Jane L. Chapman, *African and Afro-Caribbean Repatriation, 1919–1922: Black Voices*. Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. ix + 90 pp. (Cloth £49.99)

During the Great War the black population of Britain probably doubled in number to about 20,000. People of African origin and descent, mainly men, came to the metropole to aid the war effort as workers, soldiers, and sailors in the mercantile marine. At the end of the war there was violent racial unrest in major British ports. The press and popular sentiment often blamed black men for the violence. The truth was frequently the reverse with white hostility to Blacks fueled by claims that they posed a threat to white women, jobs, and housing. Government-sponsored repatriation was a response to pressure from organized labor, employers, and officials who argued for the “public good,” an old lie that often works. The chief constable of Cardiff was outspoken in his condemnation of unemployed black men as “indolent” and immoral, demanding that “immediate steps to be taken for repatriation of all unemployed coloured seamen,” and that it was the responsibility of “Government to remove this menace” (pp. 14–15). Repatriation posed a dilemma for government in that many of the black immigrants were British subjects legally entitled to remain in the country.

The power and weight of this human drama to “repatriate” black men who had served the Imperial State in wartime is conveyed in *African and Afro-Caribbean Repatriation, 1919–1922*. Jane Chapman draws exclusively on the official records in the national archives at Kew, rescuing the many individual voices and personal stories of those labelled as “colonial” and marked out for effective deportation. Some black men, for example, Fola Thomas, a Nigerian, were former prisoners of war who had recently been repatriated from Germany. That many of the men had white wives and children was a further dilemma for the government. Breaking up families smacked of colonial slavery, and the Colonial Office was concerned that “repatriating” couples of mixed-race marriages would test the rigid race distinctions of most overseas colonies in Africa and the Caribbean. Attempts were made to dissuade white wives from accompanying their black husbands. Altogether some 2000 men were “repatriated” (p. 73). This story is well told by Chapman and she catches the dilemmas of black men challenged by official deportation processes and orders, using their own words and arguments. As William McIntyre, possibly a Jamaican, wrote: “I did not expect that I should ever be forcibly deported or repatriated from the United Kingdom British soil never committing any offence. I thought there was a sacred spot and my rights and property were on sacred soil” (p. 70).

A good deal has been written on the role of black men in the British armed forces during the Great War. This book is a useful addition to that story and

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emphasizes that wars have serious socioeconomic consequences long after the end of the fighting. The business of excluding British colonial seamen from service in British ships continued throughout the 1920s.

It is puzzling why this brief booklet was published with hard covers, at roughly 50 pence per page! The author would have been better served had it been an article for a peer-reviewed journal where a skilled editor could have corrected the many errors, pointed out gaps in the argument, and helped to polish the prose. As it is, the book is repetitive in places and each of the four short chapters is introduced by an unnecessary "abstract" and "keywords." The whole text is poorly proofread and marred by sloppy scholarship; for example, Winston James is misquoted (p. 13), reference is made to "the Bermudas" (p. 34), and George de Carteret is called "Cecil (no first name), Bishop of Jamaica" (p. 46); the latter two errors are repeated in the eccentric index. A skilled editor might have queried these shortcomings and, suggested that a wider range of primary sources be consulted, and reference made to newspapers such as the *African Telegraph* (edited in its final year by the outspoken political activist Felix Hercules), the *Gleaner* (published in Kingston, Jamaica), and *West Africa* (the recently launched London weekly). An irritating feature of the book is that many of the footnoted references to official correspondence are not properly dated, thus being of limited use to scholars.

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