White violence, black nationalism, and the NAACP in North Carolina, 1918-1940

Thomas Patrick Lennon

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University of York

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Abstract

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The aftermath of World War I saw widespread violence by whites against African Americans across the United States. This study is a state-level comparison of different African-American responses to the problem of white violence, primarily those represented by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). While the NAACP aimed to secure federal legislation against lynching, the black nationalist UNIA favoured a separatist approach which emphasised group solidarity and self-defence. The segregated urban areas of North Carolina had a well-established black middle class and hosted vibrant NAACP branches and UNIA divisions, offering insights into both intra- and interracial dynamics.

Both the UNIA and the NAACP were successful at grassroots level within a relatively short period of time after World War I and in the early-1920s. The thesis uses the theme of white violence and black responses to link the fluctuating fortunes of the NAACP and of the UNIA and argues that the UNIA's focus on self-defence is an under-appreciated aspect of its popularity among southern African Americans. Meanwhile, the NAACP's emphasis on anti-lynching legislation, while effective at putting pressure on influential whites, did not offer a practical solution to people worried about violence. The ways in which black North Carolinians approached the problem of white violence suggest that different solutions to the problem coexisted, rather than being sequential or contradictory.

Changes in the manifestations of anti-black violence also shed light on changing expressions of North Carolinian whiteness. By examining shifts from the late-nineteenth century, when influential whites frequently condoned anti-black violence, to the interwar period, when most influential whites condemned racist violence, the thesis challenges North Carolina's reputation for civility in race relations and sheds light on how the dominant versions of whiteness and masculinity in the state changed over time.

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Introduction

The aftermath of World War I saw widespread violence by whites against African Americans across the United States. This study compares two different African-American responses to the problem of white violence, namely those of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). While the NAACP aimed to secure federal legislation against lynching and worked alongside state authorities to act against mob violence, the UNIA favoured a separatist approach which emphasised group solidarity and preparations for self-defence.

Both the UNIA and the NAACP were successful across the South at a grassroots level within a relatively short period of time following World War I and during the early-1920s. Historians of black protest see the NAACP and the UNIA as very different in approaches and philosophies and, as such, the two organisations tend to be examined separately in the historiography. Both organisations, however, were concerned with finding a solution to the problem of anti-black violence by whites. This study therefore uses the theme of white violence and black response to link the fluctuating fortunes of the NAACP and of the UNIA and to shed light on the genealogy of organisational black protest in the interwar period. I argue that the UNIA's focus on self-defence is an under-appreciated aspect of its popularity among southern African Americans, while the NAACP's emphasis on anti-lynching legislation ultimately did not offer a practical solution to people worried about the immediate threat and actuality of violence.

The towns and cities of North Carolina had a well-established black middle class and hosted vibrant NAACP branches and UNIA divisions in the 1920s. As a case study, North Carolina therefore provides valuable insights into the intra-racial social class dynamics of African-American protest activism. For decades, influential whites in North Carolina had carefully cultivated a reputation for moderation and civility in race relations.[1] This study will suggest, based on a close examination of the realities of white violence, that North Carolina's moderate reputation was undeserved. Even as

[1] The concept of white civility will be explored further below but, briefly, it refers to white notions of class status that often served to exclude African Americans from leadership roles and which sought to downplay problems linked to race relations in order to present an image of progressivism and respectability. On civility, see Charles W. McKinney, *Greater Freedom: The Evolution of the Civil Rights Struggle in Wilson, North Carolina* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), xix; Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 224, 61-66; William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 4-5.

lynching apparently waned after 1921, 'underground' and 'ordinary' violence by whites continued. The different ways in which black North Carolinians approached the problem of white violence in the 1920s and 1930s provide crucial insights into how organisational African-American activism changed over the course of the interwar period.

Wilmington, 1898

Any study which seeks to understand the impacts of violence on race relations and on race activism in North Carolina must contend with the profound impact of the 1898 racist attack by whites against the black community in Wilmington. In the late-nineteenth century, Wilmington was a wealthy port city on the banks of the Cape Fear River and a prominent symbol of North Carolina's prosperous black artisan and merchant community. In 1898, 14,000 of the 24,000-strong population of New Hanover County were African Americans. Eastern North Carolina was a bastion of black political strength in the 1890s, particularly following the 1894 election in which Republicans and white populists had 'fused' and carried the state government. After the 1896 elections, North Carolina's second congressional district was represented by the African-American George H. White, one of four black candidates from the district to win election to the House between 1874 and 1898.[2] After White's victory, Republicans appointed over 20 African Americans to political offices in the second district and hundreds more were appointed across the state.

This black political power in North Carolina was shattered, however, on 10 November 1898, when an angry mob of white citizens led by a former congressman unleashed a deadly attack on Wilmington's African-American community. This violence came just two days after Democrats had won control of North Carolina's state government through an election campaign based on race-baiting and intimidation. Tensions ran high in the weeks before the massacre, stoked by false rumours of an outbreak of incidents of rape against white women by black men, as well as by rumours about African Americans stockpiling firearms, and a high-profile editorial in the black press which criticised the moral virtues of white women. When it came, the attack destroyed black homes and businesses, left over 20 African Americans dead,

[2] Eric Anderson, *Race and Politics in North Carolina, 1872-1901: The Black Second* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), ix-x.

and forced around 1,500 black citizens out of the city.[3] In 1900, the return of Democratic dominance in North Carolina was followed by an amendment to the state's constitution which tied suffrage rights to literacy requirements and a grandfather clause, disqualifying the vast majority of black North Carolinians from voting. Many blacks in the east of the state were subjected to white vigilante violence in the campaign that led to the vote on the suffrage amendment.[4]

Beyond the new legal and procedural barriers to participation, the long-term psychological impact of the Wilmington massacre on North Carolina's African-American community cannot be overstated. The threat and reality of violence and terrorism deterred most blacks for decades from attempting to engage in the formal political process, and white supremacy reigned virtually unchallenged in North Carolina politics until the 1950s.[5]

Linking the NAACP and the UNIA

Building on an understanding of North Carolina's history of disfranchisement and the intergenerational fear imposed on its black community, this study aims to provide insights into the progress of organisational black responses to injustice in North Carolina as well as into the development of the norms and ideals of whiteness in the

[3] On the Wilmington massacre, including the casting of black males as rapists by white Democrats in the lead-up to the violence see Glenda E. Gilmore, "Murder, Memory, and the Flight of the Incubus," in *Democracy Betrayed: The Wilmington Race Riot of 1898 and its Aftermath,* ed. John H. Franklin, David S. Cecelski and Timothy B. Tyson (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Leon F. Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 312-15; Anderson, *Race and Politics in North Carolina*, 340; Angela Hornsby-Gutting, *Black Manhood and Community Building in North Carolina, 1900-1930* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009), 114-15; Bruce E. Baker, *This Mob Will Surely Take My Life: Lynchings in the Carolinas, 1871-1947* (London: Continuum, 2009), 97-99. David Krugler has highlighted the fact that African Americans in Wilmington did attempt to fight back against the white mob, with some success, see David F. Krugler, *1919, The Year of Racial Violence: How African Americans Fought Back* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 13. A similar attack on African Americans, also motivated by white concerns about growing black influence and assertiveness, occurred in the city of Danville, Virginia, in 1883, which contributed to the collapse of a bi-racial political alliance that had been in power in the state since 1879, see Jane Dailey, "Deference and Violence in the Postbellum Urban South: Manners and Massacres in Danville, Virginia," *Journal of Southern History* 63, no. 3 (1997): 553-590.

[4] On 'Red Shirt' violence in eastern North Carolina in 1900, see James M. Beeby, *Revolt of the Tar Heels: The North Carolina Populist Movement, 1890-1901* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), 206-07.

[5] Raymond Gavins, "Fear, Hope and Struggle: Recasting black North Carolina in the age of Jim Crow," in *Democracy Betrayed,* 189; Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, "False Friends and Avowed Enemies: Southern African Americans and Party Allegiances in the 1920s," in *Jumpin' Jim Crow: Southern Politics from Civil War to Civil Rights,* ed. Jane Dailey, Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore and Bryant Simon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 221.

state. While the study primarily examines African-American activism, it is crucial to also consider the actions and priorities of the white community and the relationship between the agency of blacks and whites.[6] As Barbara J. Fields has argued, 'white supremacy was not simply a summary of color prejudices. It was also a set of political programs, differing according to the social position of their proponents.' Precisely what white supremacy meant and how it was enforced, then, changes depending on the subsection of white society being discussed.[7] Violence by whites was not an abstract, static force, but changed in its manifestations and nature over time.

I will suggest that, far from being the opposite of violence, white North Carolinian civility was intrinsically linked to it in a number of ways. In the late-nineteenth century, elite white Democrats purposefully unleashed the violence of white supremacy in North Carolina, primarily through the demonisation of black men. Subsequently, however, in a trend that can be observed well into the interwar period, Democratic leaders publicly and frequently condemned white violence against African Americans, which nonetheless tended to continue at the grassroots level. Whiteness in North Carolina would come to have a heavily class-based definition, the power over which was closely guarded by elite whites, many of whom were connected to the Democratic party. If it was partly the fear of economic dependency that led many working-class whites to increasingly view African Americans as 'other,' then the concerns of middle-class and elite whites were certainly different.[8]

In North Carolina, civility and the 'progressive mystique' were the elements of white supremacy generally favoured by white liberals, politicians, and journalists. William Chafe has suggested that white progressivism 'did not operate as a political system with rigid regulations and procedures. Rather, it functioned as a mystique, a series of implicit assumptions, nuances, and modes of relating that have been all the more powerful precisely because they are so elusive.'[9] By addressing the apparent contradiction of white civility and white violence, it becomes possible to perceive some of the tensions within constructions of whiteness and how these tensions shifted through time and across different sections of white society, as well as the impacts those shifts had on black protest.

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[6] J. Todd Moye, *Let the People Decide: Black Freedom and White Resistance Movements in Sunflower County, Mississippi, 1945-1986* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[7] Barbara J. Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History," in *Region, Race, and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward,* ed. J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 156,168.

[8] David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991), 14.

[9] Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights*, 6.

White violence against African Americans escalated across the United States in the World War I period. Partly in reaction to this, it was in the early-interwar period that African Americans sought strategic responses to violence through grassroots protest activism orchestrated by large, nationally-coordinated organisations. This study focuses on the changing nature of organisational black responses to white violence, while also recognising that the responses of organisations cannot easily be separated from those of the individuals who joined them. While one NAACP activist may have been eager to write to the governor about an instance of lynching, another may have seen this approach as too confrontational. Similarly, while one local UNIA member may have been willing to prepare for self-defence, another may have preferred simply to read the organisation's *Negro World* newspaper. The precise nature of grassroots activism, then, will be placed within the context of local communities, while also referring broadly to the strategies of organisations at the national level. This approach allows for an appreciation of the dialectic between the local and national, as well as of the pressures and contexts that influenced activism in different organisations.

The NAACP and the UNIA operated at the grassroots level in North Carolina within a relatively short space of time, running roughly from the end of World War I through to the mid-1930s. The fortunes of the two organisations, however, ebbed and flowed significantly within that time. Neither the NAACP nor the UNIA in interwar North Carolina have been extensively investigated.[10] As will be seen, the NAACP was successful in North Carolina (and in many other areas of the South) during and immediately following the war, but declined at grassroots level after 1920. The UNIA, however, experienced rapid growth in the South between 1920 and 1925, and was a presence in certain parts of North Carolina until the mid-1930s, by which point the NAACP had partially revived itself at the local level. The precise chronology of the rise and fall of respective NAACP and UNIA fortunes in North Carolina will be considered in detail throughout this study, as will some of the possible causes of the fluctuations in the popularity of the organisations.

Historian Mary Rolinson has conducted a thorough analysis of UNIA expansion in the rural South after 1920. One of the suggestions which emerged from her valuable study is that the rapid growth of the UNIA in Georgia 'coincided precisely with the

[10] Mary Rolinson devotes a section to North Carolina in her book on southern Garveyism. The section is enlightening but relatively short, as Rolinson's main focus is on the lower South, see Mary G. Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The Universal Negro Improvement Association in the Rural South, 1920-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 59-62. Raymond Gavins' case-study of the NAACP in North Carolina is insightful but does not examine the 1920s in much detail, see Raymond Gavins, "The NAACP in North Carolina during the Age of Segregation," in *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies,* ed. Armstead L. Robinson and Patricia Sullivan (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991), 105-125.

backlash against the NAACP' by southern white supremacists. Far from being an isolated example, Rolinson writes that the same trend can be seen across much of the South in and after 1921, a period during which the gains that the NAACP had made in the region were effectively reversed.[11]

That NAACP decline and UNIA growth coincided so closely in the South in 1920 and 1921 raises a number of questions which have not yet been satisfactorily addressed by historians. Given the nature of the UNIA's racial separatism and the NAACP's preference for equal rights under the US Constitution, the two organisations are often presented by historians as having been antagonistic to each other and having much more separating them than uniting them. This perception is reinforced by the mutually hostile positions which were adopted by the respective leaderships of the two organisations. If, however, the two organisations were so different, questions remain regarding how, if at all, the NAACP's grassroots decline after 1920 may have related to the UNIA's near-concurrent rise in popularity. Either the two organisations mobilised very different sections of the southern African-American demographic, or they appealed to a similar support-base, with the attractiveness of their respective programmes depending on the effectiveness of local organisers and national priorities as well as the changing pressures and contexts of life for local people.

This study seeks to understand the waves of black activism that saw a shift in momentum at grassroots level from the NAACP to the UNIA and back again, between the end of World War I and the end of the 1930s. This was not a pattern that was limited to North Carolina. However, as will be discussed below, the Tar Heel State's class and race dynamics can help to shed light on why such a shift may have taken place and what that meant for the future of black activism by the eve of World War II. The evidence for such grassroots developments will be the respective successes and failures of NAACP branches and of UNIA divisions in North Carolina. This investigation therefore provides an in-depth state-level case study of the fortunes of two of the most prominent, influential black organisations of the interwar period.

Acknowledging that local activists could support different organisations or positions at the same time or within a short time period is not equivalent to collapsing the political, methodological, and ideological differences between different programmes of activism. Timothy Tyson and Peniel Joseph have suggested that Black Power activism developed from the same social contexts as more 'mainstream' calls

[11] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism*, 174.

for equal citizenship rights and assimilation for African Americans.[12] While different forms of activism can arise from concerns over similar issues, explicitly linking different eras of black activism has the potential to impair our overall understanding of consecutive phases of activism, primarily because 'long movement' approaches tend to downplay change over time and place.[13] This study seeks to avoid the conflation of black separatism and black integrationism at grassroots level (although there were common factors). Rather, the issue of violence can act as a lens through which it is possible to perceive differences in the ways in which African Americans reacted, often within short time-frames, and to attempt to interrogate how and why certain approaches to activism were successful or unsuccessful.

The nature of the available sources means that it is necessarily the larger, urban branches of the NAACP and divisions of the UNIA that form the bulk of evidence for this study. For the NAACP, the branches in Asheville, Charlotte, Durham, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem were the largest in the state, as might be expected, and are the ones that have left the most evidence of their memberships and activities. Similarly, for the UNIA, the divisions in Asheville, Charlotte, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem were generally the strongest. Both organisations, but the UNIA in particular, had other, smaller, branches and divisions in more remote, rural areas of the state, but there is little information about their memberships, fortunes, or activities in the surviving sources. Rather, it is the towns and cities of North Carolina, with their segregated neighbourhoods and diversified African-American populations, which allow for a state-level case study that can shed light on the changing nature of black activism over the course of the interwar years.

Defining racial violence

Throughout the interwar period, sustained anti-black violence underpinned white supremacy even in a supposedly less violent southern state like North Carolina. African Americans responded in a variety of ways that had differing emphases and aims, and which ranged from self-defence to legal campaigns and from written protests to intelligence-gathering. Many scholarly discussions of southern racial

[12] Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 3; Peniel E. Joseph, *Dark Days, Bright Nights: From Black Power to Barack Obama* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2010), 15, 171.

[13] Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, "The "Long Movement" as Vampire: Temporal and Spatial Fallacies in Recent Black Freedom Studies," *The Journal of African American History* 92, no. 2 (2007): 265-288.

violence in the Jim Crow period have centred on lynching, which was without doubt the most gruesome and performative, and therefore the most notorious, example of southern anti-black violence by whites (although other minority groups and whites were also victims of white lynching).[14]

The cultural aspects of southern racial hierarchies undoubtedly had ritualistic elements, and the defence of white supremacy was often enacted through prominent, shockingly violent instances of lynching in circumstances under which whites perceived those hierarchies to have been undermined. In his study of lynching in South Carolina and Mississippi, however, Terence Finnegan has argued that many lynch mobs wanted first to redress specific grievances, and only 'secondarily' acted with the aim of preserving white supremacy.[15] W. Fitzhugh Brundage has similarly argued that too much emphasis on the apparently ritualised nature of lynching can create the impression that mob violence had an unchanging consistency, whereas variations in the motivations, circumstances, and methods of lynching across the South in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries make any such consistency difficult to identify.[16]

The majority of instances of public lynching by large mobs happened towards the end of the nineteenth century and at the start of the twentieth century.[17] It has been suggested that a significant motivating factor for lynch mobs was the frustration which white southerners – particularly working-class ones – felt about the perceived inability of the law to sufficiently enforce the South's racial caste system.[18] More recent sociological work, however, suggests that lynch mobs may often have targeted black males who in some way stood out in the context of a local community, either by being socially marginal and itinerant, or by being conspicuously successful. Such individuals, at extreme ends of the black social scale, were more likely to offend white southerners' sense of hierarchy and hence were more vulnerable to attack.[19]

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[14] This point has been raised by Brent Campney, see Brent M.S. Campney, *This Is Not Dixie: Racist Violence in Kansas, 1861-1927* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 1-2.

[15] Terence Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed: Lynching in Mississippi and South Carolina, 1881-1940* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 145.

[16] W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 18.

[17] Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed,* 155; Amy Kate Bailey and Stewart E. Tolnay, *Lynched: The Victims of Southern Mob Violence* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 11.

[18] Michael J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society, 1874-1947* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 67, 94.

[19] Bailey and Tolnay, *Lynched,* 146-48; see also Amy Kate Bailey, Stewart E. Tolnay, E.M. Beck, Jennifer D. Laird, "Targeting Lynch Victims: Social Marginality or Status Transgressions?" *American Sociological Review* 76, no. 3 (2011): 429; Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed,* 8; Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 157.

Lynching, however, is only one element of the story of southern racial violence. Kidada Williams has pointed to a 'continuum' of the types of violence experienced by the southern African-American community. Williams distinguishes between the *ordinary* violence administered by individual white southerners, which occurred often and could take the form of beatings or physical intimidation, and *extraordinary* violence, which was rarer, tended to involve white mobs, and was more likely to result in murder through massacres or public spectacles such as lynchings.[20] Brent Campney, in his study of racist violence in Kansas, has elaborated further on the different ways in which violence manifested itself. Campney differentiates between *sensational* violence, which includes lynching, mob attacks, race riots, killing by police, and homicide; and *threatened* violence, which includes threatened lynchings by mobs and intimations of violence by posses and crowds. In terms of the impacts of these different types of violence on the African American community, Campney points out that 'threatened lynchings differed from completed lynchings only in their outcomes.'[21]

Although Campney's points refer to Kansas in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, such a framework for understanding the different manifestations and impacts of violence can be applied to events in North Carolina in the interwar period. Law and order authorities, usually the National Guard or local sheriff's departments, thwarted North Carolinian lynch mobs on at least 10 occasions between 1918 and 1931 (these incidents will be discussed in more detail below). Several of these cases, furthermore, received widespread attention in the local and even in the national media at the time. Threatened lynchings that were prevented could also qualify as *sensational* violence, despite the fact that they turned out to be non-lethal for the African Americans concerned. *Sensational* violence blurs the line between *ordinary* and *extraordinary* violence because sensational violence constituted and relied on spectacle, despite not necessarily resulting in lethal outcomes (although the mobs concerned certainly intended the outcome to be lethal before the intervention of the authorities).

Ordinary violence, which was often non-lethal, was common in North Carolina in the early-twentieth century. A number of African Americans were attacked by whites in Asheville in 1924 following a Ku Klux Klan convention in the city; in 1936 in Durham, a black girl was assaulted by a white male in whose household she worked; and in 1937 in Durham, a black homeowner's property was firebombed in an anonymous attack suspected to have been carried out by white supremacists. Police brutality was

[20] Kidada E. Williams, *They Left Great Marks On Me: African American Testimonies of Racial Violence from Emancipation to World War I* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 226 n.20.
[21] Campney, *This Is Not Dixie,* 3-4.

certainly one of the main forms of anti-black violence in this period, yet it represents a challenge to how we should categorise and understand the effects of different types of violence. Some police violence was lethal – an African-American man was beaten to death by officers in Henderson in 1931, and several black men were murdered by police in Charlotte in 1937 and in Durham in 1938. On the other hand, some police violence in this period was non-lethal – African-American women were beaten by officers in Kinston in 1928 and in Monroe in 1936, and a black man was verbally and physically abused by a policeman on a Durham bus in 1937 (these incidents will be discussed in more detail below). Regardless of whether such violence was lethal or non-lethal (or indeed whether we should classify it as ordinary or extraordinary), police violence represents a form of sensational violence, because even if it did not attract as much media attention as lynchings tended to, it would have been highly visible and conspicuous in the context of local communities and therefore would almost certainly have had an impact on the mentalities and behaviours of local African Americans.[22]

This study will use a blend of the definitions outlined by Campney and Kidada Williams, and particularly Williams' distinction between *extraordinary* and *ordinary* violence, as means of interrogating the types of violence experienced by black North Carolinians and of analysing the nature of black responses to them. Williams argues that ordinary violence was less likely to be covered in newspapers and therefore less likely to remain in the public record. This has meant that ordinary violence has been under-represented in the historiography on racial violence when compared to the topic of lynching. This is in spite of the fact that, as Nan Woodruff has pointed out, everyday, small-scale acts of violence probably had more impact on the personal and collective psychology and behaviour of southern African Americans than did more prominent but less frequent instances of mob violence such as lynchings and massacres.[23] Much of the focus of this study will therefore be on ordinary violence (some but not all of which could also be classified as sensational).

Black newspapers were more likely to publish stories about ordinary violence than was the white press, but the very fact that individual instances of anti-black violence were common in everyday life in the South suggests that most of them were likely never reported or publicised. Furthermore, only the more obvious and public

[22] On the potential impact of such sensational yet perhaps ordinary police violence in a local North Carolina community, see Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 1.

[23] Nan Elizabeth Woodruff, *American Congo: The African American Freedom Struggle in the Delta* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 136. This point has also been made by Brent Campney and Amy Louise Wood, see Campney, *This Is Not Dixie,* 3; Amy Louise Wood, *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890–1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 1-2.

examples of lynchings tended to have been labelled as such in the contemporary press. Even white journalists who condemned mob violence and lawlessness often did not question white notions of inherent black criminality, thereby leaving the excuses for lynching essentially unchallenged.[24] As Khalil Gibran Muhammad has written, 'black criminality had become the most significant and durable signifier of black inferiority in white people's minds since the dawn of Jim Crow.'[25] These opinions ran through both liberal and reactionary discourses on race relations, and the views of whites on the issue of lynching were often refracted through such attitudes towards the African American community. While white liberals were sometimes willing to speak out against lynching and to try to find solutions to extraordinary violence, they rarely recognised the reality of ordinary violence against North Carolina's black population, or the attitudes that underpinned and enabled such violence.

Public announcements about anti-black violence by whites, such as those often made by southern politicians, generally referred to incidents of violence that entered the public awareness on a state level. In 1930, for example, North Carolina governor O. Max Gardner publicly pointed to the complete absence of lynching in his state between 1921 and 1930. A closer examination of a range of sources, however, reveals instances of anti-black violence in the state between 1921 and 1930, despite there being no prominent examples of public lynchings by mobs during those years. Southern politicians and journalists seem to have relied on a very specific definition of what constituted a lynching, (one that generally matches Williams' definition of extraordinary violence) in that it revolved around white mobs gathering, seizing an African American, and publicly murdering that individual in a gruesome way which may have appeared to contain elements of community ritual. There is no way to know, however, exactly how individual white journalists and politicians defined lynching, and attempts to arrive at a precise definition of the practice, either in the past or in the present, are unlikely to shed more light on how white violence was experienced by African Americans or how they chose to respond to it. I argue that various manifestations of white violence – both ordinary and extraordinary - were an ongoing problem in North Carolinian race relations.

As well as considering the impact of lynching, this study seeks to focus on the acts of violence that remain in the historical record but which did not come to the attention of the governor or other influential whites at the time. These acts of ordinary

[24] Christopher Waldrep, "War of Words: The Controversy over the Definition of Lynching, 1899-1940," *Journal of Southern History* 66, no. 1 (2000): 76.
[25] Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 3.

violence did not meet the definitions of lynching that were held by many whites at the time, nor are they the types of violence dealt with in many subsequent scholarly investigations. According to a 2015 report published by the civil rights group Equal Justice Initiative about lynching in the South, North Carolina is above only Virginia in terms of numbers of lynchings that occurred there between 1877 and 1950. Furthermore, only Virginia had a smaller per-capita lynching rate between 1880 and 1940 than North Carolina.[26] Although these figures attest to the fact that North Carolina had less violence that was mob-related, spectacle-based, or that came to the attention of white journalists and politicians at the time, the image of the state's race relations that is presented by such an analysis obscures the prevalence of ordinary, underground, and unreported violence that nevertheless had a significant impact on African-American experiences, attitudes, and activism.

The responses of African Americans to white violence, both ordinary and extraordinary, are one of the issues at the centre of this study. A number of investigations have unearthed the role played by black self-defence in the South during the mainstream civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. This group of relatively recent studies reflects a developing critique of long-standing representations of the civil rights movement which depict it as having been overwhelmingly non-violent, instead seeking to highlight the role of armed self-defence and how it related to non-violent direct action in the South.[27] The very term 'self-defence,' however, is not necessarily well-defined by historians who discuss it, nor is it always clear which types of violence should fall under the label of 'self-defence.'[28] I propose that self-defence did not need to be violent in order to provide a sense of security for black communities. This concept, which I refer to as 'deterrent self-defence,' relates to a phenomenon that

[26] Equal Justice Initiative report, *Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror* (2nd edition), report summary, 16. Accessed via http://www.eji.org/, 3 March 2017. According to the EJI report, North Carolina experienced 122 lynchings between 1877 and 1950, more only than Virginia, which had 88.

[27] Examples of recent studies that reflect the interest in armed self-defence in the mainstream period of the civil right movement include Simon Wendt, *The Spirit and the Shotgun: Armed Resistance and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007); Christopher B. Strain, *Pure Fire: Self-Defense as Activism in the Civil Rights Era* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2005); Charles E. Cobb Jr., *This Nonviolent Stuff'll Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible* (New York: Basic Books, 2014); Akinyele O. Umoja, *We Will Shoot Back: Armed Resistance in the Mississippi Freedom Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 2013); Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*; Lance E. Hill, *The Deacons for Defence: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004). Strain, Cobb, and Wendt in particular point to the complementary nature of tactical non-violence and armed self-defence.

[28] Emilye Crosby, ""It Wasn't the Wild West": Keeping Local Studies in Self-Defense Historiography," in *Civil Rights History from the Ground Up: Local Struggles, A National Movement,* ed. Emilye Crosby (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 201. Akinyele Umoja has suggested a clear definition of what self-defence might mean, see Umoja, *We Will Shoot Back*, 7.

has been noted by several historians of black resistance without being fully utilised as a conceptual device. 'Deterrent self-defence' can best be understood as the display of being ready to defend oneself if required, either individually or in a group, in a way that fostered solidarity, helped members of a community to feel safer and more secure, and at times may even have directly deterred white aggression.[29]

Although historians have shed light on black self-defence during Reconstruction and in the 1950s and 1960s, very little attention has been paid to the nature or significance of self-defence in the early-twentieth century and the interwar period.[30] This may be at least partly attributable to the fact that blacks had very few genuine and influential white allies during the early period of Jim Crow.[31] White violence against blacks in the South during the so-called 'nadir' is so notorious that very few historians have considered precisely how it might have influenced options for black activism. Notwithstanding the detailed scholarship specifically on lynching, ordinary forms of white violence are often treated in the literature as a given. A standard view is that African Americans sometimes fought back against the attacks of whites but that, while brave, these shows of physical defiance usually made the situation worse and were ultimately doomed.

As most of the literature on black self-defence focusses on the post-World War II period, African Americans in the interwar period are often presented as mere victims.[32] Leon Litwack has suggested that 'black "uprisings" were mostly spontaneous, unorganized, individualistic, and quickly and ruthlessly suppressed.'[33] While this may have been true in many cases, this type of view nevertheless proceeds from the assumption that moves towards self-defence were more or less suicidal and does not consider how black people actually conceptualised and practiced self-defence. Christopher Strain has written that 'Afro-Americans had been denied the

[29] For examples of hostile whites being deterred from attacking because local African Americans were armed, see Greta de Jong, *A Different Day: African American Struggles for Justice in Rural Louisiana, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 58-61; Wendt, *The Spirit and the Shotgun,* 194; Joe A. Mobley, "In the Shadow of White Society: Princeville, a Black Town in North Carolina, 1865-1915," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 63, no. 3 (1986): 348; Malcolm McLaughlin, "Ghetto Formation and Armed Resistance in East St Louis, Illinois," *Journal of American Studies* 41, no. 2 (2007): 465.

[30] K. Stephen Prince, "Remembering Robert Charles: Violence and Memory in Jim Crow New Orleans," *Journal of Southern History* 83 no. 2 (2017): 301; J. Douglas Smith, *Managing White Supremacy: Race, Politics, and Citizenship in Jim Crow Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 16-17.

[31] Campney, *This Is Not Dixie,* 206.

[32] For examples of studies that have highlighted black response to white violence in the interwar period, see Woodruff, *American Congo*; Paul Ortiz, *Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), xv; de Jong, *A Different Day*.

[33] Litwack, *Trouble in Mind,* 427.

basic constitutional and human right to self-defense in both the time of slavery and the Jim Crow era.'[34] While whites may have wished to prevent blacks from practising self-defence, Strain's point nevertheless underplays the extent to which African Americans, from slavery onwards, utilised physical confrontation and self-defence as means of resistance. How those resorts to self-defence may have ended is not as important as the fact that they happened in the first place.

Rather than seeing black responses to white violence as doomed or simply sporadic outbursts, I will argue that such responses in the interwar period were varied but meaningful, often effective and, importantly, rooted in long-standing African-American approaches to resistance in the context of Jim Crow. The specific issue of self-defence tended to shimmer in and out of focus as the fortunes of different activist organisations waxed and waned. As Shannon King has pointed out in relation to anti-black violence in Harlem, New York, in the 1920s, 'placing community relations in the foreground highlights the range of black responses to white violence as well as uncovers intraracial cross-class debate.'[35] Self-defence undoubtedly often manifested itself as a community endeavour. Moving it to the front of an examination of community activism, then, can change our appreciation of how African Americans conceptualised protest and resistance in a time when violence was endemic, even in supposedly less-violent southern states, and when open expressions of black organisational strength were often ruthlessly repressed by white supremacists.

I argue that intergenerational memory is a highly significant factor in understanding African-American responses to white violence. In North Carolina, the legacy of the terrorism carried out by the Ku Klux Klan and other white vigilante groups during Reconstruction and at the end of the nineteenth century affected the black community for decades afterwards. That black North Carolinians interviewed in the 1990s could still remember the impact of stories told about the 1898 Wilmington massacre is powerful testimony to the 'burden of memory' that had grown up in the black community around the issue of white violence.[36] Ernest Swain, of Wilmington, recalled that people were 'afraid it [the Wilmington attack] would happen again… That's been always an issue to consider in Wilmington.'[37] When asked about whether

[34] Strain, *Pure Fire,* 2.

[35] Shannon King, ""Ready to Shoot and Do Shoot": Black Working-Class Self-Defense and Community Politics in Harlem, New York, during the 1920s," *Journal of Urban History* 37, no. 5 (2011): 758.

[36] On the 'burden of memory' of violence and mistreatment in the southern black community, see Tameka Bradley Hobbs, *Democracy Abroad, Lynching at Home: Racial Violence in Florida* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2015), 220.

[37] Ernest A. Swain, interviewed by Karen Ferguson, Wilmington, NC, 16 July 1993. From Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South. Centre for Documentary Studies at Duke University. David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

her family talked about the Wilmington massacre, local resident Ruth Hall Davis said that the adults in her family would not talk about it in front of the children, but nevertheless she would sometimes overhear 'my mother and them talking...'[38]

The fact that an individual person need not have personally experienced violence in order for it to affect their view of the world is well expressed by the author Richard Wright in his memoir about growing up in Mississippi and Tennessee in the early-twentieth century. Wright recalled that white people seemed to take on an abstract, collective nature in the eyes of many blacks. He states, 'I had never in my life been abused by whites, but I had already become as conditioned to their existence as though I had been the victim of a thousand lynchings.'[39] It is clear how deeply affected Wright was by the idea that violence was a force that could arrive at any time and for no discernible reason. Wright goes on to explain how, after an African-American man was murdered in his community, 'the things that influenced my conduct as a Negro did not have to happen to me directly; I needed but to hear of them to feel their full effects in the deepest layers of my consciousness. Indeed, the white brutality that I had not seen was a more effective control of my behaviour than that which I knew…'[40] Such an insight into the insidious psychological work of anti-black violence by whites suggests that we need to understand the context in which African Americans lived, rather than only looking for prominent individual acts of black self-defence which, seen in isolation and with hindsight, may appear to have been futile and inevitably doomed.

Several historians have pointed out that African Americans need not personally have been victims of or witnesses to white intimidation in order to have been psychologically and behaviourally impacted by stories or evidence of it.[41] Memories of white violence were transmitted from older African Americans who had experienced the terrors of Reconstruction. Although memories of violence became tools of social

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[38] Ruth Hall Davis, interviewed by Chris Stewart, Wilmington, NC, 20 July 1993, From Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South. For other interviews from this collection with black residents of Wilmington who recall being told about the Wilmington riot by family members, see Lillian Quick Smith, interviewed by Sonya Ramsey, Wilmington, NC, 19 July 1993; Margaret Williams Neal, interviewed by Rhonda Mawhood, Wilmington, NC, 19 July 1993.

[39] Richard Wright, *Black Boy: A Record of Childhood and Youth* (London: Longman, 1970), 64.

[40] Wright, *Black Boy,* 150-51.

[41] See Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2008), 331; Kenneth S. Jolly, *"By Our Own Strength": William Sherrill, the UNIA, and the Fight for African American Self-Determination in Detroit* (New York: Peter Lang, 2013), 69; Melissa Walker, "Shifting Boundaries: Race Relations in the Rural Jim Crow South," in *African American Life in the Rural South, 1900-1950,* ed. R. Douglas Hurt (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 96; W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "The Roar on the Other Side of Silence: Black Resistance and White Violence in the American South, 1880-1940," in *Under Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South,* ed. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 285; Robin Kelley has made a similar point in regards to black life in Birmingham, Alabama, in the 1940s and 1950s, see Robin D. G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 85.

control over time, Bruce Baker has suggested that lynching may ultimately have been used more by the black community as a socialising instrument than by the white community, as black southerners actively deployed stories and memories of lynchings as warnings to friends and loved ones about the risks associated with certain types of behaviours.[42] It is important to bear in mind, however, that not all African Americans responded to warnings of intimidation and violence in the same way,[43] thereby creating an ongoing debate about how blacks might best deal with white violence.

Regarding specifically the mistreatment of African Americans during the Jim Crow period, Ruth Thompson-Miller, Joe Feagin, and Leslie Picca have argued that 'racially traumatic events had an array of negative impacts on their victims, their families, their neighbors and friends, and the larger black community… the traumatic experiences of Jim Crow were quite cumulative and systemic.'[44] Building from the concept of intergenerational memories of violence, I will argue that the NAACP's campaign against extraordinary violence had an impact on white attitudes towards lynching but did not make African-American people feel safer at a local level. Rather, it was the UNIA's focus on community cohesion and group solidarity, as well as preparations for deterrent self-defence, which provided a sense of security for blacks through a programme that was practical as well as viable in the context of Jim Crow.

Studying the NAACP

Traditionally, much of the literature examining the NAACP before 1930 focussed on the association's national-level campaign against southern lynching. This campaign commenced in 1919 and sought to raise awareness (especially in official and liberal circles) of the extent and nature of lynching and to convince the US Congress to pass legislation against the practice. Until relatively recently, historians paid little attention to

[42] Ortiz, *Emancipation Betrayed,* 68; Bruce E. Baker, "Under the Rope: Lynching and Memory in Laurens County, South Carolina," in *Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory and Southern Identity,* ed. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 335. Timothy Tyson makes a similar point in relation to North Carolina, see Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 18. For further discussions of the role of lynching in popular memory, and particularly the role of spectacle in making extraordinary violence so impactful, see Wood, *Lynching and Spectacle*; Jonathan Markovitz, *Legacies of Lynching: Racial Violence and Memory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).

[43] Litwack, *Trouble in Mind*, 423.

[44] Ruth Thompson-Miller, Joe R. Feagin, Leslie H. Picca, *Jim Crow's Legacy: The Lasting Impact of Segregation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 23, 85. On the intergenerational impact of slave patrols and white vigilantism in the nineteenth century, see Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 218.

how the association developed at the grassroots level in the South during the 1920s.[45] Lee Sartain and Kevern Verney have suggested that historians' overwhelming focus on the NAACP's central office in New York City has 'directed attention away from the need to analyse the relationship between the national office and its local branches.'[46] More recent work has subsequently shifted the focus away from the head office and onto local branch development in a number of southern states in the World War I period and in the early-1920s, paying attention to how branches started, the types of people who led and joined them, and how and why many southern branches started to struggle.[47]

Despite these valuable additions to the historiography, however, the grassroots fortunes of the NAACP in the 1920s remain underexplored in regard to many states and areas. There has been a tendency among some scholars to present something of an uncritical, teleological approach to the history of the organisation, which is often framed by its successes after 1930 and which seems to regard the association's rise as almost pre-ordained. As Lee Sartain has pointed out in his study of the NAACP in Baltimore, however, '…establishing a branch [of the NAACP in the early period] was complex,' with many local branches 'bursting into life at times of local crisis and then

[45] Robert Zangrando and Patricia Bernstein have investigated the development of the NAACP's campaign against lynching in the interwar period, see Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980); Patricia Bernstein, *The First Waco Horror: The Lynching of Jesse Washington and the Rise of the NAACP* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006). On the challenge to the 'old guard' leadership of the NAACP presented by a younger generation of activists in the 1930s, see Simon Topping, "Supporting our Friends and Defeating our Enemies: Militancy and Nonpartisanship in the NAACP, 1936-1948," *The Journal of African American History* 89, no. 1 (2004): 17-35; Beth Tompkins Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP, 1933-1941," *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 2 (1997): 340-377. Patricia Sullivan, August Meier, and John Bracey have considered the association's fortunes in the 1920s, but primarily through the lens of national office activity rather than through local branch developments as such, see Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The New Press, 2009), 113, 136-37, 143; August Meier and John H. Bracey, "The NAACP as a Reform Movement, 1909-1965: 'To Reach the Conscience of America,'" *Journal of Southern History* 59, no. 1 (1993): 3-30.

[46] Kevern Verney and Lee Sartain, "The NAACP in Historiographical Perspective," in *Long is the Way and Hard: One Hundred Years of the NAACP,* ed. Kevern Verney, Lee Sartain and Adam Fairclough (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press: 2009), xxi.

[47] See, for example, the chapters on state-level southern NAACP activism in Verney et al, *Long is the Way and Hard*, including studies on Louisiana, Virginia, Alabama, and Texas. See also Steven A. Reich, "Soldiers of Democracy: Black Texans and the Fight for Citizenship, 1917-1921," *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 4 (1996): 1,478-1,504; Dorothy Autrey, ""Can These Bones Live?": The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Alabama, 1918-1930," *The Journal of Negro History* 82, no. 1 (1997): 1-12; Lee Sartain, *Invisible Activists: Women of the Louisiana NAACP and the Struggle for Civil Rights, 1915-1945* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007); Adam Fairclough, *Race and Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915-1972* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), xv-xvi.

fading away, rather than being an enduring factor in a locality.'[48] Because the fortunes of individual branches in the interwar period are difficult to track and the reasons for a particular branch's success or decline are often not made clear in branch files, it is undoubtedly difficult for historians to provide a meaningful synthesis of patterns of development of local NAACP branches.

Raymond Gavins' 1991 article, "The NAACP in North Carolina in the Age of Segregation," provides useful insights into the NAACP's fortunes in the Tar Heel State in the 1930s and beyond, but follows a trend in NAACP historiography by giving few details on the organisation's grassroots fortunes in the difficult decade of the 1920s.[49] However, a close analysis of the association's North Carolina branch files, held at the Library of Congress, can yield significant insights into the complexities of grassroots organising. If contextualised alongside wider developments in the state, the files shed considerable light on the association's activism after World War I and in the 1930s, as well as on the question of why it may have struggled to maintain viable local branches in the early- and mid-1920s. It is the chronological arrangement of the NAACP's North Carolina branch files that have partly informed the temporal parameters of this study, as they are broken down by decade. The current study avoids moving into the period during World War II itself when the NAACP started to experience sustained grassroots growth, as the study is specifically interested in closely exploring the challenging era for the association before World War II.

The *Crisis,* the NAACP's official publication, did not tend to give detailed insights into the composition and activities of local NAACP branches in the 1920s, but membership lists in the association's branch files from the interwar period sometimes include details of occupations, providing historians with the opportunity to gain insight into the social cross-section of people involved in the association at the local level. Where the membership lists do not record occupations, the availability online of searchable US federal census data makes it possible to cross-reference names in NAACP records with census information to glean occupational and social backgrounds of the association's North Carolina membership.

As Verney and Sartain have argued, although African-American leaders of the NAACP at a national level were in privileged positions compared to many black Americans, the assumption that the early NAACP was elitist at the grassroots level is highly questionable. Verney and Sartain suggest that, while local NAACP officials and members may often have worked in humble jobs, they were still able to command

[48] Lee Sartain, *Borders of Equality: The NAACP and the Baltimore Civil Rights Struggle* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013), 15.
[49] Gavins, "The NAACP in North Carolina during the Age of Segregation," 105-125.

respect within local African-American communities while certainly not forming part of what would be classed as the 'elite' in general American society.[50]

This raises the question of precisely how to understand and apply social class labels in the context of the African-American community. It is generally agreed that the terms usually used in social sciences to discuss social class, such as 'middle class' and 'working class,' were developed in reference to the white community and do not necessarily translate easily to the black community. Andrew Billingsley, for example, writes that, in the African-American community, '…absolute levels of education, income, and occupation take on somewhat different meanings,' and that 'factors others than these, including respectability and community activity, loom large in the attribution of social status.' It is likely that the black middle class in the early-twentieth century was defined more against the black working class than by the attainment of certain levels of wealth or types of occupation.[51] Perhaps because of these kinds of definition issues, the terminology used by historians to analyse the nature of NAACP membership in the post-World War I period has often been vague.

The methodology of the present study relies on the occupational categories of members of the NAACP (and also of the UNIA) to tentatively assign social class categories. This reliance is primarily because occupational backgrounds tend to be included in NAACP membership lists and in census data, more so than details of educational level and income. While recognising the difficulties of assigning social class labels primarily on the basis of occupation, this study is interested in ascertaining the grassroots values and activities of the UNIA and the NAACP in North Carolina, rather than specifically defining social class categories as such.[52] This is done in the hope that such an approach may allow for a greater understanding of the nature of NAACP and UNIA memberships and programmes in the interwar period.

Studying the UNIA

The Universal Negro Improvement Association had an international, multi-faceted black nationalist programme that resonated with many different aspects of daily life as

[50] Verney and Sartain, "The NAACP in Historiographical Perspective," xxvii-xxviii.
[51] Andrew Billingsley, *Black Families in White America* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), 123; Martin Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 16-17.
[52] Martin Summers has commented on the issue of class when studying the UNIA, see Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents*, 76-78.

experienced by southern African Americans in the early-twentieth century.[53] Michael Gomez, for example, has argued that appeals to the African ancestry of black Americans had, since slavery, helped black people to psychologically resist white domination by affirming self-worth and identity.[54]

Linked to questions of how we should understand the rise of the separatism of the UNIA is the existence of what some scholars have recognised as a black 'counterpublic' during the Jim Crow period. This study is informed by work on the separate black social, cultural, and political sphere termed as infrapolitics or the counterpublic. Nancy Fraser defines counterpublics as those arenas created and utilised by subaltern groups where they can 'invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs.' Furthermore, these subaltern counterpublics function both as 'spaces of withdrawal and regroupment' and as 'bases and training grounds for agitational activities directed toward wider publics.'[55] James Scott refers to the activities of subaltern groups as 'infrapolitics,' defined as an 'unobtrusive realm of political struggle… The circumspect struggle waged daily by subordinate groups.'[56]

Historians have utilised theories of infrapolitics and the counterpublic to analyse black resistance during the age of racial segregation in the United States, and particularly to examine working-class activism and resistance which are, as Scott points out, often 'beyond the visible end of the spectrum' when it comes to readily available source material. There has been some debate about how to precisely define the types of activities that may have constituted resistance, and the way in which historians should recover and present those activities. It may be that, in order to arrive at a balanced understanding of black resistance, historians need to consider both subtle, 'everyday' resistance and more visible defiance, such as self-defence, as parts of the same whole.[57]

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[53] Steven Hahn, "On History: A Rebellious Take on African-American History," *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* 3 August 2009.

[54] Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 239-40.

[55] Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere,* ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992), 122-4. See also Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989).

[56] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 183. See also Robert Cassanello, *To Render Invisible: Jim Crow and Public Life in New South Jacksonville* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013). On 'parallel institutions' and the black professional class, see Darlene Clark Hine, "Black Professionals and Race Consciousness: Origins of the Civil Rights Movement, 1890-1950," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 4 (2003): 1,279-1,294.

[57] For discussions of 'subtle' resistance, see Robin D. G. Kelley, "We Are Not What We Seem: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 1

Scholars of the American UNIA have addressed in detail the popularity of the organisation's focus on racial separatism and group solidarity, its commitment to emigration to Africa for the black diaspora, and its attempt to establish black-owned businesses and cooperatives, including the organisation's shipping enterprises, the Black Star Line Steamship Corporation and the Black Cross Navigation and Trading Company. Traditionally, scholarship on the UNIA in the United States tended to take something of a 'top-down' approach, focussing primarily on the organisation's activities in the urban North and on the fortunes of its leaders, and particularly on the figure of Marcus Garvey, the UNIA's talismanic Jamaican founder and leader.[58] Emory Tolbert's study of the UNIA in Los Angeles was the first to put local UNIA members in the spotlight. Much of the subsequent work on the organisation has heeded Tolbert's appeal for UNIA scholarship to 'consider the UNIA as an entity apart from its leader, even during the years of Garvey's greatest influence.'[59] The work of both Claudrena Harold and Mary Rolinson has shed significant light on the UNIA's activities in the urban coastal South and in the rural South respectively, paying close attention to the work of southern activists, lesser-known leaders, and the members of individual UNIA divisions.[60] According to Rolinson, around 80 percent of the UNIA's 1,176 local divisions worldwide were located in the United States. Furthermore, by 1926, the UNIA had 423 local divisions in the South, with 500 divisions across the rest of the United States.[61]

The reasons for the popularity of the UNIA among southern African Americans will be returned to throughout this study, but various approaches have been taken by historians in attempting to understand the organisation's success. Judith Stein, for example, has focused on the economic aspects of the UNIA's programme, particularly

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(1993): 109-10, 112; Brundage, "The Roar on the Other Side of Silence," 275. Sundiata Keita Cha Jua has critiqued what she perceives as an over-reliance on theory in analyses of cultural, or 'subtle,' forms of resistance, see Cha Jua, ""A Warlike Demonstration": Legalism, Violent Self-Help, and Electoral Politics in Decatur, Illinois, 1894-1898," *Journal of Urban History* 26, no. 5 (2000): 594-5. K. Stephen Prince has suggested that we should not see cultural resistance and armed self-defence as dichotomous, see Prince, "Remembering Robert Charles," 301.

[58] Tony Martin, for example, examines the development of the UNIA on a leadership level but not the local level; see Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (Dover, MA: The Majority Press, 1976). For examples of work that look primarily at the life and role of Garvey himself, see Liz Mackie, *The Great Marcus Garvey* (Hertford: Hansib, 1987); David E. Cronon, *Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1960).

[59] Emory J. Tolbert, *The UNIA and Black Los Angeles: Ideology and Community in the American Garvey Movement* (Los Angeles: CAAS Publications, 1980), 110. On the UNIA in California, see also Robin Dearmon Jenkins, "Linking up the Golden Gate: Garveyism in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1919-1925," *Journal of Black Studies* 39, no. 2 (2008): 266-280.

[60] See Claudrena N. Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South, 1918-1942* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism*.

[61] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 3-4.

on that of the Black Star Line and how this spoke to the class aspirations of African Americans.[62] Martin Summers has examined the ways in which the UNIA's focus on respectability and entrepreneurial values may have appealed to differing working- and middle-class notions of black masculinity, arguing that Garveyism appealed to a 'producerist' vision of Victorian manhood that essentially 'adhered to the underlying core values of bourgeois manliness as constructed, and lived, by the white middle class.'[63] Adam Ewing's work has set Garveyism in a global perspective with a particular focus on Africa, while Randall Burkett has examined how UNIA philosophy intersected with African-American religious preferences and argued that Garveyism allowed for the meshing of civic and religious values into a powerful vision of black redemption.[64]

While recent scholarship has done much to shed light on our understanding of the UNIA's development in the South, it has largely overlooked the significance of self-defence as a central platform of the UNIA's programme. I argue that the UNIA's endorsement of self-defence was a major part of its appeal to black southerners facing white violence, and this study will explore how people at the grassroots level interpreted the calls of national-level leaders to prepare for self-defence. Indeed, this issue may be an important part of explaining why the UNIA rapidly overtook the NAACP at local level in the South after 1920. UNIA scholars often comment on the rhetorical focus of the UNIA leadership on self-defence against white violence, especially in the early years of the organisation's expansion in the US. This rhetoric is sometimes characterised merely as oratory which did not have meaningful extensions into actions at the grassroots level.[65] Very little has been written, however, about how grassroots Garveyites interpreted these messages or about how this focus on self-defence intersected with and complemented the pre-existing attitudes of southern African Americans towards violence and self-defence. Even studies that do discuss the significance of the African Legion, the UNIA's self-defence auxiliary, generally fail to specifically link the UNIA to local climates of white violence and do not consider that the UNIA's focus on self-defence may have been a more effective solution to violence

[62] Judith Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986).
[63] Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents*, 109-10,
[64] Adam Ewing, *The Age of Garvey: How a Jamaican Activist Created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Randal K. Burkett, *Black Redemption: Churchmen Speak for the Garvey Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978); Burkett, *Garveyism as a Religious Movement: The Institutionalization of a Black Civil Religion* (London: The Scarecrow Press, 1978).
[65] See, for example, Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey*, 171.

than other black responses at the time.[66] It is at this point that studies of the grassroots UNIA need to intersect with studies of the NAACP. These two organisations were the most popular expressions of black grassroots activism in the early-interwar period in the South, and both organisations aimed to provide a solution to the issue of anti-black violence.

The public pronouncements of NAACP leaders against separatism have, over time, led to a view of the NAACP and the UNIA as being utterly at odds with each other. An example of such rhetoric can be found in the words of Kelly Alexander, Sr., a giant of NAACP activism in Charlotte, North Carolina, when he said the NAACP 'is not a racial separatist organisation, but is for integration in all areas of community life… The NAACP does not believe in isolating itself from the mainstream of American democracy.'[67] The effects of powerful public statements such as Alexander's have been to close off considerations of what the UNIA and the NAACP may have had in common, even if those common factors were primarily the issues they sought to address. Their programmes were not mutually exclusive; NAACP members in the interwar South did not always wish to integrate fully with whites, for example. The attitudes of grassroots activists reveal fluctuating currents of convergence and divergence between different visions of protest and activism, even as the rivalries of prominent leaders deepened.[68] This consideration, despite the clear differences between some of the main philosophies and approaches of the UNIA and the NAACP, should encourage historians to look to the problems that the organisations sought to address, as it is these themes that allow us to contextualise their respective efforts in a more holistic way.

While the NAACP has long been acknowledged as a crucial component of the civil rights movement, the UNIA has often been pushed to the margins of debates about interwar black activism. This is partly because the period of the UNIA's greatest strength – the 1920s – lies outside of the temporal parameters of what is generally considered to be the mainstream 'civil rights movement,' even if one subscribes to the 'long civil rights movement' approach.[69] This study does not argue that the UNIA's

[66] For discussions of the role of the African Legion, see Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 114-24; Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents,* 94-6; Chad Louis Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[67] Speech by Kelly Alexander, undated fragment, Kelly M. Alexander, Senior, Papers, J. Murrey Atkins Library Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Box 33:21.

[68] Kate Dossett, *Bridging Race Divides: Black Nationalism, Feminism, and Integration in the United States, 1896-1935* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008), 68, 184-5.

[69] For examples of work that support the 'long civil rights movement' thesis, see Jacqueline Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005): 1,233-1,263; Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost:

black nationalism should necessarily be included in the wider thematic framework of a 'civil rights movement,' but suggests rather that more questions should be asked about how interwar black nationalism and racial separatism intersected with other forms of black protest and activism, both in areas of divergence and potential convergence.

The historiography of black nationalism, whether it is addressing the period before the start of the 'mainstream' civil rights movement or after it, has at times been unsure about whether to blur the lines between separatism and integration or whether to make those lines increasingly stark. Furthermore, some accounts of the NAACP in the 1920s seem uncertain about how to engage with the success of the UNIA in that period, and tend to portray the UNIA as a 'flash in the pan' that was generally supported by uneducated working-class African Americans before protest leadership was re-assumed by the NAACP in the late-1920s.

Cedric Robinson has suggested that, since the Civil War, middle-class and elite African Americans have preferred integration and assimilation as approaches to political activism while the black working class has tended to favour separatism. Robinson further suggests that integrationism has always been the more accessible of the two approaches to other Americans, because it arose from 'political and social intercourse' between the black elite and wider American society.[70] As a further reason for the side-lining of separatism in the ongoing scholarly debate about black political activism, Steven Hahn has pointed to a discomfort among liberal scholars in presenting and analysing the UNIA's racial-nationalist platform. Additionally, Hahn has drawn attention to what he perceives to be an integrationist slant in the teaching and writing of US history that casts the black interest in separatism as 'somehow lacking in integrity, as components of the pathologies and cycles of American racism.'[71] Robin Kelley has called for historians to question what we now consider to be 'authentic' movements, referring particularly to the tendency to assume that only certain 'mainstream,' usually integrationist, civil rights organisations like the NAACP or the National Urban League can truly have represented African-American demands and aspirations.[72]

Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 3 (1988): 786-811; Jeanne F. Theoharis and Komozi Woodard, eds., *Groundwork: Local Black Liberation Movements in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

[70] Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Movements in America* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 96-7.

[71] Hahn, *On History.* On the matter of the side-lining of black nationalism and separatism in the historiography of black protest, see also Michael C. Dawson, *Black Visions: The Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 33-4; Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 16-18; Jolly, *"By Our Own Strength*," 11.

[72] Kelley, *Race Rebels*, 4.

A major practical problem for historians wishing to study the UNIA is that of source material. Although there is a good amount of information available on Marcus Garvey himself and the operations of the UNIA in New York City, there is much less information that is readily available about other leaders or about grassroots UNIA supporters and activists in the South. The best collection of primary sources for studying the UNIA is the various volumes of *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers,* edited by Robert A. Hill, which collate almost all of the extant papers of and about the UNIA from various parts of the world. The other main source for gaining an understanding of southern UNIA divisions is the *Negro World* newspaper, the official organ of the UNIA, which was published on a weekly basis between 1918 and 1933. The *Negro World* had an international following which mirrored that of the UNIA itself and featured news and information from around the world. A significant proportion of the *Negro World's* readership was located in the US South in the 1920s, where the organ vied for circulation and readership with the hugely popular *Chicago Defender.* National weekly circulation of the *Negro World* in the United States was around 25,000 copies in 1920 and it rose as high as 75,000 copies in 1921.[73] This number is lower than the 119,000 copies of the NAACP's official publication, the *Crisis,* that were circulated in mid-1919,[74] although this was at the height of the NAACP's post-war popularity before the decline in its grassroots fortunes in the early-1920s.

The *Negro World's* front page often featured transcripts of Garvey's latest speeches and announcements. Although much of the content of the publication was about Garvey or about events on a national and international scale, each week's issue also included a section called 'News and Views of UNIA divisions,' and it is courtesy of the information in this section that the activities of many local UNIA divisions can be partially reconstructed. The updates featured in this section, however, represent only the activities of divisions whose secretaries were willing and able to send updates to the newspaper's office, and therefore tend to reflect the activities of larger, more successful divisions, often in urban areas. This means that, although extremely valuable, the 'News and Views of UNIA divisions' page is only a small, limited insight into the grassroots activities of local divisions as a whole. It proves extremely difficult to find surviving personal papers or publications of local UNIA organisers or division officers from North Carolina, increasing the researcher's reliance on the information available in the pages of the *Negro World.* In general, the discussions, stories, and

[73] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 17.
[74] Theodore Kornweibel, *Seeing Red: Federal Campaigns Against Black Militancy, 1919-1925* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 200 (n. 23).

updates to be found throughout the weekly editions of the *Negro World* give valuable information about the issues that were of relevance to the UNIA leadership and support-base, insight that is very difficult to glean from any other extant source.

An important way for the researcher to compile a limited image of the people who supported the UNIA in the South is via the records of individual donors to the organisation's appeals and campaigns. These donors were listed in the *Negro World* on a regular basis, along with the location of each. Letters to the newspaper from individual Garveyites also provide names of local members, as do the appeals sent to the US Pardon Attorney and the Department of Justice by UNIA members and divisions across the nation requesting clemency for Garvey after his conviction for mail fraud.[75] Collating the names to be found in these various places provides a partial rollcall of the memberships of local UNIA divisions which can then be cross-referenced with census data to gain a more precise sense of who North Carolinian Garveyites actually were.

Overall, however, the limited source base means that fully reconstructing the precise memberships of southern UNIA divisions is now almost impossible. Many of the records of the UNIA's central office in New York City have been lost and those that survive only represent a partial picture from certain moments. The surviving UNIA Records of the Central Division, held at the Schomburg Centre for Research in Black Culture at New York Public Library, include a file that lists UNIA divisions, their locations, and their charter numbers, as well as limited information about local division officials between 1926 and 1928, but these years were well after the period of the UNIA's initial growth in the South and some divisions were already declining by 1926. These records, then, present only a fragmented picture of the extent of the UNIA's presence in the 1920s.

The larger, more successful UNIA divisions in North Carolina were generally located in the towns and cities of the Piedmont, and the state's urban centres overall provided the highest levels of middle-class UNIA participation of any state in the South.[76] Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Raleigh in particular had popular UNIA divisions in the 1920s and also had African Legion units, as did the city of Asheville, in the western mountains. The existence of the African Legion, the UNIA's self-defence auxiliary, in some of the main towns and cities of the state, raises vital questions about the nature of UNIA organising in the urban South and makes North Carolina an

[75] These letters are held in the US Department of Justice Records, Record Group 60, 198940, box 305, and Record Group 204, 42-793, boxes 1159-62, both in the National Archives II, College Park, MD.
[76] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 61; Hornsby-Gutting, *Black Manhood and Community Building in North Carolina,* 11.

important case study. Overall, segregated black neighbourhoods such as the Hayti areas of Raleigh and Durham, Oberlin and Method in Charlotte, and East Winston in Winston-Salem, provided concentrated African-American populations and were conducive to cross-class involvement in the creation of UNIA divisions and African Legion units.

North Carolina and exceptionalism

North Carolina's well-known reputation for exceptionalism in the area of race relations has been challenged by a number of historians and will be further tested in this study. In any attempt to analyse the dynamics of North Carolina's race relations, it is important to proceed with an understanding of its varied geographic, demographic, and economic contexts, a theme that will be returned to throughout this study. The state's eastern Piedmont and coastal areas, for example, were home to a high proportion of black North Carolinians in the early twentieth century, as had been the case since the antebellum period. These eastern and coastal zones, whose economies had been reliant on slavery in the nineteenth century, became bastions of black political strength between the end of the Civil War and the disfranchisement of most blacks in 1900. Historian Charles McKinney has written that, by the early-twentieth century, the east of the state continued to suffer from a legacy that featured a high degree of 'social, economic, and political constriction to maintain white control.' This reality, however, was often glossed over by white boosters who focussed on allegedly progressive race relations elsewhere in the state.[77]

William Chafe's ground-breaking book, *Civilities and Civil Rights*, was one of the first studies to focus on local, grassroots African-American civil rights activism rather than on national-level developments. The book also began to debunk the pervasive myth of North Carolina's 'progressive mystique' – the image of its supposedly civil and moderate race relations. Chafe argued that, partly due to the presence of prominent white liberals like the sociologist Howard Odum and the University of North Carolina's president Frank Porter Graham, by the late 1940s the state's image combined a 'reputation for enlightenment and a social reality that was reactionary.' Even the state's nationally-renowned white liberals were unwilling to openly challenge the fundamentals of southern segregation.[78]

[77] McKinney, *Greater Freedom,* xix.
[78] Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights*, 4-5.

Chafe's study of civility in Greensboro focuses on the ways in which elite whites used civility to manipulate race relations, primarily in the 1960s and 1970s. Chafe's focus on the post-World War II period, however, means that much remains to be said about the relationships between white civility, white violence, and black responses in the early-twentieth century. Furthermore, Joseph Crespino has suggested that Chafe's focus on elite whites may underplay the influence that the actions of other sections of white society had on the white leaders who created policy, noting particularly the significance of strong Ku Klux Klan membership in North Carolina after 1964. Crespino's critique opens up further questions about the interplay between white violence and the formation of political policy in earlier periods of North Carolina's history.[79]

Glenda Gilmore has written that the state's 'progressive mystique' relied upon 'education, polite interracial forums, and the relative absence of violence.' North Carolina's political culture, with its image of white civility and respectability, began with the generation of white Democratic men who came of age after the end of the Civil War. These influential whites reacted to the new reality of black political influence by tying suitability for leadership to standards of education and productivity, in a way that aimed to lend them the moral and social capital to dominate state affairs over and above their African-American rivals.[80] As this approach failed with the success of black Republicanism and 'fusionism' at the end of the nineteenth century, however, it became clear that something altogether more aggressive than class markers was required for Democratic-leaning white males to recover and maintain their dominance in the state's politics.

I will suggest that the image of the relative absence of violence in North Carolina, upon which rested much of the moral foundations for the 'progressive mystique,' was an illusion in the interwar period.[81] This impression, so carefully cultivated by the state's boosters, was enabled by the tendency of whites to consider extraordinary violence, primarily lynching, as the only form of anti-black violence that was worth taking action against. The preoccupation of whites with lynching and mob violence came about largely because the highly conspicuous and gruesome nature of

[79] Joseph Crespino, "Civilities and Civil Rights in Mississippi," in *Manners and Southern History,* ed. Ted Ownby (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007), 117-20.
[80] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, 224, 61-66.
[81] On the question of the overall exceptionalism of the South's race relations in the national context, see Cha-Jua and Lang, "The "Long Movement" as Vampire," 281-3; Matthew Lassiter and Joseph Crespino have argued that the very idea of southern exceptionalism is a myth that tends to present the South as an undifferentiated block, see Matthew D. Lassiter and Joseph Crespino, "The End of Southern History," in *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism,* ed. Matthew D. Lassiter and Joseph Crespino (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 6.

such violence stood in such sharp contrast to the image of moderation and stability that the state's commercial boosters and politicians wished to present to the outside world.

A close analysis of the reality of North Carolina's anti-black violence can cut through the veneer of civility and show the state to have been more similar to the rest of the South than its reputation has suggested. As McKinney points out, the artifice of North Carolina's progressive image continues to act as a barrier to understandings of African-American history and life in the state.[82] Although North Carolina was one of the least violent southern states if judged by extraordinary violence alone, a consideration of its climate of sensational and ordinary white violence can offer an overall challenge to notions of white civility in supposedly less-violent areas. Ultimately, the following study seeks to address Matthew Lassiter and Joseph Crespino's call for work on the South that investigates 'national and transnational themes that happen to be geographically located, in part, inside the generally accepted parameters of the South.'[83]

North Carolina was different from many other parts of the South in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries not because it was significantly less violent, but because of its burgeoning industrial sector – railroads, textiles, tobacco processing, and furniture-making – and its urban centres, still small compared to northern cities but nonetheless growing quickly. Economic differentiation led to intra-racial class differences and rivalries that had made their mark on white political allegiances and would also have an impact on African-American activism in the interwar period. North Carolina's history of black office-holding and two-party politics meant that its black middle class continued to thrive on civic engagement. Although the state's social, economic, and political conditions were different in some ways from those of the rest of the South, North Carolina's patterns of racial subjugation nonetheless had much in common with those that prevailed across the region.

Organisation of the thesis

This introduction will conclude with a brief overview of race relations in North Carolina between the Democratic election victory of 1898 and the onset of World War I. The

[82] McKinney, *Greater Freedom*, xix.
[83] Lassiter and Crespino, "The End of Southern History," 12. Brent Campney, for example, has warned against the common assumption that racist violence was an overwhelmingly southern phenomenon, see Campney, *This Is Not Dixie,* 8-10.

chapters in the rest of the study trace the changing nature of interwar black protest activism and the influences of both white civility and white violence through a chronological structure based on the fortunes of the NAACP and of the UNIA.

Chapter one sets the scene of the heritage of black self-defence in North Carolina during Reconstruction, largely by drawing on the secondary literature on this subject. The chapter then moves on to the social and economic conditions of the United States in the World War I era and how those conditions catalysed widespread violence by whites against African Americans, including in North Carolina itself. Consideration is given to the impact on black activism of the return from Europe of African-American war veterans, followed by an analysis of the rise of the NAACP in North Carolina up until 1921. Particular attention is paid to the relationship between local and national level activism in the NAACP's campaign against lynching, as well as to the responses of both the North Carolina state government and of influential whites to mob violence.

One of the NAACP's main problems in the years after World War I was that its brand of protest was, out of necessity, visible to whites. Because the association sought to engage white policy and opinion on issues of race and justice, it ran the risk of provoking open hostility by those whites who opposed any signs of organisational black activism. I suggest that the NAACP's status as an interracial organisation, along with the aspirations of some of its middle-class members, limited the extent to which the association could agitate effectively for change. I further argue that North Carolina's dual pillars of white civility and white violence constricted the discursive space available in which the NAACP could lobby for justice. After considering these and other reasons for the NAACP's decline at grassroots level in the early-1920s, I then set the scene of the UNIA's arrival in the US and how the organisation made its first successful forays into the South.

Chapter two considers the rise of the UNIA in urban North Carolina. I argue that the UNIA's 'civic separatism' offered a better solution to the state's context of anti-black violence for local people than did the NAACP's anti-lynching campaign. The chapter examines African Legion growth in Asheville, Raleigh, Winston-Salem, and Greensboro, linking the Legion's popularity to ongoing violence (of varying types) by whites and to concepts of 'deterrent self-defence.' The chapter then traces the fortunes of North Carolina's UNIA divisions up to the point of Marcus Garvey's deportation from the US in December 1927 following his conviction for mail fraud. I argue that, even though conspicuous instances of extraordinary violence declined in North Carolina after 1921, ordinary violence by whites against African Americans continued, increasingly out of the sight of white politicians and journalists who were

proud of what they perceived to be a lack of violence in the state. I suggest that the success of the UNIA cannot be separated from the intergenerational memory of violence or from the ongoing prevalence of ordinary and sensational violence in North Carolina.

The third and final chapter discusses the late stages of the UNIA's presence in North Carolina, suggesting that the organisation displayed a greater degree of resilience in the period after Garvey's deportation than is generally allowed for by historians. The UNIA began to struggle from the early-1930s onwards, however, a period which closely coincided with the NAACP's renaissance in the state. I argue that the dire impacts of the Great Depression increasingly opened up intra-racial class divisions within North Carolina's African-American community and, furthermore, that the NAACP's focus on desegregation litigation, particularly in the education sector, meant that the association was no longer engaging with the immediate issues that most affected the black working class. The chapter examines the NAACP's response to insurgent communist activism in the South, including the impacts of the Gastonia strikes in North Carolina and of the Scottsboro trials in Alabama. I suggest that, in the radicalism of communist activism, black southerners may have seen an opportunity to organise for community solidarity and self-defence.

The third chapter will also offer some possible explanations as to why neither the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) nor the North Carolina Communist Party (NCCP) were able to secure a significant amount of sustained support among black North Carolinians, despite the fact that the CPUSA's first foray into interracial strike action in the South took place in Gaston County, North Carolina, in 1929. I suggest that communism's impact among black North Carolinians was limited for several reasons. The CPUSA's main focus in North Carolina was on the white workforces of the textile mills, a strategy not conducive to effective recruitment among African-American workers. The CPUSA, furthermore, did not provide solutions to the direct white hostility and violence that surrounded the Gastonia strikes. These factors, along with a general hostility among white workers and CPUSA organisers towards African American involvement, as well as African Americans' own distrust of class as a substitute for race, meant that the CPUSA struggled to make an impact among North Carolina's black workers. This in turn helps to explain why less ideological protest organisations, such as the NAACP and the UNIA, were more successful at the grassroots level in the state. The NAACP perceived a significant threat to its own influence from communist activism, yet by the early-1930s the association was beginning to re-establish itself in the state's urban centres, primarily by appealing to the concerns of the black middle class.

The conclusion goes on to offer some broader considerations of how this study contributes to discussions of race and of racial activism in the interwar period. The insights provided by interwar North Carolina suggest ways in which we might think about the genealogy of black resistance and about the interplay between white actions and black responses. In particular, I suggest that focusing on a specific problem facing African Americans – in this case violence – and how blacks responded to such a problem, provides greater insights into inter- and intra-racial dynamics over time than does the study of a particular organisation.

White and black in North Carolina between 1898 and World War I

The eventual backlash against the successful fusion of interracial populists and Republicans in North Carolina, a backlash represented by the Democratic election victory, the Wilmington massacre in 1898, and the state disfranchisement amendment in 1900, was orchestrated by a small but highly influential group of white Democratic leaders and sympathisers, including the author Thomas Dixon; the prominent journalist Josephus Daniels; Furnifold Simmons, chairman of the state Democratic Party; and Charles Aycock, the Democratic Speaker. Simmons and Aycock had grown up in the second congressional district, a hub of black political and electoral strength after Reconstruction. Glenda Gilmore, however, has argued that it is important to consider the ambitions of North Carolina's disfranchisers, not just where they came from, and suggests that overall the disfranchisers represented a combination of the traditional white elite and the state's emerging white middle class.[84] Gregory P. Downs has argued that North Carolina's white supremacy movement was led by a group of 'public intellectuals,' many of whom had links to the social sciences then being taught at the University of North Carolina's Chapel Hill campus. Downs suggests that these intellectuals believed in an 'evolutionary progressivism' which aimed to enshrine and perpetuate certain characteristics within society that would lead to improvement and avoid degeneration. University of North Carolina graduates who were influenced by ethnologically-infused social science discourse at Chapel Hill included future governors Charles Aycock (governor between 1901 and 1905) and Locke Craig (governor between 1913 and 1917), and future lieutenant governor Francis D. 'Frank'

[84] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, 256 (n. 15).

Winston. Thomas Dixon and Josephus Daniels had informal links with the campus's intellectual circles.[85]

It was this group of emerging white men, educated at or influenced by Chapel Hill after Reconstruction, who entered the fray of Democratic politics between 1896 and 1898 and subsequently created a 'political machine' built on their shared commitment to 'white supremacy, public education, and state expansion.'[86] The Democrats' election campaign in 1898, which demonised African Americans and played particularly on the image of black men as rapists, had the intended effect of creating a rape scare with the specific aim of driving a wedge between white and black citizens. Through public accusations of black men, white women often reinforced paranoia about rape in the public sphere and such paranoia both created and exacerbated questions about the strength, role, and virility of white men.[87] Poor white men who had previously voted for the Populists began to assent to white supremacy's premise of the need to protect women against supposedly predatory African Americans.[88] This race-baiting campaign went a long way towards precluding any interracial politics in North Carolina and established a Democratic dominance in state affairs that would last for 80 years.

Although whiteness was increasingly being linked by influential white North Carolinians to civility, industriousness, and social progress, the fact that a Democratic election victory had been won in large part by mob violence and vigilante terrorism effectively contradicted the concept of North Carolinian whiteness. The Democratic leaders who orchestrated North Carolina's white supremacy campaign worried that the electoral violence they had unleashed would work against their social evolutionary agenda for the state's development.[89] Across the South during Reconstruction, the leaders of Democratic reaction against Republican regimes had attempted to draw wide sections of society into a vision that Stephen Kantrowitz has characterised as 'paternalistic protection and violent threat.' Kantrowitz writes that white Democrats attempted to 'distance themselves from the very acts of violence they promoted, claiming that these assaults were carried out by disreputable white men…' Despite their reliance on inciting mob and vigilante violence to achieve electoral success,

[85] Gregory P. Downs, "University Men, Social Science, and White Supremacy in North Carolina," *Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 2 (2009): 268, 273.
[86] Downs, "University Men, Social Science, and White Supremacy in North Carolina," 288.
[87] Downs, "University Men, Social Science, and White Supremacy in North Carolina," 289.
[88] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 145-46.
[89] Downs, "University Men, Social Science, and White Supremacy in North Carolina," 291-92.

'respectable' white men then presented themselves as the only meaningful protectors of southern African Americans.[90]

After white violence had played its part in turning the tide in North Carolina in 1898, white Democrats in the state re-focused their messaging and defined 'true' masculinity as being attainable only through qualities of self-control, graciousness, and respect for the law. Through the imposition of social class obstacles, then, influential white Democrats attempted to deny true manliness to the 'disreputable' white men who had formed the mobs and turned against black voters.[91] However, this situation suggests that different white masculinities were at play in North Carolina in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. As Martin Summers has pointed out, focusing on a 'hegemonic' masculinity reduces those not in the dominant social group to the role of 'negative referents.'[92] In this case, the social and economic elite of white North Carolinian society had control over the public definition of hegemonic white masculinity but, as the ongoing reality of anti-black violence attests, white masculinity in North Carolina was also constructed by men lower down the social scale who saw violence as one of the ways in which they continued to affirm their manhood. In order to avoid seeing white North Carolinian masculinity as static, then, it is necessary to examine power relationships within the white community generally and not just through the lens of a hegemonic vision of masculinity as it was set out by elite white men.[93]

After the disfranchisement of black North Carolinians in 1900, influential whites continued to tightly define societal progress and social class mobility through cultural standards of education and industriousness, attainment of which was presented as particularly white.[94] The myth of the Confederacy's 'Lost Cause,' carefully cultivated by Confederate veterans' associations, journalists, and civic leaders across the region in the early-twentieth century, invoked memories of the antebellum South's political and racial orthodoxies. In Raleigh and Wilmington, the United Daughters of the Confederacy unveiled monuments in 1912 and 1914, and a further Confederate

[90] Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 41-2. On this point see also Joel Williamson, *The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South since Emancipation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 188-89.
[91] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 145-46.
[92] Summers makes these points in reference to hegemonic black masculinity but, in terms of the need to consider power and gender relations within a certain group, these points could also apply to hegemonic whiteness; see Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents,* 20-21.
[93] Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents,* 21.
[94] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, 14; Downs, "University Men, Social Science, and White Supremacy in North Carolina," 275.

memorial was built in central Wilmington in 1924.[95] It is worth noting, however, that North Carolina's varied social and economic contexts – from plantation-style agriculture and seaport settlements in the east to subsistence farming in the western mountains and nascent industry on the Piedmont – meant that there was no single vision of white identity in the state in the early-twentieth century.[96] However, as influential white southerners in North Carolina and elsewhere built physical reminders to solidify myths of a supposedly glorious past, they often also evoked the spectre of black assertiveness during Reconstruction as a reminder that the white community should maintain its solidarity.[97]

Prior to the Democratic election victory in 1898, North Carolina had maintained a genuine two-party political system since the antebellum period in a way that most other parts of the South had not. This can be partly explained by class divisions within the white community, which had been in evidence in different ways since the Regulator revolt in the colonial period.[98] The state's geographic and economic variations meant that the concerns of mountain farmers in the west were far removed from those of planters in the east. Even North Carolina's white elites, however, tended to be less wealthy than those in the neighbouring states of Virginia and South Carolina, further opening the door for class divisions and political pluralism. Unionist sympathisers and guerrillas had been active in the western mountains and in some areas of the Piedmont during the Civil War, while the Republican Party and black officeholding remained viable well after the end of Reconstruction.[99]

Following disfranchisement, African Americans were forced to create a civic and social sphere which adhered to the limits of a segregation which became more rigidly mandated in urban areas at the end of the nineteenth century, as influential white men sought to both demonise black manhood and control the agency of white women.[100] Segregated urban communities, however, provided the conditions for black-

[95] Catherine W. Bishir, "Landmarks of Power: Building a Southern Past in Raleigh and Wilmington, North Carolina, 1885-1915," in *Where These Memories Grow*, 154, 164.
[96] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 255 (n. 14).
[97] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 140-44.
[98] For details of class divisions within the white community and the viability of the two-party system and black office-holding in North Carolina in the nineteenth century, see Michael Honey, "Class, Race and Power in the New South: Racial Violence and the Delusions of White Supremacy," in *Democracy Betrayed*, 166-69; Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, 1-3; Bishir, "Landmarks of Power," 145; Baker, *This Mob Will Surely Take My Life,* 97.
[99] For a detailed examination of white Unionism in North Carolina during the Civil War, including armed conflict between Unionists and Confederates in the state, see Barton A. Myers, *Rebels against the Confederacy: North Carolina's Unionists* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
[100] Milton Ready, *The Tar Heel State: A History of North Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 347-48; Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 94-6.

owned businesses to thrive, as those businesses often catered almost entirely to demographically concentrated markets of black patrons. As a result, the number of black-owned businesses grew rapidly between 1898 and 1915 in African-American neighbourhoods like Oberlin and Method in Charlotte. By 1920, the black population in Winston-Salem had become mostly segregated in the south-eastern corner of the town, while in Durham and Raleigh, African Americans settled in all-black areas such as the Hayti districts.

By the 1890s, urban North Carolina had a successful black middle class which contained significant numbers of educated professionals, and the state's black population varied significantly in levels of wealth and education and in type of employment.[101] By the 1920s, Durham was home to the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, described by one historian as 'the largest black business in the world in its heyday.'[102] Several other prosperous black-owned businesses were also located in Durham, including the Mechanics and Farmers Bank, the Southern Fidelity Mutual Insurance Company, and the National Negro Finance Company, making Durham a hub of the black middle class.[103]

North Carolina, however, had its share of impoverished sharecroppers, with two-thirds of farms in the state run by tenant farmers or sharecroppers in 1880, many of them African-American.[104] Additionally, despite the economic downturn of 1893-1894, North Carolina's Piedmont areas saw the rapid development of industrial sectors such as textile factories, coal mines and timber mills. By 1900, more than 30,000 whites worked in the state's cotton mills, most of them women.[105] Overall, North Carolina experienced growth in its urban settlements between 1870 and 1900 and African Americans were very much a part of that process. By 1900, African Americans accounted for 40 percent of North Carolina's urban dwellers, compared to a 31 percent proportion across the whole of the South at that time.[106] By 1910, 26 percent of black North Carolinians owned their own homes, which were generally in the state's growing urban areas.[107]

Angela Hornsby-Gutting and Glenda Gilmore have paid close attention to the gendered aspects of black life under segregation in North Carolina, from the points of view of men and women, respectively. Hornsby-Gutting highlights the fact that the loss

[101] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 3.
[102] Leslie Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham: Gender, Class, and Black Community Development in the Jim Crow South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 14.
[103] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham*, 14.
[104] Honey, "Class, Race and Power in the New South," 168.
[105] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 23.
[106] Hornsby-Gutting, *Black Manhood and Community Building in North Carolina*, 57.
[107] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 15.

of a voice in formal politics represented a significant blow to the self-perceived masculinity of black males. Given urban North Carolina's relatively high proportion of educated middle-class black people, it is no surprise that models of middle-class respectability continued to be the yardstick by which masculinity would be measured after disfranchisement.[108] Despite the disfranchisement amendment, African-American men were loath to give up their formerly assertive place in state politics and, during World War I, black voters and tax-payers formed the Twentieth Century Voters Club, with the specific aim of securing the franchise for black men.[109]

Because they were seen as less threatening than black men in the eyes of whites, black women were more effective community-builders during the segregation era. As Gilmore has pointed out, after male disfranchisement black women in North Carolina started to transform church missionary societies, especially through the Baptist church, into 'social service agencies' which harnessed the church as a quasi-political vehicle.[110] By 1910, the North Carolina Association of Colored Women's Clubs (NCACWC) embraced a wide range of religious denominations across the state, which worked to improve the conditions of African-American domestic and community life. Black club women did this by acting as 'diplomats' to the white community, largely by co-opting the Progressive Era concerns of white women and using those concerns as leverage to acquire resources for the improvement and betterment of the African-American community.[111] Black women were particularly active in the education arena, primarily because they provided a significant proportion of the state's teachers.

As Charles McKinney has pointed out, investment by the North Carolina state government in public education and areas such as highway construction and industry was part of a deliberate strategy by politicians and boosters to present North Carolina as the most progressive and harmonious state in the South.[112] Between 1902 and 1919, the number of black teachers working in North Carolina's segregated school system rose by 139 percent, from 2,515 to 3,511, and in 1918, a state constitutional amendment was approved which increased state funding for black schools. This meant that by 1928, the state financed 56 accredited black high schools with another 75 in the process of acquiring that status. Between 1902 and 1919, however, despite the growth in the numbers of black teachers, the number of white teachers rose by 214

[108] Hornsby-Gutting, *Black Manhood and Community Building in North Carolina,* 94.
[109] Hornsby-Gutting, *Black Manhood and Community Building in North Carolina*, 155.
[110] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 150-51. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham has written about the separatist and racial-nationalist character of the black Baptist movement; see Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 3-6.
[111] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, 172; Ready, *The Tar Heel State,* 314-15.
[112] McKinney, *Greater Freedom*, xix.

percent, clearly showing the discrepancies in provision and funding within the state's public school system.[113] The quality of education provision is, of course, often a relative judgement, and North Carolina may indeed have invested more money into black education than did other southern states. The issue of North Carolina's reputation for moderation and progressivism is one that will be returned to throughout this study. It can frequently be shown to have been a false veneer that disguised the reality of North Carolina's similarities to other parts of the South.

Note on terminology

Throughout this study, individual local units of the NAACP are referred to as 'branches,' as per the general terminology used for its local affiliates by the NAACP itself. Individual local units of the UNIA will be referred to as 'divisions,' the purposefully militaristic term used by the UNIA. The term 'division,' however, essentially means the same thing as the more generic term 'branch,' in that divisions were local affiliates of the main organisation.

[113] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 34, 43; William A. Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 245.

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Author’s Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university. All sources are acknowledged as references.

Chapter One

Racial violence and the limits of civility, 1918-1921

Many analyses of black resistance look to Reconstruction as a time when African Americans attempted, sometimes successfully, to defend themselves against the rising tide of white supremacy.[1] North Carolina witnessed high levels of vigilante and Ku Klux Klan violence in the late-1860s and early-1870s, a period that saw hundreds of attacks and murders against white and black Republicans, mainly in Piedmont counties. Law enforcement officers were often also Klan members in the post-Civil War period and some magistrates and former slaveholders even punished African Americans for violations of redundant slave codes.[2]

Several historians have pointed to the significance of firearms ownership to the ability of southern African Americans to resist white violence during Reconstruction.[3] When Union forces eventually arrived in North Carolina during the Civil War, freedmen jumped at the chance to land a physical blow on their former masters. Around 5,000 African Americans subsequently joined the occupying Union army in North Carolina. Judkin Browning has suggested that the act of enlisting and fighting was 'a major source of empowerment for black men.' One white Union soldier based in North Carolina observed that, 'The national uniform was as a magic robe to them [African-American army recruits] and they straightened up and stood erect in it, at once men and soldiers… The touch of the rifle as their hands clasped it seemed to fill their veins

[1] For a local-level case study from North Carolina, see Joe A. Mobley, "In the Shadow of White Society: Princeville, a Black Town in North Carolina, 1865-1915," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 63, no. 3 (1986): 348.

[2] Paul D. Escott, *Many Excellent People: Power and Privilege in North Carolina, 1850-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 128-29, 154; Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 12; Judkin Browning, "Visions of Freedom and Civilization Opening Before Them: African Americans Search for Autonomy during Military Occupation in North Carolina," in *North Carolinians in the Era of the Civil War and Reconstruction,* ed. Paul D. Escott (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 69, 79-80. Sally Hadden has written about the intergenerational memory of white violence during slavery and Reconstruction, see Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 210, 218. It has been suggested that the Reconstruction-era Klan 'understood the problem of modernity and provided a way for the defeated southern white man to position himself in terms of the modern,' see Elaine Frantz Parsons, *Ku Klux: The Birth of the Klan During Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 21.

[3] See Nicholas Johnson, *Negroes and the Gun: The Black Tradition of Arms* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2014), 88; Charles E. Cobb, *This Nonviolent Stuff'll Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 42, 168; Nan Elizabeth Woodruff, *American Congo: The African American Freedom Struggle in the Delta* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 5.

with electric life.'[4] Postbellum black manhood was a composite that included freedom from slavery and the ability to defend oneself, alongside the right to vote and the ability to benefit from economic opportunity and mobility. However, the disfranchisement of most blacks in the South, when it came, loosened the ties between citizenship and black masculinity, as did Jim Crow's violence and the various levels of economic, social, and political discriminations that increasingly made the concept of black patriarchy less commanding.[5]

The involvement of freedmen in voluntary black militia units after the end of the Civil War can be understood at least partly in a post-emancipation context where freedpeople established their autonomy by continuing to meet and organise away from white oversight. In January 1865, the federal Superintendent of Negro Affairs in North Carolina remarked on how readily and frequently local African Americans gathered together to discuss the problems and opportunities of the new world of freedom.[6] Black veterans of the Union army in North Carolina, with their recent experience of military discipline, weapons, and tactics, played a significant part in organising and leading black resistance to white terrorism during the early stages of Reconstruction, and many black veterans went on to serve in state and voluntary militia units.

Richard Reid has suggested that, after the end of the war, the presence of large numbers of black veterans in northeast North Carolina may have led to less anti-black violence by whites in that area than occurred in central and western counties.[7] In areas where blacks outnumbered whites, as they did in the east of the state, Klan growth and vigilante violence were less marked than in central Piedmont areas where there were similar numbers of blacks and whites. Sally Hadden has suggested that, in black-majority areas, white terrorists were aware that they were more vulnerable to counterattacks by armed black veterans and freedmen, making whites more reluctant to attack in the first place.[8] Organised groups of African Americans, including veterans, clashed with the Ku Klux Klan in the east of the state during the election season of

[4] Browning, "Visions of Freedom and Civilization Opening Before Them," 85-86.
[5] Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 74, 86; Martin Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 15-17; Steve Estes, *I Am A Man: Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 3.
[6] Paul D. Escott, *Slavery Remembered: A Record of Twentieth Century Slave Narratives* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 166; Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 133.
[7] Richard M. Reid, *Freedom for Themselves: North Carolina's Black Soldiers in the Civil War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 311.
[8] Hadden, *Slave Patrols,* 210.

1868.[9] The Wilmington massacre in 1898, however, ended the hard-won political influence of black North Carolinians. Even as the state's black middle class remained strong after disfranchisement, particularly in the burgeoning urban areas, both working- and middle-class African Americans were forced to inhabit a separate, segregated social and political space.

Proceeding from an understanding of the context of anti-black violence since the end of the Civil War, this chapter will go on to provide a brief overview of race relations in the World War I era, both nationally and in North Carolina, before charting African-American responses to anti-black violence in North Carolina between 1918 and 1921 with a particular focus on the development of NAACP activism in the state. Although the NAACP experienced success at grassroots level in North Carolina after the war, the association's branches were generally in urban rather than rural areas. These urban branches had cross-class support, but I suggest that the influence of middle-class African Americans predominated in determining how the NAACP operated at the local level, particularly in its relationships with white officialdom. The type of work involved in sending protests to white authorities, gathering information on lynching, and communicating with the NAACP's head office generally required literacy and networking abilities that favoured a middle-class background. I argue, furthermore, that engagement with North Carolina's civic and political structures required a degree of accommodation to the language and norms of civility that often played into the hands of influential whites, and which even added to the perception of the state's exceptionalism in the area of race relations.

I also suggest that, while joining an NAACP branch may have provided a degree of solidarity, it did not offer the chance to actually defend one's self or one's community against the threat or actuality of violence by whites. The NAACP's efforts to publicise the problem of lynching in this period undoubtedly did much to put pressure on state authorities to act against mob violence, primarily because the association's efforts invoked the possibility of federal intervention in state affairs, a concept which remained deeply objectionable to many white southerners. This chapter suggests that the NAACP's work in this regard was mainly carried out by prominent officers at the national level. Although the association's central office utilised intelligence on lynching sent by local activists, it was the NAACP's central office that tended to make the subsequent overtures to the governor, calling into question the extent of the role that local activists could play in such campaigns.

[9] Hadden, *Slave Patrols,* 210; Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 13; Johnson, *Negroes and the Gun,* 88, 95.

The World War I era, with its nationwide social and economic upheavals and violence was a new era for organisational African-American protest activism. The rise in grassroots popularity of organisations like the NAACP and the UNIA came about in large part because of the widespread massacres of African Americans by whites during the aftermath of the war. Given that there had been a number of prominent anti-black massacres by white mobs in American cities in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, however, the violence of the World War I era was remarkable more for its frequency in a short time period, rather than because of any fundamental change to the nature of race relations.

The dislocations that accompanied the end of World War I created a particularly tense, unstable economic and political climate across the nation which catalysed sudden outbreaks of white violence against African Americans. 1919 saw a sharp rise in unemployment with accompanying labour unrest. As the country was shaken by the post-war economic downturn, the aftershocks of the Russian Revolution led to a 'Red Scare' which was exacerbated by the flagrant antiradicalism and xenophobia of some sections of the political establishment and the press. The war period had seen the migration of large numbers of African Americans from the rural South to manufacturing and industrial cities, largely prompted by employment opportunities that arose in industries servicing the war effort.[10] Many African Americans saw these job opportunities as means to escape the oppressive conditions of the rural South, where most blacks had continued to reside since the antebellum period.

The tensions which arose from unemployment, migrations, and general economic uncertainty formed the backdrop for the widespread massacres of African Americans by white mobs across the US during World War I and in its immediate aftermath. In May 1919, Charleston, South Carolina, saw the first major massacre of the immediate post-war period, which originated in an argument between white sailors and an African-American man and which quickly escalated into a wide-scale confrontation between whites and blacks in the town. Across the country, the aggression of white soldiers, sailors, and Marines would become a particular problem

[10] On the economic conditions of the post-war US, see Robert Rodgers Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the mid-Twentieth Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 64, 68; Louis M. Kyriakoudes, "Lookin' for Better All the Time," in *African American Life in the Rural South, 1900-1950,* ed. R. Douglas Hurt (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 13-18; Jacqueline Dowd Hall et al., *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 183, 187-89.

in urban centres as servicemen began to return from Europe and the widespread xenophobia of the Red Scare took hold. Attacks on African Americans flared in Washington D.C., Chicago, Tulsa, Houston, and Knoxville. James Weldon Johnson of the NAACP saw black resistance in the riots in Washington D.C. and Chicago as particular psychological turning points for the nation's experience of race relations.[11] Despite black resorts to self-defence in many cases, between 94 and 115 blacks were killed in the riots in East St Louis, Omaha, Chicago and Tulsa between 1917 and 1921. Nine whites and around 39 blacks were killed in the 1917 East St Louis riot alone.[12] Officially, the death toll resulting from the white-led violence of 1918-1919 was 150, most of whom were African-American.[13]

Black journalists and editors who supported self-defence as a means of resistance praised the African-American response to the mob attacks of 1918-1919. Writers such as Robert Abbott of the *Chicago Defender* and William Monroe Trotter of the *Boston Guardian* were bold in calling for armed self-defence as well as for the federal government to make good on its rhetoric of having fought a war for democracy.[14] Although black self-defence proved to be a necessity in this period and could be tactically effective, it could also have the effect of inducing an even more intense white backlash, such as when Tulsa's black community was essentially destroyed in May 1921 after African Americans attempted to stop white incursions into black areas. Black self-defence often balanced precariously between the rewards of self-preservation and the risks of further escalation. This long-standing predicament had been summed up as early as the 1890s by T. Thomas Fortune, editor of the *New York Age*, with the statement, 'We do not counsel violence, we council manly retaliation.'[15] How exactly to define and conceptualise these terms was a challenge at the time and it remained so well into the twentieth century.

The emerging spirit of black assertiveness, which historians have seen in the creative output of the Harlem Renaissance and in the fevered political atmosphere of

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[11] Adam Ewing, *The Age of Garvey: How a Jamaican Activist Created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 79-80.

[12] Robert A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume V, September 1922-August 1924* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 751.

[13] On the nationwide anti-black violence of the post-war period, see David F. Krugler, *1919, The Year of Racial Violence: How African Americans Fought Back* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Cameron McWhirter, *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America* (New York: Macmillan, 2011); William M. Tuttle, *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1996); Theodore Kornweibel, *Seeing Red: Federal Campaigns Against Black Militancy, 1919-1925* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Scott Elsworth, *Death in a Promised Land: The Tulsa Race Riot of 1921* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992).

[14] Krugler, *1919, The Year of Racial Violence,* 5.

[15] Quoted in Simon Wendt, *The Spirit and the Shotgun: Armed Resistance and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2007), 12.

black Harlem after World War I, is generally known as the 'New Negro' movement and is seen as one of the most important ingredients in the development of a new style of African-American resistance. Paul Ortiz, however, has questioned the 'New Negro' paradigm. In his study of black activism in Florida in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Ortiz writes that 'the evidence of persistent resistance to white supremacy in Florida calls into question the thesis of the "New Negro" or a younger – largely male – generation dramatically appearing on the stage in the 1920s to fight white supremacy.'[16] The frequent focus on what was done to, rather than by, black Americans before the World War I period has contributed to this view of blacks primarily as victims of white violence and injustice, rather than as actors in formulating resistance strategies. There can be no doubt that previous generations of African Americans, including veterans of earlier wars, had been as committed to resisting injustice and violence as were the 'New Negro' activists of the World War I era.

To argue that black resistance prior to World War I has been relatively under-studied is not to say, however, that nothing changed in the World War I era itself. The most obvious symbol of African-American militancy in the World War I era was the 400,000 black soldiers who had served in Europe during the war. It is not necessarily immediately clear, however, why African-American servicemen were willing to fight for a nation that denied them the citizenship rights which should have been theirs under the terms of the Constitution. Christopher Parker, in his study of black veterans of World War II, has highlighted the crucial conceptual link between black military service and citizenship. Both Frederick Douglass in the Civil War era and W.E.B. Du Bois in the World War I era believed that African Americans serving their country and making sacrifices in wartime would, in the eyes of white officialdom, justify the granting of better citizenship status in a post-war context. Parker highlights the unreliability of this approach, however, noting that while black military service may have been partially rewarded in the cases of the War of Independence and the Civil War, this was not the case after the Spanish-American War or indeed after World War I.[17] During World War I itself, a number of leading black activists, including A. Philip Randolph, Chandler Owen, and Cyril Briggs, openly and repeatedly critiqued the concept that fighting for

[16] Paul Ortiz, *Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), xix; Brent Campney has made a similar point, see Brent M.S. Campney, *This Is Not Dixie: Racist Violence in Kansas, 1861-1927* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 199. For critiques of the presentation of the New Negro as a product of the North, see Gabriel A. Briggs, *The New Negro in the Old South* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015); Claudrena N. Harold, *New Negro Politics in the Jim Crow South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2016).

[17] Christopher S. Parker, *Fighting for Democracy: Black Veterans and the Struggle Against White Supremacy in the Postwar South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 19-20.

the US could or would subsequently result in better citizenship rights for black Americans.[18]

Adriane Lentz-Smith has argued that 'the Great War served as a crucible to fuse an indigenous militant black politics with a new, internationalized vision.'[19] Having served in Europe, and in many cases having experienced combat, newly-returned African-American veterans were acutely aware of the hypocrisy inherent in the rhetoric of the Allied governments which during the war had played on concepts of freedom, self-determination, and democracy. African Americans serving in the army had continued to face the same levels of discrimination from white officers and from the army apparatus in general as they had in a domestic civilian context. Now that they could claim to have fought and died for democracy, black veterans were at the forefront of highlighting hypocrisy and injustice and demanding a better deal in return for their collective service and sacrifice. The specific conditions of the war era gave a new urgency to, and provided an expanded discursive space for, pre-existing African-American determination to resist inequality and to push for change.

The power of the black veterans lay as much in their symbolism as in their physical presence, a symbolism which in turn informed the tone and character of black resistance and agitation in the post-war years.[20] During the war itself, the recruitment of black men into the armed forces had disturbed the racial assumptions of many whites to the extent that there was often unrest in and around army camps where African-American servicemen were stationed. Black soldiers based at Camp Sevier, South Carolina, were harassed in the nearby town of Greenville. One African American was killed and three more injured during a riot at Camp Merritt, New Jersey. There were also racially-based clashes at Camp Logan, Texas; Camp Mills, New York; Camp Hill, Virginia; and Camp Meade, Pennsylvania.[21]

The NAACP's official organ, the *Crisis*, became extremely popular with black servicemen and veterans angered by the injustice and violence they saw around them. Also popular in this period was the *Crusader,* a radical black periodical edited by the activist-intellectual Cyril Briggs. Briggs' personal vision for black liberation sought to inject a much greater awareness of class issues into contemporary black nationalism, a vision which evolved from a political nationalism during World War I into Marxism by

[18] Owen and Randolph's anti-war sentiments often appeared in the *Messenger,* while Briggs wrote for the *New York Amsterdam News* during the war. See Kornweibel, *Seeing Red,* 76-77, 83-84, 132; Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 41.
[19] Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles*, 10.
[20] Chad Louis Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 8.
[21] Ewing, *The Age of Garvey* 63; Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles,* 78.

the early 1920s.[22] Briggs was one of the founders of the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB), a group described by one historian as a 'proto-communist, black nationalist organization.'[23] The ABB was founded, probably in 1919, by a group of black intellectuals in Harlem, including Briggs, Wilfred A. Domingo, Richard B. Moore, and Grace Campbell. Many of the ABB's founders were of Caribbean origin. As historian Minkah Makalani has written, the organisation 'showed a theoretical novelty in merging black nationalist and socialist thought.'[24]

Apart from Cyril Briggs, all of the ABB's founding members had previously been members of the Socialist Party of America (SPA), but the group had become wary of socialism's failure to tackle issues of race and of national liberation in Asia and Africa. Most members of the ABB joined the Communist Party by 1922 and became very influential in that movement. Yet, they had initially displayed an 'early independence from American communism,' only eventually going over to communism when they were satisfied that the Party had developed a coherent theoretical programme for engaging positively with African and Asian liberation struggles and for including black and Asian activists in the communist movement.[25] At its height, the ABB's membership was probably between 3,000 and 8,000, with circulation of the *Crusader* standing at about 4,000 copies in 1920.[26] The Brotherhood often styled itself publicly as a self-defence organisation and gained much publicity after one of its local chapters was involved in armed self-defence efforts during the anti-black massacre in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1921. The ABB, however, was more 'a group of activist-intellectuals intent on guiding the black freedom movement toward a pan-Africanist proletarian revolution.'[27] Although publication of the *Crusader* ceased in 1922 (about the same time as several of the ABB's founding members transitioned into the CPUSA), the Brotherhood initiated a recruitment drive in May 1923 that resulted in around 300 new members, with Wilfred Domingo and Otto Huiswoud visiting New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Chicago, and West Virginia. Although the ABB is often

[22] Minkah Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 48; Ted Vincent, *Keep Cool: The Black Activists Who Built the Jazz Age* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 153.
[23] Cathy Bergin, "'Unrest among the Negroes': The African Blood Brotherhood and the Politics of Resistance," *Race and Class* 57, no. 3 (2016): 47.
[24] Minkah Makalani, "Internationalizing the Third International: The African Blood Brotherhood, Asian Radicals, and Race, 1919-1920," *Journal of African American History* 96, no. 2 (2011): 152.
[25] Makalani, "Internationalizing the Third International," 162, 165; Bergin, "Unrest among the Negroes," 54; Winston James, "Being Red and Black in Jim Crow America: On the Ideology and Travails of Afro-America's Socialist Pioneers, 1877-1930," in *Time Longer Than Rope: A Century of African American Activism, 1850-1950,* ed. Charles M. Payne and Adam Green (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 337.
[26] Bergin, "Unrest among the Negroes," 48-49.
[27] Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom*, 48.

associated with activism in the urban North, in the autumn of 1923 Huiswoud returned to West Virginia and his discussions with members of the Miner's Union there resulted in 65 new members for the Brotherhood in Montgomery, West Virginia.[28] There does not seem, however, to have been an ABB foothold in North Carolina.

Black communists and black socialists were often wary of one another in the post-war years and were not necessarily associated.[29] The black socialist periodical the *Messenger* was set up by A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen and at times advocated the right of black people to arm for self-defence. The Socialist Party had had a small amount of black support in its southern branches immediately prior to World War I, but the wartime crack-down on organisations like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) meant that the centre of socialism by 1919 was undoubtedly in the North.[30] Circulation of the *Messenger* probably peaked in the autumn of 1919 at between 21,000 and 33,000 copies, whereas circulation of the NAACP's *Crisis* was around 119,000 copies nationwide in July 1919.[31] Despite the differences in philosophical and political positions between the editors of black periodicals like the *Crusader* and the *Messenger,* their importance to developing debates about the direction of black protest activism in the post-war period should not be underestimated. There remained, however, a deep uncertainty among activists and intellectuals on the black left about the willingness of whites in the formal communist and socialist movements to consider the roles of race and anti-colonial movements in class-based activism, or to consider in general that race was not a proxy for class. Historians have highlighted these factors as crucial context for why black socialism and communism, although taken up by some intellectuals, were slow to develop at the grassroots level.[32] Such considerations also help to explain why less-explicitly ideological black 'uplift' organisations, like the NAACP and the UNIA, experienced more rapid grassroots success in the South in the 1920s and 1930s.

In general, many of the most influential black periodicals of the World War I and post-war periods devoted space to discussing how African Americans should deal with the post-war realities of injustice and violence in America. Indeed, the links between hypocritical Allied war rhetoric, the reality of widespread white violence, and the

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[28] Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom,* 88.
[29] See Theodore Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia: The Formative Period* (New York: Vintage Books, 1986), 503 (n. 10); Kornweibel, *Seeing Red,* 180.
[30] James, "Being Red and Black in Jim Crow America," 365.
[31] Kornweibel, *Seeing Red*, 21, 200 (n. 23).
[32] See, for example, Makalani, "Internationalizing the Third International," 162; Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 64-65, 100-03.

resulting black discontent was clearly understood by federal authorities. One US army intelligence officer wrote to the Director of Military Intelligence in May 1919:

> The emphasis which has been laid upon the principles of democracy and the self-determination of racially defined peoples, during the progress of the war, has not been without its effect upon the coloured people of this country. They have become more sensitive than ever with regard to the practice of lynching…and with regard to 'Jim Crow' regulations…The recent riots in Washington and in Chicago exemplify the new spirit animating an increasing proportion of the colored people. 'Fight for your rights' is the new s[lo]gan.[33]

This attitude of defiance, particularly symbolised by returning African-American war veterans, was undoubtedly feared by whites across the country. Several African-American servicemen were attacked and murdered in the immediate post-war period, often while wearing uniform. In Franklin County, North Carolina, black veteran Powell Green was lynched by white supremacists shortly after his discharge from the army.[34] North Carolina experienced a spike in levels of extraordinary anti-black violence in the immediate post-war period, in a similar way to many other parts of the US. The ways that influential whites in the state dealt with increased mob violence against African Americans sheds light on how the New South presented itself to the outside world and exposes some of the tensions and shortcomings within North Carolinian civility.

White violence against blacks in North Carolina in the World War I era

In November 1918 in Winston-Salem, on North Carolina's central Piedmont, an attack on the city's African-American community left at least five people dead and dozens injured. The unrest began on the afternoon of 17 November when a white mob attempted to abduct an African American from the city's jail. The man was accused of

[33] "Attachment 'Memorandum for the Director of Military Intelligence. Subject: The Negro Situation.' Washington D.C. August 15th 1919 (confidential).' Filed by J.E. Cutler - Major, U.S. Army," in Robert A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume I, 1826-August 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 492.

[34] "Cannot Probe Lynching: Army Powerless to Investigate Killing of Former Soldier," *Washington D.C. Star,* 26 May 1919. The North Carolina governor's determination to punish the murderers of Powell Green is noted in clippings from the *Providence Tribune,* the *New York Evening Mail,* the *New York Tribune,* and the *New York World.* See NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, Records of Racial Violence, Box I: C-363, folders 7 and 13.

assaulting a white woman and, in the subsequent confrontation, of shooting the woman's husband and the local sheriff. The mob was 'several thousand' strong according to one newspaper report, large and alarming enough to prompt the North Carolina governor to dispatch the Home Guard to the city. Although the subsequent confrontation, in which gunfire was exchanged, was primarily between the white mob and the Home Guard, at least three African Americans were among the dead when the rioting eventually subsided that night.[35] It is possible that around 25 people died overall during the unrest.[36]

While Winston-Salem's 'riot' appears to have exhibited similar traits to many of the nation's urban confrontations in the war and post-war period (albeit on a smaller scale), instances of localised violence in North Carolina nevertheless continued to follow many long-established trends. On 22 January 1921, in the neighbouring towns of Norlina and Warrenton, in Warren County on the north-eastern Piedmont, two local African Americans, Alfred Williams and Plummer Bullock, were alleged to have instigated a confrontation with local whites 'following a dispute with a groceryman over the purchase of 10 cents of apples.' It was, however, almost certainly whites who provoked the confrontation.[37] According to the *New York Globe*, this confrontation was the 'culmination of several days of ill feeling between Negroes and whites of Norlina.' The dispute resulted in a 'pitched gun battle' at the Norlina railway depot in which five white men and three African-American men were wounded. Both Williams and Bullock were subsequently apprehended by the police but, the following day, a crowd of around 150 whites kidnapped the two prisoners from the Warrenton jail. Williams and Bullock were then gunned down on the roadside by 'a mob of masked men.' The governor subsequently summoned units of the Home Guard from both Warrenton and Henderson to forestall a further escalation of the violence.[38] Ominous tensions and confrontations between local whites and blacks were also reported at this time in the town of Fayetteville, in Cumberland County.

The presence of masked men at the Warrenton murders inevitably invites questions about Klan involvement in North Carolina's racist violence in the post-war period and in the 1920s. The 'new,' or 'second,' Ku Klux Klan was established in Georgia in 1915 and steadily increased its influence across the country up until the

[35] "Southern Race Riot Costs Five Lives," *New York Times*, 18 November 1918; "Winston-Salem Scene of Disorder and Bad Riot," *Raleigh News & Observer*, 18 November 1918; NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, Box I: C-363, folder 36.
[36] Hill, *Garvey Papers V,* 657, (n. 4).
[37] For a close examination of the Warrenton/Norlina violence, see Vann R. Newkirk, *Lynching in North Carolina: A History, 1865-1941* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009), 44-52.
[38] "Troops Guard Lynch Town," *New York Globe*, 24 January 1921; "Race Riot Region Quiet Under Militia Guard," *New York Times*, 25 January 1921; clippings in NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 26.

mid-1920s, possibly reaching around two million members nationwide by 1924. Recent scholarship has indicated that, during the 1920s, most Klan members were 'small businessmen, lower middle-class employees, and skilled workers,' meaning that the organisation's membership displayed sufficient-enough class diversity that it could claim to exhibit the traits and preferences of mainstream, 'middle America.'[39] Because clarifying and defining American whiteness was a central concern of the second Klan, it has been suggested that the organization was primarily hostile towards Catholics and immigrants, including people of Jewish, southern European, and Irish descent, but it undoubtedly also cultivated a sense of threat towards blacks.[40] In terms of direct recruitment, the second Klan was most successful in areas with small black populations.[41]

It is highly likely, however, that the Klan's historical reputation for anti-black violence, based on memories of its terrorism during Reconstruction, meant that southern African Americans would have been acutely aware of the threat that the organisation presented. As historian Nancy MacLean has pointed out, definitions of race remained central to the Klan's message of white (primarily 'Anglo-Saxon') solidarity in the 1920s, mainly because a dominant whiteness could be used to overcome class and ethnic fractures within the white community.[42] In North Carolina, it has been estimated that Klan membership reached 50,000 during the 1920s.[43] While there is little evidence of direct Klan involvement in the state's anti-black racist violence in the 1920s, the organisation's presence in North Carolina's urban areas nonetheless had an impact on how African Americans approached race activism, examples of which will be discussed below.

Historians debate the extent to which lynching increased in the post-war years, not least because problems remain over how exactly to define what constitutes a lynching and because the historical record is often patchy when it comes to reporting the details of such events. Despite the problems of how to define and quantify cases of lynching, it has been argued by several historians that instances of southern lynching

[39] Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition* (New York: Liveright, 2017), 181.
[40] Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 199; Gordon *The Second Coming of the KKK,* 40.
[41] Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK,* 41.
[42] Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 127. On the use of racist violence by non-'Anglo Saxon' European immigrants as means to claim and affirm whiteness, see Cynthia Skove Nevels, *Lynching to Belong: Claiming Whiteness through Racial Violence* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007), 150-62.
[43] Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*, 22.

increased between roughly 1915 and 1920.[44] One local newspaper, *The Norfolk Journal and Guide*, referred in July 1920 to 'the recent epidemic of lynching throughout the South and especially in North Carolina.'[45]

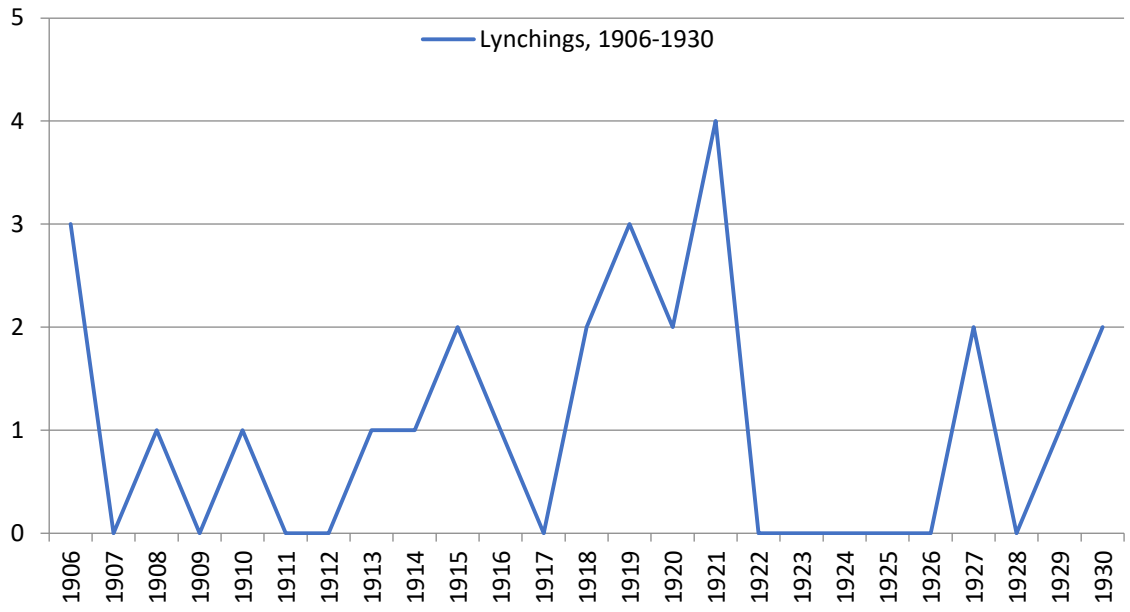

Fig. 1: Number of lynchings of African Americans in North Carolina by year, 1906-1930.[46]

North Carolina experienced 16 cases of lynchings of African Americans in the 12 years between 1918 and 1930 that can be verified with a reasonable degree of certainty. To provide some context for these figures, there seems to have been 11 cases of lynching in the state in the twelve-year period prior to 1918, compared to the 16 cases between 1918 and 1930. There were no reported lynchings in 1917, but 11 between 1918 and 1921, suggesting a short-term spike in lynching frequency in the immediate post-war period.

[44] Hill, *Garvey Papers, V,* 751. Other studies that cite an increase in lynching frequency in the immediate post-war period include Amy Kate Bailey and Stewart E. Tolnay, *Lynched: The Victims of Southern Mob Violence* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 11-12; Patricia Bernstein, *The First Waco Horror: The Lynching of Jesse Washington and the Rise of the NAACP* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006), 173; Claude A. Clegg, *Troubled Ground: A Tale of Murder, Lynching, and Reckoning in the New South* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 172.

[45] "Lynching Epidemic Causes Alarm and Indignation Among Southern Whites," *The Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 24 July 1920, clipping in NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 32.

[46] The sources cross-referenced to ascertain these figures are the University of North Carolina's project, *A Red Record: Revealing Lynchings in North Carolina*, www.lynching.web.unc.edu; and *Project HAL*, http://people.uncw.edu/hinese/HAL/HAL%20Web%20Page.htm. Only those lynchings confirmed by both of these two sources, or by one of these sources and by local press, NAACP, or UNIA records have been included. See Appendix B for further information.

Economic conditions in North Carolina in the immediate post-war period caused dislocations which in turn impacted on race relations. Several scholars have argued that there was a close relationship between lynching frequency and the context of cotton-based tenant agriculture.[47] Unlike several of the lower South states which saw more lynching in the post-war years, North Carolina did not have a clearly identifiable cotton-belt region with the associated widespread system of tenant agriculture. The east of the state was, however, a former plantation zone, home to many slaves in the antebellum period, and this area continued to be characterised by high levels of African-American peonage, tenancy, and economic dependency on white landlords.

Although small-scale farming was still a feature of the state's economy in some areas, by the early-twentieth century the Piedmont region was home to the mills of the textile industry, which had experienced rapid growth during World War I, and the factories of the tobacco industry. When the US joined the war in 1917, a general labour shortage had been created as men joined the armed forces, a shortage which subsequently drove wages upwards. African-American workers were not common in the textile mills themselves, but in industrialised towns like Durham and Winston-Salem they did take up opportunities to work in factories which serviced the war effort and processed tobacco. In April 1919, there were 600 black members of the Tobacco Workers' International Union in the Winston-Salem/Raleigh corridor of north-central North Carolina.[48]

The end of the war had serious implications for the over-expanded textile industry, which entered a sharp decline, with associated reductions in wages and opportunities for North Carolina's white workers.[49] The segregated nature of the textile industry, however, meant that white and black workers were not usually in direct competition with each other for jobs in the sector, context which provides a crucial difference between the economic situation in North Carolina compared to lower South states such as Mississippi and Georgia.[50] Competition for economic opportunities in general, however, must have increased after the collapse of the textile industry, especially with African Americans increasingly working in tobacco factories.

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[47] Terence Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed: Lynching in Mississippi and South Carolina, 1881-1940* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 7-8; W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 105-09; Michael J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching in American Society, 1874-1947* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 67-70.

[48] Mary G. Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The Universal Negro Improvement Association in the Rural South, 1920-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 60.

[49] Hall et al., *Like a Family*, 183.

[50] Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed,* 9.

Economic hardship for the North Carolinian working class, both white and black, was nothing new in the post-war period. Starting in the 1910s and running through until World War II, the rural South was beset by a number of economic downturns which pushed rural southerners towards urban areas.[51] For many working-class black southerners, regular movement in search of better opportunities and wages was a fact of life in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. But although mobility was high, the spatial scope of that mobility was often quite limited. Especially in the case of tenant farmers and sharecroppers, black workers would move regularly around different settlements or counties within a relatively local area, looking for employment opportunities that were often short-term or seasonal.[52]

In 1917, the North Carolina governor's office called an emergency meeting of business advisors to discuss the pressing problem of the scarcity of black labour, a reality which was starting to affect the productivity of some mills and factories. White businessmen began to complain about a 'vagrancy problem,' an issue which they in turn linked to unemployment among the African-American population.[53] Whatever the precise truth of this complaint, if North Carolina's African Americans were moving around more in the post-war period in the search for new employment opportunities, this may have served as precisely the kind of dislocation that has been linked by some scholars to increased occurrences of lynching.[54]

Of the 16 probable cases of lynching in North Carolina between 1918 and 1930, all but five occurred in the north-east of the Piedmont region, an area with a concentration of industrial towns, including larger settlements like Raleigh and Durham, but also many smaller ones like Warrenton, Roxboro, and Henderson. Of the remaining five instances of lynching, four occurred on the eastern coastal plain, while the western mountain region experienced one case of lynching in this period. Overall, the conditions of the north-eastern Piedmont at this time, which likely included increased white unemployment and poverty and increased black mobility around the urban areas where white industrial workers lived, were conducive to a relative spike in lynching frequency between 1918 and 1921.

Given this context, it is important to consider the ways in which North Carolina's supposedly 'civil' white political culture endeavoured to deal with the reality

[51] Kyriakoudes, "Lookin' for Better All the Time," 13-17.
[52] Kyriakoudes, "Lookin' for Better All the Time," 9.
[53] Leslie Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham: Gender, Class, and Black Community Development in the Jim Crow South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 236-37.
[54] See Amy Kate Bailey, Stewart E. Tolnay, E.M. Beck, Jennifer D. Laird, "Targeting Lynch Victims: Social Marginality or Status Transgressions?" *American Sociological Review* 76, no. 3 (2011): 429; Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed*, 8.

of increased extraordinary and sensational white violence against African Americans. Attempts by the state's white politicians and commercial boosters to present an image of moderation and good governance were intrinsically tied to the conscious perpetuation of North Carolina's 'progressive mystique.'

New South boosters and calls for reform

The North Carolina state government was intolerant of the lawlessness of white mobs in the post-World War I period. Thomas Walter Bickett was Democratic governor of the state between 1917 and 1921. Originally a lawyer from eastern North Carolina, Bickett created an image for himself as a moderate on race issues and worked to reform the state's prisons and improve its hospitals. As well as defending the rights of workers to organise, he also made efforts to improve the circumstances of sharecroppers and tenant farmers.[55] The state government's attention to such social reform issues formed an important strand of North Carolina's 'progressive mystique' in this period, even though in reality such reform was often limited in scope and impact.

While Bickett had no interest in granting better civil rights to North Carolina's African-American population, his concern for law and order can be seen in his calling out of the Home Guard during the unrest in Winston-Salem in 1919 and in Norlina/Warrenton in 1921. In the case of the lynching of army veteran Powell Green in Franklinton in December 1919, Bickett offered a reward of $400 for the capture of each of the perpetrators. This attempt to bring the lynchers to justice was noted by newspapers from outside the region, including the *Providence Tribune* and the *New York World*.[56] In December 1920, James Weldon Johnson, secretary of the NAACP, noted in a report to the association's board that Governor Bickett had 'condemned the organization and methods of the Ku Klux Klan, branding it as a "wicked appeal to race prejudice."'[57]

Such examples provide insights into how the image of North Carolina's exceptionalism was created, even on occasion being inadvertently perpetuated by NAACP officials as they sought to find ways to engage with white officialdom. Bickett's willingness to act against extraordinary violence, however, undoubtedly stands in

[55] Hall et al., *Like a Family*, 188-89.
[56] "NC Governor Declares Lynching of Negro Has Humiliated State," *New York World*, 31 December 1919, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 13.
[57] James Weldon Johnson, "Report of the Secretary for the Board Meeting of December 1920," in Sondra K. Wilson (ed.), *In Search of Democracy: The NAACP Writings of James Weldon Johnson, Walter White, and Roy Wilkins (1920-1977)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 21.

contrast to the attitude of Mississippi's governor at the time, the staunchly white supremacist demagogue Theodore Bilbo who, after a multiple lynching in 1917, told the NAACP to 'go to Hell' when the association asked him to formally investigate the deaths.[58]

Attempts by the authorities to prevent or curtail extraordinary white violence highlight the shared political priorities of New South boosters and state authority. White politicians and boosters undoubtedly saw extraordinary violence as a threat to their visions for North Carolina's economic future. In the late-nineteenth century, an economic boom had created much enthusiasm for further development in the state, particularly in the burgeoning tourism industry around the towns of the western mountains such as Asheville and Blowing Rock, and in Piedmont settlements on the expanding railroad routes like Greensboro and Charlotte. From around 1900 onwards, business leaders and politicians actively sought to overcome the South's national reputation for economic and racial backwardness through a publicity programme which advertised an image of racial moderation and commercial ambition.[59] This form of 'business progressivism,' based on economic investment, industrial development, positive marketing, and limited social reform was a cherished programme of commercial boosters and Democratic politicians in Virginia, and can also be seen in the strategies and policies of North Carolina's business and political elites in this period.[60]

Historian Edward Ayers has argued that, in the first decade of the twentieth century, southern politicians and governors were more willing than their predecessors had been to use the power of the state to advance the interests of influential members of the white community. According to Ayers, this new-found faith in the potential of interventionist government arose because the disfranchisement of the black population meant that the white community felt able to trust the state to act in their interests.[61] The

[58] Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed,* 116.

[59] Matthew D. Lassiter, "Searching for Respect: From "New South" to "World Class" at the Crossroads of the Carolinas," in *Charlotte, NC: The Global Evolution of a New South City,* ed. William Graves and Heather A. Smith (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 24. On Greensboro's emergence as a 'New South' textile centre, see William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 18-19.

[60] 'Business progressivism' is a term that was initially devised to describe the approach of Harry F. Bird, governor of Virginia between 1926 and 1930, who used the reach of the state to generate economic investment and development. See J. Douglas Smith, *Managing White Supremacy: Race, Politics, and Citizenship in Jim Crow Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 30, 337 (n. 4); George Brown Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 218-55.

[61] Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 413.

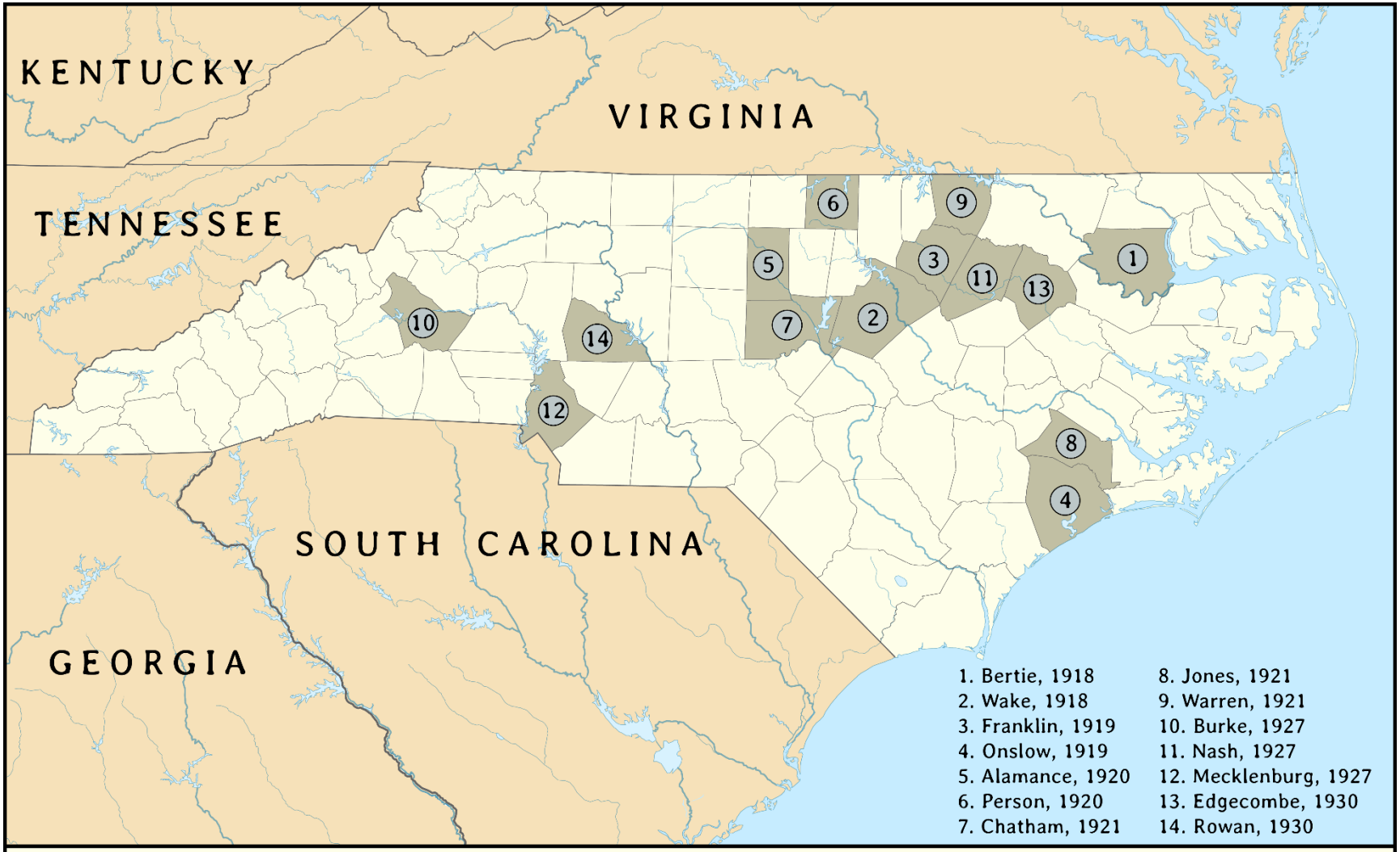

Fig 2: Map of lynchings of African Americans in North Carolina by county, 1918-1930

paternalistic tendencies of civility and of business progressivism, however, were threatened by the social and economic upheavals of the World War I period and the 1920s. J. Douglas Smith has argued that in Virginia, increased levels of migration, relatively rapid urbanisation, and competition for jobs between working-class whites and blacks led to tensions that civility, paternalism, and progressivism struggled to solve.[62] In North Carolina, such dislocations and tensions on the Piedmont almost certainly contributed to an increased level of violence by whites against blacks during and just after World War I.

The state government's campaign against mob violence was an attempt to find a 'civil' political answer to the problem of violence, one which down-played conflict as much as possible and focused on law and order. Such an approach, however, did little to alleviate issues of unemployment, poverty, and inadequate education and housing for working-class blacks and whites. North Carolina's government had first taken tangible measures against the perpetrators of extraordinary violence in 1906, when lynching culprits were convicted under the state's anti-lynching statute. Official disapproval of lynching and mob violence in the early-twentieth century, and the steps taken against that violence, were indicative of the increasingly centralised, paternalistic nature of the Democrat-dominated state in North Carolina.[63]

A particularly striking example of the exercise of state power against mob justice occurred in July 1920, when National Guardsmen deployed by Thomas Bickett fired into a group of masked men attempting to break into the Alamance County jail in Graham to abduct three African-American prisoners. One member of the mob was killed and two more were wounded by the National Guard's machine guns.[64] Given that this dramatic incident received nationwide press attention, it is not difficult to imagine that concerns about the image of the state played a part in the government's determination to crack down on extraordinary violence. Although the National Guard prevented the planned lynching in Graham in July 1920, the following month John Jeffress was lynched in Alamance County, a murder which generated nationwide media attention and raised questions about the Alamance County Sheriff Department's commitment to resisting mobs.[65]

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[62] Smith, *Managing White Supremacy,* 5.

[63] Commitment to racial equality was generally rare among southern whites, even those labelled as liberals or those willing to act against white violence. On this point, see Bruce E. Baker, *This Mob Will Surely Take My Life: Lynchings in the Carolinas, 1871-1947* (London: Continuum, 2009), 120.

[64] "Men in Masked Mob Shot Down in Front of Jail," *New York Evening Mail*, 20 July 1920, clipping in NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 17.

[65] NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 17; Newkirk, *Lynching in North Carolina,* 81-83.

The problem of extraordinary white violence, and how the state should respond to it, tested the limits of North Carolina's self-image of civility and, furthermore, influenced the views of outsiders about the nature of life in the state. The state government's efforts to reduce mob violence over time were a clear attempt to create and reinforce an image of lawfulness and civility in direct contrast to those states which took less or no action against mob violence. As the NAACP expanded its grassroots presence in North Carolina and developed its campaign against lynching, it sought to cultivate an image of respectable, reasonable co-operation with white authorities.[66] The stifling nature of the state's political culture meant that the association would need to accommodate the language and approaches of civility if it was to engage with white politicians and public opinion on the issue of extraordinary anti-black violence.

The rise of the NAACP in North Carolina

The NAACP as a national organisation was founded in 1909, in the aftermath of a notorious attack on African Americans by whites in Springfield, Illinois. Although originally a small, middle-class pressure group, the NAACP's commitment to pushing for American citizenship rights for black people also had resonance at the grassroots level. In 1916, a year after the death of Booker T. Washington, the NAACP leadership decided to distance itself from what it regarded as the traditional, accommodationist approach to race relations represented by Washington's Tuskegee Institute, and instead set out an agenda which featured opposition to endemic social problems such as lynching, segregation, and peonage. This was a platform which NAACP field secretary James Weldon Johnson presented as directly addressing the needs of African Americans in the new era, particularly in the South.[67] Johnson recalled:

> My first step as Field Secretary was an effort to organize in the South. It was my idea that the South could furnish numbers and resources to make the Association a power… I realized that, regardless of what might be done *for* black America, the ultimate and vital part of the work

[66] Patricia Schechter has argued that the attempts of African American writer like Anna Julia Cooper and Ida B. Wells to assertively critique lynching led the NAACP to pursue a less confrontational strategy when protesting lynching, see Patricia A. Schechter, "Unsettled Business: Ida B. Wells against Lynching, Or, How Antilynching Got Its Gender," in *Under Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South*, ed. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 295; Patricia A. Schechter, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett and American Reform, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 122-23.

[67] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 164-65.

> would have to be done by black America itself; and that to do that work black America needed an intelligent program.[68]

Following this change of strategy the NAACP's membership rose from 329 in 1912 to around 44,000 nationwide during World War I. Circulation of the NAACP's *Crisis* magazine reached 37,000 by mid-1916.[69] By 1918, its support-base had reached a level that it would not again surpass until the World War II period.[70] According to Johnson, there were 310 local NAACP branches in the US by the end of 1919, 131 of which were in the South,[71] and by August of that year circulation of the *Crisis* had reached 103,000.[72]

NAACP lawyers won some prominent, morale-boosting victories in this period, including successfully lobbying for the prosecution of lynchers in Waco, Texas, in 1916, and representing African-American defendants after a massacre of black sharecroppers in Elaine, Arkansas, in 1919.[73] The association's campaign for federal action against lynching was catalysed by the deadly attack on East St Louis' black community in July 1917. The association publicised the horrors of the attack in the *Crisis* and helped with relief efforts for people left homeless or isolated by the violence. Later that month, thousands of African Americans participated in a silent march in New York City to protest the East St Louis violence and the ongoing problem of anti-black violence across the country.[74] It was in the aftermath of the march that Leonidas C. Dyer, a Republican Congressman from Missouri, informed the NAACP that he wanted to introduce a bill to the House to make lynching a federal crime.

The NAACP worked tirelessly for an anti-lynching bill for more than twenty years. In the immediate post-war period, the association's central office gathered large amounts of information about white violence across the country so that it could pressurise local, state, and national authorities to act. The association collected and

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[68] James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way: The Autobiography of James Weldon Johnson* (New York: Da Capo Press edition, 2000), 315.
[69] Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Campaign Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980), 50, 53.
[70] August Meier and John H. Bracey, "The NAACP as a Reform Movement, 1909-1965: 'To Reach the Conscience of America,'" *Journal of Southern History* 59, no. 1 (1993): 19.
[71] Johnson, *Along This Way,* 315.
[72] David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century, 1919-1963* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000), 3.
[73] On the massacre of blacks in Phillips County, Arkansas, in 1919, see Woodruff, *American Con*go, Grif Stockley, *Blood in their Eyes: The Elaine Race Massacres of 1919* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2001); Richard C. Cortner, *A Mob Intent on Death: The NAACP and the Arkansas Riot Cases* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1988).
[74] On the East St Louis massacre and responses to it, see Charles L. Lumpkins, *American Pogrom: The East St Louis Riot and Black Politics* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2008).

filed at least ten separate reports of incidents of white violence in North Carolina between 1918 and 1921. Some of these incidents were urban confrontations between groups, some were lynchings under the traditional definitions of the practice, and some were attempted lynchings which were prevented by the authorities.[75] The majority of these incidents fall under the category of extraordinary violence.

An example of the NAACP's approach when protesting a lynching in this period comes from the Piedmont town of Roxboro, the seat of Person County, located about 30 miles north of Durham. On 7 July 1920, an African-American man named Ed Roach was lynched by a mob of masked men, on the grounds that he had earlier assaulted a white girl. Roach's employer later provided compelling evidence that Roach could not possibly have been guilty of the crime. The day after Roach's death the central office of the NAACP sent a letter to Governor Bickett, asking him to force the Person County sheriff to properly investigate the crime. Bickett replied on 13 July, advising that he had instructed the solicitor of the relevant district to 'take every possible action to apprehend the guilty parties.' Furthermore, Bickett had offered a reward of $400 'for each party apprehended and convicted… the limit I am permitted to offer by the laws of this state.' The governor concluded by saying, 'It is not necessary for me to say to you that I am horror stricken on account of this awful crime.'[76]

As well as the national office's letter of protest to Bickett, the Durham NAACP branch itself met and raised money to investigate the murder of Roach.[77] Durham had a prosperous black community and had been hailed by both W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington as a beacon of black middle-class achievement. By the early-twentieth century, African Americans in Durham owned and ran a variety of successful businesses and community services, including churches, schools, a library, a hospital, a textile mill, a lumber mill, and a furniture factory. The city was also home to the highly successful black-owned North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. Following a visit to the city in 1919 by field secretary Walter White, the Durham NAACP branch gained 73 new members and saw 18 people renew their memberships, as well 13 additional subscriptions to the *Crisis* from Durham residents.[78]

Perhaps because of its burgeoning middle class, however, intra-racial class tensions in black Durham were a part of everyday life, with members of the city's black working class often living in severe poverty. Even though Durham's tobacco factories were one of the only places in which local black women could find industrial

[75] NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, Box I: C-363, folders 9-37.
[76] Thomas Bickett to Jas. W. Johnson, 13 July 1920, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 32.
[77] Newkirk, *Lynching in North Carolina*, 42.
[78] "Durham (N.C.) branch renewals and new members," NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box G-147, folder 4, Durham 1919-1926.

employment, management exploited black labour through poor wages and bad working conditions.[79] Durham's class divisions would, in time, lead some to accuse the city's black middle class of stifling the political activism and opportunities of the African-American community in general. In 1919, however, there was a solid local support base for the NAACP in Durham, with at least 114 African Americans affiliated to the association's cause, either through direct membership or subscription to the *Crisis*.

Overall, seven NAACP branches were formed in the state in the 1917-1918 period. The association's popularity was boosted by a visit to North Carolina by W.E.B. Du Bois, who spoke to audiences about the need for improved civil rights alongside loyalty to the United States.[80] Around 1,000 black North Carolinians were members of local NAACP branches by 1920, mainly in urban areas, including Raleigh, Greensboro, Durham, Wilmington, Fayetteville, Winston-Salem, Rocky Mount, Asheville, Charlotte and Lexington.[81]

The local NAACP branch in Raleigh, the state capital, seems to have been present from at least 1916, earlier than most other local branches in the state.[82] Although primarily an administrative centre, by 1890 Raleigh had some cotton factories and a small industrial sector, and it was also a minor marketplace for the trading of cotton and tobacco.[83] Despite being the state capital, Raleigh was not immune from instances of shocking anti-black violence. On 5 November 1918, an African-American man named George Taylor was taken from the Wake County jail and lynched at Rolesville, a few miles outside of Raleigh itself. National-level NAACP leaders, acting on intelligence gained from local activists in the area, were quick to send a formal letter of protest to Governor Bickett's office, a letter which was also published in the local Raleigh press. While recognising that the dead man was probably guilty of a crime, the NAACP statement invoked concepts of social order and due-process, saying 'every lynching is a blow at the heart of ordered law and humane justice and that every American who takes part in the action of a mob or gives any kind

[79] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham*, 15.
[80] Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, "False Friends and Avowed Enemies: Southern African Americans and Party Allegiances in the 1920s," in *Jumpin' Jim Crow: Southern Politics from Civil War to Civil Rights*, edited by Jane Dailey, Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, and Bryant Simon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 224.
[81] Raymond Gavins, "The NAACP in North Carolina during the Age of Segregation," in *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies*, edited by Armstead L. Robinson and Patricia Sullivan (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1991), 107.
[82] NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box G-148, folder 34, Raleigh 1916-1917.
[83] Howard N. Rabinowitz, *Race Relations in the Urban South, 1865-1890* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978), 10.

of countenance is a betrayer of this great democracy…'[84] In the NAACP's strategic use of Allied wartime rhetoric about democracy and law, it attempted to hold the state government accountable for the failure to secure equal justice for all. The statement pointed out that the maintenance of law and order was of particular importance 'at this time when allied nations are apparently in [the] final stages of their war against the ruthless and autocratic power of [the] German Kaiser [sic].'

Although this statement was signed by NAACP secretary John Shillady in New York, the NAACP employed a dual national and local focus to ensure that their point was heard as widely as possible. A separate statement was sent to the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce (which it can be assumed was made up entirely of white businessmen), highlighting the damage done to 'labor conditions in states where lynchings do occur…'[85] By focusing on one of the prime concerns of local white business owners – labour – the NAACP was effectively involving as wide a section of society as possible in the debate about lynching. Furthermore, the Rolesville lynching is an example of the local and national levels of the association working together to achieve an outcome which would potentially have local impacts while also speaking to national issues. Similarly, in February 1919, the NAACP central office wrote to L.M. Cheek, secretary of the Raleigh branch, asking for Cheek's help in sourcing further information about two alleged lynchings in Onslow County, in the state's coastal area around Jacksonville.[86] The Raleigh branch appears to have been a particularly active provider of information about events at local level – it had also sent the head office information on the Winston-Salem violence in November 1918.[87]

While NAACP officials often opened a dialogue with white officialdom when an African American was killed, the organisation also involved itself in cases where authorities had already acted to prevent a lynching. In May 1918, John Shillady, in correspondence with the governor's office, referred to a case in Raleigh in which credit was given to the governor for recently having prevented the lynching of Earl Neville. Shillady reminded the governor, however, that more work remained to be done:

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[84] "Wants Lynchers Brought to Terms," *News & Observer*, 11 November 1918, 10.
[85] "Wants Lynchers Brought to Terms," *News & Observer*, 11 November 1918, 10.
[86] NAACP office secretary to Mr L.M. Cheek, 18 February 1919. NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 23.
[87] The newspaper clippings relating to racial violence in the NAACP files do not have accompanying information about where they were sourced from, but it seems almost certain that the secretaries of local branches cut out relevant stories from local newspapers and sent them to the central NAACP office in New York City. For example, the newspaper clippings in the NAACP's file on the Winston-Salem riot in November 1918 are taken from the Raleigh *News & Observer*, and include a note, presumably added by central office staff, saying 'Entire clipping not sent by Raleigh branch sec.' See "Winston-Salem Scene of Disorder and Bad Riot," *News & Observer,* 18 November 1918, clipping. NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 36.

Fig. 3: Map of NAACP branches in urban North Carolina, 1916-1922

> …a less complacent attitude towards lynching must be taken now that legal justice in the United States is before the bar of the opinion of the whole world. The country cannot successfully wage a war for democracy unless the whole people back the President in support of our own laws as well as in the offensive against the enemy without.[88]

Shillady here effectively linked North Carolina to the Western Front while also playing on the state government's concerns about law and order.

One of the most famous incidents of a thwarted lynching in this period comes from the Winston-Salem area, in which the NAACP had a strong local presence. Although around 1.5 million black southerners left the rural South between 1900 and 1920, around half of those ended up in southern urban centres, and particularly in the processing and industrial cities of the upper South, such as Winston-Salem.[89] Between 1914 and 1918, the city experienced an influx of African Americans looking for work in the manufacturing and processing sectors. Companies like Reynolds Tobacco and Hanes's textiles had expanded rapidly during the war and Winston-Salem's black population almost doubled in the decade after 1910, reaching 21,000 by 1920 out of a total population of 50,000.[90] Although Winston-Salem had a history of racially integrated residential areas, this had been undermined by a 1912 municipal ordinance mandating residential segregation of the city's neighbourhoods. By the World War I period, Winston-Salem's black community was largely segregated into a tightly packed settlement known as East Winston, which spread to the north and east of the Reynolds tobacco factories. The company-owned township of Hanes was the white working-class equivalent of East Winston. Segregated black neighbourhoods like East Winston, despite their poverty, could nonetheless provide the cultural cohesion ideal for the fostering of counterpublics.[91]

The Winston-Salem NAACP was formally chartered in March 1918, one of seven local NAACP branches in North Carolina by that point in time. The branch applied for a charter with 50 members already signed up. At least 16 of those members were engaged in working-class occupations, including nine day-labourers, a drayman, a janitor, and a painter. At least 20 members held middle-class jobs, including five merchants, a clergyman, a teacher, seven insurance agents, two estate

[88] John Shillady to Sanford Martin, 10 May 1918, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 28.
[89] Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism*, 68.
[90] Hill, *Garvey Papers, V*, 657 n. 4.
[91] Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism,* 62.

agents and a lawyer.[92] The NAACP does not, however, seem to have engaged with the sizeable black workforce of the city's tobacco factories. Nonetheless, the demographic cross-section evident in the Winston-Salem membership list helps to dispel the notion that NAACP chapters in the post-war period were primarily middle-class enterprises and lends weight to a view of NAACP branches as having cross-class support, particularly in urban areas with socially-differentiated African-American populations.[93]

In November 1918, the same month as Winston-Salem's urban riot, a group of white men attempted to abduct Russel High, an African-American prisoner, from the jail at Winston-Salem with the intention of lynching him. The white men were intercepted and arrested by the authorities and, in a landmark ruling in February 1919, a Surry County court convicted and sentenced fifteen out of the sixteen men who had been indicted for the attempted abduction. The *Baltimore Daily Herald* recognised the positive impact which such a ruling might have, suggesting that it would 'go far towards allaying the unrest among the Negroes of that section.' The newspaper praised the judgement in Surry County as 'the most pronounced vindication of the majesty of the law that has taken place in the South, or perhaps even the North, in thirty years.'[94]

The NAACP's John Shillady sent a letter to Governor Bickett, congratulating him and state officials 'upon their action in the case' and saying that North Carolina had 'set an example which may well be emulated by other states in this country in which mob violence and lynching prevail.' Shillady contrasted the successful legal proceedings in Surry County with an incident in Tuscumbia, Alabama, in which eighteen men were acquitted 'although clearly guilty of lynching a Negro in November of last year.'[95] Shillady's letter to Bickett shows the NAACP positioning itself as a respectable yet firm and pro-active partner to government reform on both the state and national political scenes. Such comments, however, also reinforced the image of North Carolina's exceptionalism in comparison to other areas of the South and indicate that

[92] Application for Charter, Winston-Salem NAACP branch, 17 March 1918, NAACP Papers, Box G-148, folder 14, Winston-Salem 1913-1922.

[93] For examples of scholars who have argued for cross-class support in NAACP branches in the post-war period, see Emory J. Tolbert, *The UNIA and Black Los Angeles: Ideology and Community in the American Garvey Movement* (Los Angeles: CAAS Publications, 1980), 92; Earl Lewis, *In Their Own Interests: Race, Class and Power in Twentieth Century Norfolk, Virginia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 73-74; Greta de Jong, *A Different Day: African American Struggles for Justice in Rural Louisiana, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 67-68; Bernard Eisenberg, "Only for the Bourgeois? James Weldon Johnson and the NAACP, 1916-1930," *Phylon* 43, no. 2 (1982): 113; Lumpkins, *American Pogrom,* 157.

[94] "Winston-Salem (N.C.) Stands for Law and Order," *Baltimore Daily Herald*, 27 February 1919, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 37.

[95] John R. Shillady, press release, 24 February 1919, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 37.

the image and language of civility was potentially limiting to the association's ability to forcefully challenge the terms of the discussion on racist violence.

A similar letter was sent to Bickett in August 1920 by the Asheville NAACP branch, commending him for a memo he had recently sent to the North Carolina general assembly about 'justice of the negro.'[96] The city of Asheville, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in western North Carolina, was a place which had both a reputation for moderate race relations and a vibrant NAACP branch. In the decades following the Civil War, Asheville had established itself as a centre for tourism for both southern and northern visitors, who came in large numbers to enjoy the views, air, and recreation offered by the mountains. Asheville had attracted large numbers of African Americans in the 1890s, most of whom came to find work in the city's restaurants, hotels, and other tourist enterprises. Asheville's reliance on attracting visitors from all over the country, however, meant that local tourism boosters had a vested interest in presenting a positive image of race relations.[97] Although none of North Carolina's 16 cases of lynching between 1918 and 1930 occurred in the western mountain region, the lynching of an African-American man near Asheville in August 1897 had been the first of a series of attacks across the state during the false rape scare in the build up to the 1898 election and the Wilmington massacre.[98]

The Asheville NAACP branch was formed in April 1918 and by that December it had 20 members, including at least four women.[99] That month, the branch publicly appealed against the showing of the notorious film, *The Birth of a Nation*, which demonised blacks, glorified the Ku Klux Klan, and presented a vision of triumphant white supremacy during Reconstruction. The film had particular resonance in North Carolina, based as it was on the novel *The Clansmen: An Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan,* by Thomas Dixon, who had been one of the orchestrators of the state's white supremacy campaign at the end of the nineteenth century. When the film first appeared in 1915, the national office of the NAACP and members across the country protested against the film's message in a campaign which would continue over the next few years and which provided impetus for the growth of the association at the

[96] "Negroes Commend Gov. T.W. Bickett," *Asheville Citizen*, 28 August 1920, 8.
[97] Richard D. Starnes, "'A Conspicuous Example of What Is Termed the New South': Tourism and Urban Development in Asheville, North Carolina, 1880-1925," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 80, no. 1 (2003): 77.
[98] On North Carolina's rape scare of 1897-98, provoked by white Democrats, and the resulting murders of a number of African Americans across the state, see Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 82-89.
[99] NAACP branch membership report for Asheville, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, Branch Files (North Carolina), folder 7, Asheville 1915-1929; *Asheville Citizen*, 28 April 1918, 2.

grassroots level. The campaign successfully raised awareness but ultimately had a limited impact on how extensively *The Birth of a Nation* was shown across the country. W.E.B. Du Bois expressed concern that instances of lynching increased noticeably in the aftermath of the film's release.[100]

In Asheville, Edward W. Pearson and F.H. Harris, president and secretary respectively of the local NAACP branch, asked the city's mayor to prohibit the showing of the film in the city's cinemas. Pearson and Harris invoked middle-class respectability to show that local African Americans were undeserving of the hostility promoted in *The Birth of a Nation*. Pearson and Harris claimed that the NAACP spoke for 'some of the best and loyal citizens in Asheville.' *The Birth of a Nation*, they pointed out, aimed to 'create race feeling such as the new type of our race disapproves. We boast of our city and of the races having less disturbance between races than any other city south [sic].' The association is here presented as more assertive than pre-war black activism yet deeply respectable and completely committed to the principle of peaceful coexistence.

Given that Asheville experienced less extraordinary anti-black violence than North Carolina's Piedmont and coastal areas in this period, the presence of an NAACP branch in the city may reflect African-American class aspirations. Pearson and Harris's letter finished with an assurance to the mayor that 'We have always been loyal. We could not be otherwise' and expressed the hope that 'you will see fit to remove at all times such obstacles that will cause race strife.'[101] Pearson and Harris's invocation of grievance, of respectability, and of loyalty to the nation was both a marker of social class and a means of communicating with white leaders.[102]

Those African Americans who sought to represent the concerns of the black community in the white-dominated civic sphere were forced to operate in the very narrow space available for social protest in North Carolina's political culture. The obsession of middle-class and elite whites with class markers of respectability had been used as means to exclude blacks from participation in the state's political and civic life.[103] Although after 1900 race had come to completely surpass class as a

[100] David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868-1919* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993), 507; Adam Fairclough, *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890-2000* (New York: Penguin, 2001), 83-84.

[101] E.W. Pearson and F.H. Harris, "Colored People Protest Against 'The Birth of a Nation'," *Asheville Citizen*, 21 December 1918, 2.

[102] Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 196-97.

[103] Glenda Gilmore has argued that, in late-nineteenth century North Carolina, elite whites often measured the suitability of African Americans for leadership roles by judging levels of education and respectability, as defined by influential whites at the time. Sometimes called the 'Best Man' concept,

marker of eligibility for civic and political roles, the emphasis that the state's political culture had traditionally placed on middle-class respectability, often through levels of education, continued to have a bearing on how blacks aspiring to leadership roles approached whites in the civic realm.

As Victoria Wolcott as argued, racial reform and protest organisations in the interwar period did not necessarily define themselves in opposition to the hegemonic system and sometimes reproduced dominant cultural norms even as they sought to challenge and transform them.[104] Black North Carolinians' leveraging of respectability was a way of confounding white images of black immorality while holding white America to account for its failure to make good on its wartime rhetoric of democracy and freedom.[105] While a powerful tool for protest, however, the politics of respectability could also expose and magnify intra-racial class differences.[106] For example, Pearson wrote to the *Asheville Citizen* on behalf of the NAACP in October 1919 decrying the tendency of white law enforcement to indiscriminately portray the African-American community as complicit in the sale of bootlegged liquor to local whites. Pearson pointed out that illegal alcohol was only sold by the 'worthless element that we are trying to get rid of,' and expressed the hope that law enforcement would 'seek the co-operation of the better element of the colored people in Asheville… and that in judging the negro they will separate the good from the bad.'[107]

In a similar condemnation of blacks who did not live up to middle-class notions of respectability, in 1925, after a series of alleged rapes, prominent African Americans in Asheville laid the blame on black newcomers to the city who had arrived from cotton belt areas of the lower South. Such an explanation was put forward in the hope that it would forestall retaliation against blacks by whites.[108] While the language and norms of respectability could be used by African Americans as means to galvanise their own communities and to critique the attitudes of whites, it could also be a polarising force that worked against racial unity and cross-class activism. This was particularly the case when middle-class and elite African Americans felt the need to vindicate their

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this scenario meant that middle-class African Americans operating in the public sphere were forced to become increasingly aware of class markers, particularly that of education, if they were to be accepted by whites as worthy representatives of the wider black community. See Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 14-15, 82-83.

[104] Victoria W. Wolcott, *Remaking Respectability: African American Women in Interwar Detroit* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 149-50.

[105] Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham has written about how the 'politics of respectability' reflected the value of the hegemonic white society while also being a means for African Americans to engage with and challenge it, see Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent,* 222.

[106] Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent,* 14-15.

[107] E.W. Pearson, "A Plea for Discrimination," *Asheville Citizen,* 27 October 1919, 4.

[108] Starnes, "'A Conspicuous Example of What is Termed the New South,'" 77-78.

race in a context of widespread migration into southern urban areas by poor African Americans who were often perceived by whites and middle-class blacks as unrespectable.[109]

There was a growing concern within the African-American community about the pernicious effects which *The Birth of a Nation* might have on white attitudes. At the forefront of such concerns within NAACP circles was an awareness that the success of the association carried risks for those involved in it. In July 1921, Colonel John Nolen, 'imperial lecturer of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan,' spoke at Charlotte's city auditorium. Nolen was openly critical of the NAACP because it wanted to 'abolish the Jim Crow laws, to revoke the laws against inter-marriage of the races and which seeks control of the reins of government for the negro…[sic]' Nolen's remarks were apparently 'vigorously applauded throughout his speech' by the audience.[110] Charlotte was home to a large branch of the NAACP in the years after World War I, so sentiments such as those expressed in Nolen's speech would have been cause for concern for local African Americans.

The Charlotte NAACP branch originally applied for a charter from the central office in May 1919 listing 53 people as members. The branch included among its membership people from a wide array of different occupational backgrounds. Those with middle-class jobs included several clergymen, a banker, a physician, and the president of Charlotte's black university, Biddle (subsequently Johnson C. Smith University). Among the working-class occupations were labourers, a janitor, a laundry worker and mail clerk.[111] Given the response to Nolen's speech in the city in July 1921, some local whites clearly were not in favour of the NAACP. In July 1919, the NAACP branch in Raleigh faced similar hostility from local white supremacists, with the press reporting that the 'order of Klansman is said to be organizing to meet this delicate situation [NAACP growth].'[112] These examples from Raleigh and Charlotte suggest that NAACP growth and Klan hostility may at times have been tied into a reciprocal relationship, particularly in urban areas.

In October 1921, one anonymous Klan supporter wrote to a North Carolina congressman complaining about the subversive nature of Catholics and of the 'Society for the Advancement of the Negro Race,' and asked Congress to officially investigate

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[109] Kevin K. Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 76, 83.
[110] "Americanism is Plea of Speaker," *The Charlotte News*, 16 July 1921, 5.
[111] "Application for NAACP Charter, Charlotte, NC," 26 May 1919, Robinson-Spangler North Carolina Room, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, Charlotte, NC.
[112] "Tex Ritchie Breezes into Raleigh To Talk of Klansman Order," *Greensboro Daily News*, 2 July 1919, 1.

such groups on the basis that they were un-American.[113] Antipathy between the NAACP and the Klan could be found across the country in the post-war years. Field secretary James Weldon Johnson recalled that, as early as 1919, 'We realised that there was a campaign of considerable proportions on to intimidate our members in southern communities and stamp out the organization; in a number of instances this campaign was successful.'[114]

In June 1920, the NAACP's eleventh annual conference was held on the campus of Atlanta University, the first NAACP conference to be held in the South. The decision had the effect of provoking southern white supremacist hostility, particularly in Georgia itself, as Atlanta was the site of the Klan's headquarters. A year after the Atlanta conference, eight Georgia NAACP branches had stopped paying their dues to the national office and had become essentially inactive. Branches in Virginia, Texas, Mississippi, and Louisiana all struggled with the animosity of white supremacists in the early-1920s, which often halted and then reversed the gains that the association had made during World War I and in the immediate post-war period. The poverty of southern working-class African Americans was also a factor in the association's grassroots problems, however, with many people struggling to afford the $1 annual subscription fee.[115]

One of the main issues that led many southern whites to perceive the NAACP as a significant threat was that of miscegenation. As indicated by Nolen's Klan speech in Charlotte, racial inter-marriage and miscegenation was a question that presented a challenge to the very foundations of white supremacy. At a meeting of the Asheville NAACP in June 1920, members heard from a local delegate who had recently attended the association's Atlanta convention. The *Asheville Citizen* journalist reported that, 'This organization [the NAACP], according to the members, stands simply for equal justice to the negro… Social equality is in no way considered, they explain.'[116] The term 'social equality' was a heavily-loaded expression, generally used as a coded way for white southerners to express their concerns about racial inter-marriage, miscegenation, and liberated black sexuality. The NAACP's James Weldon Johnson,

[113] "Another Letter in Hand," *Asheville Citizen*, 8 October 1921, 2.
[114] Johnson, *Along This Way,* 344.
[115] On the reasons for NAACP branch decline across the South, see Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 172-73; Beverly Bunch-Lyons and Douglas Nakeina, "The Falls Church Colored Citizens Protective League and the Establishment of Virginia's First Rural Branch of the NAACP," in *Long Is The Way and Hard: One Hundred Years of the NAACP*, edited by Kevern Verney, Lee Sartain, and Adam Fairclough (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 2009), 99; Steven A. Reich, "Soldiers of Democracy: Black Texans and the Fight for Citizenship, 1917-1921, *Journal of American History* 82, no. 4 (1996): 1,500-501; Neil R. McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 314-15; de Jong, *A Different Day*, 84.
[116] "Wage Campaign for Negro Association," *Asheville Citizen*, 26 June 1920, 3.

on the other hand, defined 'social equality' as meaning 'the right of the Negro to participate fully in all of the common rights of American citizenship and to arrange his own personal associations.'[117] In his autobiography, Johnson, originally from Florida, spelled out exactly how insidious the term 'social equality' was in the racial discourse of the day:

> …the most telling attack on the Association was made by those who called it a "social equality" society, for that had the effect of making a good many white friends of the Negro's cause uneasy, and of placing Negroes themselves on the defensive… [Social equality] is never defined; it is shifted to block any path that may be open…[118]

As Johnson knew, because 'social equality' was inextricably linked with miscegenation in the minds of many whites, it had the potential to summon up one of the main fears of white supremacists.

In January 1920, W.E.B. Du Bois wrote an opinion piece in the *Crisis* in which he argued that black men in general did not want to marry white women, even if southern social and racial norms would ever permit it.[119] In November of the same year, Du Bois wrote another essay for the *Crisis* in which he defended the concept of racial intermarriage, but did not go so far as to openly advocate it. Du Bois's equivocal position on intermarriage in these two essays indicates the uncertainty that surrounded this issue, particularly among black leaders who believed in black rights but who also sought racial harmony.

The year after Du Bois's essays on racial inter-marriage were published in the *Crisis*, President Warren Harding gave a speech in Birmingham, Alabama, which included a forthright rejection of any possibility of racial inter-marriage and miscegenation, summarised by his ringing statement, 'Race amalgamation, there can never be.'[120] Avoiding miscegenation, however, was also a priority for many in the African-American community, at both leadership and grassroots level. In October 1921, Marcus Garvey, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) leader, gave a speech to supporters in New York City which endorsed Harding's rejection of 'social equality' and ruthlessly mocked Du Bois's attempts to find an acceptable middle-ground on the issue. Garvey declared, '…i[f] Negroes start to strike back on

[117] Quoted in Ewing, *The Age of Garvey,* 117.
[118] Johnson, *Along This Way,* 311.
[119] W.E.B. Du Bois, "Sex Equality," *Crisis* 19, no. 3 (January 1920): 106.
[120] Robert A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume IV, 1 September 1921-2 September 1922* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 141-51.

white men trying to get too close to black women, then we will be carrying out the eternal question that there should be no social equality.'[121]

In late-nineteenth century North Carolina there were examples of African-American men policing their own anti-miscegenation stance by beating white men and black women involved in interracial relationships.[122] The later success of Garveyism across the South adds further weight to the concept that blacks at grassroots level frequently rejected the prospect of social or sexual contact with whites. The Asheville NAACP's statement in June 1920, which seemingly denied any interest in 'social equality,' could be read as genuinely expressing the preferences of local black people, or as an act of reassurance and of accommodation to local whites, particularly in the light of the backlash against NAACP branches which followed the organisation's Atlanta conference.

The rejection of 'social equality' and the quest for 'equal justice,' however, were almost certainly not seen by African Americans as mutually exclusive positions. It is very likely, furthermore, that the attitudes of local NAACP members could differ markedly from those of the organisation's leadership. While middle-class and elite leaders like Johnson and Du Bois felt able to rhetorically challenge the boundaries of what 'social equality' meant in the South, working-class blacks in local communities were instead far more influenced by long-standing attitudes in the southern black community regarding miscegenation. But a plurality of attitudes within the umbrella of the NAACP in the post-war years may explain, at least partly, why the association managed to appeal to a broad cross-section of the southern African-American population.

On Friday 10 May 1918, W.E.B. Du Bois visited Raleigh and spoke to a 'large and representative colored audience, who gave him at times tumultuous applause.' Du Bois's words that night reflected the NAACP's dual focus on patriotism and on better opportunities for African Americans. Although his speech was clearly effective, the words of the president of the Raleigh NAACP branch, Dr L.E. McCauley, also give insights into the association's messaging. McCauley, who introduced Du Bois to the crowd, spoke of the NAACP's commitment to goals of patriotism and opportunity, explaining that, 'the various issues arising intrinsically and extrinsically that would hinder such advancement [of African Americans] must be met with calm, deliberate, conservative action yet positive and unanimous.'[123] This dual message of 'positive' activism and 'conservative' restraint is a theme of NAACP messaging in this period,

[121] "Speech by Marcus Garvey (New York, Oct. 30th 1921)," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, IV,* 145.
[122] *Raleigh Gazette,* 5 February 1898, cited in Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 70.
[123] "Negro Leader is Speaker Here," *News & Observer*, 11 May 1918, 10.

including that found at the local level. Such duality was effective because it sought to both galvanise African Americans and appease white onlookers.

As many local African Americans were no doubt aware, such rhetoric likely remained within the boundaries of what middle-class and elite whites considered 'civil.' When Du Bois addressed the crowd that night in Raleigh he tied together the cause of the Allied war effort and the African-American campaign for justice, saying, 'since the negro is a factor in the war he must sustain and protect the benefits coming to him now and at the close of the conflict by the kind of intelligent organization that make for conservation of the principles for which the Allies are fighting.'[124] Du Bois went on to visit Winston-Salem, speaking in the city two months after the city's NAACP branch applied for its charter. Du Bois's speech came at a time of heightening racial tensions in the area and, just six months after his visit, Winston-Salem was hit by the wave of violence that claimed up to 25 lives.

The NAACP's 'respectable' approach to activism in the post-war years seems to have been accepted by middle-class and elite whites in North Carolina, such as journalists and the governor. The veiled threats by Klan members against the association's branches in Charlotte and Raleigh, however, suggest that other sections of the white community were not as willing to accept its programme. Indeed, the widespread hostility towards local NAACP branches across the South confirms that visible examples of organisational black activism had the potential to provoke open rhetorical hostility and even violence. Accommodating North Carolina's political culture of civility could work well when dealing with middle-class and elite whites, but it did not necessarily save local branches from threats from the Klan, nor did it save the black community in general from extraordinary violence, such as the massacre in Winston-Salem in 1918 or the several instances of lynching on the Piedmont in the post-war period.

Thus the NAACP was forced to tread carefully in post-war North Carolina. Although the association's national-level leadership was becoming increasingly dominated by African-American leaders, the NAACP was essentially still an interracial organisation. At the national level, the association's inherent desire not to alienate potential white supporters and partners meant that it was liable to adhere to white norms such as those represented by North Carolinian civility. The threat and actuality of white violence and the preference of influential whites for civility limited the extent to which an interracial organisation could agitate forcefully for meaningful change. Although respectability allowed some African Americans to engage with the white civic

[124] "Negro Leader is Speaker Here," *News & Observer,* 11 May 1918, 10.

and political sphere, it also opened class fractures that limited the possibilities for group solidarity.

Despite the prosecution of would-be lynchers in Surry County in 1919 and the National Guard's battles against white mobs in Winston-Salem and Graham, a number of the murders of blacks by whites in the post-war period were not properly investigated by local justice officials and went ultimately unpunished. These crimes include the deaths of Powell Green and Walter Tyler in Franklin County in 1919 and of Edward Roach in Person County in 1920.[125] When the state did take action against extraordinary violence, this had little to do with the direct actions of local branches of the NAACP, as it usually took the association a while to respond to instances of violence, by which time action had either been taken or the governor was in any case unwilling to push local officials to investigate further. Overall, the association's lobbying efforts at the national-level undoubtedly helped to put pressure on state authorities to act against mobs, but at the local level the NAACP's response to violence came after the event and could not prevent instances of violence before they happened. It is not clear, furthermore, that occasional instances of prosecutions of lynchers or the thwarting of mobs made local African Americans feel safer. As Lee Sartain has pointed out, 'a bureaucratic approach to civil rights meant it was difficult to translate legal victories into populist achievements that people could comprehend as being meaningful to their everyday lives.'[126] This is true when it comes to anti-black violence as well as to desegregation and voting rights, and may go a long way towards explaining why a more community-based solution to anti-black violence quickly became popular in North Carolina in 1920.

The fall of the grassroots NAACP and the rise of a new force

As well as membership information on NAACP branches in North Carolina's larger towns and cities, the association's North Carolina branch files also contain records of correspondence between the central office and activists in smaller, more isolated settlements across the state. Typically, in these cases a local organiser would enquire about the possibility of establishing a local branch. The national office would then write back with instructions on how to do so, but often no further correspondence seems to have occurred. From 1920, the NAACP's head office initiated a new nationwide

[125] Newkirk, *Lynching in North Carolina,* 42-43.
[126] Lee Sartain, "'It's Worth One Dollar to Get Rid of Us': Middle-Class Persistence and the NAACP in Louisiana, 1915-1945," in *Long Is The Way and Hard,* 127.

strategy which sought to bolster promising, larger branches while removing central office support for weaker ones, resulting in a decline in the number of local branches from 449 to 319 during the early-1920s, with much of this reduction occurring among the southern branches.[127]

The economic conditions of the post-war South also played a part in local branch failure. Southern wage levels declined relative to the national average over the 1920s and 1930s, despite the movement of many African Americans into southern towns and cities.[128] A general lack of disposable income in this period may have meant that, after showing initial enthusiasm for NAACP membership in the war era, people started to prioritise other costs as wage levels declined. Although the association's branches in urban parts of the state showed a varied cross-section of occupational backgrounds, it is very likely that in rural areas, with lower levels of literacy and wealth among African Americans, local people struggled to formally engage with the NAACP. The association's requirement that a minimum of 50 members be signed-up before a charter would be granted, as well as the bureaucratic nature of the application process, both help to explain why the NAACP was less successful in the countryside than in urban centres. This situation also speaks to the importance of middle-class aspiration and activism in catalysing grassroots NAACP branch development, despite the fact that urban branches usually had diverse memberships after they were chartered.

Mary Rolinson has argued that the rise of black nationalism in the South was essentially concurrent with the fall of the NAACP from 1920 onwards.[129] This organisational expression of black nationalism took the form of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Originally formed in Jamaica in 1914 by the African-Jamaican political activist Marcus Garvey, the UNIA quickly proved successful in the United States and, in 1916, Garvey moved to the US and based himself in Harlem, New York, already a hotbed of black political activism. The wartime climate of white violence against African Americans gave Garvey and other UNIA leaders the ammunition with which to spread their message of group solidarity, separatism, and self-defence. Leading UNIA scholars Tony Martin and Robert Hill have linked the appeal of Garveyism to the prevailing climate of anti-black violence in the post-war United States, while Liz Mackie has pointed out that the UNIA built on and encouraged an already-emerging spirit of black assertiveness, rather than initiating it.[130]

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[127] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 174.
[128] Kyriakoudes, "Lookin' for Better All the Time," 21.
[129] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 174.
[130] Liz Mackie, *The Great Marcus Garvey* (Hertford: Hansib, 1987), 26.

Historian Chad Williams has argued that the UNIA's development cannot be separated from the experiences and militancy of returning black war veterans.[131] In September 1919, Frank Burke, a Bureau of Investigation assistant director, noted in an official report that Garvey had created a 'well drilled military organization for the purpose of protection and to prevent anyone from disturbing the meetings which he addresses.'[132] This organisation was the African Legion, an auxiliary body of the UNIA. Garvey had purposefully modelled its style and structure on the US army and a section of its membership was made up of African-American war veterans. Garvey boasted in a speech in 1921 that the Chicago African Legion 'include[s] half the famous Eighth Illinois boys,'[133] a reference to a black regiment which had served during the war.

Although many African Legion units were not armed, some were, sometimes with the purpose of acting as a deterrent, sometimes for ceremonial reasons, and at other times to actively fight back against the UNIA's enemies. One prominent example of the actions of defiant UNIA supporters comes from New Orleans in the summer of 1922, when Marcus Garvey addressed the city's thriving UNIA division. When police officers arrived and attempted to disrupt the meeting, some of the UNIA members were openly confrontational in return and some may even have brandished guns at the police in a show of defiance and deterrence.[134] No actual violence took place, however, despite the obvious tension and the threat of action from both sides. In August 1927 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, a shoot-out took place between African Legion guards and local police who had arrived to raid the UNIA meeting. It remains unclear which side fired first, but the confrontation left one policeman and at least two Garveyites seriously wounded.[135] As well as these two examples from the South, there are numerous cases in newspaper reports and Bureau of Investigation files of

[131] Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy,* 287.
[132] "Frank Burke to George F. Lamb, Division Superintendent, Bureau of Investigation, New York," 15 September 1919. In Hill, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume II, 27 August 1919-31 August 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 19-20.
[133] "Speech by Marcus Garvey (New York, February 6th, 1921)." In Robert A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume III, September 1920-August 1921* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 165.
[134] Martin, *Race First*, 210 (n. 91).
[135] For further information on the gunfight in Chattanooga, see "Chattanooga Police Invade Peaceful U.N.I.A. Meeting: Four Seriously Wounded," *Negro World*, 20 August 1927, 2; "Editorial in the *Chattanooga News* (Chattanooga, Tenn, Friday, August 5, 1927)," in Robert A. Hill (ed.), *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume VI, September 1924 - December 1927* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 578; "Article in the *Baltimore Afro-American*, Chattanooga, Tenn, (13 August 1927)," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, VI,* 580; Hill, *Garvey Papers, VI*, 582 (n. 4).

individual UNIA members carrying and sometimes using guns in cities such as Philadelphia, Chicago, New York City, and New Orleans.[136]

African-American veterans who served in the UNIA's African Legion included Thomas W. Harvey, who was originally from Georgia but, after being demobbed from the army, served in Philadelphia's African Legion from 1920 onwards. Harvey was quickly made into a lieutenant due to his previous army experience and served until 1930.[137] J. Austin Norris fought as an officer in France before becoming another prominent member of the Philadelphia UNIA. James B. Nimmo, originally from the Bahamas, served in the US army and after the war joined the Miami UNIA, where he was put in charge of the Miami division's 200-strong African Legion unit. The African Legions in Philadelphia and in Newport News, Virginia, could turn out between 150 and 200 uniformed members.[138]

Historians Chad Williams and Martin Summers see the African Legion as appealing to African Americans through its emphasis on martial heroism and self-defence as well as on middle- and working-class notions of restraint, productivity, and respectability. Indeed, Summers calls the Legion 'the most visible representation of Garveyite manhood,' although he points out that that manhood was probably understood and constructed differently by different classes of Garveyites. There can be little doubt, however, that by enlisting in the Legion black veterans could co-opt their military identities for the cause of assertive racial advancement, while repudiating the humiliations they had suffered in the conventional army.[139] The African Legion, both for veterans and people who had not necessarily served in the military, became a powerful device for replacing loyalty to the state with loyalty to the race.

Given that African-American military service did not result in equal citizenship, black people had to find ways of both providing for themselves the protections that should have been forthcoming under the Constitution and of affirming their status as citizens. In the post-war context of white violence and returning black servicemen, the role of firearms came to play a central part in the debate about black citizenship. During the paranoia of the post-war Red Scare, the federal government attempted, mainly through the Bureau of Investigation and the army's Military Intelligence Division, to restrict African Americans' access to firearms, an attempt which was largely

[136] See, for example, "Report by Mortimer J. Davis, 10th May 1923, New York," In *Marcus Garvey's FBI File (part 1),* 264-66; "Says Negro Society Works with Ku Klux," *Washington Post*, 1 February 1923, 1, 4; "Murder Won't Halt Garvey Trial Feb 5," *New York Times*, 13 January 1923, 14.

[137] "Interview with Thomas W. Harvey, Philadelphia, PA, 1975 and 1976," in Jeannette Smith-Irvin (ed.), *Footsoldiers of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (Their Own Words)* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1989), 23-24.

[138] Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy,* 291, 295-97.

[139] Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents*, 94-96; Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 293.

unsuccessful.[140] It is not difficult to imagine why African Americans were drawn to an 'individual rights' interpretation of the Second Amendment, given the long-standing and systemic failure of white America, including federal, state, and local authorities, to protect black and other minority citizens. Ultimately, this reality left many African Americans feeling that they had little choice but to arm themselves for protection, in both individual and group settings.[141] Christopher Strain has argued that self-defence represented 'a critical missing link in establishing black citizenship.'[142]

The self-defence aspect of the UNIA's programme allowed military veterans and many others in the African-American community to symbolically connect with the rights and responsibilities of citizenship under the Second Amendment within a separatist context which offered solidarity and security for black communities. That the UNIA's programme could speak directly to people's citizenship concerns is not a concept that has been much considered by historians, mainly because the organisation's commitment to separatism and to African repatriation is generally thought to have nullified concerns about accessing better citizenship rights. As has been noted by some scholars of the Garvey movement, however, not all Garveyites wanted to leave the US or necessarily thought that the African liberation plan would come to fruition within their lifetimes.[143]

In the tradition of self-defence through individual rights to protection, the UNIA's programme had room for both the exercise of a central right of US citizenship and the expression of a separatist political and social identity based on race. This 'civic separatism,' and the commitment to self-defence upon which it was at least partly built, remains an under-appreciated element of the UNIA's popularity in the South in the 1920s. 'Civic separatism' is here being applied retrospectively to define a crucial aspect of the UNIA's appeal. It represents a solution to white violence that was meaningful to the black community, even when extraordinary violence had not necessarily taken place and it could address deep-seated concerns about the endemic threat of white violence in its many forms.

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[140] On the federal government's largely unsuccessful attempts to restrict black firearms ownership, see Krugler, *1919, The Year of Racial Violence*, 196-212.

[141] On the relationship between minority groups and the Second Amendment over time, see David C. Williams, *The Mythic Meanings of the Second Amendment: Taming Political Violence in a Constitutional Republic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 241.

[142] Christopher B. Strain, *Pure Fire: Self-Defense as Activism in the Civil Rights Era* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2005), 17.

[143] Rolinson, *Grassroots* Garveyism, 153; Tolbert, *The UNIA and Black Los Angeles*, 106; Claudrena N. Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South, 1918-1942* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 76.

Between 1918 and 1921, the strategy employed by Garvey and several other UNIA leaders was to use militant, radical messaging to capitalise on the prevailing climate of white violence. It is generally agreed that the period between 1918 and 1921 constituted Garvey's 'radical' period. This is an impression primarily garnered from Garvey's personal rhetoric from that time. His brazen public call for blacks to 'lynch a White man in the North for every Black man they lynch in the South'[144] is typical of the fiery nature of his language in this period. Similarly, in October 1919, Garvey was quoted as saying that 'the best thing the Negro of all countries can do is to prepare to match fire with hell fire.'[145]

The US government was already aware of Garvey's speeches and of the African Legion and was making a link between Garveyism and violent resistance. One BI agent filed a report in August 1919 which drew a causal line between the UNIA and racial confrontations, telling his superiors, 'He [Garvey] has made a recent tour of the South, particularly Virginia, and it may or may not be significant that the Washington riot broke out shortly after his return here.' The agent went on to quote Garvey as saying in a recent speech, 'The UNIA realizes that the war of 1914-18 is over, but all negroes must prepare for the next world war… So long as the Negro [is oppressed] all over the world there can be no abiding peace.'[146] Even though the Washington riot was provoked by inflammatory press reports and aggressive white servicemen rather than Garvey's oratory, the authorities were clearly willing to believe that there was a link between the UNIA and racially-based unrest. The UNIA's focus on the concerns of African Americans about escalating white violence, however, should not be underestimated. The UNIA's development was fundamentally linked to the context of post-war racial violence, just as the story and militancy of the black veterans was fundamentally linked to the UNIA's own.

In 1918, at the point when the NAACP was starting to reach a peak in its support at grassroots level, the UNIA was beginning to generate significant momentum in urban areas, primarily but not exclusively in the North. The UNIA established its first bridgehead in the South at Hampton Roads, Virginia, in 1918, and was also successful in both New Orleans and Miami by the end of 1920. In these urban pockets of the coastal South the organisation successfully appealed to the aspirations of working-class blacks who laboured in industrial and shipping jobs through its emphasis on

[144] "'IN RE: NEGRO AGITATION Marcus Garvey, New York City Dec. 3, 1918,' filed by R. W. Finch," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, I,* 312.
[145] "Editorial Letter by Marcus Garvey (Chicago, Ill., Oct 1st, 1919.)," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, II,* 42.
[146] "Bureau of Investigation Report, New York City August 22nd 1919. In RE; 'NEGRO WORLD' Negro Activities.' Filed by M.J. Davis," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, I,* 495.

race-based citizenship and on separatist economic development.[147] Large and successful African Legion units were established in Newport News, Virginia, and in Miami, Florida.

The UNIA's incursions into southern urban coastal areas occurred almost concurrently with its initial growth in the urban North. The organisation's early success in Virginia is particularly striking. This success may have come about because of a synergy between the UNIA's racial separatism and the demands of black industrial workers for better pay and opportunities. In March 1919, the National Brotherhood Workers of America (NBWA), a labour union for African-American workers, was founded in Washington, D.C. In July of that year, Walter Green, a local organiser for the NBWA from Portsmouth, Virginia, wrote to the UNIA's *Negro World* newspaper explaining the potential commonalities between the two organisations. Green pointed out that the NBWA already had branches in Florida and Atlanta. '…all of the railway shops through the Northeastern districts of Virginia are almost solidly organized. It is because of this that the A.F. of L. [American Federation of Labor] was willing to make concessions to the Negroes.'[148] Green here highlighted the link between strong, race-based co-operatives and subsequent concessions from a mainstream, traditionally white, organisation such as the American Federation of Labor. The year after he sent his letter to the *Negro World*, Walter Green became president of the Portsmouth, Virginia, UNIA division. The UNIA generally had a wary relationship with labour organisations, due to its mistrust of putting class above race, but Green's example shows that, at a local level, African Americans could embrace various solutions to racially-based problems, and did not necessarily see those different solutions as mutually exclusive.

Newport News was the first settlement in the Hampton Roads industrial zone to have a UNIA division, founded in September 1918 after Garvey personally visited the area as part of a membership drive. Local divisions in the nearby towns of Norfolk and Portsmouth soon followed. Organisers were sent to the area to get the new UNIA branches off the ground. Allen Hobbs arrived in Norfolk in 1919 and set about selling the UNIA's message of racial assertiveness. That year, E. L. Gaines, who had been charged by Garvey with overseeing the African Legion nationwide, gave speeches to the newly-founded Virginia divisions at meetings which attracted people initially uncertain or wary of joining the organisation.[149]

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[147] Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South*, 29-33, 61, 64, 93.
[148] "'Letter to the Editor, *Negro World* [ca. Sat 19th July 1919] Portsmouth, VA.' From Walter Green," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, I,* 467. On the NBWA, see Harold, *New Negro Politics in the Jim Crow South*, 29-44.
[149] Lewis, *In Their Own Interests*, 74.

In October 1919, senior UNIA leaders visited the Newport News division, where they focused on the problem of white violence. Estelle Matthews, president of the Ladies' Division of the Philadelphia UNIA, told the audience, 'we can almost smell the smoke of our lynched brothers and sisters, when we can hear the cries of our brothers and sisters for mercy in Georgia and other states, up to now we have not been able to do anything but pity them.' Many of the women who, like Matthews, organised, wrote, and spoke for the UNIA believed in a new vision of black womanhood as well as of black manhood and often openly called for lynching and violence to be curbed.[150] UNIA women, both at grassroots and leadership level, often perceived successful resistance as requiring the joint efforts of both women and men, and were well aware that men might fail to lead that resistance.[151] Scholars have pointed out, however, that while black nationalist women undoubtedly created a radical political discourse that pushed back against multiple forms of oppression, including race, gender, and class, they at times also validated conservative ideas of the respective roles of women and men.[152]

Estelle Matthews' stirring speech to her Newport News audience was followed by Garvey's own masculinist rhetorical articulation of resistance that focused on the physical protection of race and community. '…tonight the Negro stands complete in education. He knows how to read his book, he knows how to figure out, and he knows how to use the sword and the gun… Not until you can offer protection to your race as the white man offer protection to his race, will you be a free and independent people in the world.'[153] Garvey's highly gendered rhetorical advocacy of masculine self-defence was typical of his language between 1918 and 1921. The fact that the UNIA was

[150] See for example, Keisha Blain's discussion of black nationalist women's writings in the *New Negro World* newspaper in the 1940s, Keisha N. Blain, " 'We Want to Set the World on Fire': Black Nationalist Women and Diasporic Politics in the *New Negro World,* 1940-1944," *Journal of Social History* 49, no. 1 (2015): 199-200; see also Keisha N. Blain, *Set the World on Fire: Black Nationalist Women and the Global Struggle for Freedom* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018).

[151] Barbara Bair, "Renegotiating Liberty: Garveyism, Women, and Grassroots Organizing in Virginia," in *Women of the American South: A Multicultural Reader,* ed. Christie Anne Farnham (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 228-29; Anastasia C. Curwood, *Stormy Weather: Middle-Class African American Marriages Between the Two World Wars* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 92-93; Ula Y. Taylor, *The Veiled Garvey: The Life and Times of Amy Jacques Garvey* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 85.

[152] On the 'contradictions and complexities of Pan-African thought and praxis' as related to gender issues in black nationalism, see Keisha N. Blain, Asia Leeds, and Ula Y. Taylor, "Guest Editor Introduction," *Women, Gender, and Families of Color* 4, no. 2 (2016): 143; Blain, "We Want to Set the World on Fire," 205; Barbara Bair, "True Women, Real Men: Gender, Ideology, and Social Roles in the Garvey Movement," in *Gendered Domains: Rethinking Public and Private in Women's History,* ed. Dorothy O. Helly & Susan M. Reverby (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 154-166; Tony Martin, "Women in the Garvey Movement," in *Garvey: His Work and Impact,* ed. Rupert Lewis and Patrick Bryan (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1991), 67-72.

[153] "Report of UNIA Meeting (Newport-News, Va., Oct 25th, 1919.)," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, II,* 113.

successful among black industrial workers in the Hampton Roads area indicates that the language of separatism, solidarity, and masculine protection resonated with many local black people. The circumstances surrounding the UNIA's early growth in coastal Virginia, however, were not typical of those elsewhere in the South. UNIA expansion into the southern interior beyond Miami, New Orleans, and eastern Virginia did not come until 1921.

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A holistic analysis of changes in African-American activism in North Carolina requires an examination of the dynamics both of NAACP decline and of UNIA growth in the state in the post-1920 period. The NAACP had capitalised on the problems of the World War I period with a programme that was more assertive in highlighting injustice than previous manifestations of organisational black activism had been. The expansion of the NAACP's branch network in urban North Carolina after 1918 provided an outlet for those who wanted and were able to participate in activism. The nature of the association's work, however, required a style of engagement with the white political sphere that relied on middle-class values and approaches. The language of civility and progressivism that dominated North Carolina's white political culture limited the space for African-American criticisms of the state government and of its law enforcement infrastructure, and meant that NAACP activists sometimes ended up praising the state government rather than criticising it. A further problem was that, while middle-class and elite whites were sometimes willing to engage with the association's programme, the NAACP's presentation of a respectable front was not able to appease all sections of the white community.

Despite the lobbying efforts of the association's head office, and the impact these efforts undoubtedly had on southern political discourse, the NAACP's anti-lynching agenda did not address the problem of how to provide security for local communities on a day-to-day basis. Ultimately, the grassroots NAACP in North Carolina was caught between the limits of respectability and the dangers of assertiveness. The UNIA's programme, on the other hand, with its focus on separatist community development and uplift that was not tied to engagement with whites, was well-placed to dominate North Carolina's black activism scene after 1920.

Chapter Two

Changing fortunes, 1921-1928

While the UNIA established early beachheads in the coastal South in 1919 and 1920, the organisation did not turn its full attention to the southern interior until 1921. NAACP branches were still operating in parts of the region, although many of those that survived were struggling. This chapter will closely examine the fortunes of NAACP branches and of UNIA divisions in urban North Carolina in a period when one organisation was in decline and the other on the rise.

The chapter will consider the reasons for the NAACP's grassroots decline in North Carolina after 1920, many of which probably applied across much of the South. I will suggest, however, that an underappreciated reason for this decline was the fact that the NAACP's relatively narrow focus on legal and political campaigns turned out to be less appealing and relevant for local African Americans than the UNIA's multi-faceted vision of community solidarity, uplift, and protection. Such an approach was attractive because, as the chapter will demonstrate, contrary to the claims of its white boosters North Carolina was far from free of anti-black violence between 1921 and 1930. I argue that, although the NAACP had provided an opportunity for activism, the association's campaign against lynching was not typical of how African Americans at the grassroots level generally conceptualised resistance. Instead, African Americans had typically favoured group solidarity and preparations for self-defence at the local level, often out of necessity. The reality of past and ongoing violence therefore provides crucial context for understanding the reasons for the popularity of the UNIA and of its African Legion.

The UNIA organises in the South

The American UNIA faced two problems as it turned its attentions towards the South in 1921. Firstly, the militant, defiant language used by UNIA leaders to galvanise a support base in urban centres would almost certainly provoke prohibitive levels of white hostility in the heartlands of Jim Crow. White supremacy was more codified in the South than in the North, and black self-defence was tactically more challenging in smaller, less urbanised spaces. UNIA organisers and grassroots Garveyites would

have been fully aware that overt use of the rhetoric of defiance might bring down the full wrath of white opposition.

The UNIA's second problem in 1921 was that, for a time, its talismanic leader could not get back into the United States. In February 1921, Garvey had left the US for a tour of the Caribbean. As federal authorities had for some time seen Garvey as one of the most subversive black leaders, the government took the opportunity to prevent his re-admittance.[1] Garvey was a British subject, meaning that US authorities had an obvious chance to deny his return. After a nervous four-month wait, however, Garvey was eventually given a visa to re-enter the US. Robert Hill has persuasively argued that this struggle to be re-admitted to the US in the first half of 1921 prompted Garvey to moderate his rhetoric of resistance and instead to speak more in terms of racial separatism and accommodation. These were also the terms that southern white supremacists were more likely to tolerate and even to support.[2] This conservative shift lost Garvey the tolerance of many other black leaders in the US and probably also some of his more radical West Indian supporters, although it seems not to have adversely affected his support levels among southern African Americans.[3]

While a useful way of understanding how Garvey's own approaches changed over time, Hill's thesis of the 'retreat from radicalism' does not fully reflect the ways in which the UNIA as a grassroots organisation expanded and developed in the period after 1921. Mary Rolinson has pointed out that local organisers had already begun to fashion their own ways of successfully operating in the South based on their knowledge of the region as well as their experiences of white hostility when working in areas such as Florida and eastern Virginia.[4] A consideration of the approaches of other UNIA leaders and organisers aside from Garvey himself, and of the attitudes of southern grassroots Garveyites, is required in order to come to a more balanced understanding of how the UNIA as a whole developed.

A number of UNIA organisers continued to preach a message of defiance and of self-defence after Garvey's 'retreat from radicalism.' At the third annual UNIA convention in August 1922, the BI's black agent Andrew Battle quoted Thomas

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[1] On the federal government's campaign against Marcus Garvey, see Theodore Kornweibel, Jr., *Seeing Red: Federal Campaigns against Black Militancy, 1919-1925* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 100-31; Marcus Garvey's FBI file.

[2] Robert A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume I, 1826-August 1919* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), lxxix. Hill's argument has generally been supported by Mary Rolinson in her study of southern Garveyism, see Mary G. Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The Universal Negro Improvement Association in the Rural South, 1920-1927* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 62.

[3] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 6.

[4] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 228 (n. 60).

Anderson, UNIA commissioner for Louisiana, telling assembled delegates that 'the only way to stop lynching in the South is for every man to get a gun and send every lyncher to Hell as fast as they came.'[5] In January 1924, the *Negro World* reported an incident in Drew, Mississippi, when an African-American man named Joe Pullen confronted nine white men who had come to collect payment of a bill. The ensuing disagreement turned into a prolonged gunfight in which Pullen killed nine white men and injured nine more before being killed himself. Although it is unclear whether or not Pullen was affiliated with the UNIA, the *Negro World*'s suggestion that Pullen 'shot to kill and should have a monument' makes it hard to resist the conclusion that T. Thomas Fortune, the *Negro World* editor, was presenting Pullen as someone to be admired by Garveyites and possibly even emulated.[6]

The effectiveness of deterrent self-defence at times featured openly in UNIA discourse in the 1920s. In October 1923, Jacob Slappy, a UNIA commissioner and Baptist preacher from South Carolina, told a UNIA meeting in New York:

> A few days ago a few white 'crackers' went and told three hundred Negroes in twenty four hours that they must make the place white… But there were fifty Negro men who believed in doing something, and they went and got some rifles and went back and told the officer that when these 'Crackers' came they would find them sitting behind the trigger. But the 'Crackers' never came…[7]

While Slappy's story may have been based on hear-say, it nevertheless demonstrates that the theme of armed self-defence as a deterrent featured in UNIA discussions about resistance, and that an awareness of its effectiveness was often based on peoples' direct experiences, which may either have been personal or based on verbal transmission.

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[5] "Report by Special Employee Andrew M. Battle, New York City 1 – 5 August 1922)," in Hill, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume IV, 1 September 1921-2 September 1922* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 779. Bureau of Investigation reports need to be used cautiously due to agents' tendency to relay information skewed towards condemning the UNIA, but they nevertheless provide insights into the kinds of themes and issues that were discussed at UNIA meetings.

[6] "Negro Tenant Farmer Shot To Kill And Should Have A Monument," *Negro World*, 19 January 1924, 2. On the significance of the Pullen incident to southern UNIA members, see Akinyele O. Umoja, *We Will Shoot Back: Armed Resistance in the Mississippi Freedom Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 19-20.

[7] "Liberty Hall Cheered and Inspired by Disclosures Made Regarding Africa," *Negro World*, 27 October 1923, 3.

Although some UNIA leaders stood by self-defence as a means of resisting racist violence, it is the views of southern grassroots Garveyites which are the most important when seeking to understand why the organisation was so successful in the South. At the 1922 UNIA convention there was a specific session set aside for delegates to discuss the problem of lynching, the most infamous symbol of southern anti-black violence. Directly quoting proceedings, the *New York World* reported the delegates' frustration that the authorities did nothing to curb lynching, despite 'preaching and praying and begging for protection for years.' Various UNIA members spoke of the need to 'keep them off by force,' of 'meeting a destructive force with organized force, by fighting fire with fire,' and said that 'The only thing to do if the law cannot protect a man's family and his home is for Negroes to organize to protect themselves.' One woman from rural Georgia, where 'they lynch Negroes for the fun of it,' said that 'Force will respect force.'[8] The delegates heard a story from one elderly UNIA member from Louisiana who recounted how he had been chased down by twelve mounted white men after he had tried to rescue a black girl. 'He told a thrilling story of how he took the law in his own hands when he discovered his assailants had done likewise, exhibiting a scar on his neck and one on his arm as reminders of the incident.'[9]

Two years after the massacre of dozens, and possibly hundreds, of black sharecroppers in September and October 1919 around the town of Elaine, in Phillips County, Arkansas, the UNIA built a strong support-base in the area on both sides of the Mississippi. Such a preference for a self-defence option was evident despite the NAACP's pursuit of a legal defence campaign for African Americans being prosecuted for alleged involvement in the violence.[10] Mary Rolinson and Steven Hahn have both argued that the various central tenets of Garveyism meshed very effectively with the deep-seated, pre-existing practices and attitudes of southern African Americans, many of which had their roots in the eras of slavery and Reconstruction.[11]

Such attitudes included those about the best ways to respond to the threat of violence. Akinyele Umoja has suggested that the consideration which UNIA members gave to self-defence indicates that southern Garveyites 'recognized the insurgent potential of their organization in the Black-majority counties of the Deep South.'[12] An

[8] "Article in the *New York World* (18 August 1922)," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, IV,* 917.
[9] "Article in the *New York World* (18 August 1922)," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, IV,* 918.
[10] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 128-29.
[11] Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 473; Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 159-60.
[12] Umoja, *We Will Shoot Back*, 20.

examination of the attitudes of grassroots UNIA members on the issue of white violence suggests that the 'retreat from radicalism' thesis, while useful when it comes to understanding the rhetoric of Garvey himself, should not necessarily be applied to the organisation as a whole. That is not to say that everyone else in the UNIA apart from Garvey continued to advocate self-defence. Recognising continuities after 1921 in the ways in which Garveyites talked about self-defence, however, sheds important light on an under-appreciated reason for the UNIA's grassroots popularity among black southerners.[13] The UNIA's willingness to countenance self-defence is one of the several ways in which the organisation's programme connected with the pre-existing practices and values of southern African Americans.

The rise of the UNIA in the various regions of the South cannot be understood outside of the contexts of everyday life for African Americans at the grassroots level. The conditions of life and of race relations were different in the rural South and in the urban South, just as conditions in coastal areas were different from the southern interior. The UNIA's development in urban North Carolina was influenced by the existence of segregated neighbourhoods and by the presence of a relatively strong black middle class. Because of these conditions, North Carolina provides a case study of UNIA development in a very different context from more rural, isolated areas of the lower South. Nonetheless, the reality of violence by whites against black North Carolinians created conditions that were in some ways similar to those in the lower South. The existence of strong African Legion units in several North Carolinian towns and cities in the 1920s – including Asheville, Raleigh, Winston-Salem, and Greensboro - suggests that the nature of UNIA organising in southern urban areas was conducive to discussions about community protection and self-defence.

'Rough justice' and North Carolina's campaign against mob violence

In October 1923, in the tiny settlement of Spruce Pine, about 50 miles north-east of Asheville in the Blue Ridge Mountains, an African-American man named John Goff was accused of attacking an elderly white woman, but escaped before a mob of white mountaineers could carry out a lynching. The frustrated mountaineers subsequently

[13] For an in-depth examination of the attitudes of grassroots UNIA members in the South towards violence and self-defence, see Thomas P. Lennon, "'Let us who believe in fighting fight like the devil.' Garveyism and white violence in the American South, 1918-1927," MA thesis, University of York, 2014.

'invaded a Negro camp where a hundred Negroes were engaged in road building and proceeded to drive the laborers away.'[14]

The prolonged disorder around Spruce Pine caught the attention of North Carolina governor Cameron Morrison. A lawyer who became one of the state's most influential politicians, Morrison had been a leader of North Carolina's Red Shirts, one of the leading groups in the campaign to disfranchise the state's black electorate at the turn of the century.[15] Morrison was a political favourite of Furnifold Simmons, the US Senator and North Carolina Democratic leader who had prepared the disfranchisement amendment to the state's constitution in 1900. It was with the direct endorsement of Simmons that Morrison won North Carolina's 1920 gubernatorial contest.

As governor, Morrison famously gave support to the effort to expand North Carolina's road network, a campaign which was one of the most cherished projects of New South boosters. In western North Carolina, the Good Roads Association of Asheville and Buncombe County, formed in 1899, was a pioneering campaign for the expansion of southern highway infrastructure. In 1921, the North Carolina legislature created a new state highway commission and, with the help of federal highway legislation, 5,500 miles of new highways were constructed in the state.[16] It was Governor Morrison's concern for the success of the state's highway expansion programme in the western mountains that led him to dispatch two units of the National Guard to Spruce Pine in October 1923 after the black highway workers were attacked in the hills. The Guardsmen eventually dispersed the white mountaineers after a period of disorder, and then protected the black labourers as they built the new road through the Blue Ridge.[17]

Morrison had also deployed state apparatus to prevent mob violence in August 1922, when a National Guard machine gun company was dispatched to Raleigh to deter a mob from invading the state jail and abducting three African-American prisoners held on suspicion of assaulting a white couple.[18] Overall, local police and National Guard units prevented North Carolina mobs lynching African Americans at

[14] "North Carolina Mountaineers Go On Drunken Jamboree," *Negro World*, 20 October 1923, 2.
[15] Stephen Samuel Smith, "Development and the Politics of School Desegregation and Resegregation," in *Charlotte, NC: The Global Evolution of a New South City,* ed. William Graves and Heather A. Smith (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 211.
[16] Richard D. Starnes, *Creating the Land of the Sky: Tourism and Society in Western North Carolina* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 53-55.
[17] For an in-depth examination of the violence in and around Spruce Pine, see Vann R. Newkirk, *Lynching in North Carolina: A History, 1865-1941* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009), 100-05.
[18] "Guard Out In Raleigh to Save Three Negroes From Mob Violence," *New York World,* 5 August 1922, NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, Records of Racial Violence, Box I: C-363, folder 28.

least ten times between 1918 and 1931.[19] Both in Morrison's and Thomas Bickett's time as governor, there was undoubtedly a concern for order and due process among certain white officials which reflected the desire to construct a respectable, ordered image for the state.

Other southern politicians were similarly concerned to take action against mob violence in the 1920s. In 1921, troubled by the wave of post-war violence, Georgia governor Hugh Dorsey published a pamphlet documenting 135 instances of mistreatment of African Americans in Georgia, including examples of lynching. Dorsey's pamphlet was based on information gathered by the Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC), which was founded in 1919 under the auspices of white liberals in Atlanta. Despite the CIC's inherent caution, which made it unwilling to ever challenge the fundamental structures of segregation, it nonetheless undertook a significant campaign against southern racial violence.[20]

The CIC's work gave Dorsey the ammunition to develop his attack on Georgian racial violence and his pamphlet, which called for a state anti-lynching law, attracted nationwide attention as an example of southern progressivism. The Georgia branch of the CIC subsequently drew up a draft anti-lynching bill which was introduced into the state legislature in 1926, but failed to pass. The Governor-elect, Thomas Hardwick, called Dorsey's pamphlet 'infamous slander.' While differences in personal attitudes and political priorities clearly divided some elite whites on the question of how or whether to confront mob violence, Fitzhugh Brundage has suggested that many white Georgians were anxious about the NAACP's lobbying efforts in favour of a federal anti-lynching bill, efforts which were complimented by the CIC. Overall, attempts to curb lynching from within the South were often motivated by a deep-seated wariness among white southerners about the prospect of federal intervention in southern affairs.[21]

Virginia's anti-lynching statute, passed in 1928 after an outbreak of lynching in the state was, according to Brundage, 'the culmination of a nearly forty-year campaign for social order rather than any victory for racial enlightenment.'[22] Virginia and North Carolina were ostensibly the least violent southern states in the interwar period in terms of officially-recognised instances of lynching. In North Carolina, Bruce Baker argues that lynching was gradually curbed by a combination of forces that had worked for some time to raise awareness and to generate pressure to end the practice. These

[19] For examples of such instances, see NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folders 15, 17, 18, 21, 28.
[20] W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 234.
[21] Brundage, *Lynching in the New South,* 236, 243.
[22] Brundage, *Lynching in the New South,* 189-90.

forces included the NAACP's campaign against lynching, the work of white liberals such as those involved in the CIC, and the actions of state and law enforcement officials.[23] Vann R. Newkirk suggests that lynching was brought under control by a confluence of the need to secure northern investment, improvements in the technology of the print media, and the pressing issue of African-American agricultural workers leaving rural parts of the state.[24]

Although the pressure of public opinion undoubtedly did much to force the hand of state and law enforcement officials, it is also important to recognise that white violence against black North Carolinians continued, even as lynchings under the standard definition of the term declined. A focus on extraordinary violence tends to reflect the concerns of NAACP leaders, white liberals, and commercial boosters, and often overlooks the full spectrum of types of violence. Discussions that focus almost exclusively on extraordinary violence tend not to address the issue of ordinary violence and how African Americans both experienced and reacted to it. The overwhelming focus on extraordinary violence, however, helps to explain why and how states such as North Carolina and Virginia were able to construct an image of civility, as lynching could be presented by their politicians and boosters as an anomaly which could be solved relatively easily through efficient action at state level. The spread of concepts of upper South civility ultimately allowed for the creation of a dichotomy, with ostensibly more violent states in the lower South and less violent ones in the upper South. This dichotomy, and the complacency in the upper South that sprang from it, often allowed officials to evade questions about ongoing injustice and inequality.

As suggested by the publication of Hugh Dorsey's pamphlet in 1921, influential whites in lower South states also recognised the advantages of cultivating an image of civility and subsequently attempted to reassure the nation that their states were concerned with law and order. In 1925 Henry Whitfield, the Mississippi governor, openly denounced lynching by signing a pamphlet that condemned the murder of an African American.[25] In October 1925, a double lynching near Aiken, South Carolina, was loudly condemned by almost every major white newspaper in the state. South Carolina's governor, Thomas McLeod, promised the state's interracial commission that he would do 'everything possible…to bring to justice the members of the Aiken mob,' although the NAACP later publicly criticised McLeod for inaction in the case.[26]

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[23] Bruce E. Baker, *This Mob Will Surely Take My Life: Lynchings in the Carolinas, 1871-1947* (London: Continuum, 2009), 165, 191.
[24] Newkirk, *Lynching in North Carolina,* 79.
[25] Terence Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed: Lynching in Mississippi and South Carolina, 1881-1940* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 21.
[26] Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed,* 171-72.

It would have been almost unthinkable that a public apologist for lynching, such as Thomas Hardwick from Georgia or Theodore Bilbo from Mississippi, could have become influential in North Carolina politics. Indeed, North Carolina seemed to have resisted the slide towards the type of racist demagoguery that had characterised Bill Tillman's tyrannical reign in neighbouring South Carolina.[27] The difference between the two Carolinas, however, may have been more cosmetic than actual. Instances of sensational, extraordinary violence that were thwarted by the state government became important elements in the perpetuation of North Carolina's progressive narrative and helped to justify increasingly centralised government power at the state, but not federal, level. In January 1927, Angus Wilton McLean, governor of North Carolina between 1925 and 1929, gave a speech which praised the National Guard for its part in preventing extra-legal violence:

> During the short time I have been governor of the State I have had occasion several times to call upon the National Guard to uphold the law against mobs and lawless elements which were ready to nullify the orderly processes of the courts and thus trample underfoot the sovereignty of the people. Thinking in terms of the good name and fame of the State, I am sure that I am correct when I say that the prevention of one lynching is worth all the cost of maintaining a National Guard over a long period of years.[28]

In the autumn of 1925, a series of alleged rapes in Asheville resulted in whites blaming local African-American men and, in the midst of the hysteria, the Buncombe County jail was raided by a white mob attempting to abduct Alvin Mansel, an African-American prisoner being held on suspicion of rape. Mansel had, however, already been moved to Charlotte by the sheriff, who had foreseen trouble. In November, the National Guard were sent to Asheville to keep the peace during the subsequent trial of Mansel and another African-American defendant.[29] The following February, McLean issued a statement explaining why he had refused to parole the 15 white men sentenced for raiding the Buncombe County jail:

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[27] On this point see Gregory P. Downs, "University Men, Social Science, and White Supremacy in North Carolina," *Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 2 (2009): 288.

[28] Angus Wilton McLean, "Budget Message," 6 January 1927, in *Public Papers and Letters of Angus Wilton McLean* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Company, 1931), 126. Accessed via North Carolina Digital Collections, State Archives of North Carolina.

[29] Kevin W. Young, "'The Largest Manhunt in Western North Carolina's History': The Story of Broadus Miller," in *Blood in the Hills: A History of Violence in Appalachia,* ed. Bruce E. Stewart (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 343-44.

> The prisoners sought to destroy the very process of government upon which they now rely… I have been much gratified at the outstanding evidence which we have seen in North Carolina in the last few months that our people are determined to suppress mob violence at any cost… No man can calculate the damage that may be done to the good name and fame of North Carolina by even one lynching, and the only way to suppress lynching is to let those who engage in it understand that they will be punished and punished severely…[30]

In both statements, McLean's preoccupation with the state's 'good name and fame' is clear, suggesting a concern to reassure commercial boosters and investors while also justifying state power and pre-empting calls for federal intervention. The language of law and order tended to feature a rhetorical focus on extraordinary violence. Because it was so prominent and notorious, extraordinary violence was in many ways easier to act against than ordinary violence, which was low-level and so usually remained under the radar of white political discourse. Although McLean was proud of state apparatus for preventing murder in the Buncombe County jail incident, such instances of thwarted lynching essentially carried the same degree of threat as completed lynchings, and would probably have had a similar effect on the mind-set of those in the local black community who saw or heard of them.[31]

McLean's focus on social reform was based largely on concerns over public relations. He had won his gubernatorial campaign in 1924 with the help of Furnifold Simmons, the Democratic leader who had also backed Cameron Morrison's campaign in 1920. Throughout his term as governor, McLean was generally conservative on social and welfare matters, whether they pertained to working-class whites or blacks. While the upsurge of extraordinary violence in the post-war period had presented a challenge to elite whites' reliance on civility, their subsequent focus on condemning extraordinary violence was a relatively easy, low-cost way to promote and further North Carolina's progressive mystique while leaving genuine social reform largely unaddressed.

In McLean's statement on the thwarted raid on the Buncombe County jail in 1926, he particularly praised the 'splendid effort on the part of the sheriff and other

[30] Angus Wilton McLean, "Assault on the Buncombe County Jail," 10 February 1926, in *Public Papers and Letters of Angus Wilton McLean,* 559-61.
[31] Brent M.S. Campney, *This Is Not Dixie: Racist Violence in Kansas, 1861-1927* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 3.

officers of Buncombe County.' Certain local police chiefs seem to have aligned themselves with the stance of the state government on the matter of the prevention of mob violence in the 1920s. In June 1922, near the small town of Thomasville, outside Winston-Salem, a local police chief prevented a mob of around 2,000 whites lynching an African-American man.[32] In December 1927, the Wayne County sheriff successfully held off a mob that was attempting to kidnap a black prisoner in Goldsboro. During the subsequent murder trial of this prisoner, one Larry Newsome, the family of the alleged victim again tried to seize Newsome, leading to further confrontations and prompting the deployment of National Guard units to maintain order during the trial and sentencing.[33]

Given that southern police officers often aided lynch mobs in this period, either actively or passively, it is difficult to know what motivated those officers who did resist mobs. As Fitzhugh Brundage has pointed out in relation to Georgia, by the mid-1920s the public anti-lynching sentiments of journalists, clergy, and business interests meant that state authorities and law enforcement officers were increasingly pressured into making substantive efforts to curb the most flagrant forms of extraordinary white violence. Ultimately, over the period between 1914 and 1924, law enforcement officers across the South became less and less likely to allow lynchings to take place.[34] Almost inevitably, however, gaps persisted between the rhetoric of southern governors and the practical steps taken to protect vulnerable African Americans. The gathering momentum behind efforts to curb lynching did not necessarily mean that law enforcement was always available to prevent mobs when they gathered. Nor did it mean that police officers could be relied upon to resist mobs when they encountered them.

Unlike the officers in Asheville, Thomasville, and Goldsboro who protected black prisoners, some North Carolina police officers continued to actively collude in the perpetration of racial violence. In Raleigh in 1926, an African-American merchant and his assistant were beaten by a 'masked band' of at least eleven white men which allegedly included a deputy sheriff.[35] In July 1926, a chain-gang superintendent was put on trial by state authorities in the Albemarle area, east of Charlotte. Nevin Cranford was charged with the murder of two black convicts who had been working under his

[32] "Negro Taken by Chief from Mob," *New York Call*, 7 June 1922. NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 21.
[33] "Sheriff Refused [to] Let Mob Execute Wayne Co. Negro," *The Free Press,* 10 December 1927; "Militia Averts Court Lynching as Bullets Fly," *New York Herald Tribune,* 12 December 1927; NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 15.
[34] Brundage, *Lynching in the New South,* 239, 364 (n. 102).
[35] "11 Indicted In N.C. In Flogging Case," *The Sunday Record* (Columbia, South Carolina), 19 December 1926, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 30.

supervision. According to the UNIA's *Negro World*, over the course of the investigation into Cranford's conduct other cases of the mistreatment of black prisoners came to light and the trial had to be moved to another area because of the suspicion that 'local police had a part in the case.'[36] In Kinston in September 1928, a police officer assaulted a local African-American woman in what may have been one in a series of attacks in the Kinston area.[37]

In August 1927, the *Chicago Whip* ran a report from Bailey, a small Piedmont town between Wilson, Rocky Mount, and Raleigh. A man named Thomas Bradshaw, accused of a 'statutory offence,' had run away from his police escort and been chased for three days by dogs before eventually being killed in the woods. The *Chicago Whip* article, based on reports of events from the local press in North Carolina, suggests that although the death was being attributed to the foxhounds that chased Bradshaw, it may actually have been the police who killed the prisoner with firearms. The *Whip* article reported that, prior to running, Bradshaw had asked to be allowed to pray, 'apparently thinking he was about to be lynched.'

There was uncertainty in anti-lynching circles about whether to include within definitions of lynching those deaths that came about as a result of evading arrest.[38] The *Whip* article hinted that the local media in North Carolina tried to dodge the question of the extent of police complicity in the death, indicating that the pressure of public opinion and the state's reputation dictated that the police could not be seen to be involved in the killing of an African-American prisoner. In scenes reminiscent of the public-spectacle lynchings of previous decades, however, a large crowd of local people came to view Bradshaw's body before the coroner arrived to inspect it, but 'Nobody seemed particularly curious about the identity of the man or men firing the shots…,' instead, 'The dogs did it. That was the consensus of opinion…'[39]

The murder in Bailey can be seen as part of a wider trend in the changing manifestation of southern white violence, a shift which was identified and articulated by the NAACP's Walter White. By the late-1920s, according to White, public and official disapproval of lynching was growing and instances of lynching seemed to be reducing in frequency. But, 'the practice was developing, we learned, of suppressing the news

[36] "Negro Convicts Done to Death in North Carolina," *Negro World*, 24 July 1926, 2.
[37] David Warren, "Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World*, 29 September 1928, 8.
[38] On the issue of whether to include deaths at the hands of police within definitions of lynching, see Kevin W. Young, "'The Largest Manhunt in Western North Carolina's History,'" 340-79; Christopher Waldrep, "War of Words: The Controversy over the Definition of Lynching, 1899-1940," *Journal of Southern History* 66, no. 1 (2000): 89-90.
[39] "Mob Trails Man Who Escaped and then Lynch Him," *Chicago Whip*, 20 August 1927, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 8. This incident is also recorded as a lynching by the University of North Carolina's *Red Record* project.

of lynchings or reporting such mob murders as instances of criminals being killed by "posses." This new strategy required increased alertness and considerably more effort to ferret out the crimes and establish their authenticity.'[40] This new 'practice' by lynch mobs was brought about by the pressure of campaigns by state governments to crack down on mob violence, as well the growing tendency of white journalists and liberals to publicly condemn lynching.

The nature of anti-black violence in turn sheds light on the tensions within North Carolinian whiteness. The police officers who abetted mobs would likely not fall under the category of 'liberal' whites, such as the journalists, academics, and politicians who publicly condemned lynching, and this suggests that notions of how white supremacy should be upheld and reinforced varied between different groups of white North Carolinians. As some police officers clearly perceived it to be their duty to do the state's bidding and protect black prisoners while others actively colluded in anti-black violence, it may be that the police force represents fractures in the white community about whether to support or condemn anti-black violence. Ultimately, it is extremely difficult to know precisely what factors motivated the actions of individual police officers. The fact that the police were at times involved in perpetrating anti-black violence, however, highlights the fact that Governor McLean's pride in North Carolina's law enforcement was misplaced and was perhaps even an intentional misrepresentation for the purposes of public relations. Furthermore, the evidence of police brutality that has survived may only be the tip of the iceberg of police involvement in anti-black violence in the 1920s.

Under certain circumstances, the state government could undoubtedly be effective at deterring mobs intent on extraordinary violence, but the centralised power of the governor and of the National Guard nonetheless remained largely powerless to prevent individual, random instances of violence in local communities that could erupt anywhere and at any time for no significant reason. Police protection was unreliable at best. In the minds of many in the African-American community, police forces in the South were associated with decades of repression and even with white control during

[40] Walter White, *A Man Called White: The Autobiography of Walter White* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1949), 102. Historians Neil McMillen, Patricia Bernstein, and Herbert Shapiro have also noted this trend of lynchings increasingly being covered up by complicit white communities in the later-1920s and 1930s, see Neil R. McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 249; Herbert Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 205-07; Patricia Bernstein, *The First Waco Horror: The Lynching of Jesse Washington and the Rise of the NAACP* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006), 178-79.

slavery.[41] As Patricia Bernstein has written, southern boosters had realised that instances of gruesome lynching worked against an area's ability to attract investment, but 'since the motivation for abolishing the massive-scale spectacle of lynching was *not* primarily moral in nature, the end of public lynchings did not meant the end of violence against blacks.'[42] Although lower South states, particularly those in the cotton belt, were more infamous for extraordinary white violence against African Americans, it is not clear that black North Carolinians would necessarily have felt any safer than black Georgians or black Mississippians. Sensational violence such as thwarted lynchings played a significant part in the perpetuation of that climate of fear. The ongoing problems of ordinary violence and increasingly underground extraordinary violence meant that African Americans would need to look to the inner-strength and resilience of their own communities to provide a sense of security.

The UNIA enters urban North Carolina

UNIA organisers were sent into several southern states in 1921, including Arkansas, Louisiana, Georgia, and Tennessee, and several senior organisers spent a number of months in various parts of North Carolina. The problems of violence, intimidation, and exploitation preyed on the minds of North Carolinian Garveyites. In 1920, the Reverend C.W. Cheek of Nash County told the UNIA convention in New York City of the 'injustices and other troubles of our people in this section of the country, chief of which…is complete submission and subserviency to the white man[,] in all things his unjust, cruel and harsh domination over them.'[43] In November of the same year, local UNIA members in the town of Spring Hope expressed their willingness to fight to resist a case of injustice against a prominent local African American who had been imprisoned for injuring a white woman.[44]

Senior UNIA officer E.L. Gaines, who had served in the American Expeditionary Force in World War I, travelled to North Carolina early in 1921. As well

[41] On African-American views of the police and the historic tendency of southern police forces to be complicit in anti-black violence, see Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 218; Robin D. G. Kelley, "Thug Nation: On State Violence and Disposability," in *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis led to Black Lives Matter,* ed. Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton (London: Verso, 2016), 22; Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016) 107-33.
[42] Bernstein, *The First Waco Horror*, 178-79; see also Campney, *This Is Not Dixie*, 7.
[43] "Report of the Convention [Liberty Hall, New York, Aug. 4, 1920]," in Robert A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume II, 27 August 1919-31 August 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 531.
[44] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 60-61.

as his general organising duties, Gaines had official responsibility for overseeing the development of the African Legion nationwide. He visited Asheville in February 1921, evidence that UNIA activity in the southern interior was underway in some places before Marcus Garvey's return to the US in June of that year. According to the *Asheville Citizen,* the local white newspaper, Gaines promoted the UNIA to African Americans on the basis of African repatriation and because it could 'bring the negroes in closer relationship with one another.' On 20 February 1921, the Asheville UNIA had 111 members, yet had only been in existence for a few days.[45]

Asheville soon had its own African Legion unit, as well as a Black Cross nursing auxiliary and a 'motor corp.' All these units were to be deployed at Gaines' farewell dinner at the town's Young Men's Institute on 25 February.[46] The *Asheville Citizen* apparently did not disapprove of the activities of 'military members' of Asheville's UNIA division, perhaps because a farewell banquet was seen by whites to be something of a harmless pageant. Overall, such reporting in the press suggests that the UNIA was not seen as particularly radical by white onlookers; the organisation's African repatriation agenda and its focus on separatist community organisation is the kind of messaging that would have been acceptable to many whites.

The subtle, separatist messaging which the organisation used in public allowed the UNIA to organise African Americans for community uplift and even self-defence while not provoking the hostility of white supremacists. By the end of February, the Asheville UNIA division reported a membership of 154. The people who supported the UNIA in Asheville were drawn from a broad occupational cross-section, including janitors and carpenters, as well as real estate agents and small business proprietors.[47] When viewed in terms of the variety of occupations held by local members, it is difficult to see a clear difference between the types of people who supported the NAACP and those who supported the UNIA at local level in Asheville. Between February 1921 and May 1922, the *Asheville Citizen* published reports of both NAACP and UNIA meetings, showing that the two organisations were active at the same time in the city over a period of at least a year. Both the UNIA and the NAACP often used the Young Men's Institute as the venue for their respective meetings.

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[45] "Local Negroes Form Marcus Garvey Unit," *Asheville Citizen,* 20 February 1921, 3.

[46] "Local Negroes Form Marcus Garvey Unit," *Asheville Citizen,* 20 February 1921, 3.

[47] Information about the occupational backgrounds of NAACP members and Garveyites in Asheville has been gained by cross-referencing United States federal census data with lists of members' names in the UNIA's weekly *Negro World* newspaper between 1921 and 1923, and with the NAACP's membership list for the Asheville branch in 1918 which is in Box I: G-146 of the NAACP Papers, folder 7, Asheville, 1915-1929.

The Asheville UNIA's president was Edward W. Pearson, the real estate agent who had been president of the city's NAACP branch between 1918 and 1919.[48] Pearson offers an example of direct crossover between the NAACP and the UNIA at local leadership level. It becomes difficult to trace any NAACP activity in Asheville between May 1922 and May 1926, and Pearson's apparent switch in allegiance may have been due to rivalries within the leadership ranks of the city's black community.[49] After a time serving as the UNIA's state organiser for North Carolina, early in 1922 Pearson was accused by the UNIA leadership of misappropriating funds raised from members of the organisation in the state. Pearson's fall from grace followed that of the Reverend J.D. Brooks, who had been the UNIA's secretary general and one of its most important organisers in North Carolina. In August 1921, formal charges were brought against Brooks for misappropriation of the organisation's funds.

In early-May 1921, Asheville's UNIA division was visited by one of the organisation's most charismatic leaders. Originally from North Carolina, the Reverend James Eason was arguably the most influential orator and organiser in the UNIA aside from Garvey himself. Eason, an AME Zion minister, had been given the title 'Leader of American Negroes' by the UNIA to reflect his popularity among African Americans. His visit would have been a major event for Asheville's Garveyites. In July 1922, the division again hosted E. L. Gaines, the African Legion leader who had initiated the branch in February 1921.[50] Gaines' visit may have been an attempt to shore up support for the UNIA in North Carolina after the financial scandals that had recently developed around E.W. Pearson and J.D Brooks.

The NAACP also continued to meet in this period, holding what the *Asheville Citizen* described as 'regular monthly meetings,' and ultimately it is unclear exactly what became of the Asheville NAACP branch between May 1922 and May 1926.[51] Given the UNIA's strong start in the city, it may be that the UNIA out-competed the NAACP there, particularly in the light of Edward Pearson's defection from the NAACP to the UNIA. Asheville's black community may have found the UNIA's focus on community development and solidarity more appealing than the NAACP's narrower

[48] "Marcus Garvey Movement A Success Here," *Asheville Citizen*, 27 February 1921, 15.

[49] For hints about intra-racial tensions in Asheville in this period, see E.W. Pearson to the secretary of the NAACP, 20 June 1919, NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, Box I: G-146, folder 7, Asheville, 1915-1929.

[50] "Itinerary of Captain E. L. Gaines – State of North Carolina," *Negro World*, 29 April 1922, 5.

[51] The information about UNIA and NAACP meetings in Asheville in this period comes from the following press reports: "Marcus Garvey Movement A Success Here," *Asheville Citizen*, 27 February 1921, 15; "Big Meeting at Y.M.I Today," *Asheville Citizen*, 6 March 1921, 8; "Colored Meeting," *Asheville Citizen*, 26 April 1921, 2; "Meet Friday Night," *Asheville Citizen*, 21 July 1921, 9; "Advancement Body To Stage Meeting," *Asheville Citizen*, 25 March 1922, 3; "Colored Association," *Asheville Citizen*, 14 May 1922, 19.

programme, and some may have struggled to continue to pay the NAACP's membership fee. One particular strength of the UNIA's approach was that non-members were generally welcome to attend local meetings, meaning that the organisation had the flexibility to draw in even more support than its official membership might suggest. In 1924, the Ku Klux Klan chose Asheville as the venue for one of its national conventions. Shortly after the Klan meeting, the city council decreed that blacks would no longer be allowed to use the drinking fountains in the city centre, fountains that had customarily been shared between blacks and whites. This ruling led to an upsurge in ordinary anti-black violence in the city which saw several African Americans attacked by whites.[52] Such events are crucial context for understanding the appeal of the African Legion in cities like Asheville.

In April 1924, the national office of the NAACP wrote to Frank Hines, the director of the US Veterans' Bureau, to lodge a complaint about racial discrimination at the Oteen US Veterans' Hospital in Asheville. The NAACP's letter alleged that the African-American veterans in the hospital were being discriminated against and that a petition had been raised by the white patients demanding the removal of the black patients to the veterans' hospital at Tuskegee, Alabama. The NAACP's letter alleged that this discrimination had been 'stirred up' by local elements of the Ku Klux Klan, and claimed that 'we have in our possession a Ku Klux Klan threat sent to one of the colored patients.' The case had been the subject of a 'personal investigation' by NAACP secretary James Weldon Johnson.[53] The association's national office used this case to protest against Klan influence, creeping segregation, and general racial discrimination, but there is no mention of any activism on this matter by the local NAACP branch in Asheville. Overall, it seems that the Asheville branch was inactive between 1922 and 1926.

While the NAACP's national-level activism was still important in the mid-1920s, the association at the grassroots level in North Carolina was struggling to retain its support-base. This grassroots struggle can be explained by a number of different factors, including the threat of white hostility, a general loss of momentum after the association's rapid expansion during and immediately after World War I, the costs of and rules about membership, and the increasingly centralised nature of its campaigns. Although NAACP investigations dealt with injustices arising in specific localities, these cases were often taken up at the national level by a central team of lawyers and

[52] Richard D. Starnes, "'A Conspicuous Example of What is Termed the New South': Tourism and Urban Development in Asheville, North Carolina, 1880-1925," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 80, no. 1 (2003): 77-78.

[53] NAACP Assistant Secretary to Frank T. Hines, 28 April 1924, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 7.

specialists. A review in the *Crisis* of the association's activities in 1925 gives details of the NAACP's legal battles against school segregation in Indiana, Kansas, and Philadelphia; in challenging residential segregation ordinances in Washington D.C., New Orleans, and Norfolk, Virginia; in offering legal counsel to African Americans who had been attacked by mobs in Detroit and in Staten Island, New York; and in lobbying for the federal anti-lynching bill then being considered by Congress.[54]

Although protesting extraordinary white violence and providing legal assistance in cases of violence remained among the association's main priorities by the mid-1920s, its work in this area had failed to produce the long-hoped for anti-lynching legislation. This failure was the fault of southern senators in Congress rather than of the NAACP as such. Nonetheless, the campaign's inability to achieve its goal must have concerned many among the NAACP's grassroots membership, while violence against black North Carolinians remained a problem. The central office's decision to focus on its larger branches probably did not immediately harm the branches of urban North Carolina. The policy nonetheless meant, however, that branches did not have as much backing from the central office if they did start to struggle, and the association did not have as wide a grassroots following in the state as it probably could have done, had it been more willing to support and encourage interest in smaller settlements.

NAACP decline and UNIA growth on the North Carolina Piedmont

Although the Piedmont industrial city of Winston-Salem had hosted a large NAACP branch in 1918, there is very little trace of its activities after late-1918. The *Winston-Salem Journal* carried one small report of an NAACP meeting at the Mount Zion Baptist Church on Sunday 4 March 1923, listing the names of its president, secretary, and assistant secretary.[55] In March 1925, however, the central office of the NAACP was informed that the Winston-Salem branch 'has held no meetings since Mrs Hunton visited it some years ago,'[56] and the branch may have become inactive sometime after March 1923.

The Winston-Salem division of the UNIA, on the other hand, would quickly become the most vibrant local division in North Carolina. Marcus Garvey sent organiser Arnold Cummings to Winston-Salem in September 1921 to initiate a

[54] "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – The Year 1925," *Crisis*, March 1926, 229-33.
[55] "N.A.A.C.P. Meets," *Winston-Salem Journal,* 5 March 1923, 8.
[56] Robert Bagnall to Mr G.R. Derr, 13 March 1925, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-150, folder 15, Winston-Salem March - July 1925.

recruitment drive there. Cummings' work in the city proved successful and the Winston-Salem division's UNIA charter was officially unveiled in a ceremony at the city's AME church on 18 September. A speech was given at the charter ceremony by the Reverend D.O. Walker, which provides an example of the fine line that UNIA orators often walked between conciliation and confrontation. 'The Negro doesn't seek to destroy peace or sow discord… he seeks his human rights on this earth…' Walker went on to say that African Americans should not '…always endure the most horrible reward of lynching and being burned alive at the stake… Freedom is what we must have. Anything that's worth having is worth fighting for. The Negro seeks no quarrel; he seeks the rights that are enjoyed by all citizens everywhere, the Negro is going after them at all hazards.'[57]

Walker's oratory utilised a characteristic UNIA rhetorical style of duality and ambiguity, of combining talk of fighting and 'going after' rights with reassurances about not seeking outright confrontation. This rhetorical approach reflects the need of local and national leaders to both mobilise a support-base and appease white onlookers if necessary. Walker's emphasis on racist violence is also notable. His invocation of the imagery of lynching was another common rhetorical tactic of UNIA orators and one that shows how the UNIA often used extraordinary white violence as the problem against which blacks could unite. A popular African Legion unit was also formed in Winston-Salem.

The *Negro World* ran several reports over 1921 and 1922 about the successful development of the Winston-Salem UNIA. In one update, sent by the Reverend J.J. Mumford in February 1922, reference is made to the 'financial crisis' which was then afflicting Winston-Salem. Mumford admitted that this crisis meant that 'many who would like to connect themselves to the association cannot conveniently do so at present.'[58] The UNIA, however, seemed to have allowed for more flexibility in their membership rules than the NAACP. The UNIA was willing to grant charters to new southern divisions with far fewer initial numbers, allowing the organisation to spread the word and gather local supporters gradually and without requiring immediate commitment. In 1925, for example, one Winston-Salem Garveyite explained that the city's division had 'become a popular meeting place for interested non-members and friends of the movement.'[59]

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[57] A.A. Mayfield, "The U.N.I.A. in Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World,* 15 October 1921, 10.
[58] Reverend J.J. Mumford, "News from Winston-Salem Div., U.N.I.A.," *Negro World*, 4 February 1922, 10.
[59] J.H.R. Gleaves, "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World*, 28 February 1925, 8.

While precise fluctuations in membership numbers over time are difficult to track, by 1925 Winston-Salem was almost certainly home to the largest concentration of Garveyites in North Carolina, with the UNIA's central office reporting almost 200 paid-up members in the city.[60] East Winston, the city's segregated black residential area which lay to the north and east of the Reynolds factories, was cramped, over-crowded, and generally poor, but it nevertheless very likely provided a prime setting for separatist organising. Based purely on types of occupation, the Winston-Salem division's membership represented an array of occupational backgrounds. The working-class occupations included factory workers, general laborers, and domestic servants. A number of middle-class occupations are also represented, however, including several clergymen, a physician, a grocery store owner and a music teacher.

Around 20 Winston-Salem Garveyites were factory workers between 1921 and 1924, about half of whom can be confirmed as having worked in the city's tobacco factories, including the division's president in the mid-1920s, H.C. Holland. Although these are small numbers on which to generalise, the city's NAACP branch in 1918 only listed two members who were employed in the factories, out of a total membership of 50.[61] The UNIA therefore may have been more effective at reaching out to Winston-Salem's industrial workers, and to its black working class in general. One of the division's 'organisers' in the 1920s was Ren Oates, president of the Tobacco Workers' International Union. While the UNIA could not provide the city's black industrial workers with opportunities to strike or put direct pressure on employers for better working conditions and wages, those industrial workers who joined the UNIA may have seen in the organization a chance to secure fellowship and solidarity at work, as well as access to welfare and general community support that they were generally denied in their interactions with their white co-workers, bosses, and leaders.[62]

As context for the apparent synergy between the UNIA's programme and the concerns of black labour in general, Robin Jenkins, in her analysis of the UNIA in the San Francisco Bay Area in the early-1920s, has argued that Garveyism 'was the primary organizational structure for Black labor [in the Bay Area] and as such reflected

[60] Robert A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume V, September 1922-August 1924* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 657 (n. 4).

[61] See NAACP branch file for Winston-Salem in 1918, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-150, folder 14, Winston-Salem 1913-1922; various UNIA membership listings in the *Negro World* between 1921 and 1924. These sources were cross-referenced with the 1920 federal census to gain an insight into occupations.

[62] In reference to the UNIA members who worked for the Ford Motor Company in Detroit in this period, Beth Tompkins Bates has written that 'what part of the UNIA message resonated with the majority of Ford workers will probably remain a mystery.' See Beth Tompkins Bates, *The Making of Black Detroit in the Age of Henry Ford* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 71-72.

a political marriage of Black nationalism and working-class politics.'[63] Earl Lewis and Claudrena Harold have similarly found considerable support for the UNIA among working-class industrial workers in southern coastal locations such as Norfolk and Hampton, Virginia, New Orleans, Louisiana, and Miami, Florida, while the port cities of Mobile, Alabama, and Charleston, South Carolina, also had thriving UNIA divisions based largely on the support of urban black labourers.[64]

Harold sees the large proportion of black industrial workers in the factories of Winston-Salem as important to Marcus Garvey's initial decision to target the city in September 1921, and it is almost certainly no coincidence that Winston-Salem quickly became the largest site of Garveyism in North Carolina.[65] Although Garvey and the UNIA leadership were not interested in directly engaging with trade unions or organised labour as such, there nevertheless seems to have been a strong synergy between disaffected black labourers and the UNIA's focus on group solidarity, community-based organising and economic uplift away from the oversight of whites.

The Winston-Salem UNIA division was visited by William Sherrill, the organisation's vice-president, in February 1924 and again in 1925. During his first visit Sherrill gave a speech to the gathered Garveyites entitled 'Why the Negro Should Build a Nation in Africa,'[66] a title no doubt devised to present an element of the UNIA's separatist programme which would be acceptable to white onlookers. In September 1924, Marcus Garvey visited the city, with the *Winston-Salem Journal* announcing, 'whatever your opinion of the Marcus Garvey movement may be there is one thing certain and that is this: he has united more colored people together than any other living human being and that is going some [sic].' This subtly sympathetic presentation of the UNIA suggests that H.A. Wiseman, the reporter who wrote the *Journal*'s regular column, 'News of Colored People in the City and County,' may have been African-American. Garvey addressed the UNIA in the Lincoln Theatre at 3pm on Sunday 21 September, after the UNIA faithful had gathered to 'form a line and march to the theatre under the direction of captain J.G. Goode,' who oversaw the city's African Legion unit.[67]

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[63] Robin Dearmon Jenkins, "Linking up the Golden Gate: Garveyism in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1919-1925," *Journal of Black Studies* 39, no. 2 (2008): 266-80.

[64] Earl Lewis, *In Their Own Interests: Race, Class and Power in Twentieth Century Norfolk, Virginia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 73-74; Claudrena N. Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South, 1918-1942* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 93; Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 86.

[65] Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South,* 21.

[66] "The U.N.I.A.," *Winston-Salem Journal*, 12 February 1924, 7; "William L. Sherrill to Speak Here," *Winston-Salem Journal*, 30 August 1925, 9.

[67] H.A. Wiseman, "Hon. Marcus Garvey," *Winston-Salem Journal*, 21 September 1924, 7.

Within the pages of the *Negro World* there are numerous and regular mentions of the Winston-Salem division's African Legion. The Legion was reported to be expanding in 1925, and seems to have played a ceremonial role in formal community events such as the funerals of division members.[68] The month after Garvey's visit to the city, the Winston-Salem division was addressed by E.L. Gaines, the national head of the Legion.[69] As in Asheville, there are no specific records of the local African Legion being involved in direct confrontations with whites. Given the city's relatively recent experience of extraordinary white violence in the form of the 1918 massacre, however, the presence of a strong African Legion unit should be seen as an important aspect of the UNIA's appeal to Winston-Salem's African Americans.

The Raleigh division of the UNIA was founded in 1921 after a visit by organiser H. Vinton Plummer.[70] By July of that year, the division had a uniformed African Legion unit and a Black Cross nursing auxiliary,[71] and by 1923, the division had at least 30 members, although, as noted above, the lists of donors published in the *Negro World* likely represent only a small proportion of actual members and supporters at any one time. The Raleigh division claimed at least three clergymen among its numbers, as well as several labourers, again showing that the occupational backgrounds of urban UNIA members were diverse. E.L. Gaines and James Eason both visited the city in 1922, with Eason addressing a crowd of around 600 people.[72] Such visits by senior UNIA figures may well have been a response to the accusations of financial misappropriation against E.W. Pearson and J.D. Brooks.[73] Over the course of June and July 1922, Gaines visited thirteen UNIA divisions across North Carolina, including Raleigh, Asheville, and Winston-Salem.[74]

Charlotte was another of Gaines' destinations in July and, following his visit, the Charlotte division's secretary reported that Gaines 'stirred the city throughout. I think our division can get in a working condition now…'[75] Although membership information on the Charlotte UNIA division is frustratingly lacking, a few members are listed as donors in the *Negro World* in 1924, and there had clearly been some UNIA

[68] J.H.R. Gleaves, "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World*, 18 April 1925, 8; H.C. Holland and J.H.R. Gleaves, "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World*, 27 June 1925, 6; J.H.R. Gleaves, "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World*, 25 July 1925, 6.
[69] "Address Sunday by Noted Negro Orator," *The Twin-City Daily Sentinel*, 7 July 1922, 12.
[70] J.A. Bailey, "H. Vinton Plummer, Director of Bureau of Publicity, visits Raleigh, N.C. Division," *Negro World,* 24 December 1921, 10.
[71] "Raleigh, N.C.," *Negro World,* 2 July 1921, 9.
[72] "Itinerary of Captain E.L. Gaines – State of North Carolina," *Negro World,* 29 April 1922, 5.
[73] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 63.
[74] "Itinerary of Captain E.L. Gaines, *Negro World,* 29 April 1922, 5.
[75] D.M. Rorboro, "Capt. E.L. Gaines in Charlotte, N.C.," *Negro World*, 5 August 1922, 11.

Fig. 4: Map of main urban UNIA divisions in North Carolina in the 1920s

activity in the city during Gaines' visit in 1922, so it is reasonable to assume that Charlotte had a UNIA division between at least 1922 and 1924. The NAACP on the other hand, seems to have struggled in Charlotte from around 1923 onwards. In March 1924, the NAACP's central office noted that its Charlotte branch had 'failed,' although the central office did not seem to know exactly why, and the next mention of a branch there does not appear until 1927.[76] Overall, although it is not clear from membership information whether people directly left the NAACP to join the UNIA, it seems likely that, given the time frame in which the NAACP declined and the UNIA grew in urban North Carolina, the UNIA's presence and vibrant organising style provided a challenge to the ongoing viability of local NAACP branches.

By the time Marcus Garvey visited Raleigh in October 1922 to give a speech at the North Carolina Negro State Fair, the overall picture for the UNIA in the Tar Heel State was encouraging. Garvey had been invited to speak at the fair by Berry O'Kelly, a prominent local businessman and educator. O'Kelly had co-founded the National Negro Business League with Booker T. Washington, had links with Robert Moton, Washington's successor at Tuskegee, and served on the committee of the North Carolina State Interracial Commission.[77] O'Kelly, however, did not seem to have perceived a contradiction between his commitment to interracial activism and his direct role in providing a public platform for Garvey's separatism.

Garvey's speech on 25 October, in front of around 500 local African Americans, caused a stir in both the black and white communities. In an address that lasted around an hour, Garvey criticised African Americans for not making more progress as a race when compared to whites. He blamed this lack of material progress on a lack of effort and organisation. Garvey's speech seemed to both admonish African Americans for failing to improve their conditions while exonerating the white South of responsibility for the conditions of life for many blacks. Consequently, reaction to the speech was pronounced, from both black and white commentators. The correspondent covering the speech from the white Raleigh *News and Observer* was impressed by how Garvey had successfully gained the attention of blacks and whites and found favour in both camps. 'White citizens who had heard him [Garvey] described as a dangerous agitator were amazed to hear him to declare that the Southern white had been and is the only real friend the negro has in the world, and that the Northern white who denounced the South for negro oppression was a liar.'[78] Not only did Garvey speak to white North Carolina's carefully cultivated self-image of paternalism and

[76] NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-146, folder 24, Charlotte 1919-1928.
[77] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism*, 68.
[78] "Negroes Must Work Out Own Destiny, Says Garvey," *News and Observer*, 26 October 1922, 1.

benevolence, he also managed to appeal to the white South's sense of antipathy towards supposedly condescending northern onlookers.

For African Americans, the apparent scolding they had received carried a double meaning, for the content of the speech, while wrapped up in the language of accommodation, had allowed Garvey to engage his black audience on subjects such as violence, group cohesion, and even self-defence, subjects which could rarely be openly discussed by blacks in a public forum in the South.[79] It was other black leaders who were the most critical of the speech, failing to fully grasp what Garvey had attempted in Raleigh through his subtle and innovative combination of vitriol and accommodation. Seeing that Garvey's accommodationist language appeared to absolve the white South of responsibility for the bleak realities of life for southern African Americans, black leaders such as A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen denounced Garvey in stinging public attacks in the press.[80]

Despite the venom aimed at the organisation by its rivals, however, by 1923 the UNIA was continuing to grow in popularity across the South in a way that other black organisations at the time struggled to do. The *Negro World* had a growing readership and the UNIA's rhetoric and tactics had ensured that the organisation had not provoked the hostility of southern whites in the way that the NAACP had done after World War I.[81] In North Carolina, local NAACP branches seem to have all but disappeared by 1923, leaving the UNIA to emerge as the race organisation of choice for many blacks in the state's cities and towns. It is very likely that the UNIA's success in the South in this period was the root cause of much of the anti-UNIA sentiment among other black leaders and organisations, none of whom could rival the mass mobilisation achieved by the UNIA in the early- and mid-1920s.

Despite the opportunities, however, this period was not without its problems and challenges for the UNIA at the national and the local level. 1922 saw the escalation of tensions within senior levels of the UNIA leadership. Most notably, a bitter feud had developed that year between Garvey and James Eason, the UNIA's 'Leader of American Negroes.' Although Garvey and Eason were probably the UNIA's two most effective orators, Eason had started to see Garvey as too dictatorial and, conversely, Garvey had begun to view Eason as a threat to his personal authority.

[79] Rolinson makes this point directly in relation to Garvey's speech in Raleigh on 25 October 1923, see Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism*, 69.

[80] Such denunciations of Garvey were increasingly focusing on the fact that Garvey was originally from the Caribbean rather than the United States. For examples of the rhetorical criticisms levelled at Garvey by other black leaders and intellectuals after his speech in Raleigh in 1922, see Colin Grant, *Negro with a Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey* (London: Vintage Books, 2008), 354-55; Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 68-69.

[81] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism*, 70.

Consequently, during the UNIA convention in August 1922, Garvey convinced the delegates to expel Eason from the UNIA for life. Eason, however, refused to quietly retire and, in September 1922, he announced the formation of the Universal Negro Alliance, an organisation that aimed to directly compete with the UNIA. Although Eason's goal of rivalling the UNIA was always going to be difficult to achieve, his challenge to the UNIA's primacy was not taken lightly by the UNIA's leadership, mainly because of Eason's ability and reputation as a powerful orator and because of his widespread popularity among southern African Americans.

Even after his expulsion from the organisation, however, Eason was seen by some as too much of a threat to be allowed to continue speaking out against Garvey and the UNIA. On New Year's Day 1923, he was shot in New Orleans during an ambush by UNIA gunmen. Eason died from his injuries in hospital three days later, although not before saying that he was convinced that his attackers had acted under specific orders to prevent him from testifying against Garvey at his impending fraud trial. There is no conclusive proof that Garvey specifically ordered Eason's murder. Either way, however, the death of Eason certainly removed a former ally who had become one of the UNIA's most determined opponents.

Further controversy for the UNIA had erupted in June 1922, when Garvey travelled to Atlanta to hold a meeting with Edward Young Clarke, the 'Imperial Wizard' of the Ku Klux Klan. Garvey's plan was apparently to establish an entente with southern white supremacists by playing up the idea that both the Klan and the UNIA wanted the same thing: African Americans to withdraw from American society. The subsequent furore that this move created among the ranks of America's black leadership has been extensively covered by historians, but its relevance here lies in the part that the Klan meeting played in the development of the UNIA's southern strategy. Garvey's engagement with the Klan can undoubtedly be seen as a part of the accommodationist strategies that characterised his 'retreat from radicalism' after 1921. As has been discussed above, however, other UNIA leaders did not necessarily shy away from highlighting the problems of anti-black violence and often advocated self-defence. James Eason had specifically named the Klan as being symbolic of the need for community self-defence and addressed this topic several times in his UNIA speeches in the early-1920s.[82] In June 1920, for example, Eason had given a speech that highlighted in lurid terms the need for self-defence:

[82] Grant, *Negro with a Hat*, 343-44.

> …you better take means to protect yourself because the ghoulish mob is going to cower you… when our race is suffering everywhere; when our women are crying because of being separated from their husbands by the angry mob; when children are crying for their mothers' attention because the midnight assassin has destroyed their homes; when blood is running rivers throughout this land…[83]

James Eason's concern about the problem of anti-black violence raises questions about how the black clergy, both in the UNIA and in general, may have engaged with this subject. At the 1920 UNIA convention in Harlem, Eason and the Reverend J.D. Brooks, both of whom would go on to be influential in UNIA expansion in North Carolina, had convened a session specifically to allow southern delegates to discuss the problem of white violence in the South. During the convention, UNIA leaders and delegates composed the Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World. The Declaration announced, 'In certain parts of the United States of America our race is denied the right of public trial according to other races when accused of crime, but are lynched and burned by mobs,' and declared that 'the Negro should adopt every means to protect himself against barbarous practices inflicted upon him because of his color.'[84]

Historian Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham has written that, between 1880 and 1920, black churches were the most effective organisations through which African Americans mobilised and galvanised their communities.[85] The role of the black clergy in UNIA expansion in the South was hugely significant. This is something that has been noted by most of the historians who have studied the organisation. The vast majority of southern African-American church-goers in this period were either Baptists (around 60 percent), or belonged to the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) or the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AME Zion) church (around 20 percent).[86] In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the Baptist and AME churches had supported emigrationist societies, such as the American Colonization Society, who were interested in helping African Americans to emigrate to Africa. It has been suggested that some of the strongest local UNIA divisions in the South emerged in

[83] "Speech by James W.H. Eason, 26 June 1920," in Randall K. Burkett, ed., *Black Redemption: Churchmen Speak for the Garvey Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978), 59-61.
[84] Robert A. Hill, ed., *Marcus Garvey - Life and Lessons: A Centennial Companion to The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 43, 46.
[85] Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1.
[86] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 46.

those places where support for emigration societies had been strongest over the preceding four decades, including the Arkansas and Mississippi deltas, coastal areas of Virginia, Georgia, and the Carolinas, and the all-black communities in Oklahoma.[87]

Church leaders recognised that black communities needed to develop secular vehicles to address social challenges, particularly during the upheaval of the first wave of the Great Migration. Consequently, local branches of organisations like the NAACP and the National Urban League were often created with the active assistance of the black clergy.[88] Although it remains difficult to make firm assertions about the social class character of black church denominations, Robert Korstad has suggested that, in Winston-Salem, black churches were places where class differences were lessened and 'working-class sensibilities often prevailed.' This meant that tobacco labourers and domestic workers could also be well-respected lay preachers.[89] In Durham, Leslie Brown has argued that the community work undertaken by the women of black church congregations had the potential to cut across class lines through common enterprises such as missionary circles and women's church organisations.[90]

Although the AME church was officially ambivalent towards working with the UNIA, at the local level many AME clergy and laypeople seem not to have perceived a contradiction in being involved in both the AME church and the UNIA.[91] Although all the black denominations promoted, in their different ways, notions of 'racial self-help,' it was the black Baptist movement that had the most notably racial nationalist tendencies between 1880 and 1920.[92] Baptists in particular were known for their commitment to local autonomy and personal morality, meaning that grassroots Baptist clergy had a high degree of independence and the ability to react to local conditions.[93]

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[87] Jarod Roll, "Garveyism and the Eschatology of African Redemption in the Rural South, 1920-1936," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 20, no. 1 (2010): 34.

[88] C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 9.

[89] Robert Rodgers Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the mid-Twentieth Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 86-87.

[90] Leslie Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham: Gender, Class, and Black Community Development in the Jim Crow South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 102. On the role of women in black church associations in North Carolina after disfranchisement, see Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 152.

[91] On the AME church's relationship with the UNIA, see Randall K. Burkett, *Garveyism as a Religious Movement: The Institutionalization of a Black Civil Religion* (London: The Scarecrow Press, 1978), 136; James T. Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 301. For an example of the AME church criticising the UNIA, see "The Garvey Movement and the American Negro," *Star of Zion*, 8 September 1921, 4, Library of Congress, microfilm section.

[92] Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent,* 6; Angela Hornsby-Gutting, *Black Manhood and Community Building in North Carolina, 1900-1930* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2009), 47.

[93] Burkett, *Garveyism as a Religious Movement*, 114.

Given the Baptists' leaning towards local autonomy and separatism, it is perhaps unsurprising that Baptist clergy represented one third of the 250 clergymen who worked with the UNIA between 1921 and 1923. Of the others, one fifth were AME, one fifth African Orthodox, and one twelfth AME Zion.[94] One of the main reasons behind the success of Garveyism was its ability to speak to the concerns and hopes of a variety of southern black church members, congregations, and denominations, many of whom were already sympathetic to concepts of separatism and racial self-help.[95]

Lists and reports in the *Negro World* reveal that at least 22 clergymen were members of UNIA divisions in North Carolina between 1920 and 1936, with the majority being involved between 1921 and 1928. At least eight of those 22 North Carolinian ministers served as division presidents or secretaries. Some of the most prominent examples include the Reverend W.M. Allen, president of the Raleigh division between 1921 and 1927; the Reverend H.E. Edwards, a Baptist minister who was the founding president of the Wilson division in 1921; and the Baptist Reverend J.A. Miller, president of the Winston-Salem division between 1921 and 1923. Similarly, at least 29 clergymen were members of local NAACP branches in North Carolina between 1918 and 1930, most of these in the immediate post-war years.[96]

Writing about activism in the black church in the post-World War II period, Allison Calhoun-Brown has highlighted the wide variety of opinion that existed among the black clergy with regard to the most appropriate and effective ways for churches to be involved in the struggle for social change, explaining that the different black churches 'occupied every position on the continuum of involvement with the Civil Rights Movement.'[97] Black clergy in the interwar period were also positioned along a continuum of different opinions about how best the black church should be involved in seeking justice. What does seem clear, however, is that in the cases of both the UNIA and the NAACP in urban North Carolina, supportive clergymen were often present at local level, sometimes in proportionately large numbers, and sometimes serving as officers of local branches and divisions.

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[94] Burkett, *Black Redemption*, 9.

[95] On the ways in which Garveyism meshed with and built on African-American religious preferences and traditions, see Hill, *Garvey Papers, I,* xliv-xlv; Roll, "Garveyism and the Eschatology of African Redemption," 35; Burkett, *Garveyism as a Religious Movement*, 63; Burkett, *Black Redemption*, 6; Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 46.

[96] Information on clergy as members of UNIA divisions has been collated from the lists and reports in the UNIA's *Negro World* newspaper and from the various volumes of Hill, *Garvey Papers*. Information on clergy as members of NAACP branches is based on the North Carolina branch files in the NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, and on NAACP records held in the North Carolina collections of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, Charlotte, North Carolina.

[97] Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Upon This Rock: The Black Church, Nonviolence, and the Civil Rights Movement," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 33, no. 2 (2000): 174.

One issue which Garveyite clergy often spoke out about was that of white violence against African Americans, with many clergy seeing the wave of post-World War I violence as a sign that white America could not be trusted to deliver justice and that, consequently, black Americans must look to their own communities for strength.[98] In October 1923, the Baptist preacher Jacob Slappy, from South Carolina, told UNIA supporters in New York, 'those people who believe in prayer, let them pray, but let us who believe in fighting fight like the devil…'[99] Although not all black clergy would have been nearly as militant as Slappy in their messaging about self-defence, white violence was a problem that the clergy often engaged with. The *Star of Zion* newspaper, the official organ of the AME Zion church, published in Charlotte, frequently featured reports on lynching statistics and on the NAACP's attempt to persuade Congress to pass a federal anti-lynching law. The problem of white violence was one that would continue to shape black activism in North Carolina as African Americans faced the changing political terrain of the late-1920s.

By 1927, there were at least 600-700 Garveyites in North Carolina, although this figure is probably lower than it would have been when the state's new divisions were receiving their charters in 1921.[100] Overall, these members formed around 59 individual divisions across the state.[101] According to Mary Rolinson's analysis of the phases of organisation of southern UNIA divisions, the vast majority of North Carolina's divisions were organised between August 1920 and the end of 1921.[102] Many of these were small divisions in minor settlements, the fortunes of which are extremely difficult to track. The UNIA divisions of North Carolina's larger towns and cities, however, had substantial memberships which drew on a wide cross-section of the African-American population. It is clear that, in the case of Asheville, the UNIA and the NAACP were both active in the city for around eighteen months between roughly early-1921 and mid-1922, and a similar situation existed in Winston-Salem between 1921 and mid-1923. Overall, however, it seems very likely that meaningful NAACP activity faltered in Asheville, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, and Raleigh in the mid-1920s. Despite its weak presence at local level in the mid-1920s, the central office of the NAACP continued to collect evidence of extraordinary white violence from across the South.

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[98] Burkett, *Black Redemption,* 17.
[99] "Liberty Hall Cheered and Inspired by Disclosures Made Regarding Africa," *Negro World*, 27 October 1923, 3.
[100] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism*, 200.
[101] This figure has been gained from lists and reports in the *Negro World*, as well as by cross-referencing with the findings of Mary Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism*, 197.
[102] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism*, Appendix D, 202.

Meanwhile, the UNIA's *Negro World* printed reports of incidents of southern racial violence, most of which seem to have occurred in Mississippi and Georgia, but there is a notable lack of militant language in its treatment of these stories. Although there are exceptions, the *Negro World* tended instead to simply report examples of southern anti-black violence in the late-1920s, without the particular calls for self-defence which had often characterised the organisation's messaging in the immediate post-war years and in the early-1920s. This may have been partly due to Garvey's 'retreat from radicalism' in mid-1921, as well as a general awareness among the UNIA's senior leadership that the *Negro World* was being monitored by the Bureau of Investigation. Given the success of the UNIA at grassroots level across the South by 1926, however, the *Negro World*'s writers and editors may have felt no need to take risks, preferring instead a strategy that utilised moderate language, safe in the knowledge that the organisation was already doing well in the South.

At a series of meetings in 1928, UNIA members in the town of Kinston, which was a centre for tobacco distribution and the seat of Lenoir County, discussed the problem of white violence. In April, the division's president gave an address about the Wilmington 'race riot' of 1898,[103] showing how the collective memory of historic extraordinary violence could be used to foster group solidarity. In September, a meeting opened with a discussion of 'Kinston's latest outrage – committed against a Negro woman, whom Policeman Evans unmercifully beat…'[104] During a meeting the following month, 'Mrs Lula Smith, our head nurse, came forth with helpful suggestions relating to the organizing of a legion [African Legion unit]. After stating that the captain of a legion must be an army trained man, Mr S.M. Grady presented a new member, who, he said, is "an army man."'[105]

The Kinston division's reference to the town's 'latest outrage' suggests that there may have been other recent cases of ordinary anti-black violence by local whites in the area. That the suggestion of an African Legion unit was taken up by the head of the division's Black Cross nurses indicates that the Legion and the nurses were two contrastingly gendered sides of the same self-defence coin.[106] As discussed in the previous chapter, this situation points generally to the way that many black women in

[103] David Warren, "Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World*, 21 April 1928, 6.
[104] David Warren, "Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World*, 29 September 1928, 8.
[105] David Warren, "Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World*, 27 October 1928, 8.
[106] Barbara Bair has written that the Black Cross Nurses and the African Legion were 'two contrasting constructions of gender,' and represented 'dichotomous sets of genderized values which can be listed under the headings of "motherhood" and "militarism."' See Barbara Bair, "True Women, Real Men: Gender, Ideology, and Social Roles in the Garvey Movement," in *Gendered Domains: Rethinking Public and Private in Women's History,* ed. Dorothy O. Helly & Susan M. Reverby (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 157.

the grassroots UNIA may have seen their roles in race activism; that is, as different from yet complementary to those of black men in a way that often mirrored traditional gender roles. Black Cross nurses were trained to provide healthcare education and medical services to the black community but, given the role of nurses generally in conflict scenarios, the nurses may also have seen themselves as partners in the African Legion's symbolic physical resistance.

Although the Black Cross nurses represented an opportunity for black women to stake a claim to equality in race work and to continue a long heritage of black women's community activism, the nature of the UNIA's gender hierarchy meant that the nurses were likely seen by UNIA men primarily as helpmates, an extension of the domestic roles of wife and mother.[107] Black women in the UNIA held a range of views on the role that women should play in the movement; many did not necessarily demand complete equality for women in the movement but did assume that men and women had different yet complementary roles to play in race activism, which could include women helping men where necessary.[108] Despite the limitations of the source material, then, it may be that the comments of the Black Cross nurse in Kinston in 1928 can be read in such a light.

In general, a lack of source material makes it difficult to gain insight into the views of black women in North Carolina's UNIA divisions.[109] The women's section of the *Negro World* was entitled 'Our Women and What They Think' and was edited by Marcus Garvey's second wife, Amy Jacques Garvey. As historian Ula Taylor has written, the contributions to this section from women supporters and members of the UNIA shows that some women:

> …agreed with Jacques Garvey that black women should stand beside black men but not be afraid to challenge them in the struggle for liberation. Other women only partially concurred with her position. They felt that their role was to be exclusively in the home and their function

[107] Martin Summers, *Manliness and Its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 123, 138.
[108] On this point see for example Bair, "True Women, Real Men," 155 and 160; Ula Y. Taylor, *The Veiled Garvey: The Life and Times of Amy Jacques Garvey* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 78; Keisha N. Blain, " 'We Want to Set the World on Fire': Black Nationalist Women and Diasporic Politics in the *New Negro World,* 1940-1944," *Journal of Social History* 49, no. 1 (2015): 205.
[109] Women made up a significant proportion of the memberships of North Carolina's urban UNIA divisions, with some holding leadership positions, particularly in Winston-Salem. For more details see Appendix D, 199-208.

> was solely to raise their children to be conscious citizens and support their husbands as they engaged the struggle for black liberation.[110]

Taylor has referred to Jacques Garvey's personal vision of activism and political agency as 'community feminism'; that is, it focused on 'assisting both the men and the women in their lives,' as well as helping black women to reconcile the dual roles of 'helpmate' and leader 'by exposing the underlying unity of the different approaches.'[111] Taylor notes that Garveyite women often sent articles to the *Negro World* challenging male dominance in the UNIA and in black activism more generally and reminding black men that they needed either to strive harder or relinquish their leadership positions.[112]

When it comes to ordinary and threatened violence (which could also be sensational), it is important to re-state that the agency of the Legion, and indeed of the Black Cross nurses, was not merely symbolic. As noted earlier, there are several examples of UNIA members' willingness to confront police and even to use weapons in self-defence, including in New Orleans in 1922 and Chattanooga in 1927, as well as in numerous cases in newspaper reports and Bureau of Investigation files from cities such as Philadelphia, Chicago, Miami, and New York City.[113] The Legion, however, did not necessarily need to physically confront whites in order to be a meaningful manifestation of the desire for protection, security, and civic separatism. Civic separatism allowed for both the exercise of a central right of US citizenship and the

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[110] Taylor, *The Veiled Garvey*, 78.

[111] Taylor, *The Veiled Garvey,* 64, 76; see also Kate Dossett, *Bridging Race Divides: Black Nationalism, Feminism, and Integration in the United States, 1896-1935* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008), 165-69; Erik S. McDuffie, "The Diasporic Journeys of Louise Little: Grassroots Garveyism, the Midwest, and Community Feminism," *Women, Gender, and Families of Color* 4, no. 2 (2016): 146-70; Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents,* 139.

[112] Taylor, *The Veiled Garvey,* 85.

[113] On the confrontation in New Orleans, see "Speech by Marcus Garvey (Liberty Hall, July 4, 1922)," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, I), V,* 694; "Report by Bureau Agent J. Tolivar, New Orleans, La. June 26, 1922," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, IV,* 681; Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (Dover MA: The Majority Press, 1976), 210 (n. 91). On the gunfight in Chattanooga, see "Chattanooga Police Invade Peaceful U.N.I.A. Meeting: Four Seriously Wounded," *Negro World*, 20 August 1927, 2; "Editorial in the *Chattanooga News* (Chattanooga, Tenn, Friday, August 5, 1927)," in Robert A. Hill (ed.), *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume VI, September 1924-December 1927* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 578; "Article in the *Baltimore Afro-American*, Chattanooga, Tenn, (13 August 1927)," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, VI,* 580; Hill, *Garvey Papers, VI*, 582 (n. 4). For examples of UNIA gun ownership and use in various northern and southern cities, see "Report by Mortimer J. Davis, 10th May 1923, New York," in *Marcus Garvey's FBI File (part 1),* 264-66; "Says Negro Society Works with Ku Klux," *Washington Post*, 1 February 1923, 1, 4; "Murder Won't Halt Garvey Trial Feb 5," *New York Times*, 13 January 1923, 14. On intra-racial UNIA violence in Miami, see Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South*, 77-79; Robert A. Hill, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume VII, November 1927-August 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), xli.

expression of a developing programme for political mobility based on race. Michelle Stephens has highlighted the significance of the UNIA's parody of Euro-American imperialist and nationalist imagery. Mimicry and parody of the hegemonic culture spoke more to citizenship aspirations than to separatism, and the African Legion was an important way to link 'empire's fetish spectacles and a new focus on investing modern political subjects as citizens in the nation-state.'[114] Furthermore, the pageantry inherent to the Legion's public performances (when they occurred) was a symbol of the discipline and preparedness of the men of the UNIA.[115] Such a view of the Legion's public appearances reinforces the idea that the organisation may have played on deterrent self-defence.

Martin Summers has argued that the African Legion 'counter-appropriated the rituals of high imperialism, thereby disrupting the dominant cultural stereotypes of black men,' a central part of the UNIA's attempt to construct a vision of black manhood based on labour and production. The Legion, furthermore, was a symbol of the 'respectability and militancy' of the organisation's racial nationalism.[116] The issue of 'respectability' was often a challenging one for African-American men to negotiate, as the term was usually described in terms of dominant white cultural values. Such values included the ideal of the family man as a patriarch who could protect his vulnerable wife and children from the dangers of the outside world.[117] African-American men undoubtedly attempted to assert their masculinity through their commitment to protecting black women, a stance which was very much encouraged in UNIA messaging and one which has to be understood in the context of the widespread sexual mistreatment of black women by white men in the South.[118] It is important to note, however, that black men in this period also constructed their masculinity on their own terms, in a variety of ways that were separate from attempts to resist the hegemony of whites.[119]

Historically, the lynching of black men and the abuse of black women by whites had served, in part, as a symbolic device to remove the ability of black men to act as protectors of their communities and, specifically, of their wives and children. Michael Kimmel has argued that the ability and willingness to fight in order to defend one's self can often be crucial measures of worth and of self-worth, and therefore of masculinity

[114] Michelle Ann Stephens, *Black Empire: The Masculine Global Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals in the United States, 1914-1962* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 97-98.
[115] Summers, *Manliness and Its Discontents*, 100.
[116] Summers, *Manliness and Its Discontents*, 99-101.
[117] Rachel Williams, "Response to Deborah Willis, "The Black Civil War Solider: Conflict and Citizenship,"" *Journal of American Studies* 51, no. 2 (2017): 341.
[118] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 138.
[119] Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents,* 289-90.

itself.[120] Although it is unclear to what extent black women necessarily wished to accept the protection of black men, the patriarchal family structure was nonetheless seen as a symbol of security by many black women as well as by men.[121] Indeed, the idea of protection for black women that was an important part of general UNIA discourse and philosophy represented an inversion of a history of exploitation and vulnerability suffered by black women, particularly in the South.[122] Black men seeking to project both a masculine and a respectable image needed to strike a difficult balance between being willing to deploy violence to protect their families, yet not being so closely associated with violent conduct that they appeared 'unrespectable' to outside observers, both white and black.

It is at the crossroads of respectability, masculinity, and security that the UNIA's civic separatism can best be understood. The African Legion, through its formal army-style dress and drill, spoke to a citizen's right to service and self-defence in a respectable and masculine setting. Although notions of 'respectability' tend to be more associated with the NAACP and other assimilationist organisations, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham has suggested that the politics of respectability served 'the dual goals of racial self-help and respect from white America.'[123] The UNIA was less concerned with gaining the respect of white America, but it was nonetheless fundamentally committed to a programme of uplift and self-help for black communities, even if the UNIA emphasised different elements of respectability from the NAACP.[124] The NAACP's version of respectability was essentially bourgeois in its attempts to engage with white civility on the issue of racial violence through middle-class concerns about loyalty and justice. The UNIA, on the other hand, represented a respectability that focused on group pride and solidarity, survival, and self-esteem.[125]

The UNIA's vision of black respectability did not require the vindication of white America. Such a vision may have been more working-class than that of the NAACP but, importantly, it was not essentially working-class and it could and did appeal to North Carolina's urban black middle class too. Overall, the African Legion should be seen as a crucially important part of the UNIA's ability to provide an outlet for black respectability in a separatist community context. The existence of African Legion units

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[120] Michael S. Kimmel, *The Gendered Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 277.
[121] Kevin K. Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 107.
[122] Bair, "True Women, Real Men," 156.
[123] Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent,* 14.
[124] Martin Summers argues that respectability 'was not antithetical to the self-determinationist discourse of the Garvey movement,' see Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents,* 247 (n. 55).
[125] Victoria W. Wolcott, *Remaking Respectability: African American Women in Interwar Detroit* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 95.

in Winston-Salem, Asheville, Raleigh, and Greensboro in the 1920s suggests that the UNIA's message of self-defence was an important part of the UNIA's appeal. That message, furthermore, did not necessarily require the use of violence in order to be relevant.

As noted throughout this chapter, although extraordinary violence ostensibly declined in North Carolina after 1921, reports of police misconduct against African Americans in the state in the mid- and late-1920s show that ordinary violence continued, often in the form of random and sometimes deadly attacks on individuals. Furthermore, instances of extraordinary violence were probably becoming more difficult to identify and monitor. The Klan presence in the state as well as instances of recurring police brutality all provide crucial contextual insights into why the UNIA's vision of civic separatism and of deterrent self-defence remained relevant in North Carolina several years after the post-war flurry of extraordinary violence. The changing conditions of the late-1920s, however, presented challenges to the UNIA's fortunes in North Carolina. Those challenges were not necessarily insurmountable for the organisation, but they nonetheless shed light on how black protest activism was changing in the state as the NAACP made efforts to re-establish itself at grassroots level.

The UNIA falters and the NAACP revives

By 1926, the UNIA divisions in Winston-Salem, Raleigh, and Charlotte still functioned, holding regular meetings and sending reports to the *Negro World*. It is difficult to gauge how successful the Asheville division was by 1927, as there are very few mentions of it between 1924 and 1926. Asheville's black activism scene seems to have been particularly fractious during the 1920s, with leaders such as Edward W. Pearson and W.P. Brooks being involved in both the NAACP and the UNIA and switching allegiance a number of times between 1918 and 1924.[126]

This situation suggests that, for grassroots campaigners eager to lead African-American activism in a particular area, the programmes of the UNIA and the NAACP may not have been seen as so very different, in a way that challenges the way the two organisations are often presented by historians. Edward Pearson had been forced to withdraw from the UNIA under a cloud in 1922, but wrote to the NAACP's head office

[126] E.W. Pearson to NAACP secretary, 20 June 1919; also see general papers in Asheville branch file for 1929, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 7.

in November 1924 offering to re-organise the Asheville NAACP branch.[127] A local activist called Alonzo McCoy also wrote to the association seven months later with a view to re-organising Asheville's NAACP branch. By May 1926, the Asheville NAACP had 45 members, including both Pearson and McCoy.

The reorganisation of the NAACP in Asheville by May 1926 meant that both the NAACP and the UNIA were operating there in 1926, even if the UNIA was probably on the decline.[128] NAACP secretary James Weldon Johnson had toured North Carolina in 1924 and spoken at several black colleges. He reported that North Carolina was 'a southern state in which the program of the NAACP can be carried out with great success.'[129] Although Johnson may primarily have engaged with middle-class opinion on this visit and might have been putting an optimistic spin on the situation in North Carolina, the association's head office decided that the area had potential for future organising efforts. In 1927, the NAACP's Robert Bagnall suggested that conditions had fundamentally changed in the South as a whole and that the climate of the late-1920s was different from that of the post-war years in ways which could be conducive to an NAACP revival in the region.[130]

It is important to consider the possible impact on the UNIA's grassroots progress of events at the national level in the mid-1920s. In June 1923, Marcus Garvey was found guilty of federal charges of mail fraud. Although the evidence against Garvey now seems flimsy, the prosecution was the culmination of a long political campaign by federal agencies to silence him. Having been convicted of defrauding his followers through sales of stock in the UNIA's Black Star Line shipping company, Garvey was given a five-year prison sentence and ordered to pay a fine of $1,000. Colin Grant has suggested that Garvey's imprisonment in 1923 precipitated a decline in UNIA membership, although there is nothing to directly suggest that this was the case in the urban divisions of North Carolina in 1923, with the possible exception of Asheville.

In general, UNIA supporters across the US and the world remained steadfastly committed to their leader throughout the period of his confinement in the Tombs prison in New York City. Letters from loyal UNIA supporters across the US poured into the Department of Justice and the office of the Pardon Attorney. On 16 July 1923, for example, S. W. Hawkins of the Winston-Salem UNIA division sent a telegram to the

[127] "Director of Branches to E.W. Pearson," 19 November 1924, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 7.
[128] Director of Branches to E.W. Pearson, 19 November 1924; Director of Branches to Alonzo L. McCoy, 1 June 1925; Application for NAACP charter for Asheville branch, May 1926, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 7; "Rehabilitation and Expansion Fund," *Negro World*, 4 September 1926, 6.
[129] Quoted in Hornsby-Gutting, *Black Manhood and Community Building in North Carolina*, 155-56.
[130] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 181-82.

Attorney General, Harry Daugherty, which was also signed by the chairman and treasurer of the division. Very similar in tone and content to telegrams sent by thousands of disaffected Garveyites across the country, the telegram protested against 'the injustice that has been done to Marcus Garvey…by his frame up conviction in New York and denial of bail pending appeal.'[131]

Three months after his initial sentence, it was announced that Garvey would be released on the proviso that $15,000 be paid for his bail. It was for this purpose that many Garveyites sent individual donations to the UNIA's head office, the lists of which were subsequently published in the *Negro World*. By February 1925, however, Garvey was back in prison, his appeal against his earlier conviction having been turned down, and this time he was sent to federal prison in Atlanta. During his incarceration there, Garvey attempted to continue to lead the organisation, mainly through correspondence with other leaders within the organisation but, by 1926, a rift had developed between Garvey and William Sherrill, the Acting-President General, which caused pro- and anti-Garvey factions to form in New York City in the midst of much acrimony.

Meanwhile, the US government was aware of the widespread discontent within the African-American community over Garvey's conviction and incarceration, an issue which Garveyites viewed as a symbol of oppression against an entire community.[132] President Coolidge, wary of the possible repercussions of such discontent, decided to commute Garvey's sentence and set him free, but only on the basis that he be immediately deported. On 3 December 1927, Garvey sailed from New Orleans on the SS *Saramacca,* bound for his homeland of Jamaica. He would never return to the United States.

The direct impact that Garvey's deportation had on UNIA divisions in North Carolina is difficult to discern. Given Garvey's charisma and his cult status among his followers, as well as his huge personal commitment to the organisation, his departure must have been a significant blow to North Carolinian Garveyites, as it was to UNIA members across the United States. Reports in the *Negro World* from the Charlotte division disappear after December 1926, a time which pre-dates Garvey's deportation but not his incarceration in Atlanta. In March 1927, on the other hand, the central office of the NAACP received an application for a new branch in Charlotte, complete with 50 names and the required membership dues.[133] Given that the NAACP charter was

[131] S.W. Hawkins to Harry Daugherty, 16 July 1923, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, box 3053, entry 112, National Archives II, College Park, MD. This record group contains dozens of similar letters from UNIA supporters across the United States on the subject of Garvey's conviction.
[132] Grant, *Negro with a Hat,* 410.
[133] "Application for Charter, Charlotte, NC," 9 March 1927, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 24.

applied for four months after the last mention of UNIA activity in Charlotte in the *Negro World*, it is conceivable that an NAACP revival in the city undercut the embattled UNIA.

The Asheville division may already have been on the decline by 1924 and it was not mentioned much in the *Negro World* after this point, although it was still operating in September 1926. Meanwhile, the UNIA division in Raleigh reported a 'great mass meeting' at its Liberty Hall at South and Harrington streets in April 1926, for which 'The hall was so crowded that not even standing room was to be had.' Although the division's long-serving president, the Reverend W.M. Allen, resigned in 1927, the division was still operating the following year.[134] There is little evidence of any substantial NAACP activity in Raleigh between 1918 and 1933 and the UNIA may have been relatively unchallenged in the state capital in the 1920s, although Raleigh's UNIA division becomes difficult to track in the *Negro World* after April 1928.

The Winston-Salem division, with its 200 members, sent regular updates to the *Negro World* about its meetings and activities throughout 1926, and although these reports were often quite formulaic, there are frequent mentions of large meetings which were sometimes led by the division's Black Cross nurses or its African Legion.[135] In March 1927, Thomas Brooks, the 'commissioner and organizer of North and South Carolina,' spent two days in the city, during which he gave 'one of the greatest addresses ever heard in Winston-Salem,' with the city's Liberty Hall 'packed to its doors.'[136] Reports from the city to the *Negro World* dry up somewhat between the middle of 1927 and the start of 1928, but it is difficult to know whether this brief lapse was due to organisational difficulties or something more mundane such as personnel change.

By 1928, then, the UNIA remained strong in Winston-Salem and Raleigh, but may have been in difficulties in Charlotte and Asheville. In the case of the struggling divisions, the available sources make it hard to know to what extent this was due to Garvey's departure from the United States, or whether it is attributable to developments at the local level, such as internal rivalries or the beginnings of an NAACP revival in the state. Ultimately, the explanation may lie in a combination of several of these factors. In the final two years of the 1920s and in the early-1930s, however, new or revitalised UNIA divisions would spring up in certain areas of North Carolina, providing Tar Heel Garveyism with a new surge of purpose and energy.

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[134] L.E. Grey, "Raleigh, N.C.," *Negro World,* 5 June 1926, 6; R.R. Hamilton, "Raleigh, N.C.," *Negro World,* 21 April 1928, 6.

[135] See the "News and Views of UNIA Divisions" section of the *Negro World* over the course of 1926 and early-1927 for regular reports from the Winston-Salem division; also Hill, *Garvey Papers, V,* 657 (n. 4).

[136] "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World,* 23 April 1927, 8.

This chapter has chronicled some of the ebbs and flows of both UNIA and NAACP fortunes in North Carolina in the mid-1920s, as well as suggesting some of the reasons for these changing fortunes. The chapter has also suggested that, although extraordinary violence ostensibly declined in the state after 1921, the lines between extraordinary and ordinary violence were becoming blurred by the increasingly underground nature of anti-black violence. This trend also applied across other areas of the South and must be factored in when considering the conditions of life for southern African Americans. The developing consensus among elite and middle-class whites that extraordinary violence was unacceptable was motivated largely by concerns about presenting a respectable image and did not extend to less visible ordinary violence, which continued in the state throughout the 1920s. Although the rhetoric of influential white North Carolinians encouraged a sense of dichotomy between the conditions of the lower South and the upper South, North Carolina's black community nonetheless lived in the shadow of past and current violence.

While Marcus Garvey's 'retreat from radicalism' formed a part of the UNIA's southern strategy, the views of grassroots Garveyites on self-defence and community protection were almost certainly informed more by the southern black community's accumulated experiences of and attitudes towards white intimidation, violence, and oppression. Black North Carolinians saw that community mobilisation and protection was possible through the vehicle of separatism, especially in segregated urban areas. The UNIA's broad vision of solidarity was a powerful means to provide a sense of community cohesion that could avoid directly antagonising white supremacists. The African Legion, furthermore, was able to address the specific concerns of urban UNIA supporters in the areas of security, respectability, and masculinity, largely through concepts of civic separatism and deterrent self-defence. The 1930s, however, would bring new levels of economic hardship and growing intra-racial class divisions, all of which would dramatically alter the dynamics of black protest in North Carolina.

Chapter Three

The post-Garvey world and the return of the NAACP, 1928-1940

It is generally agreed that after Garvey's deportation from the United States in December 1927, the American UNIA began to gradually decline. While largely true, this does not mean that the organisation at grassroots level immediately lost its influence or that local people did not strive to ensure that the UNIA had a future in the US. As this chapter will show, the UNIA in urban North Carolina made a concerted effort to maintain its local divisions after 1927 and even to create new ones. There can be little doubt, however, that by the mid-1930s the UNIA in North Carolina was nowhere near the force it had been ten years earlier, and an NAACP revival was evident by the late-1920s and early-1930s.

Both extraordinary and ordinary white violence continued to be a problem in North Carolina in the 1930s and the issue of lynching returned to the forefront of the public discourse on race relations in 1930 itself. After considering the fortunes of North Carolina's UNIA divisions from 1928 onwards, the chapter will then examine communist activism in the state in the late-1920s and early-1930s in the context of the Great Depression and the New Deal. Some suggestions will be offered as to why communism did not make more of an impact among African Americans in North Carolina. I suggest that this can be accounted for, at least partly, by considerations of the often-violent white hostility that surrounded the Gastonia strikes in 1929; the fact that communist organisers did not tend to focus on black workers in their own right; and the influence of middle-class black leadership on the state's activism scene. Although scholars including Glenda Gilmore and Gregory Taylor have examined the overall impact of left-wing and communist organising in the South generally and in North Carolina specifically, I here explicitly examine the extent to which such left-wing organising engaged with problems of anti-black violence in the state and how this engagement may have differed from what came before and after.[1]

I argue that the widening intra-racial class fractures of the Depression era facilitated the NAACP's increasing focus on middle-class issues such as teacher salaries and desegregation in higher education. The NAACP saw itself as offering a moderate alternative to communism, despite not engaging sufficiently with the economic and social problems then being faced by the black working class in North

[1] See Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008); Gregory S. Taylor, *The History of the North Carolina Communist Party* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009).

Carolina. The NAACP's programme, combined with the decline of the UNIA's community uplift agenda, meant that African-American activism in North Carolina became increasingly focused on the concerns of the black middle class. Although communist activism provided brief hope for a revival of working-class black activism, communism ultimately had only a limited effect among black North Carolinians and the NAACP was able to move to the foreground.

The UNIA in North Carolina after Garvey

After Marcus Garvey's deportation in 1927, the UNIA ran fewer appeals for funds from its support-base and consequently far fewer lists of donors were published in the *Negro World*. For historians, this removes one of the most effective ways to partially reconstruct the memberships of local UNIA divisions. Nonetheless, some UNIA divisions in North Carolina did experience success in the post-Garvey world even while some that had existed in the early- and mid-1920s, such as those in Asheville and Charlotte, seem to have faded away.

The UNIA division in the town of Kinston is an example of thriving Garveyite activity after 1927. Kinston, the seat of Lenoir County, is located around 30 miles inland from the coastal town of New Bern. The Kinston UNIA division sent extremely regular updates to UNIA headquarters between 1927 and 1931 and, throughout the middle months of 1928, was the only North Carolina division to do so. Kinston was a significant enough site of Garveyism for S.A. Haynes, the UNIA's 'High Commissioner for Virginia and the Carolinas,' to hold a regional meeting there in March 1928. This meeting aimed to 'formulate plans for a bigger and better U.N.I.A. in North Carolina.' Around 300 people attended the meeting, the first session of which was held at Kinston's Freewill Baptist Church. Delegates from the Goldsboro and Winston-Salem divisions spoke at the gathering, as did Captain E.L. Lighty, an officer of the Greensboro division's African Legion.[2]

Haynes' visit to the upper South was almost certainly part of a general effort by the UNIA leadership to galvanise local divisions in the wake of Garvey's deportation. Haynes visited Kinston again in June 1928, perhaps using it as a base for further organising visits across North Carolina. Later that month, a new UNIA division was established in Spencer, a Piedmont town between Charlotte and High Point. One of the first to have signed up for the new division was the Reverend J.S. Daniels, pastor

[2] David Bryant, "Comm. Haynes Holds Successful Regional Meet in Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World,* 24 March 1928, 6.

of the Shady Grove Baptist church, who joined the UNIA despite 'hostile criticism from his colleagues and officers of his church.'[3]

Although no further details about the Spencer division's activities exist, Daniel Warren of the Kinston division gave an insight into one of the factors which may account for the fluctuating fortunes of smaller UNIA divisions in North Carolina in this period. Warren reported in September 1928 that many local Garveyites had recently returned to Kinston after spending the summer working on outlying tobacco farms, and 'a revival of Garveyism marks their return.'[4] This insight into the seasonal nature of participation in UNIA divisions by working-class blacks offers a rare insight into how the organisation may have operated in North Carolina's smaller settlements. In places such as Kinston, many working-class African Americans probably held rural agricultural jobs in the spring and summer, and jobs based in manufacturing and processing at other times of the year.

This pattern of itinerant labour, based on seasonal employment where agriculture and industry could be found within a relatively small geographic area, clearly had an impact on the size of the Kinston UNIA division, which seems to have fluctuated depending on whether or not it was tobacco-harvesting time on the farms. Overall, however, the UNIA in Kinston experienced sustained success through 1930. There was a unit of the Black Cross nursing auxiliary attached to the Kinston division by the late-1920s.[5] The division seems to have struggled after 1930, however, before being revived by Mr and Mrs C. Edwards. By 1936, the division was reported by S.A. Haynes as having 'a bright future and the Edwards have made it progressive and constructive.'[6] As will be shown, however, North Carolina's UNIA divisions were generally struggling by the mid-1930s and Haynes may have been attempting to put a positive spin on the situation for the sake of the organisation's morale.

In July 1928, UNIA divisions from Salisbury, Kinston, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem staged a large parade through the town of Salisbury. Arriving in a fleet of cars and buses, 'A mighty horde of Garveyites with colors streaming invaded this staid and sophisticated community…' The bands of the divisions played while the African Legion and the Black Cross nurses marched, in scenes reminiscent of the

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[3] John Littlejohn, "Spencer, N.C.;" David Warren, "Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World,* 23 June 1928, 6; Priscilla Ross, "Spencer, N.C.," *Negro World,* 25 August 1928, 6.

[4] David Warren, "Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World,* 8 September 1928, 6.

[5] David Warren, "Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World*, 27 October 1928, 8; "Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World*, 13 April 1929, 3.

[6] "Report of Activities in UNIA Divisions and Garvey Clubs by Samuel A. Haynes, 2109 W. Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia, [ca. March 1936]," in Robert A. Hill (ed.), *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume VII, November 1927 - August 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 670-71.

large UNIA conventions in Harlem in the early- and mid-1920s, albeit on a smaller scale. The meeting included a large open-air rally in the grounds of Livingstone College and finished with a baseball game. The organisers extended thanks to the mayor of Salisbury, to the chief of police for 'looking after the safety of the visitors,' and to the *Salisbury Evening Post* for 'free publicity and favorable comments.'[7] This picture of apparent harmony with the white community, even if its extent may have been exaggerated, is an insight into how successfully the UNIA could operate in the South by trading on its separatist credentials in a way that white onlookers would find non-threatening. The show of strength and unity evident in the Salisbury parade indicates the ongoing presence of a vibrant UNIA counterpublic on the North Carolina Piedmont and complicates the view of the UNIA as fading from sight with Garvey's departure from the US in December 1927.

Garveyites from the Piedmont city of Greensboro participated in the parade in Salisbury in July 1928 having only just re-organised their own division. S.A. Haynes was credited for organising the revival alongside several committed local activists. Haynes gathered 35 young people into what he referred to as the 'Garvey Club':

> …the majority of whom were drawn from the student role of Bennett College, the local high school, Sedalia Institute, and the A. and T. college. It is chiefly through the activities of the club that the division is able to keep alive, as most of the old members who got weak and discouraged are now returning, and we anticipate a bright future.[8]

Haynes' tactic of bringing in students to re-energise a failing division seems to have been an astute way of benefitting from the black educational establishments in the urban area around Greensboro, which also bordered on the cities of Winston-Salem and High Point. How typical this tactic was during late-stage UNIA organising in the urban South, however, is difficult to ascertain from the existing sources. The Greensboro division moved into a brand new Liberty Hall on South Ashe Street and the first meeting there was held on 17 June, at which 'the hall was packed with local visitors and friends and a delegation of legions and nurses from Winston-Salem.'[9] The Greensboro division had its own branch of the African Legion in the 1928-1930

[7] W.E. Agnew, "Salisbury, N.C.," *Negro World,* 21 July 1928, 6.
[8] S.P. Whitman, "Greensboro, N.C.," *Negro World*, 14 July 1928, 6.
[9] S.P. Whitman, "Greensboro, N.C.," *Negro World*, 14 July 1928, 6.

period[10] which, along with the Legion from Winston-Salem, meant that the Triad area, comprising the cities of Winston-Salem, Greensboro and High Point, was a hub of African Legion strength during the UNIA's late stage.

Despite the longevity of its African Legion unit, which had endured since 1921, the Winston-Salem UNIA division encountered difficult times in the late-1920s and early-1930s. S.A. Haynes helped the division out of a 'misunderstanding' in August 1929, which had meant that it had stopped sending its previously-regular reports to the *Negro World*. The division boosted its membership in November of that year while adding two new officers to its African Legion. By March 1930, however, the division was reporting 'troubles within and without,' and a total membership of just 40.[11] The division cited class differences within the black community as one of the main reasons why African-American businesses could not get established:

> If the Negro businessman would show interest in the masses of his race, he would have less failure and more business. It is the masses that spend many thousands in this and all other cities each week… The U.N.I.A. offers the only solution to assure our continual success. You could help yourself and your race by making your local U.N.I.A. a success here in Winston-Salem… Let each and everyone get busy: forget about classes, forget about false pride, drop all of your differences, and join the folds of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, and build for your race and yourself a name that will not die… We must either rise together, or fall separately.[12]

The Winston-Salem division's appeal for racial unity over class interests is indicative of the wider economic context of the early-1930s. As Leslie Brown has pointed out with reference to Durham, North Carolina, the economic impacts of the Great Depression increasingly highlighted differences of wealth, status and of political preference between different classes of African Americans.[13] Robert Moton, of Tuskegee Institute,

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[10] David Bryant, "Comm. Haynes Holds Successful Regional Meet in Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World,* 24 March 1928, 6; Iona Lee Caldwell, "Greensboro, N.C.," *Negro World*, 16 November 1929, 3; "Kinston, N.C.," *Negro World*, 26 April 1930, 3.

[11] "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World*, 10 August 1929, 3; B.W. Floyd, "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World*, 2 November 1929, 3; Daisy Campbell, "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World*, 3 March 1930, 3.

[12] "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World*, 12 April 1930, 3.

[13] Leslie Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham: Gender, Class, and Black Community Development in the Jim Crow South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 308. The growing importance of class issues over racial unity within the black community as a result of the Great Depression has also been noted by Lee Sartain in his study of women in the NAACP in Louisiana. See Lee Sartain, *Invisible*

was aware of this problem and suggested that the African-American middle class needed to be strengthened in order to reduce the gulf between increasingly differentiated sections of black society.[14] Despite the Winston-Salem division's call for racial solidarity above class interests, S.A. Haynes' tactic in Greensboro of targeting students, the future middle class, suggests a willingness to respond to and exploit class divisions. Haynes' approach may also have been a response to the NAACP's strategy, discussed below, of focusing increasingly on the concerns of the educated black middle class.

Further evidence of the growing differences of opinion between black activists comes from July 1930, when the Winston-Salem division launched a new 'practical program.' This program:

> …may be some inspiration to some other struggling divisions of the U.N.I.A… The president, J.H.R. Gleaves and his faithful group of co-workers have modified the time honored program which consisted of a monotonous repetition of previous programs that became boring to the public… the adoption of a working program is also gratifying and is growing in popular favor with those who have not understood that the objects and aims of the organization were not to take them to Africa, as many have thought, but to lay a foundation in racial improvement wherever they may chance to live, and that the organization rather means Negro uplift along all lines.[15]

This report gives an insight into the tensions, only obliquely alluded to over the previous months, which had developed among Garveyites in the city. The reference to the 'faithful group of co-workers' who developed a new programme suggests that different factions had developed, one of which preferred the original programme for UNIA divisions, which traditionally included a strong focus on repatriation, the quasi-religious Universal Negro Ritual, and the Black Star Line, and the other of which favoured a less rigid structure. Particularly striking in the 'new program' is the disavowal of repatriation to Africa for black Americans, one of the UNIA's most famous aims at the time and one that has received much attention since. This disavowal,

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Activists: Women of the Louisiana NAACP and the Struggle for Civil Rights, 1915-1945 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 57-58.

[14] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham*, 308.

[15] F.D. Foxworth, "Practical Program of U.N.I.A. Launched by Winston-Salemites," *Negro World,* 12 July 1930, 3.

however, is almost certainly a re-writing of the organisation's aims by a certain faction of Garveyites with their own priorities to promote.

The wrangling that was going on in Winston-Salem in 1929-1930 was to some extent indicative of a wider power struggle over visions for the UNIA's future, as well as a re-orientation of the organisation's goals in the difficult times that followed Garvey's deportation. The fragmentation of the UNIA at the national level was rapidly becoming clear. During his time in prison in Atlanta prior to his deportation, Garvey had lost faith in William Sherrill, the UNIA's acting president-general, believing that Sherrill was secretly scheming against him and seeking to build his own power base within the organisation. In February 1926, Garvey ordered a public denunciation of Sherrill to be published in the *Negro World.* Further to this, Garvey called an emergency convention to be held in Detroit, rather than in Harlem, the traditional site of UNIA conventions, because Harlem had by 1926 become a centre of support for Sherrill's leadership. Tense stand-offs followed in Harlem between Garvey loyalists and Sherrill supporters. In March 1928, three months after Garvey's eventual deportation, Laura Kofey, an influential UNIA organiser who had formed a popular offshoot of the UNIA in Miami, was shot dead during a meeting, probably by a Garvey loyalist, in what was widely rumoured to have been an ordered execution.[16] Following Garvey's move to Jamaica, the tension between the Jamaican and the US wings of the UNIA resulted in violence in 1929 when the African Legion's Harlem unit, known as the 'Tiger Division,' led by 'street leader' Sergeant William Grant, clashed with the more conservative Garvey Club in New York City.[17]

In this context of nationwide factionalism and upheaval, a main priority for those promoting the UNIA at local level was almost certainly an attempt to make the organisation more relevant to the everyday concerns of local people. The fact that the report from Winston-Salem's new guard of Garveyites, sent in 1930, was published in the *Negro World* suggests a tacit approval at editorial level for their programme. In Winston-Salem, at least, the prospect of the return to Africa apparently no longer spoke to the lives and priorities of local African Americans. By July 1930, Garveyites in Winston-Salem were providing a number of community support services for blacks in the area, including a night school, a free legal consultancy, and an employment bureau.[18] Such initiatives indicate the attempts of Winston-Salem Garveyites to respond positively to the challenging economic conditions of the early-1930s.

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[16] Hill, *Garvey Papers, VII*, xli; Colin Grant, *Negro with a Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey* (London: Vintage, 2009), 420.
[17] Hill, *Garvey Papers, VII,* xli; Grant, *Negro with a Hat*, 221, 420.
[18] *Negro World,* 12 July 1930, 3.

In late-November 1930, the city's division reported its success over recent months. How much of this report is positive spin is impossible to say, but the African Legion was apparently still active in June 1930.[19] Overall, the UNIA in Winston-Salem, home to the largest concentration of Garveyites in North Carolina in the mid-1920s, struggled during the early-1930s. It was 'revived' in 1936, however, and was probably still sporadically active by the late-1930s, making it perhaps the longest-lived of North Carolina's UNIA divisions.[20]

S.A. Haynes' 1936 report about the Winston-Salem division's revival may also shed light on how other UNIA divisions in North Carolina refocused their energies in the difficult times after the departure of their leader. As well as divisions being revived in Greensboro, Kinston, and Winston-Salem, Haynes reported that the Wilson division '…boasts of a grocery store and a splendid nurses unit… Rocky Mount, led by that prince of men, Rev. John A. Hunter, aided by a noble band of Christian women and men, operate a large farm… The divisions in Bailey and Supply are purchasing properties and farmland.'[21] A general emphasis on separatist economic self-sufficiency had always been a feature of the UNIA, but this specific focus on buying land for farming feels very different from Garvey's calls in the 1920s for African Americans to organise around African redemption, community protection, the Black Star Line, and black-owned businesses. The new focus on farming and sustenance activities was almost certainly designed to address the subsistence problems faced particularly by working-class African Americans who had been hit hard by the impacts of depression. This strategic shift also reflects the decline of the previously strong urban divisions in some of North Carolina's major cities like Charlotte, Asheville, and Winston-Salem. In Winston-Salem and Asheville particularly, it seems that intra-racial rivalries impaired the viability of the UNIA's programme and strategies.

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[19] "Winston-Salem, N.C.," *Negro World,* 21 June 1930, 3; "Winston, Salem, N.C.," *Negro World,* 29 November 1930, 3.

[20] "Report of Activities in UNIA Divisions and Garvey Clubs by Samuel A. Haynes," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, VII,* 670-71; Robert A. Hill (ed.), *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume V, September 1922 - August 1924* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 657 (n. 4). Mary Rolinson has identified three different UNIA divisions in Winston-Salem (division number 79, division number 399, and chapter 92). This study has not differentiated between the three, primarily because the reports in the *Negro World*, from which much of the contextual information is taken, rarely differentiate between the three, making it difficult to come to any firm conclusions about the nature and fortunes of these three different divisions (or chapters). See Mary G. Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The Universal Negro Improvement Association in the Rural South, 1920-1927* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), Appendix A, 199.

[21] "Report of Activities in UNIA Divisions and Garvey Clubs by Samuel A. Haynes," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, VII,* 670-71. Garveyites in Norfolk and Newport News, Virginia, established co-operatives in the early-1930s in response to economic hardships, see Claudrena N. Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South, 1918-1942* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 109-10.

These rivalries in turn indicate the growing disunity between different social classes within the African-American community as the impacts of the depression made the middle class less willing or less able to concern themselves with the problems facing working-class blacks. The dire impacts of the Great Depression were almost certainly one of the major factors in precipitating the UNIA's gradual decline as Garveyites started to doubt the UNIA's ability to deliver economic self-help and uplift.[22] Despite the continued commitment of some sections of North Carolina's African-American population to the UNIA, the organisation would never again be the force it had been in the early- and mid-1920s. Changing economic conditions, widening intra-racial class divisions, and disagreements over the direction and emphasis of the UNIA's post-Garvey programme had fundamentally damaged the UNIA's ability to present a coherent, racially-unified front.

The 1930s brought a new context that, while limiting opportunities for the UNIA, opened possibilities for organisations like the NAACP and the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA). The respective programmes of these two organisations, however, represented the increasingly stark intra-racial class divisions within North Carolina's black community. While the CPUSA attempted to address the concerns of the working class, both black and white, mainly through strike action in the mills of the Piedmont, the NAACP's campaigns in North Carolina focussed increasingly on litigation in the education sector, campaigns which were, by their very nature, primarily of relevance to the educated, professional black middle class. I argue that by the mid-1930s, it becomes increasingly difficult to see who was representing the concerns of working-class and poor blacks on an organisational level.

The Great Depression and the New Deal in North Carolina

The profound impacts of the Great Depression had ramifications for the nature of black activism, both at state-level and across the country, and no discussion of the factors that impinged on African-American activism in the 1930s (or indeed any activism) would be complete without some consideration of the profound impacts of the depression on American society and political economy.

Although North Carolina suffered less of a fall in real per capita income between 1929 and 1933 than most other states, it had had a low real per capita income at the start of the depression and its dependence on overproduced cash crops

[22] Claudrena N. Harold, *New Negro Politics in the Jim Crow South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2016), 84, 122.

and on an overly competitive textile sector meant it could not avoid economic problems when the Depressions started to hit. While North Carolina's Democratic regimes had a record of relatively strong executive authority and of generous state spending on roads and (white) education, its political record in the 1920s had not shown any real commitment to legislation on social welfare or labour issues or progressive taxation schemes.[23] Although the state's Democratic establishment politicians generally welcomed Franklin D. Roosevelt's candidacy in 1932 most of them, including Governor O. Max Gardner, saw Roosevelt's New Deal policies as a way of avoiding upheaval from below in the face of economic strife, rather than as an opportunity to reform the structural inequalities of economy and society.[24] In any case, the state's relative poverty made it difficult to increase public spending while maintaining a balanced budget and meant that federal money had to be stretched thin.

The economic emergency provided an opportunity for influential white southerners to shift the national focus away from the region's ongoing racial inequality and violence and towards economic recovery instead. At the national level, Ira Katznelson has argued that Roosevelt's administration 'pursued a strategy of pragmatic forgetfulness with regard to racial matters as long as it could.'[25] The power of southern Democrats in Congress after 1932 meant that the New Deal administration needed the votes of the representatives of the segregated South if its raft of new legislation was to be passed. Southern representatives enthusiastically embraced the economic policies of the New Deal as a means to ease the plight of their constituents, safe in the knowledge that the South's racial order could not realistically be challenged by the federal government, which needed their support.

One of the main concerns of southern politicians in Washington was to ensure that employers and businesses in the South could continue to benefit from access to a large supply of cheap, largely powerless black labour. Accordingly, southern Congressmen and Senators influenced New Deal bills to discount farmworkers and maids, thereby excluding the majority of southern African-American employees. They furthermore ensured that responsibility for the administration of many New Deal

[23] Anthony J. Badger, *North Carolina and the New Deal* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1981), 1, 7-8.
[24] Badger, *North Carolina and the New Deal,* 61, 74-75.
[25] Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013), 168. For other studies that deal with race relations and racial activism during the New Deal, see Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Lauren Rebecca Sklaroff, *Black Culture and the New Deal: The Quest for Civil Rights in the Roosevelt Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Hugh Davis Graham, *The Civil Rights Era: Origins and Development of National Policy, 1960-1972* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

programmes was decentralised to state and local officials wherever possible, and pushed for legal recognition of regional differentials in wage levels. The reluctance of government officials to inhibit the long-standing exploitative labour arrangements upon which the southern economy rested meant that planters and landowners could usually continue to manipulate New Deal relief funds so that they did not benefit tenants and employees.[26]

In the 1930s, African Americans made up a third of North Carolina's population, and three quarters of those black North Carolinians lived in the east of the state, where agriculture predominated. As the New Deal took shape, Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) programmes displaced thousands of black tenant farmers and sharecroppers in eastern North Carolina, as the AAA sought to reshape agricultural production and implement acreage control. Representatives of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) estimated in 1934 that there were 10,000 displaced tenants in eastern North Carolina, with 60 percent of them being African American.[27] This was a trend that applied across the rural South, as AAA acreage restrictions meant that landlords had less need for agricultural labour, resulting in millions being displaced.[28] Although those black farmers who managed to stay on their farms, either owned or rented, probably did benefit from some of the AAA reforms, the number of black-operated farms in North Carolina declined by almost 10 percent between 1930 and 1935. About 15 percent of black tenants in the state had been displaced by the agricultural reforms by 1934, compared to around six percent of white tenants displaced in the same period.[29] The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA), however, were examples of New Deal programmes that probably did benefit African Americans to some extent, mainly through the provision of employment and training opportunities.[30]

Although North Carolina congressmen supported the New Deal up until 1937 – a year which saw both Roosevelt's attempt to reform the US Supreme Court and the re-emergence of the question of federal anti-lynching legislation – their commitment to helping a wide cross-section of society did not extend past the initial emergency of the early-1930s. Ultimately, North Carolina's congressional delegation represented the

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[26] Katznelson, *Fear Itself*, 163; Greta de Jong, *A Different Day: African American Struggles for Justice in Rural Louisiana, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 96-97.
[27] Douglas Carl Abrams, "Irony of Reform: North Carolina Blacks and the New Deal," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 66, no. 2 (1989): 158.
[28] Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 190.
[29] Abrams, "Irony of Reform," 160.
[30] Tameka Bradley Hobbs, *Democracy Abroad, Lynching at Home: Racial Violence in Florida* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2015), 22.

interests of commercial agriculture and of the Piedmont's wealthy business owners.[31] The economy of eastern North Carolina undoubtedly benefitted from the New Deal's contribution to rescuing cotton and tobacco farmers. After the immediate economic crisis had passed and the status quo had been assured, however, Tar Heel politicians had little interest in implementing longer-term spending and regulation for the benefit of poorer sections of society. Looking at the South overall, Anthony Badger has argued that the New Deal essentially 'left the basic economic, social, racial, and political structure of the region untouched.'[32]

It was North Carolina's tobacco sector that had proved to be the most resistant to the effects of the depression. Black labour, both female and male, was critical in the tobacco factories. African-American women, often recent migrants from rural areas, generally did the hard-labouring jobs that white workers did not want to do, such as stemming, cleaning and sorting. White women would generally inspect and pack the tobacco, while black men usually moved heavy loads of tobacco around the different areas of the factories.[33] While conditions in the tobacco factories were hard, unionisation for black workers had proved difficult. In Winston-Salem, the management of the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company consistently opposed moves towards unionisation. The willingness of black workers to organise into unions was further undermined by the American Federation of Labor's (AFL) push to organise segregated locals.[34] The big break for organised labour, however, came in 1935 when Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act, also known as the Wagner Act. This piece of legislation protected the rights of employees to collectively bargain, to form unions, and to strike if necessary. Over the next few years, tobacco workers in Winston-Salem and Durham negotiated agreements with some of the major tobacco manufacturers.

As Robert Korstad has suggested, however, these successes were largely due to the rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in December 1935. The CIO had begun as an offshoot of the AFL and developed along more radical lines, targeting employees in burgeoning industrial sectors without consideration of race, nationality, or employment background.[35] The CIO's more assertive approach, based

[31] Badger, *North Carolina and the New Deal,* 90.
[32] Anthony J. Badger, *New Deal/New South: An Anthony J. Badger Reader* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2007), 32-33.
[33] Beverly W. Jones, "Race, Sex and Class: Black Female Tobacco Workers in Durham, North Carolina, 1920-1940, and the Development of Female Consciousness," *Feminist Studies* 10, no. 3 (1984): 441, 444.
[34] Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movements," *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 3 (1988): 788.
[35] Robert Rodgers Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism: Tobacco Workers and the Struggle for Democracy in the mid-Twentieth Century South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 131.

to some extent on interracial organising, successfully pressured several employers to settle labour disputes. In the early-1930s, however, it was the textile towns and mills of the North Carolina Piedmont that were the scene of left-wing activism, as communist organisers attempted to rally both white and black workers for strike action.

Communism enters the South

Prior to 1928, the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) had given only sporadic attention to the problems facing southern working-class African Americans.[36] Despite its lack of grassroots operation in the South, however, the CPUSA had vocally protested lynching throughout the 1920s. Through its official organ, the *Daily Worker,* based in New York City, the organisation documented many instances of southern lynching, frequently debunked the reasons given to excuse lynching, and supported efforts to encourage Congress to pass the Dyer anti-lynching bill.[37]

In 1928, the Comintern, which directed Communist Party activities outside of the USSR, held its Sixth Congress, which has been seen by historians as a watershed moment in the subsequent approach taken by the CPUSA to addressing the issues which most affected African Americans. This was also a period, however, when many black radicals had become deeply disillusioned by their attempts to engage with international communism, largely because of communism's failure to adequately integrate issues of race into analyses of structural class problems. At the Sixth Congress, the Comintern adopted the 'Resolution on the Negro Question in the United States,' more often known as the Black Belt Nation Thesis (BBNT). The BBNT, in the words of historian Minkah Makalani, 'described southern blacks as an oppressed nation with the right to self-determination… [The CPUSA] could no longer ignore the Negro question or render it a field of work reserved largely if not solely for black Communists.'[38] The Comintern's imposition of the BBNT on the CPUSA was made possible by the increasingly centralised nature of communism, but the BBNT's impact on American communist activism was still limited by the fact that white Party workers

[36] Edward Johanningsmeier, "Communists and Black Freedom Movements in South Africa and the US: 1919-1950," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 30, no. 1 (2004), 159.
[37] Taylor, *The History of the North Carolina Communist Party*, 8.
[38] Minkah Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 114; on this point see also Winston James, "Being Red and Black in Jim Crow America: On the Ideology and Travails of Afro-America's Socialist Pioneers, 1877-1930," in *Time Longer Than Rope: A Century of African American Activism, 1850-1950,* ed. Charles M. Payne and Adam Green (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 385.

in the US continued to see the issues affecting African Americans as black issues first and foremost, rather than as a problem of race with multiple manifestations.[39]

Initially, however, when considering the US South after the Sixth Congress, communist strategy focused on poor workers employed in the southern textile, farming, mining and tobacco sectors, workers who could be central to future Party strength in the US.[40] The Comintern decided on a strategy of arranging labour organisations under the umbrella of its Trade Union Unity League (TUUL). CPUSA organisers, under the TUUL banner, engaged black workers and attempted, with occasional success, to create interracial unity via the formation of small unions in a variety of industrial sectors important to the southern economy, including textiles, shipping, steel, and mining.[41] During the 1920s, several CPUSA activists had suggested that North Carolina might be the best place to gain a footing in the South, due mainly to its nascent industrial sector and burgeoning urban areas.[42] The communists' first official foray into the South came during the strike called by CPUSA organiser Fred Beal in April 1929, at the Loray Mill in Gaston County, North Carolina.[43]

Although southern textile mills employed overwhelmingly white workforces, about 400 African-American labourers were employed in the mills of Gaston County, the seat of which, Gastonia, lies about twenty miles west of Charlotte over the Catawba River. Generally, Gaston County's white leaders were deeply suspicious of communism and tensions ran high once the textile workers' strike got under way at the Loray Mill. On the second day of the strike, North Carolina governor O. Max Gardner sent the National Guard to Gastonia to keep the peace. As the days went by, communist organisers had mixed success in persuading white workers to forget their racial prejudices, while local white supremacists did their best to undermine the strikes by attacking the offices of the National Textile Workers Union of America (NTWU). Communist organisers reported that local whites often conflated communism with miscegenation and 'social equality.'[44]

During strikes in Bessemer City, a few miles west of Gastonia, the concept of interracial striking found support among many of the white workers involved. Perhaps because of the threat that communism presented to white supremacy, events around Gastonia became increasingly violent. In June, one striker and a police chief were killed in a shootout at the Loray Mill when police attempted to disrupt the strike there.

[39] Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom,* 114.
[40] Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism*, 123.
[41] Johanningsmeier, "Communists and Black Freedom Movements," 103-05.
[42] Taylor, *The History of the North Carolina Communist Party*, 18-19.
[43] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie*, 77.
[44] Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism*, 91.

71 people were arrested over the incident, with 12 men, including CPUSA organisers Fred Beal and Red Hendricks, charged with first degree murder. The subsequent defence of the Gastonia strikers was taken up by the Communist International Labor Defence (ILD), which used the trials to highlight the injustices of the South and sponsored rallies in support of the defendants in Mexico and Canada as well as in numerous cities in South America and Europe.

Despite some shows of interracial solidarity among workers, however, it was the question of the role of black self-determination which proved to be a long-running point of contention for the communist leaders and organisers. Self-determination, of the kind advocated by the UNIA, had a proven track-record of success in the South outside of the communist context, and had become linked with anti-colonial movements, but the concept was often deplored by CPUSA organisers working at grassroots level. Communist activism in the South simply could not escape the deep-seated hostility of most whites to any kind of black organising, or the tradition of black separatism in social and political movements. In August 1930, however, the Comintern's Negro Commission confirmed self-determination as the Party's preferred strategy in the South. The ruling created uncertainty among organisers about how self-determination should be interpreted, defined, and presented. Ultimately, the Party's commitment to what it called 'self-determination in the black belt' of the American South was ambiguous and created confusion among organisers, black and white, from Moscow to Charlotte.[45]

The summer of 1930 saw the rise of fascist 'Black Shirts' in the South, as the effects of the Great Depression deepened and whites increasingly saw blacks as competition for the ever-reducing amount of jobs available to the working class. Racial tensions became particularly acute in those southern urban areas that had experienced high levels of in-migration by African Americans during the preceding decade. In Atlanta, the Black Shirts and other white supremacist interests, including the Klan, were united by economic insecurities, racial hatred, and a growing paranoia about communism's attempts to reconcile the white and black working classes.[46] 1930 saw a spike in lynching, and anti-black violence flared from Texas to Georgia and from Arkansas to Florida. Communist organisers working in the South as the depression deepened bore witness to the ways in which white supremacy sought to shore-up white working-class support and shift the burden of deprivation onto the black community.

[45] Johanningsmeier, "Communists and Black Freedom Movements," 167; Gilmore, *Defying Dixie*, 100-02.
[46] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie*, 106-08.

In December 1929, the communist International Labour Defence held its First Southern Conference in Charlotte and, in January 1930, the CPUSA established two districts in the South, one of which, District 16, covered Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Winston-Salem had a small but active CPUSA branch until the mid-1930s.[47] Between December 1931 and February 1932, 55 of 66 new members of the North Carolina Communist Party were African-American.[48] Party organisers had begun to use the issue of lynching and racial violence to recruit southern African Americans, presenting violence as class-based oppression upon which the southern economy unjustly rested. This approach built upon the *Daily Worker*'s documentation of southern lynching, a campaign it had carried out consistently throughout the 1920s. In 1930, prompted by a multiple lynching in Emelle, Alabama, the Party initiated a regional campaign against lynching, and began to use the term 'class war prisoners' to describe African-Americans falsely accused of capital offences.[49] Groups of white and black protesters held anti-lynching meetings in Charlotte and Winston-Salem during 1930.[50]

Given the tendency of southern white supremacists to deal violently with expressions of black agitation, the issue of how black communists, or black members of the CPUSA-endorsed unions, should respond to racial violence was of growing importance. In July 1931, a meeting of the Croppers' and Farm Workers' Union (CFWU) in Camp Hill, Alabama, was raided by police and deputised vigilantes, who attacked African Americans gathered at the meeting. The following day, around 150 black sharecroppers again met the CFWU representative and the police again arrived to disrupt the meeting. A sustained gun-fight ensued between the police-led posse and the armed African Americans, leaving one black union member dead and the local sheriff seriously wounded. Reprisals by whites against the black community over the following few days left dozens dead or injured and forced many black families to go into hiding in the local woods.

A similar clash between a white police posse and black farmers of the Share Croppers Union (SCU) occurred in December 1932 in Lee County, Alabama.[51] Robin Kelley has pointed out that, although black communists (and other radicals) generally went to lengths to avoid violent confrontations with the white power structure, 'the

[47] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie*, 126.
[48] Taylor, *The History of the North Carolina Communist Party,* 87.
[49] Robin D.G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 81.
[50] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie,* 98; Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism*, 124-25.
[51] For a more detailed overview of the causes and consequences of the confrontations in Alabama in 1931-32 between white police officers and black union activists, see Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe*, 40-51.

assurance of outside support, even if imagined, and the physical presence of a collective organization, engendered a sense of power that lent itself to isolated acts of counteraggression or self-defence.'[52] That the practicalities of communist organising may have both bolstered and reaffirmed southern black working-class notions about self-defence suggests that grassroots left-wing activism may have inhabited a very similar space to that which had been occupied by the UNIA's African Legion in the 1920s, although the UNIA was less ideological in a political sense.

As the textile strikes around Gastonia were failing to make concrete progress against the intransigency of the mill owners, national CPUSA leaders considered the possibility that a lack of support for the strikes among African-American workers may have damaged the strikers' cause. Party headquarters in New York City sent African-American organiser John H. Owens to North Carolina to assess the situation regarding black workers. He reported that there were no African Americans among the Gastonia strikers and none on the strike committee, largely because white workers had not included blacks in the unionising efforts. While in Gastonia, Owens tried to enlist the support of local black ministers and businessmen but reported that, almost without exception, they were too scared to agree to help him in mobilising black workers. Owens himself received death threats during his time in North Carolina and threats of lynching against striking workers were common.[53]

In his report to CPUSA headquarters on the situation in Gaston County, Owens reflected that, while white workers tended to be concerned about working conditions and wages, black workers 'were more interested in some sort of physical defence organization rather than an organization along purely economic lines.' Owens subsequently recommended that the Party and the NTWU create a specific organisation for black workers which could function as a 'relief, defense, and cooperative enterprise.' This proposal, however, was ignored by CPUSA and union leaders.[54] This concern was also expressed by Cyril Briggs in this period. Briggs directly criticised the CPUSA for not providing a self-defence unit for its supporters in the South and proposed the creation of the 'Ethiopian Mutual Aid League' for this purpose.[55]

A concern for practical self-defence seems to have been present among working-class African Americans involved in or on the fringes of union efforts in both

[52] Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe*, 100-01.
[53] Taylor, *The History of the North Carolina Communist Party,* 30, 39.
[54] John Owens, "Report of Trip to Strike Area in Gastonia, N.C., April 13, 1929," reel 128, folder 1662, numbers 34-39, Comintern files, quoted in Taylor, *The History of the North Carolina Communist Party*, 29-30.
[55] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie,* 100-01.

Alabama and North Carolina in the early-1930s. Working-class blacks who worked with unions like the SCU and the NTWU would have been experienced in the realities of southern racist violence and would have had finely-tuned instincts about how to conceptualise resistance. Although the CPUSA seems not to have seriously considered setting up organised self-defence units in the South, its strategic utilisation of the imagery of southern violence, alongside its vocal commitment to protesting lynching, has strong echoes of the radical black activism of the previous decade. That working-class blacks, be they sharecroppers in Alabama or textile workers in North Carolina, viewed the CPUSA-affiliated activity as a potential opportunity for organised self-defence suggests that, in the late-1920s and early-1930s at least, communism had the opportunity to act as a conduit for the black radicalism that had until recently resided in organisations like the African Blood Brotherhood and Garvey's African Legion. Indeed, Robin Kelley has suggested that national communist leaders may have seen in the apparent militancy of southern organising 'the finest contemporary examples of black revolutionary traditions.'[56]

In March 1931, however, the CPUSA was given a clear chance to demonstrate its supposed commitment to racial equality. This chance came in the form of the ILD's legal defence of nine African-American detainees who had been arrested in Paint Rock, Alabama, for allegedly raping two white women on a train. The saga of what became known as the Scottsboro trials exposed to the whole country the failures of southern democracy and justice and laid bare the ways in which the South mobilised gender, class, and race to underpin white supremacy. The ILD had already sent an investigator to the area and, in the aftermath of the convictions, appointed a Chattanooga-based lawyer to appeal the cases. For the CPUSA, Scottsboro represented an opportunity to directly challenge the foundations of southern white supremacy.[57]

The leadership of the NAACP, on the other hand, hesitated about the best way to react to the ongoing Scottsboro fiasco and to the ILD's co-ordination of the legal defence of the accused African Americans. Although the association did not want to provide an opening for the communists to become the primary representatives of black Americans, the NAACP at grassroots level was suffering from the impacts of the depression. Furthermore, the NAACP's leadership was initially unsure about the innocence of the Scottsboro defendants. Disagreements subsequently surfaced among national leaders about whether the association was offering a sufficiently

[56] Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe,* 53.
[57] For an in-depth examination of the Scottsboro case, see Gilmore, *Defying Dixie,* 118-28.

militant programme against injustice and even its own members started to criticise the lack of leadership.[58]

Through a series of trials, re-trials, and appeals to the US Supreme Court, juries in Alabama continued to find the Scottsboro defendants guilty, even though one of the alleged white victims recanted her statement. Eventually, charges were dropped for four of the nine defendants, although all but two of the rest served time in prison, some on very lengthy sentences. The efforts of the ILD in Scottsboro, however, had shown the effectiveness of a strategy of pursuing local legal fights combined with national and international publicity campaigns. This approach was again deployed in Camp Hill, Alabama, after the violent attacks by whites on the Croppers' and Farm Workers' Union (CFWU), following which several black members of the union were prosecuted.[59] The CPUSA was also making gains in local membership levels, with African Americans joining the party in District 16, which covered Virginia and the Carolinas. In and around Charlotte there was considerable support for the Scottsboro defendants; in 1931, 49 of 57 CPUSA members in Charlotte were African American.[60]

Growing support for communists in the wake of high-profile legal encounters such as Scottsboro and Camp Hill put increasing pressure on the NAACP to respond with a similar level of dynamism. As the depression took its toll on NAACP finances and membership, the early-1930s saw the development of a rift at the senior level of the association over the question of how it should best respond to the economic climate and to the rise of other groups such as the CPUSA. Some within the association's leadership thought that it needed to be more responsive to the everyday needs of African Americans at grassroots level. This criticism came to a head during the Amenia Conference in 1933 and in the emergence of the Harris Report the following year.[61]

The Amenia Conference, an informal gathering of pro-NAACP black leaders and intellectuals, established that the NAACP should work towards an alliance between middle- and working-class African Americans but, the following year, W.E.B. Du Bois resigned from the association's board, claiming that the necessary changes of strategy were not taking place. Du Bois had increasingly come to favour separatist approaches to solving the problem of racial segregation, a position which put him on a collision course with Walter White, who was by then the most influential figure in the organisation. Abram L. Harris, an economist based at Howard University and a Du

[58] Beth Tompkins Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP, 1933-1941," *American Historical Review* 102, no. 2 (1997): 345.
[59] Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe,* 40-42.
[60] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie,* 128-30.
[61] Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP," 353-54.

Bois ally, gave his name to the subsequent report which recommended that power should be transferred away from the national office and towards the local branches, and that those branches should become centres of direct protest and agitation against discrimination, particularly regarding labour issues. In the final reckoning, however, the NAACP's board removed both the Harris Report's call for power to be transferred to the branches and its recommendations about active grassroots agitation, instead preferring a focus on education and voting registration.[62] The decision to adopt this strategic course had a direct impact on the sections of the African-American community that the NAACP was able to appeal to over the course of the 1930s.

As executive secretary of the NAACP after James Weldon Johnson's resignation in 1930, Walter White was one of the influential conservative group who wanted to resist the change towards the decentralised, militant strategy proposed by the likes of Harris and Du Bois. White quickly moved to rebuild his authority in the aftermath of the Scottsboro controversy and the defeat of the Harris Report. The issue through which he chose to reassert his credentials and those of the NAACP was that of lynching, an area that he had specialised in investigating during the 1920s and one that the NAACP board viewed as a better platform for fundraising than a focus on economic and labour issues. It is likely that White viewed a renewed anti-lynching campaign as a safe route towards presenting the NAACP as a radical organisation that could compete with the ILD, in a way that would appeal both to African Americans and to whites concerned about the continuing problem of racial violence.[63] As will be seen, however, the association's activism in North Carolina after 1930 was focussed not on preventing anti-black violence but on campaigns based on litigation, desegregation, and national-level politics. Although the NAACP worked to protest against a prominent lynching in the state in 1930, successful passage of a federal bill against lynching continued to prove elusive throughout the decade and, furthermore, the association missed several opportunities to take a stand against cases of ordinary white violence against black North Carolinians.

[62] Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP," 354.
[63] Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP," 357; Herbert Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 282; Christopher Waldrep, "War of Words: The Controversy over the Definition of Lynching, 1899-1940," *Journal of Southern History* 66, no. 1 (2000): 80-81.

The political impacts of white violence in the early-1930s

In May 1930, the NAACP was reminded of the impact that white violence could have on local communities when Robert Bagnall visited Chickasha, Oklahoma, to investigate the death of an African-American man at the hands of a white mob. Bagnall held two meetings in the town for concerned citizens and claimed that around 600 people attended one of them. He invited several representatives of Chickasha's white community to the meeting, although only the mayor and his wife attended. The NAACP attracted nearly 100 new members in the town in the wake of the lynching there. A more direct response to white violence was also on display, however. Bagnall reported that, although some local African Americans fled the town after the lynching, 'The great part of them remained home and determined to defend themselves. Men were posted all over the Negro district armed with Winchesters and with a goodly supply of ammunition.'[64]

Walter White was well placed to lead the NAACP's renewed national campaign against lynching, given his experience and his contacts within Congress and the New Deal administration.[65] The association had remained vigilant about the lynching problem and, in the wake of Scottsboro, was particularly concerned about the issue of so-called 'legal lynchings,' in which African Americans would be accused, tried and sentenced on flimsy evidence, usually without any sort of suitable legal advice or defence.[66] The racial climate of the early-1930s, furthermore, lent new urgency to attempts to fight lynching. In 1929, there had been 10 lynchings reported nationwide, but there was a jump to 21 cases in 1930, and 28 in 1933, including a notorious case in Princess Anne, Maryland, not far from Washington D.C. itself.[67] Walter White and the NAACP's Legal Committee worked to draw up a new anti-lynching bill, which was similar in approach to the Dyer bill of the previous decade, and which became known as the Costigan-Wagner bill. The intransigence of southern senators, however, meant that the bill was not considered before the Senate adjourned.

The ongoing movement against lynching was one of the reasons behind the development of North Carolina's reputation for moderate and progressive race relations. The Institute for Research in the Social Sciences, based at Chapel Hill, was established by the prominent southern sociologist Howard Odum, who believed that social science research could help bring an end to the South's history of racial

[64] Robert Bagnall, "An Oklahoma Lynching," *Crisis,* August 1930, 274, 284.
[65] Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP," 357.
[66] Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: The New Press, 2009), 178-81.
[67] Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice,* 194.

violence. The Southern Commission for the Study of Lynching (SCSL), also based at Chapel Hill, was convened in July 1930 and was led by the academic Arthur Raper.

The SCSL was formed to address the spike in southern lynching during the first half of 1930, during which six whites and four blacks had been killed across the region.[68] North Carolina experienced at least two lynchings in 1930, although other forms of anti-black violence, which may not necessarily have counted as lynchings under traditional definitions, continued in the state. The SCSL's report on lynching, when it emerged in 1933, noted that the balance of public opinion in the South had not yet swung sufficiently against lynching for the practice to be brought to an end. The SCSL's report also noted with concern, as had the NAACP, the rise of 'legal lynchings.'[69]

On 1 February 1930, a 65-year-old black woman named Laura Wood was lynched at Barbar's Junction, near Salisbury in Rowan County, North Carolina. The murder is noted in both the UNIA's *Negro World* and the NAACP's files on racial violence, but no motive for the lynching is recorded in either source.[70] In February 1931, in the town of Henderson, near the Virginia state line, an elderly African-American man was beaten to death by two local policemen, apparently for no reason beyond being 'mildly intoxicated.' The incident was reported to the NAACP by Charles Burrell, the principle of the nearby Middleburg School. Burrell explained that one of the police officers involved had had a 'mock trial' which completely exonerated him. Burrell ended his letter by asking the NAACP to send information about how to start a local branch, as 'I feel that something could be done and that without much effort. It is a clear case of rank perverted southern justice. To protect the lives of other Negroes – officer has made further threats – I think something should be done.' According to Burrell, 'several prominent white people have expressed their desire to help in any way if some one takes up the case [sic].' There is no record of a reply in the NAACP files, or of a NAACP branch in Henderson or Middleburg in the early-1930s.[71]

Murders of African Americans by whites continued to occur in North Carolina, with the brutal death of Dock Rogers in August 1933 in Pender County and of Govan Ward in July 1935 in Franklin County. Ward's death had more of the hallmarks of a traditional lynching and, in the aftermath of the murder, the Raleigh NAACP branch

[68] William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 4-5; Bruce E. Baker, *This Mob Will Surely Take My Life: Lynchings in the Carolinas, 1871-1947* (London: Continuum, 2009), 181.
[69] Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response*, 205-07.
[70] "Lynch Fury is Raging in South," *Negro World,* 19 July 1930, 1 and 8; news clipping, NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, Records of Racial Violence, Box I: C-363, folder 7.
[71] Charles Burrell to NAACP headquarters, 24 February 1931, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 19.

wrote to North Carolina governor John Ehringhaus demanding that the state take action to investigate the crime. The subsequent investigations however were perfunctory and yielded no meaningful results, exposing the limits of the NAACP's tactic, even at local level, of seeking to engage with white officialdom on the matter of violence.[72]

Whether the murders of Rogers and Ward constituted extraordinary or ordinary violence, the ongoing and often sensational nature of anti-black violence in North Carolina, as well as officialdom's complacency about it, presented problems for the NAACP and highlighted the continued shortcomings of its approach. The experience of the early-1920s meant that the association's leadership would have been aware of the potential for NAACP agitation to provoke the hostility of southern white supremacists. Although it continued to apply political pressure about the lynching issue at the national level, the NAACP still did not offer a tangible solution to local people facing the threat of random violence. The deaths of the elderly man in Henderson in February 1931 and of Dock Rogers in 1933 may not even count in traditional lynching statistics, yet these incidents blur the line between extraordinary and ordinary white violence and shed light on the ongoing climate of fear upon which white dominance rested in North Carolina.

Meanwhile, the state government and some North Carolina police officers attempted to act against mob violence, as successive governors had done throughout the 1920s. In January 1930, the Wilmington *Morning Star* reported that a lynch mob had been thwarted when police officers in Duplin County moved two African-American prisoners from the Kenansville jail 'to the safety of state's prison at Raleigh, while an angry but irresolute mob formed near Wallace to avenge the brutal killing of Mrs. Stephen English [sic]…' One of the suspects, Dave Lock, who had been picked up by police in Wilmington, supposedly confessed to the crime in front of the officers, although he later repudiated this confession on the basis that it had been extracted under duress. The *Morning Star* reported that the white mob had been about 100 strong, and that 'considerable excitement was caused throughout the lower half of Duplin County by the report that a mob was out.'[73]

In June 1930, Sheriff H.W. Caldwell and Cabarrus County deputies prevented a mob from breaking into the court house in Concord, outside Charlotte, to seize seven African-American prisoners being held on suspicion of beating a 15-year-old

[72] On the murders of Rogers and Ward, see Vann R. Newkirk, *Lynching in North Carolina: A History, 1865-1941* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009), 116-21.
[73] "Mob Effort Frustrated by Prisoner's Removal from Kenansville Jail," *Morning Star* (Wilmington, NC), 21 January 1930, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 11.

white girl. Governor O. Max Gardner sent the National Guard to Concord after a request from Sheriff Caldwell, although the mob, which had apparently been several hundred strong, dispersed before the Guard units arrived. After the attack on the white girl, the press reported that 'Eleven negroes were arrested by posses that scoured the county with bloodhounds yesterday and last night… Deputies said early today they did not believe they had "the right negro."'[74]

Max Gardner followed Thomas Bickett, Cameron Morrison, and Angus McLean in acting against North Carolina lynch mobs, while governors of other states at times also tried to take steps against mob violence. Governor John Gardiner Richards of South Carolina, for example, employed a special investigator to gather evidence about a lynching that occurred on Easter Sunday 1930 in Walhalla, in South Carolina's Upper Piedmont. 17 men were indicted based on the information uncovered by Richards' investigator, which included 40 sworn statements, but the jury did not return a guilty verdict.

Terrance Finnegan has argued that by the 1930s lynching could not unite white southerners as it once had done, citing the electoral defeat of South Carolina's vociferously pro-lynching US senator Coleman Blease in the 1930 election. Blease's stance on racist violence was heavily criticised by white women's groups and by much of South Carolina's press in the run-up to the election.[75] Both Finnegan and Fitzhugh Brundage credit the campaigns of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC) and, particularly, of the NAACP, in pressuring authorities and changing the attitudes of at least some influential sections of white southern opinion on the matter of lynching.[76] Furthermore, the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching (ASWPL), led by Jesse Daniel Ames, worked hard to persuade southern newspaper journalists and editors that the deployment of 'gallantry' as a defence for lynching was false and untenable.[77] It is worth noting, however, that neither the CIC nor the ASWPL lent support to either of the two anti-lynching bills which were debated in Congress at this time. Herbert Shapiro attributes the failure of the CIC and the ASWPL to back the

[74] "North Carolina Mob Thwarted by Soldiers," *Commonwealth* (Greenwood, MS), 28 June 1930, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 18.
[75] Terrance Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed: Lynching in Mississippi and South Carolina, 1881-1940* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2013), 179-80. This point has also been made by Grace Elizabeth Hale, who points out that whites who wanted to be seen as civilised by northern onlookers felt increasingly compelled to denounce southern lynching. See Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (New York: Vintage, 1999), 238-39.
[76] W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 236; Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed,* 180.
[77] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, *Revolt against Chivalry: Jesse Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign against Lynching* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 199; Neil R. McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 249.

Costigan-Wagner bill (1934) and the Wagner-Van Nuys bill (1937) to the paternalism of white southern liberals who could not bring themselves to endorse mass-protest tactics on the part of black organisations like the NAACP.[78]

By the 1930s, North Carolina's mainstream white press frequently spoke out publicly against lynching. In April 1937, the Burlington *Daily Times-News* condemned a lynching in Mississippi and cast doubt on the accusation of rape that had been offered as a justification for the crime.[79] Later that year, the Raleigh *News & Observer* credited the influence of anti-lynching sentiment in the mainstream southern press for helping to turn public opinion against lynching. Although recognising that much work still needed to be done, the newspaper's editorial claimed:

> The truth of the matter is that at least a very large share of the credit for the reduction across the years of number of lynchings in the South must go to Southern newspapers. On no other important subject have they been so much in agreement; against no other Southern evil have they been so steadily arrayed. Slowly they have taught their readers that to lynch a criminal is to lynch the law… [80]

As the Costigan-Wagner anti-lynching bill was debated in Congress, there was a lively discussion within the southern press about the desirability of federal legislation in the fight against mob violence. Newspapers including the *Daily Times-News* and the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* favoured the legislation. The *Asheville Citizen-Times*, on the other hand, did not support the prospect of federal intervention, arguing in February 1937, '…the prevention of lynching is now a local responsibility and the only cure for this crime is, we believe, a continued quickening of the public sense of this responsibility… The steady decline in the number of lynchings has been accomplished as a result of the pressure of public sentiment…'[81] The staunch opposition of some sections of white southern opinion to the prospect of federal intervention is unsurprising. Terrance Finnegan points to the NAACP's push for federal anti-lynching legislation as a prime factor in changing the dynamics of national politics in a way that 'made it clear to whites that lynching could work against the best interests of a local white community.' Finnegan highlights the large-scale out-migration of African Americans from across the South during the Great Migration as perhaps the most

[78] Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response,* 283-85.
[79] "Mississippi Shows the Way," *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, NC), 14 April 1937, 4.
[80] "Lynching and Newspapers," *News & Observer* (Raleigh), quoted in *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington), 17 November 1937, 4.
[81] "Is this the Remedy?" editorial, *Asheville Citizen-Times,* 4 February 1937, 4.

significant factor in curbing lynching, as influential whites increasingly recognised the need to retain a pool of cheap and readily-available black labour.[82]

Governor Gardner was proud of the lack of lynchings in North Carolina between 1921 and 1930. Despite this apparent lack of prominent lynchings in this period, Gardner's pride in the state's record can nonetheless be shown to be unjustified. Bruce Baker has highlighted the case of the death of black construction worker Broadus Miller in 1927, who was killed by a mob following the death of a white woman in Morganton in the west of the state. Miller's body was dragged through the streets of the town and then displayed at the courthouse, making this case, as Baker notes, 'an event with many of the trademarks of a lynching.' The NAACP, however, declined to define Miller's death as a lynching because of the involvement of a white posse in hunting the victim down after a crime had allegedly been committed.[83] In July 1929, a 23-year-old tenant farmer called Willie McDaniel was found dead in woodland near Newell, on the outskirts of Charlotte. McDaniel's white landlord, Mell Grier, and the local police put out a story about McDaniel having hanged himself, but a white newspaper reporter subsequently uncovered evidence that McDaniel and Grier had 'quarrelled Saturday over the price of blackberries that McDaniel's wife picked for Grier and that the white man threatened McDaniel with a shotgun.' Further evidence was discovered at the scene which strongly suggested that a lynching had taken place there.[84]

The misinformation frequently circulated by white supremacists, combined with the often-narrow definition of the term 'lynching,' ultimately make it impossible to give credence to the claims of influential whites like Gardner about extraordinary violence being non-existent in North Carolina between 1921 and 1930. Anti-black violence had continued to be a feature of life in the state after 1921, in the form of beatings and intimidation, and of deaths that were either covered up or that simply may not have fitted the traditional description of a lynching in the public dialogue about mob violence. Indeed, the relative absence of lynching in North Carolina's public discourse during the 1920s may also be explained by the fact that whites controlled that discourse, which

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[82] Finnegan, *A Deed So Accursed*, 180, 184.

[83] "Negro outlaw slain at end of long trail," *Twin-City Daily Sentinel,* 5 July 1927, 2; Bruce E. Baker, "North Carolina Lynching Ballads," in *Under Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South,* ed. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 241; see also Kevin W. Young, "'The Largest Manhunt in Western North Carolina's History': The Story of Broadus Miller," in *Blood in the Hills: A History of Violence in Appalachia,* ed. Bruce E. Stewart (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 340-79. On the controversy over whether to include in the definition of lynching deaths at the hands of law enforcement posses, see Waldrep, "War of Words," 89-90.

[84] "Dead Negro's Friends Claim Was Lynched," *Charlotte News,* 2 July 1929; "Reporter Finds Tree Where Farmworker Was Lynched," untitled newspaper clipping. McDaniel was alternatively referred to as McDonald. NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 9.

included newspapers, the state and local government, and public institutions in general. Those eager to promote the reputation of the state, or of certain towns or localities within the state, would presumably not have wanted to highlight issues like lynching and anti-black violence in general, which did not fit with popular narratives of progress, development, and North Carolinian 'civility.'[85]

In August 1930, Gardner's pride in North Carolina's race relations was finally shattered by the brutal killing in Tarboro of Oliver Moore, a 29-year-old black tenant farmer. Moore was accused of attacking his landlord's two young children and, having been taken from the Edgecombe County jail by a mob, was 'swung from a tree by a rope under his armpits and shot to death.' The deputy in charge of the jail that night later claimed he had thought that the mob was there to deliver a prisoner. He said the mob 'wore masks and that he recognized no one. He said that the license tags had been removed from their automobiles.'[86] White responses to the murder, even from those who condemned it, tended to automatically assume that Moore was guilty of sexual assault simply because he was black and poor. The evidence for his guilt, however, was far from conclusive and the state's justice system failed to complete its investigations, possibly because Gardner was one of those whites who assumed Moore was guilty. The case was subsequently used by white supremacists as proof of black men's threat to white womanhood.[87]

The dubious response of the deputy guarding the Edgecombe County jail on the night that Moore was taken by the mob points to the ongoing ineffectiveness of the police in guaranteeing the safety of black prisoners. Although the ability of individual police officers to deter mobs undoubtedly varied with the specific circumstances of each case, the fact that some officers thwarted the intentions of mobs while others did not suggests that some were more committed than others to the ideal of upholding the law regardless of racial categories. Differences between how individual police officers responded to mobs, and between the police and elite whites like the governor, continued to expose a lack of consensus within the white community about how white supremacy should be enforced. Governor Gardner publicly called the Moore murder 'a disgrace to North Carolina' and pledged that the state would do 'everything in its

[85] Bruce E. Baker, "Under the Rope: Lynching and Memory in Laurens County, South Carolina," in *Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory, and Southern Identity,* ed. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 336.
[86] "Mob Lynches Negro in North Carolina," newspaper clipping (newspaper name not included), NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 7.
[87] Newkirk, *Lynching in North Carolina*, 112-15.

power to find the guilty parties and bring them to justice,'[88] a reaction that echoes the public sentiments of previous governors and that shows how precious North Carolina's reputation for racial moderation continued to be to its white leaders, publicists and boosters.

The NAACP was active in investigating the Moore lynching, at both national and local level, as part of its general campaign to continue to put pressure on authorities to act on the problem of lynching. C.F. Rich, an attorney based in Rocky Mount, which neighbours Tarboro, was central to the NAACP's fact-gathering mission in the Moore case.[89] The NAACP's growing preoccupation with the Scottsboro trials, however, meant that the association did not investigate Rich's leads in the Moore case, leads which could potentially have led to the perpetrators being identified. As it turned out, no one was ever brought to justice for Moore's murder.[90]

It was not just the NAACP who worked to publicise the wave of lynching that swept the South in 1930, however. Despite the UNIA's difficulties at local level in the early-1930s, the *Negro World* ran reports on southern lynching in July and September 1930. As well as the deaths of Laura Wood and Oliver Moore, the *Negro World* reported alleged lynchings in 1930 in Charlotte and in Beaufort.[91] In the case of the alleged murder in Beaufort, on the North Carolina coast, the *Negro World* claimed that this death came about in part because of white supremacists' disapproval of African Americans 'struggling together with the white workers against increased [un]employment, general lowering of living standards, starvation and misery.' The newspaper went on to report that, 'the International Labor Defence has sent instructions to its District Organizer in North Carolina to make a thorough investigation of the lynching of the Negro worker…'[92] Although the *Negro World* article does not endorse the ILD outright, the fact that the ILD is mentioned at all is striking, given Garvey's opposition to any kind of alliance with communists during the 1920s. The presence of an ILD organiser in North Carolina, and one who was apparently briefed to investigate racial violence, is an intriguing precursor to the events in Scottsboro the following year.

In 1933, Garveyites of the Berkley, Virginia, UNIA division allowed communist activists to use their Liberty Hall for a rally, although, as Claudrena Harold notes, there

[88] "Mob Lynches Negro in North Carolina," newspaper clipping (newspaper name not included), NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 7.
[89] For correspondence between C.F. Rich and NAACP headquarters about the Moore case, see NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, folder 35.
[90] Baker, *This Mob Will Surely Take My Life*, 180.
[91] "Lynching Terror Spreads in the South," *Negro World,* 5 July 1930, 1; "Lynch Fury is Raging in South," *Negro World,* 19 July 1930, 1 and 8; "August Lynching Orgy," *Negro World,* 20 September 1930, 8.
[92] "Lynching Terror Spreads in the South," *Negro World,* 5 July 1930, 1.

is insufficient evidence to make firm conclusions about the extent of UNIA supporters' sympathy for the CPUSA in that area.[93] In another example of changing times since the period of Garvey's dominance over the American UNIA, in May 1930 the *Negro World* ran an editorial calling for federal action on the lynching problem, signalling a notable shift since the days when Garvey had publicly condemned the NAACP's support for the Dyer anti-lynching bill. In what seems to be a veiled reference to the propaganda of southern boosters like Gardner, the editorial argued:

> Despite all the statistics that have been published with a view to placate us, and make us believe that lynching is on the decrease, the barbarians in the south continue their nefarious practices. The recent reports of lynching of two Negroes in North Carolina, and Mississippi help to swell the total of the recent mob murders of the past few weeks.[94]

The *Negro World*'s reporting of ILD activity and its advocacy of federal intervention in the lynching problem suggest that the UNIA attempted to readjust itself to engage with the changing activism landscape of the early-1930s and to make itself more relevant. At the local level in urban North Carolina, however, there is little evidence that the large and successful UNIA divisions of the early- and mid-1920s were still active by the early-1930s, except for the Winston-Salem division. Divisions in smaller settlements including Bailey, Supply, and Rocky Mount based themselves on community self-help and farming enterprises. These places, however, were never vibrant sites of Garveyite activity in the way that Charlotte, Asheville, and Raleigh had been during the 1920s.[95] Ultimately, committed Garveyites struggled on in Wilson, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and Kinston into the mid-1930s, until North Carolinian Garveyism vanished from sight almost completely as the 1940s approached.

[93] Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South,* 110.
[94] "Lynching in the South," *Negro World,* 10 May 1930, 4.
[95] Details of UNIA activity in North Carolina in the mid- and late-1930s is taken from the following: "Report of Activities in UNIA Divisions and Garvey Clubs by Samuel A. Haynes, 2109 W. Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia, [ca. March 1936]," in Hill, *Garvey Papers, VII,* 670-71; Hill, *Garvey Papers, VII,* 674 (n. 2-6)*;* Hill, *Garvey Papers, V,* 657 (n. 4).

The NAACP's campaigns in North Carolina in the 1930s

As the 1930s dawned, North Carolina found itself at the heart of one of the most significant campaigns of the period for the development of African-American political activism. Early in 1930, President Herbert Hoover nominated John J. Parker to fill a vacant seat on the United States Supreme Court. Parker, from Charlotte, North Carolina, was a federal judge on the Fourth Circuit Court. After Walter White asked contacts in North Carolina for information on Parker, the Greensboro NAACP branch provided a newspaper clipping about Parker's 1920 Republican gubernatorial campaign showing that he had spoken out in lurid terms against black participation in North Carolina politics. White and other senior NAACP officers subsequently initiated a grassroots campaign to put pressure on senators who represented states with an influential black vote, in the hope that those senators would vote against Parker's nomination. The campaign drew the active support of black newspapers, the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), Tuskegee Institute, and thousands of local activists.

On 7 May 1930, the US Senate voted against Parker's nomination by 41 votes to 39, handing the NAACP a major victory on the national stage.[96] Only one prominent black leader, Dr James Shepard, president of North Carolina College for Negroes, had lent his support to Parker's nomination. Alexander Rivera, son of the Greensboro NAACP officer who had initially sent White the newspaper clipping about Parker's race baiting, remembered how his father and Dr Shepard had managed to remain on good terms despite their difference over the Parker issue:

> James Shepard… was one of my father's closest friends, and they almost broke up, broke friendship. Jim Shepard was for Parker, because he was trying to run this school and he needed his [Parker's] support and the other white support and money and so forth, and he felt he should go along, but my daddy said, "I'm very sorry, Jim. I can't go with you."

James Shepard's stance on the Parker nomination points to the fact that influential African Americans were often dependent on the limited cooperation of elite whites in the quest to improve conditions for blacks. Walter White stayed at the Rivera residence during his initial trip to Greensboro to work on the anti-Parker campaign.

[96] For a detailed account of the Parker campaign, see Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice*, 138-41.

Alexander Rivera recalled the threat of violence which hung over his father, Dr A.M. Rivera, a dentist, due to his role in the campaign:

> …they started working to defeat Parker, and it got real, real nasty. We had to string lights in our back yard for fear of my father's safety. This is the time when Walter White and members of the NAACP came to Greensboro... There was no place for them to stay, no hotel or anything, nothing, no place to eat or stay, so they all stayed at our house.[97]

The family were no strangers to white violence; Dr Rivera had fled Wilmington as a 14 year-old after the massacre there in 1898.

The active involvement of the Greensboro branch in the Parker case may also have been the catalyst for a rejuvenation of the Durham branch. In August 1930, NAACP central office records noted 41 members in a 'revived' branch in Durham that had been officially declared 'inactive' just seven months earlier.[98] The input of determined local activists was clearly central to the NAACP's success in the Parker case and Walter White later wrote that 'in the Parker fight victory had been achieved and a philosophy and aura of success had replaced the purely protest values of preceding battles.'[99] White may have been thinking about the association's failure in 1921 to mount a successful challenge to Warren Harding's nomination of Parker's 'lily white' Republican colleague Frank Linney for the position of US district attorney for western North Carolina.

Although black political agency in the early-1930s remained largely circumscribed and should not be too heavily overstated, the Parker case nevertheless represented what the NAACP could achieve by that point if a campaign was well-managed and strategic. The victory may, however, have come at a cost. White wrote to James Weldon Johnson in the aftermath of the Parker vote expressing concern than an outbreak of southern lynching may have been a sign that white Democrats were taking out their frustrations on African Americans.[100]

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[97] Alexander McAlister Rivera, interviewed by Mary Hebert and Felicia Woods, Durham, NC, 2 June 1995. From Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South. Centre for Documentary Studies at Duke University. David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

[98] NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box G-147, folder 5, Durham 1927-1930.

[99] White, *A Man Called White,* 113.

[100] Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, "False Friends and Avowed Enemies: Southern African Americans and Party Allegiances in the 1920s," in *Jumpin' Jim Crow: Southern Politics from Civil War to Civil Rights,* ed.

By October 1933, however, the NAACP had branches established (or re-established) in Durham, Raleigh, Rocky Mount, and Wilson. Branches were being 'newly organized or reorganized' in Asheville, Greensboro, High Point, New Bern, Southern Pines, Winston-Salem, and South Mills, as well as branches in Charlotte and Salisbury which were in the process of being organised.[101] A branch had been added in Kinston by December.[102]

In February 1933, Durham-based attorneys Conrad Pearson and Cecil McCoy, who would quickly become known for their bold work in civil rights cases, had written to Walter White asking for the NAACP's support in bringing a test case against the University of North Carolina's (UNC) policy of refusing to accept black students into its graduate programmes.[103] The idea spoke to the NAACP's strategy, outlined in 1930, to challenge segregation through litigation, and offered an opportunity to re-focus the association's so far lacklustre campaign in this regard.[104] NAACP headquarters saw Pearson and McCoy's proposal as an opportunity to strike at one of the most vulnerable points of segregation. Under the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court ruling, African Americans were generally prohibited from attending white higher education institutions, but states were required to make 'separate but equal' provisions for education. In North Carolina, as in many other states across the country, education provision for African Americans was in practice separate but unequal, meaning that blacks did not have access to programmes in fields requiring specific licensing, such as law and pharmacy.

Understanding this reality, the NAACP felt that the test case proposed by Pearson and McCoy in February 1933 offered the chance to undermine segregation in higher education. The test case would attempt to do this by highlighting the lack of separate but equal educational institutions, knowing that the state of North Carolina could not afford to provide alternative institutions for blacks which were of the same standard as UNC, even if it had the political will to do so (which it did not). With the NAACP's support, Pearson and McCoy arranged for Thomas Hocutt, a recent graduate of North Carolina College for Negroes, to apply to the graduate pharmacy programme at UNC in the full knowledge that his application would be turned down.

Jane Dailey, Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, and Bryant Simon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 230.

[101] "Financial Record of NC Branches," 18 October 1933, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-146, folder 3, North Carolina State Conference.

[102] "North Carolina Branches – NAACP," NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-146, folder 2, North Carolina State Conference.

[103] Conrad Pearson and Cecil McCoy to Walter White, 6 February 1933, NAACP Papers, Box D-96, folder 1.

[104] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie,* 255.

The test case would, however, have the unforeseen effect of highlighting the growing rift between two different visions of African-American activism in Durham, a city known for its successful black middle class.

For much of the early-twentieth century, black Durham's official interactions with the white community had been led and mediated by an influential triumvirate of black leaders – Dr James E. Shepard, William G. Pearson, and Charles C. Spaulding. Shepard was founder and president of North Carolina College for Negroes (NCCN), the state's main liberal arts institution for African Americans; Pearson was principal of Whitted School and unofficially oversaw all the black public schools in the city of Durham and the surrounding county; while Charles C. Spaulding was president of the extremely successful North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company.[105]

Durham's black elite shared certain characteristics with elite black groups across the South, particularly in their tendency to believe in accommodation, racial solidarity, gradualism, and the advancement of black businesses through hard work. As Robin Kelley has pointed out, these values in many ways reflected those of Booker T. Washington and his National Negro Business League.[106] Ultimately, Shepard, Spaulding, and Pearson were too wedded to their own statuses and to concepts of gradual progress under white patronage to allow the NAACP to come into Durham and shake up the racial status quo in a way that might damage the prospects of further white funding for the black community. If the NAACP was too radical for the Durham elite, it was always highly unlikely that Shepard, Spaulding, and Pearson would ever work with or lend support to other, even more radical groups, particularly those that directly advocated class agitation, such as the CPUSA.

When the Hocutt case against UNC came to court, NAACP lawyer William Hastie argued Hocutt's case so well that the judge was convinced by it, but James Shepard effectively blocked progression by refusing to release Hocutt's transcripts from NCCN, meaning Hocutt could not provide all the evidence necessary for a full application to UNC. Charles Spaulding also put pressure on the Durham branch of the NAACP to distance itself from the case. Even though the Hocutt case was ultimately thus sabotaged by Durham's black elite, the NAACP nonetheless went on to pursue segregation suits against higher education institutions in Maryland and Missouri which forced states to desegregate higher education or provide genuinely equal facilities. Although it was not a complete victory, it was a huge step forward for the NAACP's

[105] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 14.
[106] Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe,* 108.

desegregation campaign. In the case of the University of Maryland Law School, the African-American applicant was allowed to enrol after the court ruling.[107]

The conservatism of the powerful Durham group of Shepard, Spaulding, and Pearson was evident later in 1933 when the NAACP decided to challenge Jim Crow by taking up the issue of teacher salaries. Black female teachers in North Carolina earned around 30 percent less than their white counterparts, and sometimes less than labourers in the tobacco factories, a situation made worse by the impacts of the Great Depression as the state cut teachers' salaries.[108] In September 1933, NAACP headquarters wrote to Julia Delaney, the president of the Raleigh branch, informing her that its lawyer, William Hastie, would be visiting North Carolina to investigate 'the inequality of salaries paid to white and colored teachers.'[109] The NAACP's subsequent campaign in the state started with an initially encouraging meeting in Durham between NAACP worker George Cox and James Shepard of NCCN. Between them, however, Shepard, George Pearson, and Charles Spaulding would work to undermine the NAACP's campaign to equalise teachers' salaries, not because they necessarily disagreed with the cause, but because they continued to be wary of alienating the white community.

Their stance in such cases was in some ways dictated by their own experiences and by the experiences of the generation to which they belonged. Pearson, for example, had been born a slave and had witnessed the wave of destruction against black schools that had accompanied the overthrow of Reconstruction in the late-nineteenth century. Charles Spaulding had been severely beaten by a store clerk in Raleigh in 1931, and was worried that an attack on the black community like that in Wilmington in 1898 would follow if black agitation became too assertive. Memories of widespread racist violence and even of slavery were still fresh for this generation of black leaders and their resistance to NAACP campaigns in North Carolina in the 1930s cannot be understood without this context.[110] They all were highly successful professionals and had prestige, status, influence, and livelihoods to lose in any potential white backlash that might follow an open display of black agitation in Durham.

In November 1933, Daisy Lampkin, the NAACP's Regional Field Secretary, toured the association's branches in North Carolina. On 27 November, Lampkin wrote

[107] For a detailed account of the NAACP's legal challenges in North Carolina, Maryland, and Missouri, see Gilmore, *Defying Dixie,* 255-64

[108] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 314.

[109] NAACP secretary to Julia Delaney, 20 September 1933, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-146, folder 1, North Carolina State Conference.

[110] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 166, 316, 318-19.

to Walter White to update him on the situation in the Tar Heel State with regards to the teachers' salary campaign. The picture was mixed at best. While Lampkin was encouraged by the work of the branches in High Point, Winston-Salem, Salisbury and Charlotte, she was unsure about the commitment of the Raleigh branch, complained of the 'poor leadership' in Greensboro, and referred to the Asheville branch as being 'absolutely hopeless.' One of the main barriers to the teachers' salary campaign identified by Lampkin was the fact that many teachers were afraid to openly support the NAACP, often because they had been intimidated by the head teachers of the schools in which they worked.

Despite the 'fine leadership' of the Winston-Salem branch, Lampkin wrote that teachers in that city '…are afraid to be identified with N.A.A.C.P. activities with few exceptions. Campaign will not be successful… Very doubtful that teachers will join 100%... Prof. Atkins of State Teacher's College is keeping quiet, but his influence is being felt. Teachers in his school are afraid to work in campaign.' Upon arrival in Asheville, she found 'a committee of the branch prepared to ask me not to mention the N.A.A.C.P.'s program for Teachers... No plans had been made for meeting, and Prof. Lee, Principal High School had intimidated the teachers.' Lampkin summarised to White the situation in North Carolina with the following brief paragraph:

> One thing I want to correct in your impressions. Plans are not made for my visit, enthusiasm is not high, and if the N.A.A.C.P. decides to make this fight they must expect to do it with very little help from the teachers of the state, and with plenty of opposition which is growing daily, from certain leaders, and lack of interest, because of fear on the part of the teachers.[111]

Dorothy Fletcher Steele, a teacher in Charlotte, joined the NAACP 'in spite of Mrs. Davis, our principal… she had a meeting, don't join she said because you run danger of losing your job. Don't join. Well, I was young and foolish and so I joined.'[112] According to Alexander Rivera, son of the Greensboro NAACP activist Dr A.M. Rivera, 'a lot of people contributed, teachers and all; they would not ever let it be known that they did. They would send money, but they didn't want a membership card or anything

[111] Daisy Lampkin to Walter White, 27 November 1933, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-146, folder 5, North Carolina State Conference.
[112] Dorothy Fletcher Steele, interviewed by Leslie Brown, Charlotte, NC, 16 June 1993. From Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South.

that would divulge that they were a member of NAACP.'[113] Ernest A. Swain, a teacher originally from the Wilmington area, confirmed that the memory of the 1898 Wilmington massacre still circumscribed the willingness of many African Americans in the area to engage publicly in activism and suggested that, because of this fear, most of the more assertive leadership tended to come from leaders who were originally from outside of North Carolina itself.[114]

In Durham, Shepard, Pearson, and Spaulding had refused to meet any further with NAACP representatives to discuss teacher salary equalisation, and would not allow a rally to be held in the city. A similar situation unfolded one state north, in Virginia, as senior black educators withheld support for the NAACP's teacher salary campaign, believing that working within the existing power structure, rather than directly challenging it, was the best way for blacks to progress.[115] Charles Spaulding put his name to a rival campaign run by the CIC, essentially a group of white liberals and prominent black leaders, which also aimed to raise money for salary equalisation.

The CIC was initially founded in 1919 by a group of white southern liberals in Atlanta in response to the racial violence of the post-war period. The founders of the group had close ties with northern philanthropists and could therefore direct a flow of funds towards uplift efforts on behalf of southern blacks. Although the CIC did much to highlight the issue of lynching and racial violence in the 1920s, it did not advocate racial equality and did not even oppose segregation. Instead, seeing segregation as an unfortunate but inevitable part of southern life, the interracial movement represented an opportunity for middle-class liberal whites to work with the black middle class in the South on the problems of race relations.[116] J. Douglas Smith has suggested that the CIC, and other similar interracial cooperation groups set up in the interwar South, represented attempts by middle-class gradualists of both races to maintain a supposedly 'civil' approach to race relations in a context of increasing black assertiveness and social and economic upheaval.[117]

The North Carolina branch of the CIC was established in March 1921 with the blessing of the then-Governor, Cameron Morrison. Founding members included Howard Odum, who led the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and William L. Poteat of the interracial committee of the

[113] Alexander McAlister Rivera interview, 2 June 1995.
[114] Ernest A. Swain, interviewed by Karen Ferguson, Wilmington, NC, 16 July 1993. From Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South.
[115] On the NAACP's campaign for teacher salary equalisation in Virginia, see J. Douglas Smith, *Managing White Supremacy: Race, Politics, and Citizenship in Jim Crow Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 270-73.
[116] Hall, *Revolt against Chivalry*, 62-63.
[117] Smith, *Managing White Supremacy*, 5.

Federal Council of Churches. Under the leadership of gradualist and primarily white liberals, the North Carolina CIC focused on issues such as education, health, and public welfare, but it soon became ineffective. Mark Ellis has suggested that William Poteat was 'typical of the CIC's progressive white leadership in his unwavering confidence that segregation was good.'[118] Given the links between Durham's black elite and the gradualist preferences of white liberals like Odum, it is perhaps no surprise to see the North Carolina CIC being used as a vehicle to oppose the NAACP's more assertive brand of agitation in Durham.

Daisy Lampkin discovered while she was in North Carolina that some teachers and schools had given money to the CIC under the misapprehension that it was going to the NAACP.[119] The aim of the apparent obstructionism by Spaulding, Shepard, Pearson, and others involved in the CIC was to publicly demonstrate to white officialdom that they did not support the new brand of black activism.[120] W.J. Trent, President of Livingstone College in Salisbury and chairman of the Salisbury NAACP branch, wrote to Walter White in November 1933 suggesting that Dr Shepard 'is being used to attempt to split the ranks of the Negro in North Carolina… Shepard is again playing his usual role of 'Uncle Tom.'[121] Ultimately, Shepard's stance on salary equalisation was motivated by the same fears that had led him to oppose the NAACP campaign against John Parker's nomination to the US Supreme Court three years earlier.

Trent's letter to White, however, suggests that not all senior black educators in North Carolina were opposed to the NAACP's work in the state, and that a divide was growing between accommodationist leaders and those who were willing to push for change more assertively. The fact that some established professionals, like Trent in Salisbury and A.M. Rivera in Greensboro, were willing to back the NAACP's campaigns further suggests that divisions within the black community were not necessarily generational; some older African Americans were ready to agitate for change alongside younger activists. Ernest Swain, a teacher from Wilmington, suggested that job status had much to do with whether a person was willing to risk speaking out. '…we have doctors and lawyers who don't depend on anybody for their income.'[122] Howard Monroe Fitts, from Durham, recalled how an independent dentist

[118] Mark Ellis, *Race Harmony and Black Progress: Jack Woofter and the Interracial Cooperation Movement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 101.
[119] Daisy Lampkin to Walter White, 27 November 1933, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 5.
[120] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 316.
[121] W.J. Trent to Walter White, 17 November 1933, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 5.
[122] Ernest A. Swain, interviewed by Karen Ferguson, Wilmington, NC, 16 July 1993.

could speak out more freely than Fitts' father, who was a public-school teacher.[123] Alexander Rivera remembered that in Greensboro, '…a whole lot of people who were members [of the NAACP] that nobody ever knew they were members, and my father was different because he was self-employed. He was a dentist, and nobody could hurt him.'[124] Whether a person was self-employed or employed by the state was a significant factor in deciding whether he or she was willing to actively organise campaigns and to speak out. This in turn may explain why certain older North Carolinians, such as A.M. Rivera, who was of broadly the same generation as the likes of James Shepard and Charles Spaulding, could still be found in the ranks of the NAACP.

In a letter to Walter White in September 1933, George Streator, a former professor at North Carolina A&T and editor of the *Crisis*, gave a stinging indictment of the accommodationist leaders based in Durham. Streator reserved particular scorn for Charles Spaulding, saying 'he is not worth in the final analysis a tinkers damn for fighting purposes.' Streator confirmed the vulnerability of public-school teachers in this kind of situation, saying, 'There is not a college president who will come out on this issue [teacher salary equalisation]. Any college teachers who do are thenceforth anathema to…the State Department of Education.' Referring to the Durham triumvirate as 'interracial racketeers' for what he regarded as their pursuit of white patronage at the expense of black advancement, Streator declared that 'unless we are able to swing the center of this thing away from Durham, there is little likelihood that the movement will gather much force.' In advance of a visit to North Carolina by White, Streator recommended making Raleigh the centre for any state-wide NAACP organising efforts.[125]

Accordingly, the NAACP held a large conference in Raleigh in October 1933 which was attended by around 2,500 black North Carolinians. Walter White attended along with NAACP lawyers Charles Houston, William Hastie, and Edward Lovett. The delegates at the conference met, in the words of George Streator, 'to voice their protest against the rising tide of white oppression, violence and discrimination.' Streator called for black North Carolinians to join the NAACP's State Federation of Branches, newly set up under the leadership of Dr George Nightengale of the High Point branch. In October 1933, the NAACP had 12 branches across North Carolina.

[123] Howard Monroe Fitts, interviewed by Paul Ortiz, Durham, NC, 8 June 1994. From Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South. William Chafe also notes that, in Greensboro, many teachers joined the NAACP but kept their membership as private as possible, for fear of reprisals including loss of employment, see Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights*, 30.
[124] Alexander McAlister Rivera interview, 2 June 1995.
[125] George Streator to Walter White, 6 September 1933, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 1.

Following the Raleigh conference, Nightengale oversaw recruitment drives in High Point, Winston-Salem, and Charlotte.[126]

Despite these gains, however, the NAACP continued to face strong opposition from accommodationist sections of North Carolina's black community. It was in Durham that the accommodationism of the established, relatively-wealthy professionals and of the old guard of the black elite was most visible. It is perhaps surprising to note that Durham did not have a UNIA division of any significant size in the 1920s and 1930s. It would be easy to imagine that the black elite would have been supportive of the UNIA's programme of separatism and economic self-sufficiency for blacks and of its sometimes accommodationist public messaging. Mary Rolinson, however, has pointed out that elite black leaders in urban areas, mainly in the North, frequently opposed what they perceived to be the UNIA's extreme tactics, particularly in the early-phase of UNIA expansion.[127] It is possible, therefore, that the black elite in Durham were not impressed by early-phase UNIA rhetoric that was critical of whites or that incited African Americans to organise against repression. This may in turn explain the apparent lack of a sizeable or active UNIA division in Durham during the UNIA's heyday in North Carolina, even while other urban centres such as Charlotte, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem hosted vibrant divisions.

Writing in the *Crisis* in response to the intransigence of elite black opposition to the NAACP, particularly in North Carolina, George Streator was highly critical of black leaders that he referred to as 'Uncle Toms.' Pointing out to *Crisis* readers that 'the fight of school teachers for salaries is only one phase of the larger fight against discrimination,' Streator referenced a recent lynching in the small town of Burgaw, just north of Wilmington, as proof that equality under the law would not come without a fight.[128] The intensity of the disagreement between the so-called 'old-line' activists and the NAACP supporters can be glimpsed in an anonymous letter sent to a newspaper by a senior black North Carolina educator. Referring to the NAACP's recent Raleigh demonstration, the letter stated that the NAACP's campaign 'does not have the support of the older Negroes in the state and is being agitated almost entirely by a group of outsiders…' The letter reminded readers that black North Carolinians 'have seen upheavals before, in 1898. It began with the Negro editors and young lawyers.' With its implicit yet ominous warning of a repeat of the murderous violence in Wilmington in 1898, the statement claimed that, 'Only a few ignorant folks, who

[126] Reverend George A. Fisher, "North Carolinians Form State-Wide N.A.A.C.P. Body," press release, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 1; George Nightengale to Walter White, 15 November 1933, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina) Box I: G-146, folder 4, North Carolina State Conference.
[127] Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism,* 132.
[128] George W. Streator, "The Colored South Speaks for Itself," *Crisis,* December 1933, 274-75.

possesses only book knowledge, are clamoring for social equality… The white people in this state have been too good to a few of the younger element [sic].'[129]

Such a resurrection of the ghost of the Wilmington violence was a direct attempt to drive a wedge between a supposedly moderate older generation and a reckless younger one, a wedge that relied on the creation of a false dichotomy between the tendencies of different generations. The statement's emotive impact for white readers lay in its calculated deployment of the term 'social equality,' a concept which had long served to stir up the white South's paranoia about the NAACP's alleged promotion of racial inter-marriage and miscegenation. Statements such as this made clear the size of the NAACP's task in pushing for change in an urban centre like Durham with pre-existing, conservative elite black leadership.

The NAACP stopped pursuing the teacher salary issue in North Carolina after 1934 and eventual salary equalisation in the state only came about because the NAACP won other cases in Maryland and Virginia that set precedents on the matter. The salary equalisation campaign did, however, have an impact on the dynamics of activism in North Carolina, and particularly in Durham. Almost all black teachers in Durham eventually joined the NAACP during the campaign, with hundreds joining across the state. This strongly suggests that, despite not wanting to be openly associated with the NAACP, many teachers were nonetheless supportive of the association privately. It seems that senior teachers and school managers were far more resistant to the NAACP's activism than were rank-and-file teachers.

Membership of the Durham NAACP branch had grown to 198 by the beginning of 1934, many of whom were women and teachers.[130] There was not, however, any decisive change to the face of black leadership in Durham in the wake of the teachers' salary campaign, and it is possible that the NAACP's assertiveness pushed the white establishment closer to the traditional, accommodationist leaders of the black community. Shepard, Spaulding, and Pearson continued to gain influential concessions from white patronage, including an expansion of segregated higher education programmes at Shepard's North Carolina College for Negroes, and a place on several New Deal advisory boards for Spaulding.[131]

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[129] "Older Negroes Not Supporting Present School Salary Issue," NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 4.
[130] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 321.
[131] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 320-21. The black sociologist E. Franklin Frazier argued in the 1960s that middle-class black leaders were obsessed with status and disassociated themselves from the black poor and working class. Frazier suggests that, despite their imitation of the white upper class, black leaders were often also rejected by influential whites. While Frazier's arguments have been criticised, they provide some context for discussions about black leadership in the pre-World War II period. See E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie* (New York: Collier Books, 1962); James E. Teele (ed.), *E. Franklin Frazier and Black Bourgeoisie* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2002).

As the Parker battle, the UNC test case, and the teachers' salary campaign suggest, by the early-1930s NAACP strategy was starting to move away from dealing with the problems of the black working class, including that of vulnerability to the various forms of white violence. By 1935, the association's attempts to persuade President Roosevelt to support the Costigan-Wagner anti-lynching bill had failed as southern members of Congress continued to block the passage of any such bill. North Carolina's Josiah Bailey was one of those southern senators who were steadfast in their commitment to thwarting the Costigan-Wagner bill. The NAACP's approach to white violence had, ever since the World War I period, generally been one of top-down campaigning that had focused on political pressure and constitutional rights rather than community protection and solidarity at the local level.

As the 1930s progressed, the NAACP missed numerous chances to protest individual instances of ordinary white violence in North Carolina, some of which certainly also fall under the category of sensational violence. This trend had begun in 1931 when the association's central office failed to provide advice to Charles Burrell after the death of a local African-American man at the hands of police in Henderson. In a particularly dramatic anti-black incident one night in May 1937, the home of Oscar Walker and his wife on Piedmont Avenue was blown-up in a dynamite attack. Although they were asleep in the house at the time, no members of the Walker family were physically harmed. The *Carolina Times*, edited by the fiery black activist Louis Austin, suspected racial motivation and called it 'one of the most heinous crimes in the history of Durham,' although the newspaper could not offer any speculation about the cause of the bombing.[132] When, in 1936, the white son of a Durham County commissioner was accused of sexually assaulting a thirteen-year-old black girl whose mother worked for the family, Charles Houston, Walter White, and Roy Wilkins at NAACP headquarters considered taking up the case. The young girl's testimony, however, had inconsistencies, probably due to pressure put on the family by the employers. These circumstances, along with concerns about the respectability of the girl and her mother in the eyes of Durham activists, meant that the NAACP ultimately decided not to take up the case, despite the association's desire to make more of an impact in Durham.

The attorney Conrad Pearson, who had worked with the NAACP in 1933, complained to Charles Houston about the indifference of the Durham NAACP branch to the problems of the working class. His law partner, M. Hugh Thompson, was willing to work on the sexual assault case only if it did not create tensions with Durham's elite

[132] "Negro Home Dynamited," *Carolina Times,* 8 May 1937, 1.

black leadership.[133] One Durham resident, speaking of this kind of sexual assault on black women by white men, recalled, 'that was one thing that was hush-hush.'[134] Class divisions, tactical caution, and reluctance to discuss issues of sexual abuse meant that the NAACP missed an opportunity to fight against sexual assault and to take a public stand against violence in general. As Conrad Pearson pointed out in his letter to Charles Houston, it was those issues that weighed particularly heavily on the black working class that the NAACP was increasingly failing to address. Historian Lee Sartain has argued that, in the 1930s and 1940s, the association often saw its local branch network as a means to raise funds for its legal campaigns against segregation, a tendency that often alienated local activists and set them against the national office.[135]

In late-May 1937, Vernon Farrington, a young African-American man, took a seat on a Durham bus next to a white police officer. The officer, J.S. Whitfield, took offence to this and attacked Farrington. Farrington subsequently reported the incident at the police station, where officers refused to help, one of them saying that Whitfield had done the right thing and that 'some of you damn niggers are getting mighty smart around here.' Both the Durham Committee on Negro Affairs (DCNA) and the Durham branch of the NAACP subsequently offered to help with prosecuting the officer, although the *Carolina Times* reported that 'Counsel for the young man [Farrington] will be secured at the expense of the Committee [DCNA].' [136]

The DCNA had been set up in 1935 with the aim of pursuing objectives similar to those of the NAACP but more directly under the auspices of Durham's black leaders like James Shepard, which probably had the effect of stifling Durham's NAACP branch.[137] Whether due to the machinations of the DCNA or not, the NAACP seems again to have missed an opportunity to make a bold statement about resisting ordinary white violence. It was Conrad Pearson and his partner C.J. Gates who led the prosecution of officer Whitfield which resulted in him being convicted of assault and battery. The *Carolina Times* announced that 'the case attracted much interest in Durham and the courtroom was crowded to capacity Saturday morning.' The Durham

[133] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 325-26.
[134] Julia H. Lucas, interviewed by Leslie Brown, Durham, NC, 21 September 1995. From Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South.
[135] Lee Sartain, *Borders of Equality: The NAACP and the Baltimore Civil Rights Struggle, 1914-1970* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013), 84-85.
[136] "Young Negro Assaulted by Policeman on City Bus," *Carolina Times,* 29 May 1937, 1.
[137] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 323.

City Manager took an active interest in the case and personally suspended Whitfield for four days.[138]

Despite this small but significant legal victory, Durham's black elite, worried about provoking whites and about losing their influence in the city, remained wary of challenging the structures of segregation. Looking forward to 1938, Louis Austin wrote in a *Carolina Times* editorial that 'Negro leaders in Durham are still a bunch of spineless, gutless, bedridden near humans, who don't give a tinker's damn about the masses of the race as long as they are well kept and well thought of by the oppressor… Real leadership is unselfish, sacrificing and fearless.' Austin concluded by warning Durham's African Americans to 'beware of leaders in 1938 who are objects of empty honors from the oppressors!'[139]

The tensions caused by the issue of police brutality were on display again in Charlotte when, in November 1937, an African-American man named William Connor was shot by police officer L.W. Bowlin after allegedly stealing clothes. Witnesses later testified that Connor probably had not stolen anything and that he was shot with his hands in the air, in what was described by the *Carolina Times* as 'the second killing of a Negro prisoner by the Charlotte police in the last few weeks.' The North Carolina State Committee of the Communist Party called for the suspension of the officer implicated in Connor's death, while the Charlotte NAACP created a fundraising committee which quickly raised over $200 through appeals to black businesses and churches in the city. Lawyers were subsequently appointed by the NAACP to take on the case.

Nine months previously, the Charlotte NAACP was reported as having been 'inactive for some time.' However, whether its fundraising efforts in the Connor legal case reflected a revival in membership numbers or the efforts of just a small number of campaigners is difficult to tell.[140] The case generated a strong reaction from the local community and on the first day of the hearing the trial had to be moved to a bigger court room. The accused officer was eventually found guilty by a coroner's jury of 'unjustifiable homicide' and suspended from the Charlotte police force pending a grand jury investigation. The *Carolina Times* celebrated this 'partial victory for justice and

[138] "Policeman Convicted and Suspended for Attacking Young Negro; Appeals Case," *Carolina Times,* 5 June 1937, 1.
[139] Louis Austin, "Facing the New Year," *Carolina Times,* 8 January 1938, 4.
[140] L.P. Harris to William Pickens, 10 March 1937, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-146, folder 29, Charlotte 1937-1939.

civic decency' and praised the 'fine courage and determination of the Colored citizens of Charlotte.'[141]

In 1937 and 1938, then, certain small groups of African-American activists in Durham and Charlotte were successful in challenging police brutality in the courts. It is notable that the courts were willing to rule against white police officers, even if the actual penalties were often excessively lenient.[142] This apparent shift in attitudes on the part of the courts reflects the pressure of public opinion, both locally and nationally, to present a respectable image of civilised race relations. This trend also reflects the long-standing preference for the processes of law and order on the part of North Carolina's political and civic elite.

The extent to which NAACP branches became involved in such cases, however, seems to have been limited and may have depended on a combination of national-level tactical preferences and local willingness to raise funds. For example, the NAACP was involved in the case of police violence in Charlotte, but seemingly not in similar cases in Henderson or Durham. Successful prosecutions of perpetrators of racial violence remained rare. Ultimately, the problem of police brutality was a clear continuity from the 1920s, rather than an area that saw real change for the better. In 1937, North Carolina created a new Department of Justice and gave the State Bureau of Investigation powers to scrutinise crimes, meaning that investigations were no longer in the hands of local officials who were afraid to speak out against their neighbours or who were even complicit in the crimes themselves. In December 1938, North Carolina's Attorney General proposed an updated anti-lynching statute for the state, which would make lynching a capital offence. The statute was suggested in the wake of an outbreak of lynching in Mississippi and Georgia and was indicative of the North Carolina's determination to deflect external concerns about mob lawlessness, particularly in the context of federal assistance through the New Deal programmes of recent years.[143]

The NAACP's campaign to equalise teachers' salaries had resulted in increased membership numbers in some cities in the state. When William Pickens, NAACP Director of Branches, toured North Carolina in November 1936, he reported that the association's branches in the state 'are showing renewed life,' and recorded

[141] "Charlotte Negroes Fight Police Double Slaying," *Carolina Times,* 27 November 1937, 1; "Charlotte Police Guilty of Murdering Negro," *Carolina Times,* 11 December 1937, 1, 8.
[142] For a further example of African-American attorneys prosecuting a white police officer accused of murdering a black man in Durham, see "Killer Cop Bound Over on Manslaughter Charge," *Carolina Times,* 18 June 1938, 1, 8.
[143] "Attorney General to ask Legislature to Enact Law against Mob Violence," *Carolina Times,* 31 December 1938, 1; on North Carolina's legislative reforms in the late-1930s, see also Newkirk, *Lynching in North Carolina,* 124.

13 active branches, including in Durham, Raleigh, Winston-Salem, Asheville, and Charlotte.[144] Despite this optimism, eight months later Pickens wrote to NAACP activists in Asheville, Greensboro, and Raleigh, voicing concern that North Carolina's branches were becoming inactive and asking that the state federation of branches be convened. In October 1938, Pickens wrote to contacts in Kinston, Salisbury, Morganton, and Charlotte asking for their help in 'reviving' the branches in those cities.[145] He received a favourable response from Charlotte, in the form of a letter from James A. Brewer of Johnson C. Smith University, and one T.A. Anderson, but the branch file does not indicate what, if anything, came from this correspondence. Instead, Kelly Alexander Sr., who would become a colossus of civil rights organising in Charlotte, set up an NAACP Youth Chapter in the city in 1938, with voting rights as its main campaign issue.[146] By 1939, the Durham branch listed 75 members, although its growth overall had been sporadic over the course of the 1930s.[147] The Raleigh branch reported 46 individual members as well as four organisational memberships in 1939, while Winston-Salem's 'reorganized' branch listed around 50 members and a Youth Chapter.[148]

The concern shown by Kelly Alexander about black voter registration in Charlotte suggests that the ability of many black North Carolinians to vote remained precarious by the late-1930s. Although North Carolina repealed the poll tax in 1920, informal barriers to black voting still remained, particularly the tendency of white registrars to wilfully misinterpret literacy requirements and the long-standing fear of many blacks about attempting to engage with the white-dominated electoral process.[149] The Twentieth Century Voters Club had been set up in North Carolina during World War I by eligible black voters and tax payers with the goal of increasing

[144] "Apportionment record of branches on tour of William Pickens," 19 November 1936; William Pickens to George W. Cox, 30 November 1936, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-146, folder 6, North Carolina State Conference.
[145] Williams Pickens to Minnie Rogers, 27 July 1937; Pickens to H. Edward Ferrison, 27 July 1937; Pickens to Curtis Todd, 27 July 1937; Pickens to NAACP officers in Kinston, Salisbury, and Morganton, September and October 1938, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 6. James A. Brewer to William Pickens, October 1938, NAACP Papers, Box I: G-146, folder 29.
[146] Walter P. Holmes, interviewed by Karen Ferguson, Charlotte, NC, 15 June 1993. From Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South.
[147] Membership list for Durham NAACP branch, 26 June 1939; Williams Pickens to R.M. Withers, 21 July 1939, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-147, folder 12, Durham 1937-39; Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 324-25.
[148] Membership list for Raleigh NAACP branch, 29 June 1939, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-149, folder 3, Raleigh 1937-1939. James H. Robinson to O.T. Banks, 26 October 1939; Williams Pickens to G.H.R. Gleaves, 21 June 1939, NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-150, folder 26, Winston-Salem January – December 1939.
[149] Korstad, *Civil Rights Unionism,* 138.

voting opportunities for black men.[150] In Union County, however, although a very few African Americans had been allowed to vote in the 1920s, only 22 of the thousands of eligible blacks in the county were recorded on the voting register in 1934.[151] The few remaining electoral registration records that remain for this period indicate that registration among African Americans gradually increased in North Carolina's urban areas after 1920. While only a few African Americans across the state could vote in 1918, several hundred could by 1928, with several thousand registered by 1932, although even the numbers in the 1932 survey represent only a very small proportion of the state's overall black population.[152]

Raleigh had an estimated 2,000 registered black voters by 1935, thanks largely to the establishment of a Negro Voters' League in the city in 1931. Winston-Salem seems to have had just over 300 black men and women registered to vote by 1930. In Durham, the DCNA and the North Carolina Federation of Colored Women's Clubs (NCFCWC) undertook a voter registration drive in the city's black community. Both the DCNA and NCFCWC believed that gaining more black voters could result in the black community holding the balance of power in elections where the local white vote was split between Roosevelt's Democrats and the economic conservatism of the Republicans. Leslie Brown has noted, however, that although levels of black voter registration did slowly increase in Durham over the 1920s and early-1930s, '…mostly the status quo of enforced Jim Crow, segregation, racial discrimination, and exploitation remained.'[153]

From 1920 onwards, polling stations may have become slightly less intimidating places for those African Americans who could pass the requirements for registration. Glenda Gilmore has suggested that violence at polling places decreased after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in August 1920, partly because polling stations needed to be suitable places for newly-enfranchised white women to vote.[154] Black women had some success in registering to vote in the towns and cities of the North Carolina Piedmont and in the west of the state, but the process of registration proved more difficult in the east. Overall in the autumn of 1920, probably

[150] Angela Hornsby-Gutting, *Black Manhood and Community Building in North Carolina, 1900-1930* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2009), 217 (n. 76).
[151] Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 21.
[152] Glenda Gilmore has highlighted the fact that only a few voting registers from North Carolina in the 1920s and early-1930s still survive, making it difficult to gain any kind of accurate view of black voter registration levels in this period. See Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 223-24; Gilmore, "False Friends and Avowed Enemies," 231, 233 (n. 11).
[153] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 324.
[154] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 217, 306 (n. 51).

less than 1,000 African-American women successfully registered to vote across North Carolina, although many more than that attempted to. The NAACP subsequently lobbied for a congressional investigation into the problems faced by black women attempting to register in 1920, but southern congressmen obstructed the association's attempts.[155] It is clear, however, that the association did seek to protest intimidation and obstruction when these problems intersected with voting, which was one of its central causes.[156]

Despite its often limited effectiveness in North Carolina, however, by the late-1930s the association had emerged as the premier black protest organisation among black North Carolinians. After an assertive start, the North Carolina Communist Party had failed to consolidate its place in the state's racial activism scene.[157] Given that the CPUSA had chosen North Carolina as the scene of its first interracial foray into the South in the form of the Gastonia strikes, the subsequent failure of communism to gain traction among black North Carolinians is notable. A number of interlinked factors seem to explain this. While the Gastonia strikes were made purposefully prominent by the CPUSA and drew public attention across the nation, focussing on textile mills with their majority-white workforces was not the most effective method to achieve grassroots recruitment among North Carolina's African Americans. Indeed, Cyril Briggs openly criticised the CPUSA's strategic focus on southern white mill workers.[158] Any such efforts among black workers, however, would have needed to avoid arousing the kind of direct white hostility that was immediately in evidence in and around Gastonia in 1929, an issue that Briggs was clearly aware of when he questioned the CPUSA's lack of a grassroots 'self-defense corps' for its members in the South.[159]

That the white strikers and organisers rarely included African Americans in the planning and execution of the Gastonia strikes, as noted by John H. Owens during his visit to the area, would clearly have worked against the development of future black participation in North Carolina communism generally. Even before Gastonia, it seems that the African Blood Brotherhood, the main grassroots black Marxist organisation of the early-1920s, did not have a significant presence or impact in North Carolina. Furthermore, the members of North Carolina's middle-class black leadership ranks may have been unwilling to entertain the notion of an insurgent class-based activism

[155] Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow,* 222-23.
[156] For examples of correspondence between people in North Carolina and the NAACP central office regarding voting rights in the state, see folders 15, 16, and 17 on voting issues in NAACP Papers, Box I: C-285.
[157] Taylor, *The History of the North Carolina Communist Party,* 128.
[158] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie,* 101.
[159] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie,* 100-01.

that had the potential to undermine their own leadership positions. Communism, therefore, probably began from something of a standing start among blacks in the state in 1929, a handicap that it never managed to truly overcome.

A branch of the Share Croppers Union (SCU) was formed in North Carolina in 1934, which attracted some support from black farm workers.[160] The unionisation effort among black sharecroppers, however, seems not to have been comparable with the impact of the SCU or of the Croppers' & Farm Workers' Union in Alabama, for example.[161] The fact that black North Carolinians working in the factory, mill, and tourism sectors had to work in close proximity with white employees may also have militated against the organising of working-class blacks when compared with sectors where they worked in more isolated, segregated conditions, such as in agriculture.[162] Added to this was the traditional hostility shown by factory owners and management, such as the Reynolds business in Winston-Salem, towards any moves for unionisation for its black workers. During the Gastonia strikes, black mill workers expressed to a CPUSA official their wish to strike, but feared that this would result in them immediately losing their jobs.

The NAACP, meanwhile, remained deeply wary of working with communism throughout the 1930s. In March 1939, James W. Ford, the Executive Secretary of the Harlem division of the Communist Party, wrote to the NAACP head office regarding the 'brutal lynch attack on two Negroes in Goldsboro, North Carolina' which had occurred the previous month after two local police officers had allegedly failed to protect their black prisoners. Ford expressed the communists' willingness to work with the NAACP to continue to push for federal action on lynching.[163] Despite this overture, however, there is no record of any response from NAACP headquarters in the association's files.

The NAACP's continued unwillingness to be in any way associated with the CPUSA was also evident in the realm of higher education desegregation when, in 1939, Thurgood Marshall and Roy Wilkins declined to work with Pauli Murray to challenge the University of North Carolina's refusal to admit African-American applicants to its undergraduate programmes, despite showing initial interest in the case. Murray had in the past been a member of a communist group. Given the NAACP's belief that its recent grassroots development in the South was based on its ability to provide a moderate alternative to communism, the association decided that it

[160] Taylor, *The History of the North Carolina Communist Party,* 102-03.
[161] On the SCU in Alabama, as well as other communist groups and unions, see Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe.*
[162] Taylor, *The History of the North Carolina Communist Party,* 29.
[163] James W. Ford to NAACP headquarters, 1 March 1939, NAACP Papers, Box I: C-363, Records of Racial Violence, folder 16.

could not be seen to be representing a plaintiff with communist sympathies, despite the clear opportunities that the Murray case offered for a desegregation challenge in the South itself, rather than in a border state.[164] Concerns about Murray's sexuality, her residence outside of North Carolina, and the assertive tone of her letters to white North Carolinians may also have played a part in the NAACP's unwillingness to support her case.

By the late-1930s, NAACP membership across the South was just under 20,000.[165] Although the association had certainly made gains in membership numbers in North Carolina by the end of the 1930s, its growing focus on legal challenges to segregation and inequality, particularly in the realm of education, meant that its programme primarily benefitted the black middle class and it was paying increasingly less attention to the problems of the working class. Incidents of ordinary white violence continued, however, and by the mid-1930s the NAACP's national campaign for federal anti-lynching legislation continued to prove fruitless.[166] In any case, the anti-lynching cause was coming to have less relevance in a state where extraordinary violence by white mobs was markedly less common than it had been in the early-1920s.

Membership records from North Carolina in the late-1930s do not provide enough detail to allow for firm judgements to be made about the social class make-up of the state's urban NAACP branches. However, membership lists from 1939 for the branches in Asheville, Raleigh, and Durham suggest that people from working-class occupations made up at least a part of the memberships in those urban areas.[167] Glenda Gilmore has pointed to the association's 'incremental cautiousness' in the 1930s as a reason why it struggled to build a truly broad-based, inclusive grassroots membership in that decade.[168] Cautiousness, however, is a relative term. For black workers and aspiring professionals in Durham, for example, the NAACP represented the more radical alternative to the accommodationist solution offered by the city's elite black leaders.[169] Perhaps inevitably, however, the specialist nature of legal campaigns

[164] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie,* 287-88.
[165] Sullivan, *Days of Hope*, 141.
[166] Lee Sartain has suggested that Congress's unwillingness to pass federal anti-lynching legislation led to calls for a change in strategy from some within the NAACP's ranks, see Sartain, *Invisible Activists*, 200-10.
[167] Membership lists in NAACP Papers, Branch Files (North Carolina), Box I: G-146 folder 14, Asheville 1937-1939; Box G-149, folder 3, Raleigh 1937-1939; Box G-147, folder 12, Durham 1937-1939. The names on these lists were cross-referenced with data from the 1940 United States federal census.
[168] Gilmore, *Defying Dixie*, 248.
[169] Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham,* 324.

and the focus on the education sector made the NAACP's methods more appealing to middle-class professionals than to the black working class.[170]

The economic strife of the Great Depression had deepened class divisions within the African-American community and may have meant that many working-class people were too preoccupied with attempting to stay in employment and support their families to commit themselves, through time, energy, or finances, to supporting organisational protest activity. In June 1933, Bessie Barber, a devoted Garveyite from the UNIA division in Salisbury, North Carolina, wrote to the *Negro World* explaining how difficult it was to get local UNIA supporters to remain active in the organisation. 'It is such hard times here…' she explained, '…we haven't been meeting for a good while. But we are trying to get started again.'[171] Given that the NAACP's Daisy Lampkin reported a successful NAACP branch in Salisbury in November 1933, it may be that middle-class activism was on the rise while working-class activism was waning. Bessie Barber's explicit mention of financial problems suggests that the economic condition of working-class Garveyites was having an impact on the organisation's grassroots viability. This may be a point which relates to working-class membership of organisations in general in this period, particularly where formal membership payments were required, as they were for NAACP membership. It is also possible that, once the UNIA had faded as an organisational force in various centres, many former Garveyites did not perceive enough similarity in the NAACP's programme to move their support over to the association.

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Lynching, as it has traditionally been described by contemporary observers and historians since, certainly became rarer in the 1930s. There seems to have been only four recorded instances of lynching in North Carolina during the 1930s, three of which were in 1930-1931. However, this apparent decline in the practice almost certainly reflects the fact that, after 1930, there was a greater degree of secrecy around the murder of African Americans by groups of whites, largely because of the growing disapproval of state authorities, politicians, and journalists, and on the part of national public opinion. There were almost certainly murders that never made it into press

[170] Several scholars have suggested that the NAACP in the 1930s represented primarily middle-class concerns and interests. See Simon Topping, "Supporting Our Friends and Defeating Our Enemies: Militancy and Nonpartisanship in the NAACP, 1936-1948," *The Journal of African American History* 89, no. 1 (2004): 17; Sartain, *Borders of Equality*, 21; Beth Tompkins Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP, 1933-1941," *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 2 (1997): 340.

[171] Letter from Mrs Bessie Barber, *Negro World,* 17 June 1933, 3.

reports, or that did not fit the widely-accepted definition of what constituted a lynching. There may also have been a shift in discourse about lynching, with middle- and upper-class sections of the southern white community becoming increasingly disapproving of lynching while also wanting to talk about it less due to liberal and national pressure. If such a shift in white discourse occurred, it was not necessarily indicative of a general decline in anti-black violence overall.

The UNIA had successfully represented the concerns of working-class black North Carolinians in towns and cities, including issues such as economic uplift, group solidarity, and preparations for self-defence. These concerns were not purely working-class ones, however, as the healthy proportion of middle-class UNIA members in urban North Carolina suggests. The NAACP had re-established itself in urban parts of the state by the mid-1930s, although its revival was halting and uncertain in many places and there remained a degree of fear of possible reprisals against those who joined the association in terms of loss of employment and even physical harm. The association's increasing focus on salary equalisation and higher education desegregation gave it a higher degree of relevancy for the black middle class and black professionals who worked in or who were interested in education.

The situation in Durham suggests that middle-class African Americans who worked as teachers, yet who were not at senior management level, were more willing to support the activities of the NAACP than were more established people such as school and college principles and relatively wealthy businessmen. Junior professionals potentially had much to gain from the reforms that the NAACP championed, while established people had more to lose if disapproving whites decided to punish the black community. Independent professionals, such as small business owners and medical practitioners, were more willing to engage in protest work than those dependent on the state for their salaries. The independence of one's employment situation may have had more bearing on willingness to engage in activism than which generation a person came from, although the older generation of African Americans sometimes had direct, personal memories of the violence of Reconstruction and even of slavery. The fact that the Wilmington massacre of 1898 was so often cited in black discussions about race strongly suggests that this event, to use just the most notorious example of extraordinary anti-black violence, continued to haunt the collective memory of the state's black community as a whole.

Although the impact of communism in black North Carolina seems not to have been widespread (possible reasons for which have been suggested above), African-American workers in Piedmont towns in 1929 and 1930 nevertheless may briefly have hoped that communism would provide a vehicle for separatist group solidarity and

organised self-defence, even if this turned out not to be the case in the way that it did, for example, in Alabama. By the mid-1930s, it becomes increasingly difficult to trace who was addressing working-class issues. The UNIA was failing and black suffrage was not yet sufficiently re-established in North Carolina to make the Democratic Party a meaningful vehicle for representation of the concerns of working-class people. Historians Fitzhugh Brundage and Robin Kelley have written about the significance of considering black working-class resistance that was not immediately visible. It may be that, after the decline of the UNIA and the failure of the CPUSA to build a meaningful support-base among black North Carolinians, working-class resistance moved out of the realm of organisational activism and into the 'unobtrusive realm of political struggle… beyond the visible end of the spectrum,' to use James Scott's language.[172]

Although it is extremely difficult to reconstruct, with relatively limited sources, the processes of individual and group decision-making, the picture is undoubtedly more complex than one of younger people and outsiders involving themselves in assertive activism while older local people stuck to accommodation; or of the working class being less willing than the middle class to make a stand. There is no formula to delineate precisely who supported the NAACP in the 1930s and who did not. But any attempt to understand the association's fluctuating fortunes in North Carolina must pay attention to the context of people's everyday lives. This context included awareness of the threat and reality of violence; one's level of financial independence from the state; one's age; and the level of resonance that the NAACP's causes and campaigns had with the personal circumstances of individuals. Despite the overwhelmingly middle-class slant of the NAACP's campaigns in North Carolina after 1930, by the middle of the decade the association nonetheless stood as the main organisational option for African Americans who were willing and able to be involved in protest activism.

[172] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 183. On hidden resistance, see Robin D. G. Kelley, "We Are Not What We Seem: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (1993): 109-10, 112; W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "The Roar on the Other Side of Silence: Black Resistance and White Violence in the American South, 1880-1940," in *Under Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South,* ed. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 275.

Conclusion

This section forms both a conclusion to the thesis and an epilogue. It sets out the connections between manifestations of anti-black violence and the respective fortunes of the NAACP and the UNIA, before summarising the relationship between expressions of and reactions to anti-black violence to dominant ideas of whiteness in North Carolina. The section then goes on to briefly examine the changing nature of the NAACP's responses to white violence after World War II, and how the context of the interwar period can inform our understanding of such shifting responses through time.

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This study's examination of the different proposals to address anti-black violence in North Carolina has shed light on changes in the state's African-American activism scene in the interwar period. The NAACP capitalised on the violence that swept the nation immediately after World War I and its campaign against lynching did much to pressurise white authorities to act against extraordinary violence. Despite the contributions of local activists, however, the NAACP's campaign was generally top-down and centralised and therefore did not provide a practical solution to people and communities facing violence. Although the NAACP was successful in its efforts to influence the opinions of white liberals, boosters, and politicians on the matter of extraordinary violence, those achievements were largely due to the lobbying efforts of the NAACP's head office. I suggest that the efforts of the NAACP at the local level in North Carolina were, at various points through the interwar period, liable to be circumscribed by the discursive limits of respectability and civility on the one hand, and by the threat of repercussions from whites on the other. Ultimately, the ways in which NAACP leaders and the association's local activists in North Carolina engaged with white officialdom highlights the fact that African Americans were often forced to accommodate influential whites in their attempts to push for change, a reality which both created and limited space for different kinds of activism.

This study has argued that the concept of North Carolina's lack of lynching between 1921 and 1930, as it was presented by influential whites at the time, promulgates a false image of Tar Heel race relations. Although instances of extraordinary violence may appear to have declined after 1921, ordinary violence nonetheless continued, while extraordinary violence increasingly moved 'underground.' Furthermore, incidents that may previously have been classified as

lynchings became harder to detect, largely because complicit individuals and communities covered up evidence in a political climate becoming increasingly intolerant of mobs. Although influential whites often boasted of North Carolina's lack of mob violence, it is far from clear that black North Carolinians would have felt any safer by the mid-1920s than they did in the immediate post-war years.

This context is crucial to the understanding of the rise of the UNIA in North Carolina from 1920 onwards. While the NAACP's strategy generally required a middle-class mode of activism, the UNIA provided a sense of security through a community-based form of separatist activism that did not rely on engagement with whites for its effectiveness and which allowed for expressions of citizenship through the protection of community and family – what I have referred to as 'civic separatism.' Importantly, the organisation's culture generally allowed its supporters the flexibility to decide their own priorities based on the conditions and circumstances of daily life, and grassroots Garveyites undoubtedly exercised a high degree of autonomy in this respect.[1] The African Legion units in Winston-Salem, Asheville, Raleigh, and Greensboro were a crucial part of the UNIA's programme in North Carolina, where urbanised black populations, segregated residential areas, and cross-class support for the organisation all helped to make viable the Legion's 'deterrent self-defence.' Furthermore, the UNIA after the deportation of Garvey was durable in North Carolina in a way that complicates the general perception of the organisation as being of limited effectiveness after 1927.

In the late-1920s and early-1930s, the NAACP kept its national focus on anti-lynching, although the association's efforts continued to be impeded by the intransigence of southerners in the Senate. At the local level in North Carolina, the NAACP missed opportunities to protest ordinary anti-black violence, some of which was sensational, instead focusing its efforts on centralised campaigns mainly relating to national politics and to desegregation and equalisation in the education sector. The arrival of the CPUSA in North Carolina in the late-1920s and early-1930s offered brief hope for the revival of a focus on working-class issues, including economic uplift and community protection, but flawed CPUSA strategy, mainly focused on white textile workers, meant that communism seems never to have made a sustained impact on grassroots black activism in the state.

This study's comparison of UNIA and NAACP reactions to anti-black violence in urban North Carolina has also enhanced our understanding of the membership base of the two main black protest organisations in the state during the interwar period.

[1] Claudrena N. Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South, 1918-1942* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 23, 76.

Ultimately, it is difficult to perceive clear differences between the demographic character of the NAACP's support-base in urban North Carolina in the early-interwar period and that of the UNIA in the 1920s. The possible exception is in Winston-Salem, where the presence of large numbers of African-American industrial workers created conditions particularly conducive to UNIA organising. While the two organisations generally had cross-class support in urban North Carolina, the UNIA's programme was more inclusive of the concerns of the black working class. Such concerns included economic uplift and independence, separatist group solidarity, and community protection. Those concerns, however, were not exclusively working-class ones, and the black middle class was galvanised by them too.

An underappreciated reason for the NAACP's decline after 1920 and the UNIA's nearly concurrent growth in urban North Carolina is, therefore, that the UNIA offered a more holistic vision of community activism for various classes of African Americans. The NAACP's failure to provide solutions to working-class issues can also explain, at least partly, the stuttering nature of the association's revival in North Carolina in the late-1920s and early-1930s, as the effects of the Great Depression increasingly opened class fractures in the black community. Meanwhile, the UNIA's apolitical stance became less relevant to the needs of the embattled black working class.[2] In the context of the New Deal era, the UNIA's ability to provide economic uplift was found wanting, an important reason for the organisation's decline beyond Garvey's deportation and the subsequent internal power struggles within the organisation.

By the early- and mid-1940s, internal debates continued about whether the NAACP was too centralised and insufficiently attuned to the concerns of its grassroots support-base.[3] Such debates shed light on questions about how the NAACP was constituted, managed, and governed, but it is important to also consider that the issues the association proposed to tackle had an impact on which sections of the African-American community it appealed to. Working-class blacks did not necessarily support the NAACP when it did not engage with the problems that were most relevant to their daily experiences. Comparing the respective fortunes of the NAACP and the UNIA, with a particular focus on class issues, can help us to more clearly understand

[2] Harold, *The Rise and Fall of the Garvey Movement in the Urban South,* 114.

[3] On the debates about the relationship between the NAACP head office and the grassroots support-base in the 1930s and 1940s, see Charles M. Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 74-75; Lee Sartain, *Invisible Activists: Women of the Louisiana NAACP and the Struggle for Civil Rights, 1915-1945* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 33-38.

the reasons for the successes and failures of different types of activism, and to avoid judgments based on which movements we now know to have succeeded or failed.

The issue of working-class concerns about community protection can also shed light on why the CPUSA did not have as much impact among black North Carolinians as might have been expected on the Piedmont. CPUSA strategy did not specifically engage with the concept of black self-defence against white violence in the South, but the organisation, through its organ the *Daily Worker,* did publicise and condemn southern lynching during the 1920s. Communist activism in the South provoked the wrath of white supremacists after 1929, with attacks occurring against CPUSA-affiliated unions and strikes in Alabama and North Carolina in the early-1930s. The attacks were more explicitly racial in Alabama, and African-American sharecropper unionists fired back at their white attackers in Tallapoosa and Lee counties in 1931 and 1932. Such retaliation in self-defence was, however, more the result of actions by individuals and small groups, rather than the product of ideological or practical moves toward self-defence on the part of the CPUSA itself. It seems that some African Americans who were in the CPUSA or involved in its activities, including in North Carolina, wanted the CPUSA to provide an organisational self-defence solution, but the organisation's hierarchy does not seem to have considered taking up the issue.

The various organisational manifestations of community protection for African Americans suggest that self-defence was generally a grassroots phenomenon, one which requires a focus on local communities to be fully and properly contextualised.[4] The theme of violence and the ways black protest organisations engaged with it helps to widen our focus and allows us to analyse different responses to a particular problem. Evidence from across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries points to the popularity of self-defence, or at least preparations for self-defence, as an option for African Americans facing violence by whites. As an organisational expression, however, self-defence was championed only sporadically and only by certain black protest and uplift organisations. Whether or not self-defence was advocated by organisations had much to do with the philosophies and approaches of the organisation in question and with the personal preferences of individual activists and leaders operating at a grassroots level. It is important to note, however, that during

[4] Shannon King, ""Ready to Shoot and Do Shoot": Black Working-Class Self-Defense and Community Politics in Harlem, New York, during the 1920s," *Journal of Urban History* 37, no. 5 (2011): 758; Charles E. Cobb Jr., *This Nonviolent Stuff'll Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 2-10.

periods when organisational activism did not reflect community-based resistance strategies, black southerners nonetheless resisted in other, less visible ways.[5]

The foregoing exploration of the variations of and reactions to anti-black violence has not only enhanced our understanding of the fortunes of the NAACP and the UNIA in North Carolina, but also sheds further light on the changing norms and meanings of whiteness in the state. Between Reconstruction and the Wilmington massacre, whiteness, at least among politicians and voters aligned with the Republican and Populist parties, had room for political alliances with African Americans. The racist reaction to these alliances manifested itself in the violent white supremacy campaign deliberately unleashed in 1898 by elite white Democratic leaders which, by manufacturing gender-based insecurities amongst working- and middle-class whites, successfully destroyed black electoral and political influence in the state. After the passing of North Carolina's disfranchisement amendment in 1900, very few options remained for interracial class-based alliances. The preservation and perpetuation of elite and middle-class white supremacy then came to rest on cultural tropes of respectability, hierarchy, deference, and the downplaying of conflict. By the interwar period, elite white journalists and Democratic politicians spoke out against violence by white mobs, yet the fact remained that hardly any white North Carolinians, from any social class, were able to contemplate genuine interracial alliances.

These shifts between violence and order, between enabling the mob and condemning it, in turn reveal the underlying tensions in North Carolinians' notion of 'civility.' During the 1898 election campaign, Charles Aycock endorsed the lynching of African Americans but later, while governor of the state, he condemned lynching and used state power to attempt to curtail the practice.[6] Similarly, Cameron Morrison, governor between 1921 and 1925, organised vigilante terror attacks on black communities during North Carolina's campaign to disfranchise African Americans but, while governor, deployed the National Guard to quell instances of white mob violence against blacks.

Sociologist Matthew Hughey has written that whiteness is constructed not only on the basis of those who are labelled as 'non-white,' but also through the purposeful marginalisation of those who do not live up to the practices and ideals of a dominant

[5] On hidden resistance, see for example Robin D. G. Kelley, "We Are Not What We Seem: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (1993): 109-10, 112; W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "The Roar on the Other Side of Silence: Black Resistance and White Violence in the American South, 1880-1940," in *Under Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South,* ed. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 275.
[6] Gregory P. Downs, "University Men, Social Science, and White Supremacy in North Carolina," *Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 2 (2009): 290.

version of whiteness.[7] The contradictions between a Democratic election victory built on mob violence and a subsequent preference for the downplaying of conflict indicates that there were shifts in North Carolinian whiteness which made 'civility' a less straightforward concept than it may have appeared. In the interwar period, the idealised version of white identity, of which 'civility' was a key part, continued to exist in tension with what had happened in 1898. Interwar 'civility' relied heavily on the condemnation of white mob violence against blacks, even though some of the politicians who used state power against mobs had, twenty years before, courted the power of the mob to achieve their electoral goals. Overall, mobs in the interwar period were generally presented by white politicians, journalists, and liberals in North Carolina as comprised of the least respectable sections of white society. Despite, and perhaps even because of, the tensions inherent in white civility, then, influential whites continued to tightly control definitions of a hegemonic white respectability and masculinity shaped by gender norms.[8]

The disapproving attitude of influential whites towards violence in the 1920s and 1930s was brought to the fore as a reaction to the spike in anti-black violence in the World War I era and in the post-war period, and to the subsequent calls for federal intervention in the matter. This was not a new phenomenon, however, as suggested by Charles Aycock's use of state power against lynching during his governorship earlier in the century. The unreliable nature of police responses to mobs during the interwar period further speaks to the heavily class-based values upon which hegemonic North Carolinian whiteness rested. While some police officers went to great lengths to defy mobs and to protect black prisoners, others did not resist mobs or were themselves directly complicit in extra-legal anti-black violence. Given that many sheriffs and deputies would likely have come from working-class and lower middle-class backgrounds, these officers were probably on the fault lines between middle-class notions of civility and the violence that still went on in local communities. Overall, this police failure to provide reliable protection for African Americans reflects the difficulties inherent in entrusting law enforcement to community-based officers whose attitudes and social positions left many unable to stand up to the actions of their

[7] Matthew W. Hughey, "Hegemonic Whiteness: From Structure and Agency to Identity Allegiance," in *The Construction of Whiteness: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of Race Formation and the Meaning of a White Identity,* ed. Stephen Middleton, David R. Roediger, and Donald M. Shaffer (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2016), 227.

[8] On the links between white respectability and masculinity, see Downs, "University Men, Social Science, and White Supremacy in North Carolina," 289; Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 145-46; Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 41-42.

neighbours and acquaintances. The lack of sufficient state response to police complicity in violence adds further context to long-standing problems of relations between white police officers and the black community.

Although the police had failed to keep African Americans safe for years, the issue of this failure only entered the national debate about racial violence during and after World War II.[9] This can, in part, be explained by the fact that white concerns about lynching rarely extended to the issue of ordinary white violence (the type of violence most likely to be experienced by black North Carolinians, particularly after 1921). It is crucial, therefore, that consideration also be given to assaults, surreptitious murders, police brutality, and thwarted lynchings in discussions of interwar race relations generally and of racial violence specifically. William Chafe has highlighted that black North Carolinians were well versed in the 'other side of civility – the deferential poses they had to strike in order to keep jobs, the chilling power of consensus to crush efforts to raise issues of racial justice.'[10] The rhetoric of civility combined with the threat and actuality of violence efficiently underpinned segregation in interwar North Carolina. Given the stifling façade and the veiled threat created by the veneer of civility, black North Carolinians needed to develop nuanced means of exercising their organisational agency to protect their communities.

The NAACP did not engage with issues of self-defence or community protection after its revival in urban North Carolina in the late-1920s. Self-defence as an organisational strategy, and even as a discussion, largely fell away from African-American activism in the state after the decline of the UNIA and after communist activism failed to engage with it. Self-defence did not reappear as an organisational response until after World War II when, paradoxically, it was a renegade North Carolinian NAACP branch that provided its next expression. The actions of the Monroe NAACP branch in the 1950s are testament to the fact that self-defence was a tactic never far below the surface of activism when southern black communities felt threatened by white violence. The case also exposes the potential tension between centralised, top-down activism and the approaches preferred at the local level to ensure community protection. The approaches were not mutually exclusive, but the reaction of the NAACP hierarchy to self-defence efforts in Monroe in the 1950s contributed to enduring perceptions of a dichotomy between self-defence and non-violent forms of activism.

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[9] Robin D. G. Kelley, "Thug Nation: On State Violence and Disposability," in *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis led to Black Lives Matter,* ed. Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton (London: Verso, 2016), 22.

[10] William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 9.

The early-1940s were successful years for the NAACP in North Carolina; by 1945 the number of branches in the state had more than doubled from its pre-1941 level.[11] The issue of self-defence was taken up by Robert F. Williams, a Marine Corps veteran who became president of the local NAACP branch in the Union County town of Monroe, south-east of Charlotte. During his time as an activist in Monroe, Robert Williams demonstrated a commitment to armed self-defence that marked him as different from the majority of black leaders in the US at the time. In 1947, for example, Williams, along with a group of similarly-minded companions (some of whom were also army veterans) deterred a Ku Klux Klan raid on Monroe's black funeral home. Additionally, one October night in 1957, during a period of widespread Klan revival across the North Carolina Piedmont, Williams and other members of the Monroe NAACP took up their guns to defend the home of Dr Albert Perry, a local physician and vice-president of the Monroe NAACP. As one of Monroe's most visibly successful black citizens, Perry had received death threats from the Klan and, when a large Klan contingent arrived at Perry's house and opened fire on it, Williams and the other defenders fired back and repelled the attack. One member of the NAACP group who defended Perry's home that night later commented that the Klan had always been less likely to attempt violence if they discovered that their intended victims could fire back.[12]

In May 1959, events in Monroe suddenly put the national spotlight on the NAACP's relationship with the concept of armed self-defence. In quick succession, two court cases in Union County against white men accused of assaulting African Americans ended in acquittal for the white defendants. Robert Williams' patience with the southern judicial system was finally shattered by these acquittals, as was the patience of many in Monroe's black community. Williams subsequently told the press that the time had come to 'meet violence with violence.' He clarified in subsequent media interviews that he did not believe in guerrilla warfare against whites, but his support for self-defence nonetheless led rapidly to a breakdown in relations with then-NAACP executive secretary Roy Wilkins. The NAACP's official position was that it never condoned extra-legal protest or resistance activities, and Wilkins was determined not to let Williams' contrasting position reflect on the association's reputation. In the face of Williams' continued defiance of the official NAACP line,

[11] Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 31.

[12] For a detailed account of Williams' involvement in self-defence efforts in Monroe, see Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*, 49-50, 86-89.

Wilkins had Williams suspended from his position as president of the Union County branch.[13]

The official position of the association's head office clearly did not necessarily reflect the beliefs and actions of its grassroots membership. Not even Roy Wilkins could deny that many black southerners understood, as had generations of their ancestors, the need for self-defence as a tactic when circumstances demanded it. In eastern North Carolina, in events that echoed the strong black response to white supremacist violence in that area during Reconstruction, the Northampton County NAACP branch openly supported the right of its members to bring guns to meetings, while in Washington County NAACP members used weapons to drive away the Klan.[14]

The tense nature of the stand-off between Williams and Wilkins over the issue of self-defence can be understood in the context of the general direction of NAACP strategy in this period. Political scientist Megan Francis has argued that the NAACP in the 1950s shrank away from dealing with problems of racial violence in favour of a focus on education and labour issues, which eventually led to the landmark Supreme Court *Brown v Board of Education* desegregation ruling in 1954. Francis suggests that this emphasis on education originally arose because the NAACP needed to address the issues prioritised by its biggest funder at the time, the American Fund for Public Service (better known as the Garland Fund).[15]

As the situation in North Carolina has shown, the NAACP's shift away from addressing racial violence and toward desegregation and equalisation began to take shape in the early-1930s. There can be little doubt that, as Lee Sartain has pointed out, the political climate of the New Deal era was well-suited to the NAACP's favoured style of publicity and political lobbying, thereby helping to solidify the strategic preferences of the national office.[16] The actions of Robert Williams and the Monroe branch indicate, however, that the concerns and priorities of African Americans at the grassroots level could still diverge from those of the NAACP's national-level leaders, fundraisers, and strategists in the post-World War II period.

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[13] On Roy Wilkins' campaign against Robert Williams, see Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 150-64.

[14] On the effectiveness of black resistance to white violence in the black-majority counties of eastern North Carolina after the Civil War, see Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001). On self-defence by NAACP members in eastern North Carolina in the 1950s, see Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 124.

[15] Megan Francis, "Do Foundations Co-Opt Civil Rights Organizations?" *HistPhil,* 17 August 2015, http://histphil.org/2015/08/17/do-foundations-co-opt-civil-rights-organizations/. See also Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016), 181-82.

[16] Lee Sartain, "'It's Worth One Dollar to Get Rid of Us': Middle-Class Persistence and the NAACP in Louisiana, 1915-1945," in *Long Is The Way and Hard: One Hundred Years of the NAACP*, ed. Kevern Verney, Lee Sartain, and Adam Fairclough (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2009), 128-29.

Overall, the NAACP's approach to protesting white violence in the interwar period tended to be centralised and orientated towards litigation in a way that favoured middle-class modes of activism while not addressing ordinary violence or more working-class concerns. That the UNIA offered a more direct, community-based response to violence than that of the NAACP resonates with debates regarding whether the NAACP continues to be too institutional and 'respectable' in its approach to protest activism when compared to more recent, decentralised campaigns such as the Black Lives Matter movement. Tempting as it may be to view the NAACP and Black Lives Matter as divergent in their approaches, with one centralised and top-down and the other decentralised and based on local responses, this study has suggested that political and legal campaigns and community-based movements all have different and not contradictory parts to play in wider battles against injustice.

Although anti-black violence by whites was a continuous theme of the interwar period and beyond, the nature of black responses to that violence varied significantly. The range examined in this study, and the intra-racial differences exposed by these responses, show us that separatism, integration through litigation, and accommodation were not sequential but rather coexisting responses shaped by the pressures of various circumstances, influences, and priorities. The respective fortunes of those responses are crucial in helping us to analyse black activism not just in the framework of a long movement, but as a series of distinct approaches, each with different intra- and interracial dynamics, and which often attempted to address similar, long-standing systemic injustices in American society.

Appendix A

UNIA divisions in North Carolina

This listing is primarily taken from the following sources:

- The UNIA's *Negro World* newspaper

- Universal Negro Improvement Association, Records of the Central Division (New York), 1918-59, Schomburg Centre for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library, New York, NY.

- Mary G. Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The Universal Negro Improvement Association in the Rural South, 1918-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), Appendix A, 164-66.

- Robert A. Hill, *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume VII, November 1927 - August 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 986-96.

Cross-referencing is an inexact process as there are variations in the spelling of certain place names and some divisions are duplicated or from settlements that no longer exist. Mary Rolinson has undertaken a cross-referencing process for all UNIA divisions in the 11 states of the former Confederacy and my own findings largely agree with the North Carolina list in Rolinson's book. An asterisk next to the division's name indicates a settlement which also hosted an NAACP branch in the post-World War I period:

Acme, Asheville*, Aulander, Bailey, Belhaven, Bellvedere, Bethel, Broadway, Charlotte*, Columbia, Council, Duke, Durham*, Elm City, Fairmont, Fayetteville*, Gardiners, Gaylord, Goldsboro, Goodwin, Greensboro*, Hermondale, Jamesville, Kingston, Kinston, Lagrange, Lidling, Lillington, Mackeys, Magnolia, Matthews, Merry Hill, Morgantown, New Bern, Norwood, Pantego, Parmele, Pink Hill, Raleigh*, Randleman, Ransomville, Red Springs, Rocky Mount*, Ronake (Littleton), St Matthews, Salisbury, Sandford, Spencer, Spring Hope, Supply, Warrenton, Warsaw, Whittaker, Wilmington*, Wilson, Windsor, Winston-Salem*, Zebulon

Appendix B

African-American victims of lynching in North Carolina, 1906-1930

The sources cross-referenced to ascertain this list are:

- *A Red Record: Revealing Lynchings in North Carolina,* University of North Carolina: www.lynching.web.unc.edu (abbreviated to RR)

- *Project HAL: Historic American Lynching Data Collection Project:* http://people.uncw.edu/hinese/HAL/HAL%20Web%20Page.htm (abbreviated to HAL)

- NAACP Papers, Series I, records of racial violence, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. (abbreviated to NAACP)

- The UNIA's *Negro World* newspaper (abbreviated to NW)

- Local press reports - specific references are given in the relevant part of the text (abbreviated to LP)

Only those deaths that are recorded in at least two of the above sources have been included.

Year	Name	County	Sources
1906	John Gillespie	Rowan	HAL/RR
1906	Nease Gillespie	Rowan	HAL/RR
1906	Jack Dillingham	Rowan	HAL/RR
1908	Unnamed male	Johnston	HAL/RR
1910	Unnamed male	Rockingham	HAL/RR
1913	Joseph McNeely	Mecklenburg	HAL/RR
1914	James Wilson	Johnston	HAL/RR
1915	Josephine Perry	Vance	HAL/RR
1915	Bessie Perry	Vance	HAL/RR
1916	Joseph Black	Greene	HAL/RR
1916	John Richards	Wayne	HAL/RR
1918	Peter Bazemore	Bertie	HAL/RR
1918	George Taylor	Wake	HAL/RR/LP
1919	Powell Green	Franklin	HAL/RR/NAACP
1919	Walter Elliott/Tyler	Franklin	HAL/RR
1919	John Daniels	Onslow	HAL/RR/NAACP
1920	John Jeffress	Alamance	HAL/RR/NAACP
1920	Edward Roach	Person	HAL/RR/NAACP
1921	Ernest/Eugene Daniel(s)	Chatham	HAL/RR
1921	Jerome Whitfield	Jones	HAL/RR
1921	Alfred Williams	Warren	HAL/RR/NAACP
1921	Plummer Bullock	Warren	HAL/RR/NAACP
1927	Broadus Miller	Burke	RR/LP
1927	Thomas Bradshaw	Nash	HAL/NAACP
1929	Willie McDaniel	Mecklenburg	HAL/RR/NAACP
1930	Oliver Moore	Edgecombe	HAL/RR/NAACP
1930	Laura Wood	Rowan	RR/NAACP/NW

Appendix C

North Carolina NAACP supporters by city

The following names are taken primarily from membership lists in the NAACP's North Carolina branch files. Where possible, those names were then cross-referenced with US census data to ascertain a person's race and occupation. Where no occupation is listed, it proved impossible to ascertain a reliable cross-reference between name and census data.

Asheville:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by NAACP
M.	Anderson	Reverend		Clergy	1918
William P.	Brooks	'Director' in 1922	Mulatto	Barber	1918
W. M.	Dalton		Black	Grocer	1918
F. H.	Harris	Secretary			1918 (press)
Ivey M.	Harris	Mrs	Mulatto	Wife	1918
Mary E.	Langston	Mrs			1918
W.E.M.	Lenoir	Treasurer			1919
Julia	Lenoir	Mrs			1918
W. R.	Lovell	Reverend		Clergy	1918
J. H.	McGinnes				1918
L. O.	Miller	Dr; 'Director' in 1922		Doctor	1918
Charles	Morgan		Black	Porter	1918
Mattie G.	Morris	Miss	Mulatto	Chamber maid at hospital	1918
Noah	Murrough		Black	Owner of undertaker business	1918
J. R.	Nelson	Reverend			1918
Edward W.	Pearson	President	Black	Real estate business owner	1918 (press)
Henry	Pearson		Black	Café proprietor	1918
C. E.	Saxon	Professor			1918
Joe	Sisney		Mulatto	Taylor	1918
S. J. W.	Spurgeon	Reverend	Black	Clergy	1918
E. W.	Swepson		Black	Hotel cook	1918
J. W.	Walker	Dr	Mulatto	Doctor	1918
S. W.	Walker			Wife	1918
A. C.	Sims	President in January 1920	Mulatto	Barber	1920 (press)

S. W.	Alexander	'Director' in 1922			1922 (press)
R. D.	Alexander				1926
S. R.	Alexander				1926
Mary	Alexander				1926
H. L.	Alston				1926
James	Bacon		Black	Janitor	1926
John	Baird		Black	Janitor	1926
Warren	Barber		Black	Hotel worker	1926
W. P.	Brooks		Mulatto	Barber	1926
G. W.	Burton		Black	Grocery store clerk	1926
Eugene	Cashion				1926
W. C.	Colies				1926
M. B.	Davis		Black	Carpenter	1926
William	Deloach		Black	Cook	1926
J. B.	Dixon				1926
Davis	Dixon				1926
F. D.	Evans	Dr		Physician	1926
James	Franklin		Black	Labourer	1926
L. N.	Gallego	Dr		Physician	1926
O. R.	Gordon	Reverend	Black	Clergy	1926
James	Greenleaf		Mulatto	Truck driver	1926
G. E. O.	Hamilton				1926
W. E.	Harrison				1926
E. C. B.	Horne				1926
C. T.	Howell		Black	Pullman porter	1926
B. J.	Jackson		Black	Green grocer	1926
A. G.	Jenkins				1926
F. D.	Johnson				1926
J. H.	Keaton	Dr		Physician	1926
C. C.	Lipscombe		Black		1926
R. H.	Loder		Black	Undertaker	1926
A. L.	McCoy				1926
V. S.	McDowell		Black	Barber	1926
John D.	Miller		Mulatto	Brick mason	1926
Noah	Murrough		Black	Undertaker	1926
Kay	Palmer		Black	Porter	1926
Samuel	Patton		Black	Grocery store driver	1926
E. W.	Pearson				1926
W. F.	Perrin				1926
Louis	Pinkney				1926
James	Randalph				1926
Sam	Singleton				1926
R. L.	Stephenson				1926
Thomas	Stokes		Black	Servant at	1926

				doctor's surgery	
James	Todd				1926
Fred	Woodford		Mulatto	Butler	1926
J.	Andrews				1930
W. L.	Bell	Mrs			1930
E.	Berry				1930
S. J.	Bradshaw				1930
W. P.	Brooks	Mrs			1930
J.H.	Hale				1930
W.M.	Haike				1930
Louis	Holloway		Black	Fireman on railroads	1930
Thomas	Latto				1930
Robert	Lenoir				1930
M.	Love				1930
J. H.	Michael	Professor			1930
L. B.	Michael	Mrs			1930
C.	Morgan	Mrs			1930
S. L.	Nelson	Reverend		Clergy	1930
E.W.	Pearson	Branch secretary in 1930	Black		1930
B.	Quick				1930
W.F.	Rice	Reverend			1930
George	Rookard		Black	Hotel cook	1930
John	Smith				1930
G. H.	Spaulding	Reverend	Black	Methodist clergyman	1930
C.	Williams	Mrs			1930
J.	Wilson				1930
J.W.	Watson	Acting branch secretary in 1930			1930
S. E.	Bowman	Miss			1939
R. H.	Bryant	Mrs			1939
C. L.	Burchett	Mrs			1939
Howard	Burchett	Mrs			1939
Harold	Burton	Mr	Black	Hotel porter	1939
Charles	Collette	Mr	Black	Hotel porter	1939
Vivian E.	Cooper	Mrs			1939
B. M.	Darden	Miss			1939
M. L.	Edwards	Mrs			1939
H. Y.	Goodwin	Mrs			1939
O. N.	Greer	Mr			1939
Estella	Holland	Mrs			1939
Hattie	Holmes	Miss	Black	Cook	1939

Isabelle	Jones	Miss	Black	Teacher	1939
R. J.	Kennedy	Reverend			1939
Charlie	Kennedy	Mr	Black	Porter	1939
Edward	Lanning	Mr	Black	Machine operator	1939
E.	Lanning	Mrs	Black	Housewife	1939
J. S.	Lathan	Mr			1939
T. H.	Leonard	Mr			1939
Julia	Lilas	Miss			1939
J. V.	Logan	Mr			1939
James	Lurman	Mr			1939
A. E.	Manley	Professor			1939
J. H.	Michael	Mrs	Black	Teacher	1939
S. A.	Mills	Mr			1939
Ethel	Murray	Miss	Black	Teacher	1939
F. M.	Owens	Mrs			1939
Eula B.	Owens	Mrs	White	Teacher from Hendersonville	1939
F. M.	Patton	Mrs			1939
James	Pilgam	Mr			1939
Lenora	Reed	Mrs	Black	Teacher	1939
Adella	Ruffin	Miss			1939
Rufus	Scott	Mr	Black	Helper	1939
Hezekiah	Shorter	Mr		Fletcher	1939
Anna	Shorter	Mrs		Fletcher	1939
J.	Shorter	Mrs			1939
John	Shorter	Mr	Black	Gardener	1939
Dorothea	Stewart	Miss			1939

Charlotte:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by NAACP
?	?			Minister	1919
Z.	Alexander				1919
Ida	Barker	Mrs		Hairdresser	1919
M.	Barringer				1919
Edward E.	Blackman				1919
E.E.	Blackman	Mrs			1919
Hannah	Blount	Mrs			1919
J.	Brown				1919
W.E.	Burton		Black	Insurance agent	1919
J.A.	Byers			Labourer	1919
E.N.	Carpenter			Minister	1919
Daisy	Childs	Mrs	Black	Office worker	1919
George W.	Clinton	President		AME Zion Bishop	1919
Gertrude	Davidson	Mrs	Black		1919
W.F.	Debardelaben		Black	Labourer	1919
Amelia	Dincan				1919
C.D.	Dockery			Minister	1919
W.J.	Frazier				1919
N.P.	French			Labourer	1919
Hester	French				1919
G.W.	Goode			Mail clerk	1919
D.	Grecian Denowa	Reverend		Minster	1919
W.J.	Hunter				1919
Richard	Jones		Black	Cement industry worker	1919
John	Jordan				1919
J. Francis	Lee			Minister	1919
Geo W.	McClelland				1919
John	McCree		Black	Janitor	1919
H.L.	McCrory			President of Biddle University	1919
A.C.M.	McCrory	Mrs		Wife of Biddle President	1919
J.W.	McDaniel				1919
E.T.	McDonnell				1919
William	McDonnell			Insurance agent	1919

J.B.	Moore				1919
W.M.	Morgan				1919
N.B.	Morris	Vice-President		Labourer	1919
J.H.	Perrin			Banker	1919
B.J.	Perrin	Mrs			1919
J.J.	Ridley		Mulatto	Minister	1919
M.D.	Smith			Minister	1919
N.C.	Smith			Printer	1919
W.C.	Smith				1919
A.E.	Spears			Minister	1919
J.C.	Sterling				1919
J.D.	Todd				1919
J.D.L.	Torrence	Secretary		Businessman	1919
E.J.	Tyson			Physician	1919
Alice	Walker		Mulatto	Laundry worker	1919
A.J.	Warren			Bishop	1919
S.D.	Watkins	Treasurer		Minister	1919
L.B.	West		Black	Minister	1919
J.T.	Williams	Dr		Physician	1919
L.D.	Wilson				1919
M. M.	Adams	Mrs		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
S. H.	Adams	Professor		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
Z.	Alexander	Mr		Undertaker	1927
F. J.	Anderson	Dr		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
H.	Anderson	Miss		Teacher	1927
R.	Anderson	Professor		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
C. A.	Blue	Professor		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
I. L.	Brooks	Mrs; Treasurer		Housekeeper	1927
N. M.	Burnett	Mr		Brick mason	1927
Geo. W.	Clinton	Mrs		Saleslady	1927
D. A.	Costner	Mr		Student, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
William B.	Crittenden	Reverend		Episcopal Minister	1927
P. E.	Davis	Mr		Student, Johnson C.	1927

				Smith Uni	
Chas	Dixon	Mr		Brick mason	1927
E. W. D.	Goings	Reverend		Student, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
William R.	Harris	Sergeant		Retired sergeant	1927
S. L.	Harris	Mr		Brick mason	1927
S. F.	Hogans	Dr; Vice-President		Doctor	1927
M. J.	Howie	Reverend		Methodist Minister	1927
T. S.	Jackson	Professor; President		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
I.	Jackson	Mrs		Housekeeper, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
G. G.	James	Dr		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
J. A.	Jones	Mr		Student, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
W. J.	Knox	Professor		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
J. F.	Lee	Dr		Editor	1927
L. B.	Lee	Mrs		Teacher	1927
I. M.	Martin	Reverend		Presbyterian Minister	1927
W. M.	McCain	Mr		Carpenter	1927
M. L.	McCrory	Mrs		Housekeeper, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
M.	Muldrow	Mrs		Teacher	1927
J. M.	Pride	Mrs		Teacher	1927
E. L.	Ram	Professor		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
M. M.	Reid	Miss		Teacher	1927
Q. T.	Shelton	Mr		Barber	1927
M. K.	Spaulding	Mrs		Housekeeper, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
J. J.	Sperman	Mr		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
W. H.	Stinson	Professor		Teacher	1927
Roy	Thomas	Mr		Headwaiter	1927

A. B.	Thompson	Mrs; Secretary		Housekeeper	1927
J.	Thompson	Mr		R.M.C	1927
W. L.	Tynes	Mr		Headwaiter	1927
F.	Tyson	Dr		Doctor	1927
W. M.	Walley	Professor		Teacher	1927
G.	Walley	Mrs		Housekeeper	1927
W. J.	Walls				1927
A.	Warner	Mrs		Teacher	1927
S. D.	Watkins	Dr		Manager	1927
O.	Weddington	Miss		Stenographer	1927
C. H.	White	Mr		Student, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927
A.	Williams	Miss		Y.M.C.A. secretary	1927
A. J.	Williams	Dr		Doctor	1927
S. D.	Williams	Professor		Teacher, Johnson C. Smith Uni	1927

Durham:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by NAACP
F. S.	Abernathy	Reverend		Clergy	1919
Rufus	Allen		Black	Factory labourer	1919
Marcellus	Allen		Mulatto	Railroad labourer	1919
William	Allen		Black	Public works labourer	1919
G. W.	Austin				1919
L. E.	Austin				1919
J. M.	Avery		Black	Vice president of insurance company	1919
J. M.	Avery	Mrs	Black	Wife	1919
Coley B.	Barbee		Black	Tobacco factory labourer	1919
C. H.	Barber				1919
N. H.	Barnett				1919
L. J.	Bruce	Dr			1919
I. H.	Buchanan				1919
C. L.	Bynum				1919
D. E.	Caldwell	Dr	Black	Doctor	1919
M. V.	Cannada	Reverend		Clergy	1919
E. W.	Cannady	Mr			1919
W. C.	Cleland	Reverend	Black	Clergy	1919
J. L.	Cooper		Black	Post office janitor	1919
Effie	Cotton	Mrs	Black	Family servant	1919
G. W.	Cox				1919
Fred	Crews		Black	Tobacco factory labourer	1919
J. E.	Davis				1919
Clyde	Donnell	Dr	Mulatto	Doctor	1919
Jas	Dunn				1919
J. A.	Dyer				1919
Porthenia-Mobile	Elliott	Mrs			1919
M. A.	Eoins				1919
J. R.	Evans		Black	Grocery store proprietor	1919
E. E.	Fennell	Professor			1919
R. R.	Fitzgerald	Mrs			1919

Irene	Fitzgerald	Miss	Black	Bookkeeper at insurance company	1919
Chas R.	Frazier				1919
C. G.	Gates				1919
H. S.	Gilmer				1919
M. A.	Goins		Black	Insurance company clerk	1919
A. L.	Goodloe				1919
W. R.	Gullins	Reverend	Black	Clergy	1919
Lillie B.	Harris	Mrs			1919
W. D.	Hill				1919
J. S.	Houghson				1919
A. S.	Hunter	Dr			1919
N. B.	Hunter	Mrs			1919
S. T.	James	Dr			1919
Joshua	Jones		Black	Barber	1919
W. J.	Kennedy	Mr	Black	Insurance agent	1919
W. J.	Kennedy	Mrs	Black	Wife	1919
Thomas	Lambeth		Black	Hospital orderly	1919
Ernest	Latta				1919
I. B.	Lautier	Mrs			1919
M. E.	Lawrence				1919
Geo W.	Logan				1919
J. E.	Love				1919
M. C.	Martin				1919
D. B.	Martin				1919
W. L.	Mason	Reverend		Clergy	1919
John	Mayes				1919
R.	McCants Andrews				1919
F. L.	McCoy				1919
R. L.	McDougald		Mulatto	Teller at bank	1919
E. R.	Merrick				1919
John	Merrick				1919
Martha	Merrick	Miss			1919
E. R.	Merrick	Mrs			1919
W. W.	Michaux			Union Insurance Reality Company	1919
A. M.	Moore	Dr	Mulatto	Physician	1919
A. M.	Moore	Mrs	Mulatto	Wife	1919
Mattie B.	Moore	Miss	Mulatto	Wife	1919
A.	Moore Shearin				1919

E. M.	Morrison		Black	Tobacco factory labourer	1919
M. T.	Norfleet				1919
S. V.	Norfleet	Mrs			1919
T. D.	Parham				1919
P. W.	Peace				1919
W. G.	Pearson		Black	School principal	1919
M. S.	Pearson	Mrs	Black	Wife	1919
H. A.	Poole				1919
Fred	Pratt				1919
E. D.	Pratt				1919
W. C.	Pratt		Black	Grocery store merchant	1919
M. E.	Ray	Miss	Mulatto	Stenographer	1919
T. C.	Reid				1919
T. A.	Rivera				1919
Percy	Rivera				1919
Charity	Rivera	Miss			1919
P. R.	Ruffin		Black	Carpenter	1919
Ed	Ruffin				1919
P. R.	Ruffin	Mrs			1919
E. W.	Ruffin				1919
S. P.	Satterfield				1919
R. M.	Shaw	Mr	Mulatto	Printer	1919
W. H.	Shearin		Black	Butler	1919
C. H.	Shepard	Dr			1919
Arnold	Shepard				1919
P. H.	Smith	Captain	Black	Grocery store manager	1919
J. E.	Southerland				1919
Frank G.	Sowell				1919
C. C.	Spaulding				1919
A. G.	Spaulding				1919
E. G.	Spaulding				1919
Otelia	Spaulding				1919
R.	Spiller	Reverend			1919
Bernice J.	Spratley				1919
James	Strudwick				1919
Archie	Taylor		Black	Mill labourer	1919
J. T.	Taylor			NC College for Negroes	1919
J. W.	Tetter	Reverend		Clergy	1919
Leo	Townsend		Black	At school (22 y/o)	1919
S. L.	Warren		Black	Physician	1919

F. K.	Watkins				1919
J. W.	Wheeler				1919
J. W.	Whittaker				1919
D. E.	Whitted	Miss			1919
O. A.	Whitted		Mulatto	Insurance company salesman	1919
Bessy A.	Whitted	Mrs	Mulatto	Cashier at insurance company (wife of Orrand A.)	1919
J. F.	Williams				1919
C. D.	Williams		Black	Porter at book store	1919
Sylvia	Williams	Mrs			1919
W. E.	Williams				1919
F. O.	Winslow				1919
D. M.	Winslow	Mrs			1919
Thomas	Winston		Black	Tobacco factory labourer	1919
L. W.	Alston	Mr			1939
Lucille	Baines	Miss			1939
Gertrude	Ball	Miss	Black	Insurance clerk	1939
E. S.	Berry	Mrs			1939
L. M.	Berry	Mr			1939
Josephine	Blunt	Miss			1939
D. M.	Bridgeforth	Miss			1939
S. H.	Cleland	Mrs			1939
J. W. V.	Cordice	Dr	Black	Physician	1939
G. W.	Cox	Mrs			1939
G. W.	Cox	Mr			1939
R. B.	Davis	Mrs	Black	Real estate clerk	1939
J. H.	Davis	Mr			1939
Aaron	Day Jr	Mr			1939
H. D.	Desboine	Mrs			1939
Clyde	Donnell	Dr	Black	Physician	1939
W. A.	Dooms	Mr			1939
R. C.	Foreman	Mr	Black		1939
Y. D.	Garrett	Dr	Black	Pharmacy owner	1939
U. M.	George	Mr	Black	Contractor	1939
M. A.	Goins	Mr			1939
G. W.	Goodloe	Mr			1939
R. L.	Goodloe	Mrs			1939
B. W.	Goodloe	Mrs			1939

J. W.	Goodloe	Mr			1939
J. J.	Henderson	Mr			1939
W. D.	Hill	Mr	Black		1939
G. P.	Holloway	Mr			1939
J. S.	Hughson	Mr			1939
S. T.	James	Dr		Physician	1939
L. J.	Jordan	Dr		Physician	1939
L. J.	Jordan	Mrs			1939
B. W.	Kennedy	Mr			1939
W. A.	Kenney	Mr			1939
Grace H.	Lainer	Miss			1939
G. B.	Ledbetter	Miss			1939
J. W.	Love	Dr		Physician	1939
D. B.	Martin	Mr	Black	Clerk	1939
R. L.	McDougald	Mr			1939
Hattie	Meadows	Mrs	Black	Stemmer	1939
C. J.	Medley	Miss			1939
L. V.	Merrick	Mrs	Black		1939
Vivian	Merrick	Miss	Black		1939
Cottie S.	Moore	Mrs			1939
M. L.	Nicholas	Miss	Black	Stenographer	1939
S. V.	Norfleet	Mrs			1939
T. D.	Parham	Mr			1939
E. B.	Pemberton	Mrs			1939
R. P.	Randolph	Dr		Physician	1939
J. C.	Scarbough	Master			1939
J. M.	Schooler	Mr	Black	Public school teacher	1939
C. H.	Shepard	Mrs			1939
Celeste J.	Smith	Mrs			1939
P. F.	Spaulding	Mr			1939
A. T.	Spaulding	Mr			1939
C. C.	Spaulding Jr	Mr			1939
O. D.	Stanley	Reverend		Clergy	1939
O. J.	Stewart	Mrs			1939
J. S.	Stewart	Mr	Black	Clerk	1939
J. F.	Strickland	Mr	Black	Manager	1939
T. R.	Stroud	Mr			1939
B. G.	Thompson	Miss			1939
A. H.	Turner Jr	Mr	Black	Clerk	1939
E. A	Vidal	Miss			1939
William Jay	Walker	Mr	Black	Assistant secretary	1939
W. J.	Walker Jr.	Mr			1939
J. H.	Wheeler	Mr			1939
E. L.	White	Mr	Black	Manager	1939

G. W.	White	Mr	Black	Clerk	1939
B. A. J.	Whitted	Mrs			1939
S. E.	Whitted	Miss			1939
W. E.	Williams	Mr			1939
Virginia	Williamson	Miss			1939
Rose Mae	Withers	Miss			1939
H. Mae	Young	Miss			1939

Raleigh:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by NAACP
Paul	Alston				1939
O. S.	Bullock	Reverend		Clergy	1939
Mack	Carter		Black	Fireman	1939
W. J.	Clark	Dr		Physician	1939
E. D.	Crossin				1939
Lucy	Crossin	Mrs			1939
L. T.	Delaney	Mrs			1939
L. T.	Delaney	Dr		Physician	1939
Lydia	Dubisette	Mrs			1939
C. A.	Dunstan	Dr			1939
H. Nara	Evans	Miss			1939
Harper	Fleming	Dr		Physician	1939
Leon	Frazier		Black	Baker	1939
Jessie	Guernsey			St Augustine's College	1939
T. C.	Hamans	Reverend		Clergy	1939
N.	Harris			Shaw University	1939
Chas	Haywood		Black	Undertaker	1939
D. H.	Hinton		Black	Fireman	1939
Alice	Jones	Mrs	Black	Teacher	1939
M.	Latham	Mrs			1939
E. C.	Lawrence	Reverend		Clergy	1939
Reginald	Lynch		Black	Teacher, Dean of St Augustine's College	1939
L. E.	McCauley	Dr	Black	Physician	1939
Nelson	Perry	Dr	Black	Physician	1939
W. D.	Pettiford	Dr		Physician	1939
J. O.	Plummer	Dr	Black	Physician	1939
C. F.	Pope	Professor			1939
Clyde D.	Ray				1939
David H.	Reid	Dr		Physician	1939
D. H.	Reid	Mr	Black	Barber	1939
Bertha	Richards			St Augustine’s College	1939
B. H.	Roberts	Mr			1939
J. W.	Smith	Reverend		Clergy	1939
P. A.	Snodgrass			St Augustine’s College	1939
Clifton	Stewart		Black	Fireman	1939

Juanita	Strickland				1939
Jas	Strickland			Mechanics & Farmers Bank	1939
Bernice	Taylor			St Augustine's College	1939
Mildred	Taylor				1939
John W.	Tucker				1939
A. T.	White	Mr			1939
A. T.	White	Mrs			1939
Viola	Williams	Miss	Black	Elementary school teacher	1939
Lillie S.	Wilson	Miss	Black		1939
R. C.	Wilson	Mr	Black	Fireman	1939
R. C.	Wilson	Mrs			1939
Arcade Hotel					1939
The Community Drug Company					1939
Hamlin Drug Company					1939
Julia's Beauty Parlor					1939
Shire Ward Service Station					1939

Winston-Salem:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by NAACP
				N/A	1918
Willie	Vaughan		Black	Tobacco operator	1918
William	Holland		Black	Merchant	1918
E. N.	Ellis			Assistant sales clerk	1918
R.	McMoore			Baker	1918
A.B.	Moore				1918
J.M.	Dull		Mulatto	Clerk	1918
C.O.	Lee	Vice-President	Mulatto	Dentist	1918
Lindsay	Lewery			Day labour	1918
R.	Payne			Day labour	1918
P.J.	Slade			Day labour	1918
N.L.	Scarborough			Day labour	1918
George	Black			Day labour	1918
L.A.	Williams			Day labour	1918
C.C.	Neely		Black	Day labour/Tobacco operator	1918
J.	Branie			Day labour	1918
				Day labour	1918
P.M.	Cathey			Drayman	1918
James	Williams			Employment agent	1918
W.	Joy	Secretary		Foreman	1918
N. Theo	Mitchell			Insurance agent	1918
J.R.	Simmons			Insurance agent	1918
O.L.	Joy			Insurance agent	1918
G.W.	Hill			Insurance agent	1918
W.A.	Kapp			Insurance agent	1918
J.	Blunce	President		Insurance agent	1918
				Insurance agent	1918
Ernest	Lewery			Janitor	1918
				Lawyer	1918
W.H.	Bruce		Mulatto	Physician	1918
W.J.	Banner			Merchant	1918

J.D.	Starks			Merchant	1918
George W.	Penn		Black	Grocery store owner	1918
R.D.	Crosby		Mulatto	Grocery store owner	1918
C.S.	Smith	Treasurer		Merchant	1918
M.	Wallace			N/A	1918
S.	Young			N/A	1918
W.	Kiser			N/A	1918
Royal	Puryear			Painter	1918
H.L.	Ashe	Reverend	Mulatto	Preacher	1918
G.W.	Jones			Printer	1918
C.H.	Jones			Real estate	1918
				Real estate	1918
J.S.	Hill		Black	President of Forsyth Savings & Trust Company ('bank' in census)	1918
George J.	Ragsdale			Service?	1918
J.H.	Joy			Student	1918
				Teacher	1918
Savannah	Webster	Miss	Mulatto	Telephone operator	1918
J.M.	Titch			Undertaker	1918
Artie	Cash			US soldier	1918
F.M.	Fitch	Professor		Teacher	1923 (press)
Royal	Puryear	Secretary		Painter (see 1918 listing)	1923 (press)
R.	O'Hara Lanier	Assistant secretary			1923 (press)

Appendix D

North Carolina UNIA supporters by city

The following names are taken primarily from lists in the *Negro World*. Where possible, those names were then cross-referenced with US census data to ascertain a person's race and occupation. Where no occupation is listed, it proved impossible to ascertain a reliable cross-reference between name and census data.

Asheville:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by UNIA
William	Brown	President			1922
W.P.	Brooks	Vice-President in 1921	Mulatto	Barber	1921
Waymon	Caldwell				1922
M.	Caldwell				1922
W. C.	Caldwell				1922
Mira	Caldwell				1922
F. S.	Campbell				1922
W. L.	Cowan				1923 & 1926
W. M.	Glover				1922 & 1926
J. A.	Hollins				1923
S. C.	Justice				1922
Henry	Justice				1922
J. C.	Justice				1923 & 1926
J.	Justice				1923
Mary	Marlow		Black	Wife	1922
Robert	McIntosh		Black	Carpenter	1922
D. J.	Mitchell		Black	Janitor	1923
E.W.	Pearson	President in 1921	Black	Real estate business owner	1921
Roy	Pearson				1922
Alvin	Pearson				1922
Roy Lee	Pearson				1922
E. B.	Sullervan				1922
James	Baxter				1926

Charlotte:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by UNIA
D. M.	Rorboro				1924
Geo	Glayner				1924
Jeff	Thompson				1924
Aaron	Dixon				1924
William	McBith				1926
William	Gorell				1926
Bessie	Grant	Mrs	Black	Teacher	1926
George	Simmons	Mr			1926

Greensboro:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by UNIA
S.A.	Haynes			UNIA organiser	1928
Michael	Roods				1926
Cyrus	Caldwell		Black	Labourer in lumber plant	1926
Iona L.	Caldwell		Black	(Daughter of above)	1926
Thomas	Williams				1926
Walter	Blackwell				1926
John	Collens				1926
Robert	Vanstory		Black	Labourer at print works	1926
John	Wharton		Black	Truck driver	1926
Ella	Satlow				1926
Geo	Patlown				1926
J.K.	Hickman		Black	Labourer in lumber plant	1926
Mitchell	Rhodes		Black	Railroad fireman	1926
Will	Williams		Black	Railroad worker	1926

Raleigh:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by UNIA
W.M.	Allen	Reverend; President			1921-1927
J. A.	Bailey	Executive Secretary in 1921			1921
Vinia	Baker				1922
Janie	Blake		Black	Wife	1922
N. B.	Blount				1922
J. W.	Chevis				1922
J. W.	Choves				1923
D.	Dickens				1922
D.	Dickens				1923
William	Dunstan				1922
L. E.	Fairkey	Reverend			1922
H. A.	Felton				1922
M. F.	Frazier				1922
A.	Friend				1923
L. W.	Goode				1923
Louis	Goold				1922
C.	Gray		Mulatto	Public works driver	1922
R. G.	Griffin				1922
J. W.	Huggins	Reverend			1922
J. J.	Johns				1922
W. D.	Jones				1922
John	Lee		Black	Lumber yard labourer	1922
Mabel	Perry				1922
J. C.	Powell		Mulatto	Labourer	1922
Chas W.	Purdie				1922
J. R.	Smith				1923
Dorsey	Taylor				1922
Joseph	Taylor				1922
	Williams	Mrs			1922
Lizzie	Yeargan				1922
Hillard	Yellida				1922

Winston-Salem:

First name	Surname	Title	Race	Occupation	Year recorded by UNIA
A. J.	Christian	Dr; President in 1921	Black	Physician	1921
Lizzie	Coger				1921
J. C.	Coger				1921
E. W.	Hogue		Black	Grocer	1921
Gracie	Moss		Black	Domestic service	1921
Joe	Moss		Black	Labourer on a lumber plant	1921
Louise	Moss		Black	Juvenile daughter of Joe and Gracie	1921
D. O.	Walker	Reverend; presided over unveiling of division charter in 1921	Black	Clergy	1921
Bingham	Bonds				1922
J. F.	Branie				1922
Carrie	Brooks				1922
Sallie	Caldwell		Black	Cook (widowed)	1922
Willie	Cason				1922
Charlie	Edwards		Mulatto	Public works labourer	1922
R. B.	Garrett				1922
Mary	Gillian				1922
Lizzie	Golden				1922
Mary	Good		Black	Laundry worker	1922
Andy	Greer				1922
Richard	Greer				1922
Will	Gwyn		Black	Ice wagon driver	1922
Annie C.	Hampton				1922
Lee Thomas	Hampton				1922
W. H.	Hopkins				1922
J. D.	King				1922
D. C.	Long				1922
Mary	Long		Black	Labourer	1922
A.A.	Mayfield	Financial secretary in 1921			1921 (NW)
Howard	McKnight				1922

George T.	Merrick				1922
Needham	Mitchell		Black	Labourer in tobacco factory	1922
Burnett	Moore				1922
Gracie	Moss		Black	See 1921 listing	1922
Louise	Moss		Black	See 1921 listing	1922
Joe	Moss		Black	See 1921 listing	1922
J.J.	Mumford	Reverend; President in February 1922			1922
Will	Penix				1922
A. W.	Smith	Captain			1922
Alex	Smith		Black	Factory labourer	1922
N. W.	Weaver				1922
Leonora	Webster		Black	Wife	1922
Nathaniel	Webster				1922
Jim	Webster		Mulatto	Farmer, owner of 'truck farm'	1922
Edward	Webster		Black	Juvenile son of Jim & Nora	1922
Cassie	Webster		Black	Juvenile daughter of above	1922
John F.	White				1922
Phyllis	Wilkins				1922
E. T.	Wilson		Black	Shoe maker	1922
S.S.	Womack	Mrs; Lady President			1922
Caroline	Atkins		Mulatto	Factory labourer	1923
J. A.	Bonns	Reverend		Clergy	1923
J. F.	Branark				1923
Elbert	Brigg				1923
B. T.	Byers				1923
James	Dons				1923
	Ealdwell	Mr			1923
Lucy B.	Felton	Mrs	Black	Wife	1923
J. C.	Felton		Black	Picture salesman	1923
Laura J.	Felton		Black	Juvenile daughter of Lucy and JC	1923
Bertha	Felton		Black	Juvenile daughter of	1923

				Lucy and JC	
Lillie M.	Felton		Black	Juvenile daughter of Lucy and JC	1923
W.	Franklin		Black	Machine operator in tobacco factory	1923
S. W.	Galloway				1923
R. B.	Garrett				1923
J.	Good	Reverend			1923
J. W.	Harton				1923
S. W.	Hawkins		Mulatto	Music teacher	1923
Jennie	Jenkins		Mulatto	Wife	1923
A. A.	Jones	Reverend			1923
Francis	Linzy				1923
J. C.	McKnight		Black	Machine operator in tobacco factory	1923
Josh	Minis				1923
William	Mitchell		Black	Farm labourer	1923
Louise	Moss		Black	See 1921 listing	1923
Gracie	Moss		Black	See 1921 listing	1923
Joe	Moss		Black	See 1921 listing	1923
Mack	Murray				1923
Jas H.	Penn				1923
Claude	Ridley				1923
L. R.	Roberts		Black	Music teacher	1923
T. F.	Spencer		Black	Machine operator in tobacco factory	1923
L. W.	Spencer				1923
	Steward	Mr	Black	Cement mixer for construction company	1923
Henry	Tatom		Black	Factory labourer	1923
Martha A.	Terry		Black	Wife	1923
John	Vestal		Black	Cooper in tobacco factory	1923
Peter	Webster		Black	Tobacco factory	1923

				labourer	
Mary	Willis				1923
Carry	Willison				1923
A. T.	Wilson				1923
R. R.	Woods	Reverend			1923
Lelia	Abrams	Mrs			1924
Robert	Bates		Black	Labourer	1924
J. T.	Branie				1924
E. B.	Briggs				1924
Isiah	Briggs				1924
Sallie	Caldwell	Mrs	Black	Cook (widowed)	1924
N.	Clauden	Mrs			1924
Robert	Clouden				1924
James	Davis	President in 1926			1924 & 1926
L. C.	Foster	Reverend	Black	Clergy	1924
Frank	Frontis				1924
John	Gaines		Black	Farm labourer	1924
Peter	Galds				1924
Jas T.	Goode	Captain			1924
Mary	Goode	Mrs	Black	Laundry worker	1924
Harvey	Groves				1924
Willie	Gwyn		Black	Ice wagon driver	1924
S. W.	Hawkins	Professor	Mulatto	Music teacher	1924
H.C.	Holland	President in 1924 and 1926	Black	Machine operator in tobacco factory	1924 & 1926
M. V.	Jiller				1924
A. A.	Joe	Reverend			1924
Charlie	Jones		Black	Machine operator in tobacco factory	1924
Frances	Linney	Mrs			1924
Lucy	Martin	Mrs			1924
Lee	Martin				1924
Noah	Mimms				1924
Cleveland	Mitchell				1924
Gracie	Moss	Mrs	Black	See 1921 listing	1924
Joe	Moss		Black	See 1921 listing	1924
Henry	Owyn				1924
J. T.	Paddy				1924

Will	Penix				1924
W. L.	Ray		Black	Janitor	1924
James	Reaves				1924
Frank	Rouyelle				1924
W. T.	Stafford				1924
Patsie	Stewart	Mrs			1924
M. A.	Terry	Mrs			1924
Rachel	Van Landingham	Mrs	Black	Machine operator in tobacco factory	1924
Lee	Watts				1924
G. W.	Yores	Colonel			1924
J.A.	Miller	Baptist Reverend; President until death in 1923			1921-1923
R.B.	Jarrett	Union veteran of Civil War; division 'organizer'			
Ren	Oates	President of Tobacco Workers' International Union; division 'organizer'			
Edward	Thomas	Vice-President in 1926	Black	‘Stemmer' in tobacco factory	1926
Walter	Phlam	President in 1927			1927
Craig	Crone	First Vice-President in 1927			1927
Booker T.	Hines	Second Vice-President in 1927			1927
G.F.	Branie	Chaplain in 1927			1927
J.A.	Mitchell	Mr; treasurer in 1927			1927
Priscilla	Ross	Mrs; General Secretary in 1927			1927
A.R.	Tate	Recording secretary in 1927			1927
Daisy	Campbell	Lady President in 1927			1927
Emma L.	Footes	First Lady Vice-President in 1927			1927
Anna	Blake	Second Lady Vice-President in 1927			1927
James	Richardson	Trustee in 1927			1927
Willie	Pinrix	Trustee in 1927			1927
G.J.	Goode	Trustee in 1927			1927

		'Major of the Legions'			
W.H.	Wright	Trustee in 1927			1927

Abbreviations

AAA – Agricultural Adjustment Administration

ABB - African Blood Brotherhood

AFL – American Federation of Labor

ASWPL- Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching

BI – Bureau of Investigation

CCC – Civilian Conservation Corps

CFWU – Croppers' and Farm Workers' Union

CIC – Commission on Interracial Cooperation

CIO – Congress of Industrial Organizations

CPUSA – Communist Party of the United States of America

DCNA - Durham Committee on Negro Affairs

FERA – Federal Emergency Relief Administration

ILD – Communist International Labor Defence

IWW – Industrial Workers of the World

NAACP – National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

NACW - National Association of Colored Women

NBWA – National Brotherhood Workers of America

NCACWC - North Carolina Association of Colored Women's Clubs

NCCN – North Carolina College for Negroes

NCCP – North Carolina Communist Party

NCFCWC - North Carolina Federation of Colored Women's Clubs

NTWU – National Textile Workers Union of America

SCSL – Southern Commission for the Study of Lynching

SCU – Share Croppers Union

SPA – Socialist Party of America

TUUL – Trade Union Unity League

UNC – University of North Carolina

UNIA – Universal Negro Improvement Association

WPA – Works Progress Administration

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