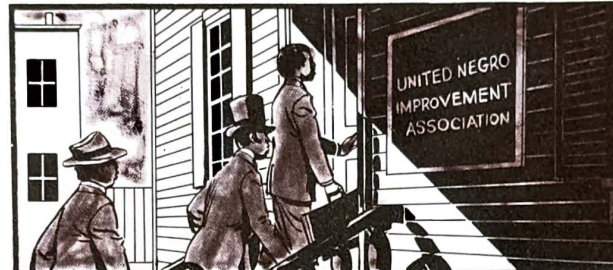## Marcus Moziah Garvey
(1887-1940)

Founder of the United Negro Improvement Association and the first black leader to have a mass following both in the U.S. and abroad.

Marcus Moziah Garvey was born on August 17, 1887 at St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. He attended school until he was fourteen after which time he left for Kingston to find a job to help support his family.

Once in Kingston, he mastered the trade of printing. By the age of twenty he had become a master printer and foreman of one of the island's largest printing firms.

He migrated to London and then to the U.S. where he founded and established the United Negro Improvement Association. His dream was to establish a Pan-African Government.

The structural foundation of the United Negro Improvement Association was to promote unity among the Negroes of the world, by instilling pride of race, economic power and self-government. He emphasized the beauty of blackness.

The Garvey movement peaked in 1920 with an international convention which drew 25,000 persons to Madison Square Garden in New York City. He claimed a following of a million.

Garvey's program electrified black America. Within two years, the UNIA was one of the largest black organizations in the ghetto. The Negro World, the organization's paper, had a circulation of from sixty to two hundred thousand.

To accomplish his goals, Garvey founded the Black Star Line to promote trade among Negro people. The line consisted of three small ships. When the line folded his backers lost large sums of money.

Like all men, Garvey had his weaknesses. He was arrested and convicted of using the mails to defraud in a complicated scheme to finance his steamship company. For this he had to serve a two year sentence and was pardoned by President Coolidge.

In 1940, his dream finally shattered, Marcus Garvey died in London, England without ever having been to Africa. Had Garvey succeeded in his undertakings he would have been unquestionably one of the great figures of this century.