

The parent body of the UNIA was incorporated in Jamaica and sought, among other things, funding from the British Government for the economic, social and cultural transformation of Jamaica.

The UNIA also acted as a catalyst for cultural development in Jamaica and Edelweiss Park became a major cultural centre for black Jamaicans.

Garvey himself wrote poetry and was the author of three plays. Many famous Jamaicans in the field of the Arts began their career at Edelweiss Park, among them Ranny Williams and Una Marson.

Garvey continued his work in journalism and founded three publications namely, 'The Blackman' a weekly newspaper in 1929, "The New Jamaican" a daily, in 1932 and, "The Black Man", a magazine in 1935.

In 1935 due to opposition by the Colonial authorities, Garvey decided to promote the work of the UNIA overseas and moved to England.

Marcus Garvey died in June 1940 after suffering two strokes. His remains were returned to Jamaica in 1964 and interred at the National Heroes Park.

He became Jamaica's first National Hero.

SOURCES

Jamaica Cultural Development Commission.
Garvey Centenary 1887-1987: Official Souvenir Magazine.

Jamaica Information Service. *Marcus Mosiah Garvey*

National Library of Jamaica. *Emancipate Yourself From Mental Slavery Exhibition.*



"If you have no confidence in self you are twice defeated in the race of life. With confidence you have won even before you have started."

Marcus Garvey



Information Unit
3-5 Phoenix Avenue
Kingston 10
Tel: 926-5726-9
Fax: 968-2662
Website: www.jcdc.gov.jm
Email: library@jcdc.gov.jm

MARCUS MOSIAH GARVEY



1887 - 1940

MARCUS MOSIAH GARVEY THE EARLY YEARS

Marcus Garvey was born on August 17, 1887 in St. Ann's Bay, St. Ann, the son of a reputable bricklayer, Marcus Senior and a peasant woman, Sarah Jane nee Richards. He was the youngest of eleven children.

He attended infant school and then the St. Ann's Bay Methodist Elementary school until the age of 14. An elementary school education then was the full extent of tuition for most Blacks in Jamaica.

Garvey's parents could not afford to send him to secondary school but he had the advantage of his father's extensive library, as well as that of his godfather, Alfred Burrowes, a printer. This influenced his early taste for reading and later as an apprentice to Mr. Burrowes, he fully utilized the use of the library.

As a teenager he left for Kingston where he joined the staff of P.A. Benjamin as a printer. At the age of 18 he became a foreman, which was a great achievement, as at that time foremen were imported from England. This was the starting point of his future career as he became deeply interested in politics, cultural organization, trade unionism and journalism.

In 1910 Garvey journeyed overseas to Costa Rica and was critical about the deplorable conditions of West Indian workers. He established worker organizations, gave public lectures and wrote newspaper articles. In 1911 he returned to Jamaica but soon left for England.

In England he learned a great deal about Africa. He worked for the 'African Times and Orient Review' a newspaper edited by Duse Mohammed Ali, an Egyptian nationalist who greatly influenced his political development.

UNIVERSAL NEGRO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION (UNIA)

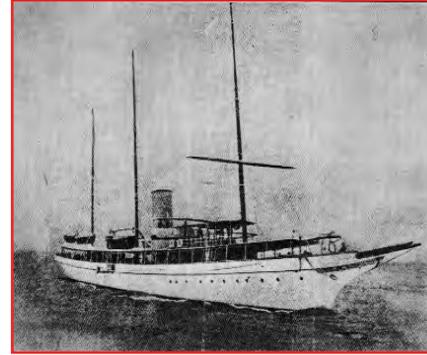
In 1914 Garvey returned to Jamaica and founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) with the motto 'One God, one Aim, One Destiny'. In 1920 they adopted the colors red, black and green. He also founded the African Communities League (ACL).

In 1916 he went to the United States of America where he was to meet with Booker T. Washington, Principal of the Tuskegee Institute, to discuss the establishment of an Industrial Farm and Institute based on the Tuskegee model. However Washington died before Garvey's arrival.

Garvey settled in Harlem, New York where he set up a chapter of the UNIA.

Garvey's stay in the U.S. during the period 1916 - 1927 was the highpoint of his career as an international leader. The UNIA grew rapidly with membership at its peak estimated at 6 to 11 million. By 1921 there were 859 branches in over 30 countries.

Garvey strongly believed that the focus of black nations should be Africa and fought tirelessly for an independent Africa. He preached self-reliance for



S. S. Antonio Maceo of the Black Star Line

with a capital stock of US\$1/2 million.

Garvey also established the 'Negro World' newspaper which became the most widely circulated newspaper among Blacks.

On Christmas Day 1919 he married Amy Ashwood. The couple parted company by the following year and were formerly divorced in June 1922. Later that year he married Amy Jacques.



Garvey and UNIA officers viewing the convention parade

black people and the need for Blacks to control their lives in every sphere.

In 1919 the Black Star Line Steamship Company was launched

In August 1920 the first International Convention of Negro Peoples of the World was held in New York with 25,000 persons in attendance. In September of the same year Garvey and his UNIA team published the "Declaration of Rights of the

Negro Peoples of the World".

In 1923 Garvey was convicted of mail fraud and was deported to Jamaica in 1927. His international reputation had spread to Jamaica and he received a hero's welcome.

He sailed to England in 1928 and was instrumental in founding the West African Students' Union and presented his famous speech at Albert Hall in London on 'The case of the Negro for International Racial Adjustment'.

GARVEY & POLITICS

Garvey returned to Jamaica in 1929 and founded the People's Political Party (PPP), the first modern political party in Jamaica.

In 1930 the PPP fielded candidates in the general elections to the Legislative Council. Garvey contested the St. Andrew constituency but lost despite drawing huge crowds to his meetings. This was due to the fact that most of his followers could not vote. Universal Adult Suffrage had not yet been won.

He was elected unopposed to the Kingston & St. Andrew Corporation in the Local Government elections in 1930. The same year he launched the Jamaica Workers and Labourers Association in an attempt, among other things, to organize workers.

In 1931 he led a deputation to the Governor outling in details the conditions of the suffering poor, especially the unemployed.

He drew up a petition which he sent to the King through the Colonial Office, copied to the Labour MPs and other liberals. This resulted in the sending of a Royal Commission to investigate the political and economic conditions of the West Indies.