

CHRONOLOGY

AUGUST 1920–JULY 1921

1920

- 1 August UNIA's month-long First International Convention of Negro Peoples of the World opens in New York.
The Negro Progress Convention is formed in British Guiana.
- 8 August "Professor" Arlington Newton arrives in St. Kitts and speaks at meetings of the St. Kitts Universal Benevolent Association about the Black Star Line, urging his hearers to invest their money in it.
- 10 August The Black Star Line steamer S.S. *Yarmouth* arrives at the port of Charleston, S.C., instead of New York, short of coal and provisions and with a case of smallpox on board the ship. Indebted for supplies and other expenses that the Black Star Line is unable to pay, the vessel is thereupon libeled.
- 13 August The UNIA convention adopts and signs Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World.
- 17 August Following his letter of resignation, Luc Dorsinville, manager of the Black Star Line in Haiti, writes to officials in New York stating that "the Haitian public has lost all confidence in the Black Star Line owing to the treatment meted out to the passengers on their first trip, intending to go to New York."
- 29 August UNIA division in U.S. Virgin Islands holds meeting at Liberty Hall, in St. Thomas.
- August Rev. R. H. Tobitt, representing Bermuda, is elected "Leader of the West Indies (Eastern Province)" by the UNIA convention in New York; J. Sydney de Bourg is elected executive member of the UNIA and "Leader of

the West Indies (Western Province)”; Rev. George A. McGuire of Antigua is elected chaplain-general and an executive member of the UNIA.

In Trinidad, copies of the officially proscribed *Negro World* are found in the cargo of a vessel coming from New York.

UNIA division is organized in the city of Key West, Florida.

Costa Rica confiscates copies of the *Negro World* from the mails.

- 6 September Arrival of Black Star Line steamer S.S. *Kanawha*, rechristened S.S. *Antonio Maceo*, is expected in Havana, Cuba, coming from Norfolk, Virginia.
- September Garvey’s wife, Amy Ashwood Garvey, brings action against Garvey for divorce; Garvey counter-sues for divorce and annulment of marriage.
- 5 October The Colonial Office requests the British Foreign Office to secure copies of the UNIA’s “Constitution and Book of Laws” for its use and that of the “Director of Intelligence.”
- 8 October After returning to Bermuda, Rev. Tobitt withdraws from the ministry of the AME church, which revokes all previous honors given to him.
- 17 October UNIA division in Roseau, Dominica, unveils charter and installs women officers at public meeting held at Liberty Hall.
- 18 October First talent performance sponsored by the UNIA division in Barbados.
- ca. 18 October The governor of Bermuda cuts funding for St. George Elementary School run by Reverend R. H. Tobitt, due to Tobitt’s membership in the UNIA.
- 20 October UNIA division in San Pedro de Macorís, Dominican Republic, installs officers.
- 28 October After avoiding capture for eight months, the West Indian labor leader William Stoute is arrested en route to Panama City and imprisoned.
- October A “Professor Brooks,” allegedly from St. Kitts and supposedly visiting from Cardiff, Wales, lectures in

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Georgetown, British Guiana, where he advises Negroes to go back to Africa and establish themselves in Liberia.

UNIA publishes the first volume of the Official Record of the First International Convention of Negroes.

In Trinidad, invoking the seditious bill law, government authorities begin searching private residences of individuals suspected of having copies of the *Negro World*, the *Messenger*, and the *Crusader*.

J. R. Ralph Casimir, the leader of the UNIA in Dominica, publishes article in the *Negro World*.

Garvey and the executive council of the UNIA announce plans for the “Liberian Construction Loan,” also known as the “African Liberty Loan,” with the goal of raising \$2,000,000 from UNIA members to build railroads, schools, churches, and other infrastructure in Liberia in preparation for repatriation.

7 November UNIA division in Castries, St. Lucia, unveils charter at public meeting held in Liberty Hall.

7 December UNIA San Pedro de Macorís division holds day-long ceremonies to celebrate its one-year anniversary.

December A children’s savings system is inaugurated by the UNIA San Pedro de Macorís division.

UNIA division in Banes, Oriente province, Cuba, purchases and establishes its own Liberty Hall; it also establishes a division of the Black Cross Nurses, along with a ladies’ division.

1921

7 January The UNIA chaplain general, Reverend George Alexander McGuire, leaves New York on a two-month tour of Cuba.

26 January A telegram circulates to the governors of Bermuda and the Bahamas, warning of the advertised sail of a Black Star Line steamer for the West Indies and recommending the prohibition of its landing under the Government Control Act of 1919.

January–February A reported 2,500 farm and railroad workers in the Limón-based Federación de Trabajadores strike against the United Fruit Company to protest layoffs and a

- thirty-percent wage reduction. In a signed pact, they receive financial and political support from the Confederación General de Trabajadores in San José.
- 6 February Colonial authorities report the establishment of a branch of the African Blood Brotherhood in San Pedro de Macorís, Dominican Republic.
- 17 February Garvey obtains British passport for travel to West Indies.
- 18 February Prior to his departure for the West Indies, Garvey is honored by the Barbados group of the UNIA with a farewell banquet in Liberty Hall.
- 19 February The Black Star Line announces that “instead of paying any dividends this year money will be utilized in the purchasing of more ships.”
- 24 February Garvey leaves New York at the start of a fundraising tour of the Caribbean and Central America.
- 24 February UNIA division in Jobabo, Cuba, is established, with its first public meeting and installation of officers at the Hotel Palacio.
- 25–27 February Garvey arrives at Key West, Florida, and delivers speeches nightly at Samaritan Hall.
- 28 February Garvey sails from Key West for Havana, Cuba, aboard the P & O Steamship Company’s S.S. *Governor Cobb*.
- February Controversial change in presidency occurs in the UNIA Castries, St. Lucia, division; Job E. James replaces Wilberforce Norville as president.
- ca. 1–3 March Garvey visits Havana, Cuba, where he delivers series of speeches throughout the city and meets with legislators and Cuban President Menocal.
- 4 March UNIA division in Ciego de Avila, Cuba, is reorganized by the visiting UNIA chaplain-general Rev. Alexander McGuire.
- 4 March *Heraldo de Cuba* publishes the text of an extensive interview with Garvey, along with the transcript of his meeting with representatives of the “Atenas Club,” representing the leadership of the Afro-Cuban community.
- 10–11 March Garvey visits the city of Santiago, Cuba.

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- 15 March Garvey visits Banes, Cuba.
Colonial Registrar of Friendly Societies in Trinidad refuses petition by the UNIA to register as a Friendly Society.
- 18 March Garvey passes through Marcane en route to Guantánamo, Cuba.
- 22 March Garvey arrives in Kingston, Jamaica, from Santiago, Cuba; delivers speech at Collegiate Hall.
- 23 March Garvey addresses mass meeting at Ward Theatre in Kingston, in which he denounces local clergymen as hypocrites and describes Jamaica as the most backward country in the Western hemisphere.
- 25 March U.S. State Department instructs American consul general in Jamaica to refuse Garvey a visa in view of his activities “in political and race agitation.”
- 29 March U.S. authorities in Panama Canal Zone lift exclusion order on Garvey after arrangements are made with the United Fruit Company.
- March The Black Star Line proposes to launch a new ship “which is to trade between the United States and Africa.”
- March–May S. P. Radway and “Professor” Dave Davidson travel throughout Cuba holding UNIA organizing meetings.
- 7 April Charles L. Latham, American consul at Kingston, Jamaica, writes to inform American consul general in Panama that the State Department has instructed consular officials to refuse a visa to Garvey.
- 9 April The Black Star Line’s S.S. *Kanahwa* arrives in Cuba.
- 11 April Garvey applies for U.S. visa for travel to the Panama Canal, but he is refused by the American consul general in Kingston.
- 14 April Garvey arrives in Port Limón, Costa Rica, from Kingston; he is greeted by a reported crowd of 2,000 people. During his stay, Garvey is also received by the Costa Rican president Julio Acosta.
- 16 April Garvey is reported to be receiving from Minor Keith, the most influential American entrepreneur in Central

- America, employing thousands of West Indians as banana pickers, at \$2,000 per month.
- 17 April The United Fruit Company general manager in Limón, Costa Rica, George P. Chittenden, reports that it has achieved “an understanding with [UNIA] leaders that Garvey’s meetings would be arranged so as not to interfere with fruit cuttings or loadings.”
- 18 April Garvey leaves San Jose and returns to Port Limón.
Garvey holds lengthy meeting in Limón, Costa Rica, with the United Fruit Company general manager, who reports that “If he keeps his word he will make no trouble.”
Mass meeting of the African Blood Brotherhood and the UNIA is held in Georgetown, British Guiana.
- 19 April Garvey applies for Panamanian visa from U.S. consul Stewart McMillin in Port Limón.
- 20 April Public celebration in honor of Garvey held in Limón, with a reported 10,000 people in attendance, roughly half of the total black population in Costa Rica.
- 21 April Garvey visits Bocas del Toro, Panama.
- 23–24 April Garvey visits Almirante and Guabito, Panama.
- 26 April Garvey travels to Colón, Panama, aboard the S.S. *Atenas*.
The U.S. State Department instructs the American legation in Costa Rica to refuse Garvey’s request for visa.
- 30 April Garvey visits Panama City.
- April Garvey drops legal action for divorce and annulment of marriage.
- 3 May Garvey lectures to a prospective division of the UNIA in Calidonia, Panama.
- 4 May Garvey leaves Panama City and returns to Colón, to deliver farewell address at Variedades Theatre.
- 5 May Garvey leaves Colón, Panama, for Kingston, Jamaica, aboard the S.S. *Carillo*.
- 7 May Garvey arrives back in Jamaica.

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- 9 May William C. Matthews, the UNIA assistant counselor general, petitions the U.S. State Department to allow Garvey to return to the United States.
- 10 May U.S. State department instructs the American consul general in Kingston to refuse to visa the crew list of S.S. *Kanabwa* should Garvey's name appear as crew member.
- 15 May Under new leadership, UNIA St. Lucia division holds a second ceremony to unveil charter.
- 16 May Rev. Richard Hilton Tobitt arrives in Georgetown, British Guiana, and holds UNIA meetings supported by the British Guiana Labour Union.
- 17 May After being summoned to Cuba to settle dispute with the crew of the S.S. *Kanabwa*, Garvey takes ship to Kingston from Santiago, bringing with him Henrietta Vinton Davis, UNIA international organizer, and John Sydney de Bourg, UNIA "Leader of the West Indies."
- 19 May Mass meeting of the UNIA is held at Ward Theatre, Kingston, with speeches by Sydney de Bourg, Henrietta Vinton Davis, and Garvey.
- 28 May Garvey sets sail for Panama as *Kanabwa* crew member; after three days at sea, the vessel returns to Kingston in distress.
- May The Panama strike leader William Stoute is released from prison and voluntarily leaves Panama for Cuba, where he becomes active in the UNIA Havana division.
- 1-7 June Garvey lodges series of complaints against *Kanabwa's* master and crew.
- 4 June Rev. Richard Hilton Tobitt is denied entry into Trinidad due to his reported UNIA organizing activities.
- 7 June William C. Matthews confers with the U.S. State Department's official in charge of visa control.
- 14 June American consul general in Jamaica carries out investigation of Garvey's charges against *Kanabwa's* master and chief engineer; finds them to be innocent.
- ca. 16 June Honduran native Rev. T. C. Glashen, president of UNIA Key West division, Florida, arrested for "inciting a riot" and is deported to Cuba in lieu of standing trial.

- In Havana, Glashen testifies to the racial terror inflicted by the Ku Klux Klan toward himself and the UNIA leading up to his own arrest.
- 18 June UNIA San José division, Costa Rica, unveils charter at meeting held at Club de Obreros.
- 18–22 June S.S. *Kanabwa* leaves Kingston a second time but is disabled once more and returns to port.
- 25 June The U.S. State Department cables authorization for Garvey to be issued a U.S. reentry visa in Jamaica.
- UNIA Guaico division in Trinidad unveils charter during visit by J. R. Ralph Casimir, who visits Trinidad to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the various UNIA branches.
- 27 June Merchants in British Guiana implement a twenty-percent wage reduction for all casual laborers, stevedores, and others in the midst of postwar recession.
- 28 June Garvey leaves Jamaica for Belize, the final stop on his tour; mechanical problems again prevent S.S. *Kanabwa* leaving port of Kingston.
- 28 June Garvey leaves Kingston for Belize, British Honduras, en route to the United States, aboard the S.S. *Canadian Fisher*.
- 1–5 July Garvey arrives at Belize; addresses mass meetings and holds interview with the governor.
- 2 July The Bahamian native Rev. Richard Higgs, UNIA president and Baptist preacher in Coconut Grove, Florida, is kidnapped, beaten, and told to leave the United States by his assailants. Police subsequently arrest more than twenty-five armed blacks among those protesting the incident; Rev. Higgs's kidnappers are not pursued.
- 4 July UNIA division in Niquero, Cuba, unveils charter at its first meeting, held at Liberty Hall.
- ca. 10 July Rev. Richard Higgs, with his wife and five children, arrive in Nassau, Bahamas, from Miami, Florida.
- 12 July Garvey sails from Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, for the U.S.

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- 13–14 July Garvey arrives in New Orleans; he is detained temporarily by U.S. immigration authorities; speaks at public meetings in New Orleans.
- 17 July Garvey arrives in New York.
- 20 July Back in New York, Garvey delivers address in Liberty Hall providing extensive details of his Caribbean and Central America trip.
- 22 July Garvey’s wife, Amy Ashwood Garvey, sues for separation from Garvey.
- July Amidst economic crisis, Cuban President Menocal claims that indigent Afro-Caribbean laborers constitute “a serious danger to public health . . . [and] a public burden on the nation” and decrees that the Cuban government would cover the costs of their repatriation.



Central and South America