation, in 1918, of a black Business and Professional Men's Club. The membership of this club consisted of physicians, lawyers, dentists, morticians, realtors, insurance men and lawyers. The organization's initial membership numbered forty and the club held its Tuesday luncheons at the Spring Street Branch YMCA.\textsuperscript{71}
Problems of Adjustment

Among the reasons blacks gave for migrating from the South was a belief that they would receive fair treatment from Northern police, judges, and courts. In reality racism often prevented judicial equality but in Columbus the concern of the community and the Columbus Police Department meant that the migrants were at least given special consideration. Steps were taken by the police department in conjunction with concerned members of the community to give migrants assistance by helping them assimilate and become part of the community.

The Columbus newspapers were, to some degree, responsible for generating concern for the crime rate among blacks. The three leading publications, the Columbus Evening Dispatch, the Ohio State Journal and the Columbus Citizen, were extensively circulated and in the absence of such media as television and radio played a large part in formulating public opinion. Blacks were given considerable coverage by the press but this coverage was generally negative. Whenever blacks were accused of committing crimes, especially against whites, the daily journals invariably gave the incident prominent coverage. A survey of the newspapers clearly reveals this trend which became especially evident after 1920. This negative portrayal of blacks led
to concern among blacks who complained that this only served
to perpetuate racist attitudes.

Blacks represented a disproportionately large number of
those arrested and in the post war years the number of blacks
arrested increased sharply. The migrants (classified as those
who had been in the city less than five years prior to 1926)
constituted the majority of the blacks arrested.72 One police
officer in commenting upon the situation stated: "In those
days [before the migration] the Negroes in jail were about
one in every seven. Now I believe it's the other way
around."73 Several factors account for the large number of
migrants among the blacks arrested. The most obvious is that
a very large number of the blacks in Columbus were migrants.
While comparable figures are not available for earlier years,
a study of the black men in the Columbus Workhouse in 1931
revealed that of the 135 blacks retained, 29 were native-
born Ohioans while all but five of the remaining 106 were
migrants from Southern states.74 Similarly, indicating con-
ditions on a state-wide basis, the Ohio Board of Clemency
issued the following report in 1927:

There has been a large immigration... [sic] from the Southern states. No one thinks of these
immigrants as alien, because they were born in the
United States, but the fact remains that a very
large population of these newcomers find them-
sehers alien in a strange land, whose inhabitants
do not understand them, and too many do not care to
understand them. As a result there are now 2,327
Negroes in Ohio's four prisons or 32 per cent of the
prison population.

In fairness to native Negroes, attention must
be called to the fact that in the Penitentiary only
16 per cent are sons of Ohio while 84 per cent come from other states. The percentage of Ohio Negroes is only slightly larger than the percentage of white men.

Complex socio-economic factors led to the high crime rate among blacks. Poor housing, inadequate recreational facilities, overcrowding and a host of other maladies infected the black neighborhoods and the migration only served to exacerbate these problems. Further, the migrants were, as a group, more prone to commit crimes than were the non-migrants. The reason for this is a matter of conjecture. The migrants were mostly rural people who had to adjust to city life. The South was, as a whole, more "lawless" than the North, and perhaps these contributed to the lawlessness among migrants. No doubt racism among law enforcement officers played some part in the high incident of arrest among blacks also. The crimes blacks committed most frequently included felonious homicide, aggravated assault, disorderly conduct, burglary, sex crimes other than rape, and violations of liquor laws. The victims of black crime were more often blacks than whites.

The formation of the Friendly Service Bureau indicates that the Columbus Police Department along with both black and white members of the community sought to alleviate the crime problem through concerted efforts aimed at increasing the social awareness of the migrants.

The Friendly Service Bureau was formed during the post-war period when the crime rate among blacks escalated. The
Columbus Urban League instigated the Bureau's formation. Concerned citizens including social workers, ministers, and members of the Sociology Department at Ohio State University met to discuss the situation. The meeting was addressed by Chief of Police Harry E. French, who pointed out that migrants were the chief perpetrators of crimes among blacks. A committee charged with working out plans to deal with the situation recommended that a black police officer be detailed as a social worker and assigned the duty of acting as a "friendly guide and worker" among the migrants. Consequently Leslie M. Shaw was assigned the position and in September 1924, the Friendly Service Bureau was formed. The stated purpose of the Friendly Service Bureau was:

...to assist the migrant to adjust himself to city life; to enable him to understand better the problems and responsibilities of the community; to enlist in the work the cooperation of good citizens; to eliminate those influences which are productive of unsocial conduct; to develop in the minds of these unadjusted people a feeling of friendliness toward them on the part of the Bureau and the City Government [sic].

Shaw proved very adept at his work as the program he instituted was designed to wipe out the forces which bred crime. In this respect his approach was somewhat novel and for this reason the Friendly Service Bureau is said to have been the first crime prevention agency in the country. Shaw realized that the police department was fighting a losing battle by neglecting to deal with the causes of crime and his program reflected this realization. The Bureau,
through the aid of volunteers, sponsored lectures on law and order and law enforcement practices. Black churches, black teachers, and other civic and social organizations including the Urban League and the Spring Street YMCA worked with Shaw in carrying out his program.\textsuperscript{80} The Bureau also served as a sort of social agency as it helped blacks find jobs and housing. Further, Shaw instigated a "clean-up" of the black neighborhoods by ridding them of wine shops, poolrooms, and smoke shops which he believed harbored and bred criminals.\textsuperscript{81} The relative success of Shaw's work throughout the remainder of the decade may be seen in the decline in the number of black arrests. In 1925, 7,199 blacks were arrested, in 1926 the number dropped to 4,976, a 30.8 percent decrease.\textsuperscript{82} The number of arrests continued to decline until the 1930's when the Great Depression set in.

That Shaw was detailed for this special duty indicates at least nominal concern for the migrants. But in spite of the existence of the Friendly Service Bureau, evidence suggests that the police were generally less than fair in their dealings with blacks. Blacks were often treated cruelly by officers, and there was a general feeling among blacks that the police department was negligent in its response to crime in black neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{83} Of the 259 members of the police department when the Friendly Service Bureau was formed, only nine were black.\textsuperscript{84} Apparently it was the position of the police department, and certainly
that of the black community, that black officers would be more effective in dealing with blacks, yet the number of black officers remained low.\textsuperscript{85}

It is also very doubtful that blacks were treated fairly by the courts. The large number of blacks convicted of crimes indicates, among other things, that it was easier to convict a black who lacked the personal friendships and connections which a white offender might have. Unable to hire lawyers, most were forced to retain the aid of court appointed attorneys who often failed to give black clients competent representation.

An examination of racial attitudes of both white and black Columbus in the post-war period indicates that the migration, while leading to concerted efforts by blacks and whites to help the migrants adjust, did little to lessen the traditional racism and feelings of suspicion and resentment. Indeed, the migration served to "strengthen" the black community. Increased numbers, a broader economic base, and the formation of networks within the black community led to more stability and fostered a change in the attitude and actions of blacks. The change was somewhat subtle but the manifestations were very noticeable as is indicated in the following letter written by a middle-class white Columbus resident to her pastor (who was the president of the Columbus Urban League):

The deepest sympathy is of course due them
[blacks] and I have read many an article by DuBois which wrung my heart, but when I see how his teaching of race equality (that they must stand upon their rights to get anywhere) is putting them on the defensive and wiping the care-free smile from their faces I cannot help siding with Booker Washington's theories as being best for their "pursuit" of happiness.

It seems to me there has been a definite propaganda at work along the former lines; whether emanating from their churches or from your League I do not know but I do know the kind-hearted, willing, happy worker has gone and instead we have an imitation of the white race at its worst and a suspicious unkind spirit of rivalry.

I have two colored girls working for me doing the housework and because they are of the best type of their race they have seemed illuminating. They have been up from Louisville two years and when they first came they were so kindly and so cheerful, but I have seen a distinct change in their attitude—toward service—not at all towards me... These girls of mine are big, strong, healthy girls but they think because I occasionally lie down in the afternoon it is the thing to do so up they go leaving me to the mercy of the telephone and door bell. I have never had a white girl refuse to help in housecleaning time and these girls had [sic] they followed their natural kindly instinct, would not have done so, but they felt they must "stand on their rights", so let me work all day alone while they did their regular tasks only and went to their rooms for two hours every afternoon. They used my front door for themselves and their callers until I forbade it and then resented it. To be sure I could give no real reason for not [permitting] it, but if your Christianity carries you that far, dies it stio this side of intermarriage?

At any rate the comfort of Negro servants is gone with this "chip on the shoulder" attitude. Demanding as they do, equal wages with whites, I feel as if I would never have them again. It is not only in household labor that this attitude manifests itself.... Any one who uses the Long Street cars can testify [to] the aggressiveness of the Negroes....

Have not most of them more money than it is good for them now?... To be sure discontent and unrest are the faults of the age, but is your organization fostering or lessening them? What are you giving the Negroes
to take the place of their happiness if you are not giving them the ideal of service? I feel confident you must at least be trying to give them that, but what then is the strong influence opposing it? 86

Clearly, changes were taking place within the black community. White reaction to blacks varied in this period. The attitude ranged from hatred to toleration with a few who accepted blacks and sought to foster racial harmony. A strong undercurrent of nativism and racism led to the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the city and the state in the post-war era. The Franklin County Klan was organized in 1920 by a Columbus dentist, Charles Harrod. Because of the success of Herrod's recruiting, the Columbus branch became recruiting headquarters for the state. Whether Herrod's recruiting success was in numbers or technique cannot be determined, but the Franklin County chapter reportedly had over fifty-thousand members at one point in the 1920's. 87

By the time of the Great Migration racial discrimination and segregation were already deeply rooted in Columbus, but according to one black resident this was not true before 1900. This resident stated that before 1900 blacks were free to patronize every business on High Street. 88 Around 1900 blacks began to be barred from downtown establishments. This was, according to one report, precipitated by the worsening of Bad Lands, a black district on North Third Street, notorious for the gambling halls and brothels located there. The prostitutes and gamblers began to frequent the entertain-
ment spots in the downtown area and before long the proprietors, in an effort to keep out the undesirable, closed their doors to all blacks.  

It is debatable whether or not this situation was mainly responsible for the change. Undoubtedly a more plausible explanation may be found in the general surge of jim crowism which swept the nation about this time. Too, the black population of Columbus experienced a late-nineteenth century surge. Retailers on High Street also closed their doors to potential black customers during this period.

Discrimination in the press seemed even more pronounced in the post-war period than before. News about blacks was often presented in glaring headlines and in almost all cases presented a negative image of blacks. A survey done in 1924 revealed that 55.7 percent of the items concerning blacks in Columbus's three leading dailies for the preceding year were about vice and crime among blacks. The Ohio State Journal was the only paper which had a section set aside specifically for blacks. This column was titled "Afro-American News" and appeared weekly in the Sunday edition. The column was made up primarily of contributions from blacks and dealt with such items as church meetings, lodge meetings, social activities, and business news.

Ohio did not escape the wave of post-war violence against blacks which swept the nation. Though no incidents of the magnitude of the riot in Chicago occurred in the
state, Cleveland, Springfield, Lima, and Youngstown experienced violent racial outbreaks.\textsuperscript{92} Black leaders in the state became increasingly concerned about these incidents and they held meetings protesting the violence. In Cleveland the NAACP, the Ministers' Alliance and the Cleveland Association of Colored Men sent a letter to their Congressman protesting the violence in East St. Louis, Illinois.\textsuperscript{93} Editor Harry Smith of the \textit{Gazette} warned blacks to expect violence and suggested that they have weapons in their homes to protect themselves against mobs.\textsuperscript{94} William S. Scarborough, president of Wilberforce University, in commenting upon the violence, stated that he believed the violence would only be halted when the perpetrators could expect punishment for their acts. He, too, issued a warning when he stated "Negroes are not rioters, but they can be made so."\textsuperscript{95} But no riot took place in Columbus. Some of Columbus' blacks organized the Columbus Citizens Law and Order League which worked to prevent violent outbreaks by giving lectures and "instruction on the advantages of being law abiding citizens."\textsuperscript{96} Perhaps the organization was successful in curbing any potential violence. Economic competition and racial intolerance were primarily responsible for the rioting in the other Ohio cities. The post-war adjustment did not create high unemployment in Columbus as it did in other cities. Though interracial harmony did not prevail in Columbus, positive steps in this direction had
been made. These positive inroads might certainly have been responsible in some measure for the lack of violence following the war.

The migration affected the state's various school districts also. Suddenly inundated with black pupils, some districts made special efforts to help the migrant children and others used the situation to justify further segregation in the schools.

In 1848 the state's boards of education were authorized to provide school facilities for black children, but Columbus' blacks supported a school for their youth prior to this time. In 1836 blacks organized their own "school society" and subsequently purchased a lot and building for a school.

In 1874 Columbus' public schools were integrated. By 1920 there were approximately 3,000 black students in the public schools, which had a total enrollment of 32,000. There were 58 public schools in the city and blacks attended all except two. However, by 1932 gerrymandering of the school districts and a policy permitting students to transfer at will had succeeded in segregating the city's schools. Nevertheless, in 1920 the children of migrants attended the schools on a more or less equal basis with other students.

In other cities the migrant children did not fare so well. In Dayton they were placed in special classes because, according to school officials, their educational backward-
ness warranted such segregation. One of Dayton's elementary schools assigned all black pupils to rooms in the school's basement and made them use the back exits.\textsuperscript{102} Similarly, Mansfield's Bowman School segregated its black pupils after the arrival of a large number of black students from the South.\textsuperscript{103}

The migrant children in Columbus attended regular classes, although their presence was tolerated rather than accepted. In a survey of 100 randomly selected parents with children in the schools in 1920 (80 white and 20 black), it was found that the majority of the white parents wanted racially segregated schools. They stated that "the negroes [sic] as a race are backward" and the presence of black children in the school retarded the progress of the white children. On the other hand, all 20 of the black parents were in favor of integrated schools, realizing that separate generally meant inferior for blacks. A survey of 150 teachers indicated that 115 thought that the schools should be segregated; 15 thought that they should be integrated and 20 failed to make a commitment. Some stated, like the white parents, that innate differences between the races meant that white students were intellectually superior to black students and were educationally harmed by occupying the classroom with blacks. Others pointed out that differences between the races made the one repulsive to the other and that white teachers habitually discriminated against
black children in the classrooms. With such attitudes and policies in action one can easily surmise that the situation was less than ideal for black students in Columbus' schools. Added to this, the migrant children were handicapped by the inadequate preparation they had received in Southern schools. Refusing to confront this, some whites pointed to this group as proof of the innate inferiority of blacks. In situations like Dayton and Mansfield the migrant children became the pawn of racist school board officials and white parents who loathed the presence of black students in the schools anyway.
Military Participation

Blacks contributed to the Allied victory not only in factories and foundries, but also in the trenches and on numerous battlefields in Europe. When the United States entered the war there were approximately 20,000 blacks in segregated units of the National Guard and the regular army. When the country declared war in April 1917, black volunteers innundated recruiting stations but were turned away. Of the three branches of the armed forces, the Marine Corps, the Navy, and the Army, only the Army and Navy accepted blacks. The few blacks accepted into the Navy served as cooks and in other menial positions. For this reason the vast majority of the blacks who served in World War I were in the Army. The War Department's policy was to bring already existing units up to full strength, and the four black units in the regular army, the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry and the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantry, had their quotas within one week. Policy was to accept blacks only in the four segregated units, thus, initially, only 4,000 blacks were accepted.106

Military planners realized that effective participation in the conflict would require a massive force which the U. S. did not have when it entered the war. Consequently, in May 1917, the Selective Service Act was passed by Congress and
signed by the President. This law required that all able-bodied male citizens between 21 and 31 register with their local draft boards. The legislation made no specifications for any race, but it is clear that blacks were not treated fairly by local draft boards. One indication of this may be seen in the way the registrant was required to identify himself. He was "to list his race as 'Caucasian,' 'negro,' [sic] 'Mongolian,' 'Malayan,' or 'Indian'"--the use of the lower case "n" clearly indicated the status of the black man. To further insure that blacks were readily identified, some draft boards instructed blacks to tear off a corner of their forms. Blacks were denied exemptions much more often than were whites. In Fulton County, Georgia, for instance, 526 of 815 white registrants were given exemptions while only 6 of 202 blacks were exempted. Following this incident President Wilson ordered the removal of the entire draft board.

Blacks also protested their lack of representation on draft boards, but the protest was unheeded as they were systematically excluded from these appointments. Finally, of the 2,290,527 blacks who registered, 74.69 percent were accepted for service while only 69.71 percent of the whites were accepted. Black doctors and dentists were refused commissions and drafted as privates when the army was in dire need of their professional skills. A glance at the classification figures also indicates discrimination against
blacks. In the first draft call 51 percent of the black enrollees were placed in Class I (immediately available for the draft) while only 32 percent of the whites received such a classification. The most obvious conclusion to be drawn from this is that black enrollees were considered mentally and physically superior to whites, but this was not the case. Blacks were, for the most part, drafted as "pick-and-shovel troops so it didn't matter what they had wrong with them—they did their day's work with these handicaps as civilians..." and they could perform just as well as soldiers. Further, few blacks had the power to obtain exemptions and often those who had legitimate reasons for exemptions were drafted anyway. Ironically, blacks were discriminated against both by being excluded from some branches of the service and by being denied exemptions from others.

When the war broke out in Europe most black Americans, like their white counterparts, felt no real threat from a conflict thousands of miles away. But when the United States entered the conflict blacks, with few exceptions, firmly supported Woodrow Wilson in spite of his racist record. One of the nation's most influential black leaders, William E. B. DuBois, urged blacks to put aside grievances for the duration of the war and help in the fight to "make the world safe for democracy." In an editorial in the Crisis, DuBois argued that an Allied victory would lead to an American in which
blacks would receive the justice that had so long eluded them.\textsuperscript{112} Some black leaders noted the irony of blacks being called upon to sacrifice to make Europe safe for democracy when they were denied democracy in the United States. Asa P. Randolph was one of the most vocal exponents of this opinion, but the general black public seemed convinced that participation in the war would lead to better treatment after the conflict ended.

Black Ohioans were supportive of the war effort. The state's leading black newspaper, the \textit{Gazette}, urged support of war bond drives and admonished blacks to do their part in the war even though the editor, Harry Smith, adamantly opposed the discriminatory practices of the Army, including the establishment of a separate training camp for black officers.

In Columbus there was considerable activity among blacks in support of the war. The War Camp Community Service, a national organization which sought to boost morale and provide for the comfort and welfare of soldiers while they were in training, had a local chapter in Columbus which, aided by local black women, set up a Community House for black soldiers. These houses were generally used for social purposes and the War Camp Community Service sponsored dances and other activities to entertain the soldiers.\textsuperscript{113} The Columbus Chapter of the NAACP became involved in a controversy at the Ohio State University when black students were
denied admission into the University's Student Army Training Corps (SATC). The Columbus NAACP, the Cleveland NAACP, and the students involved communicated with the War Department and within three weeks of their application the students were allowed to join the organization.\textsuperscript{114}

Ohio was one of several states which maintained black National Guard units. Thus when the Ohio National Guard was mustered into federal service on August 5, 1917, the Ninth Battalion (the black unit) was scheduled to accompany the Guard to Camp Sheridan in Alabama. According to reports the Ninth experienced manpower shortages which prevented the whole unit from going south. Only Company B (Columbus) had a full quota, so Companies A, C, and D of Springfield, Dayton, and Cleveland respectively stayed in Ohio and were at least momentarily forgotten as evidenced by the gross neglect of Company C which was encamped at the National Military Home near Dayton, Ohio.\textsuperscript{115} Meanwhile, Company D was mishandled as it was first directed to recruit 100 men and then told to disregard this order and leave for Camp Sheridan on October 12. By mid-October the entire Ninth Battalion was reunited at Camp Sheridan in Alabama amid protest from the white citizens of Montgomery.\textsuperscript{116}

When Alabama's whites first heard that black troops would be stationed in their midst they began a vigorous protest. Congressman Robert Dent of Alabama, chairman of the House Committee on Military Affairs, was asked to intervene
and keep the black soldiers out of Camp Sheridan. Considering a run for the Presidency and therefore not inclined to antagonize blacks, Dent refused to intervene but did warn the black Ohioans that things were different below the Mason-Dixon line and that it would indeed be prudent if they observed the local jim crow practices and stayed in their place.¹¹⁷ Dent's action was not enough for the citizens of Montgomery, so a group led by the city's mayor petitioned the Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, to send the soldiers to a Northern camp. Baker considered the request but decided that the soldiers would remain at Camp Sheridan and was consequently applauded by black Ohioans for making that decision.¹¹⁸ On August 25 a "riot" in which two black soldiers and 17 white civilians were killed, occurred in Houston, Texas. Following this incident, protest over the stationing of Northern black troops in Southern camps intensified.¹¹⁹ Representative Dent was again asked to use his influence to have the black troops removed from Camp Sheridan, and this time he asked Secretary Baker to transfer the troops to a Northern camp. Baker, however, remained steadfast and refused to move the troops for fear of inciting racial bitterness.

Meanwhile, some of Montgomery's blacks attempted to entertain the soldiers. This group sponsored at least one party which was not well attended by the local girls as only two showed up for the affair. The soldiers were dissappointed
by the lack of attendance, and the whole affair was a failure. 120

On November 8, a minor altercation occurred. Apparently two men from Company A tried to get into the local movie theatre and were arrested. Interestingly, the two men had posed as white soldiers, but their identity was detected. Rumors spread that the soldiers were in the hands of a lynch mob. A rescue party composed of men from all four companies went to the place where the lynching was supposed to occur and were there apprehended and arrested by Military Police. 121 Captain C. C. Caldwell of Company B was furious over the action of the police and ordered the soldiers released. The entire Battalion was then confined to quarters. The men involved in the incident were later exonerated after being found innocent of any illegalities. 122

The incident, though of no major consequence, had the potential to become as serious as the Houston incident, but the soldiers remained calm and the Ninth's stay at Camp Sheridan produced no real problems. Yet the men of the Ninth Battalion were, as Major John C. Fulton, battalion commander, stated, "weary of being treated as second-class soldiers." They were provided with facilities equal to those of their white counterparts, but the hostility of the whites prevented the men from receiving passes to go into the city. Furthermore it was apparent that crossing the Mason-Dixon line affected some of the white soldiers as there was a
marked change in their actions while encamped at Camp Sheridan. 123

In December the Ninth was transferred to Camp Stuart, Newport News, Virginia where it joined the 372nd Regiment of Infantry, 93rd Division. After three months of training the 372nd sailed for France arriving at St. Nazaire, on April 13, 1918. In France it was attached to a French unit. 124 General John J. Pershing, commander of American forces in Europe, did not want an integrated American force or an all-black division established. In fact Pershing opposed the stationing of black troops in France. He was obviously not very enthused over the arrival of the 372nd as the regiment was in France several days before he knew of its arrival. 125

Black Ohioans were obviously proud of their men in uniform. A survey of the Columbus daily newspapers for the period April to December 1917 reveals little about black troops in particular. Most of the news is of a general nature while draft dodgers receive quite a bit of attention. It is interesting to note that the papers carried articles stating that the Montgomery, Alabama Chamber of Commerce was preparing the city to receive the Ohio Guard, but none commented upon the fact that these same people attempted to keep black soldiers from being quartered at Camp Sheridan. 126 There were also reports on the preparations for a parade to honor the Guardsmen before they left for Camp Sheridan, but again, no mention is made of race in this connection. Five
thousand dollars was raised to buy "amenities" for the soldiers but whether or not Company B received any of the money is a matter of speculation.

The Gazette seemed more interested in the treatment of black soldiers on the national level, thus its comments on the state troops were limited to the reception black Guardsmen received in Montgomery and the neglect of Company C after the Guard was federalized.

When Ohio's black troops returned after the war they were received with celebrations in several towns. They had fought gallantly and were seen as a tribute to the state and their race. Yet, black Ohioans, like blacks elsewhere in the country, realized that sacrifice in the war did not mean that they would be granted the justice and democracy they expected as a result of their participation in the war. As one Columbus black stated:

Victory for a universal democracy and an unbiased humanity, so far as the Negro is concerned, has not been won; notwithstanding the fact that he by the heroism and valor that he displayed in everything that he did that had even the very least to do with winning the war, [he is still] denied his civil and political rights, in this so called [sic] land of the free and home of the brave.
Conclusion

The Great Migration had lasting effect upon Columbus if for no other reason than that it greatly increased the size of the black population. Before the migration the black community was very small and, to some degree, rather isolated from the larger white community. But with the rapid influx of the migrants both blacks and whites realized that something had to be done, and that neither could act independent of the other if the city was to adjust and absorb its new population.

This period in Columbus' development offered blacks a chance for economic and social advancement while it forced whites to take note of the problems of the black community. Though little thoroughgoing change in interracial relationships came out of the period, links between the two races were made and a foundation for later progress was laid. The formation of the Federated Social and Industrial Welfare League (Columbus Urban League) and the Friendly Service Bureau represents biracial efforts to improve conditions in the black community which had larger implications for the city as a whole.

The greatest impact of the migration was, as may be expected, upon the black community. Though older black residents sometimes resented the migrants, the group
solidarity bred in the black community as a result of the migration cannot be overlooked. A sense of racial pride and awareness also came out of the era. This was especially evident in the post-war period when blacks began to form social clubs like the Fort Nightly and the Women's Independent Political League. It was also evident in the marked change in attitude and action which showed that blacks were less and less content to accept second-class citizenship.

Another concrete result of the migration was that it strengthened the economic position of the black community as a whole. Black entrepreneurs took advantage of the consumer market the migration created and migrants, accustomed to patronizing their own businesses where they existed in the South, were ready patrons of the black-operated establishments which were set up in the city. These included several confectionaries; two restaurants, one on Long Street and one on Goodale Street; an industrial mortgage company and a savings and loan association. By 1932 black-owned businesses employed at least one thousand persons. The economic differentiation consequent of these developments led to the rise of a distinct middle class among Columbus' blacks. Composed of professionals and businessmen, members of this group became spokesmen for blacks and leaders in the black community. Their presence was especially important during the depression years as they organized drives to aid destitute members of the black community.
An inevitable consequence of the migration was the exacerbation of social ills within the black community. The most obvious of these was the overcrowding in the black neighborhoods. A rise in the black crime rate was also a product of the migration. The lack of sufficient police protection and the absence of adequate recreational facilities in the black neighborhoods only made these problems worse.

One change which may be expected with this increase in population is increased political activity. This did not occur because the city elected officials at-large rather than by the ward system, thus rendering the black vote insignificant. Blacks could not poll enough votes to elect a candidate nor could a black enlist votes from whites in sufficient number to be elected to any city office.
Endnotes


5Frontiers of America, Advancement, p. 7.


8Mark, *Negroes in Columbus*, p. 8 and 16.


10Ibid., p. 141.


13Ibid.


15Cleveland *Plain Dealer*, 4 August 1917.


Mark, Negroes in Columbus, p. 9.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 9 and 31.

Scroggs, "Interstate Migration," p. 1041.


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Scott, Negro Migration, p. 60.


Ibid., p. 72.

Scott, Negro Migration, p. 53.

Ibid., p. 17.

Campbell and Johnson, Black Migration in America, p. 76.

Mark, The Negro in Columbus, p. 41.

Columbus Dispatch, 11 May 1919.


Nimrod Allen, "Interracial Relations in Columbus, Ohio," (The Southern Workman, vol. 20; April 1922), p. 47.

Mark, Negroes in Columbus, p1 26.


41 Murphy, "The Columbus Urban League," p. 27.

42 ibid.

43 FSIWMN, First Annual Report, p. 5.

44 ibid., p 4.


46 ibid.


48 ibid.


50 FSIWMN, First Annual Report, p. 4.

51 ibid.

52 Minor, "The Negro in Columbus," p. 45.


55 Ralph G. Harshman, "Race Contact in Columbus, Ohio," (Masters thesis, Ohio State University, 1921), p. 24-25.


57 Harshman, "Race Contact," p. 27.


60*ibid.*

61*ibid.*, p. 114.


64*ibid.*, p. 108.

65*ibid.*, p. 109.


69Minor, "The Negro in Columbus," p. 43.

70William McWilliams, *Columbus Illustrated Record*, (Columbus: By the Author, 1922), p. 77.


72*ibid.*, p. 44.

73*ibid.*, p. 129.

74*ibid.*, 119.

75*ibid.*, 126.

76*ibid.*, p. 128.


78*ibid.*


81Dulaney, "Black and Blue in America," p. 46.


84 Ibid., p. 134.


88 Minor, "The Negro in Columbus," p. 239.

89 Ibid., p. 240.

90 Ibid., p. 242-243.


93 Ibid., p. 57.

94 Cleveland, Gazette, 2 August 1919.


96 Ibid.


98 Ibid.

99 Ibid., p. 149.

100 Harshman, "Race Contact in Columbus," p. 14.


102 Ibid., p. 177.

103 Ibid., p. 181.

104 Harshman, "Race Contact in Columbus," p. 17-20.


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Barbeau and Henri, The Unknown Soldiers, p. 36-37.

See Barbeau and Henri, The Unknown Soldiers, p. 35; Foner, Blacks in the Military, p1 128.

Crisis, June 1918.


Ibid., p. 130-132.

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Ibid., 122-123.

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Interview with Mr. Freeman Lee, Springfield, Ohio, 2 February 1983.


Interview with Mr. Freeman Lee, Springfield, Ohio, 2 February 1983.
125 Ibid.

126 See Ohio State Journal, 5, 8 August 1917; Columbus Citizen, 3 August 1917.


128 William McWilliams, Columbus Illustrated Record, Columbus: By the Author, 1922), p. 87.

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Interview

Appendix I

LEGEND

- Corporation Boundary
- District Boundary

Districts:
1. E Long Street
2. W Goodale Street
3. Seventh and Main Streets
4. E Fifth Avenue
5. Hilltop
6. Belleview
7. South Side
8. Frombos Avenue
9. American Addition
10. Hanford Village
O Scattered Families; 1924
X Scattered Families; 1870
### Appendix II

#### Table 1: Age Distribution of All Columbus Blacks, 1910 and 1920

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#### Table 2: Age Distribution of All Columbus Blacks, 1910 and 1920 by Sex

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Appendix III

Table 3  Years of Residence in Columbus of Persons
18 Years of Age or Older

(This table includes only persons born outside of Columbus)

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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 or more .......</td>
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## Appendix IV

### Table 4: Years of Residence in Columbus of Persons 18 Years of Age or Older, by State of Birth

(This table includes only persons born outside of Columbus)

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<td>20 or more</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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<td>61</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>91</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>81</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>..</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>161</strong></td>
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### Percentage distribution

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<td>20 or more</td>
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<td>------------</td>
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### Appendix V

#### Table 5: Age Distribution of Migrants, by Sex

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#### Table 6: Age Distribution of Non-Migrants, by Sex

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<th>Female</th>
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<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 59</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 64</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>2.7</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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Appendix VI

Table 7 Occupations of Persons 18 Years of Age or Older, Migrants and Non-Migrants  
NM = Non-Migrants  
K = Migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage Distribution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sales</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory or shop</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building trades</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railroads</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving and teaming</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porters, janitors, etc.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-domestic</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proprietors</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
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<td>92</td>
<td>135</td>
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**Females**

<table>
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<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory or store</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>5</td>
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