

Timothy B.
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Wars for Democracy

African American Militancy and Interracial
Violence in North Carolina during World War II

On 11 July 1943, Governor J. Melville Broughton mounted a podium beside the Cape Fear River in Wilmington to confront black North Carolinians about the wartime crisis in race relations. Mob violence in Detroit three weeks earlier had left thirty-eight people dead. Privately, Broughton felt it was imperative to take “every step to avoid such contingencies in this state,” and publicly he acknowledged in his speech that many “delicate places as between the races exist in certain places in North Carolina.”¹

If Governor Broughton was seeking to intimidate black citizens, he could not have selected a better place to speak than at the mouth of the

Cape Fear, which Democrats in 1898 had threatened to clot with dark bodies. Wilmington had been the shining symbol of Democratic triumph when the “party of the white man” seized power by fraud and by force across the state. Forty-five years later, warning of the same kind of confrontation, the state’s leading Democrat singled out for condemnation “radical [black] agitators,” impressing upon them the need for a civility grounded in unquestioning acceptance of white domination. Like the Democrats of 1898, Broughton summoned the specter of miscegenation, accusing black activists of “seeking to use the war emergency to advance theories and philosophies which if carried to their ultimate conclusion would result only in a mongrel race.” Lest his message be misunderstood, Broughton referred directly to the events of 1898: “Forty-five years ago . . . blood flowed freely in the streets of this city,” he reminded his audience. Broughton stood beside the Cape Fear as head of the political party that had orchestrated the slaughter he described: it would have been inconceivable for the black citizens of Wilmington to hear these words as something other than a dire threat.²

The white Democrats who overthrew North Carolina’s hopeful if halting experiment in biracial democracy in 1898 had indeed relied upon force, not civility. Alfred Waddell, who led the mobs in Wilmington, urged a crowd the day before the election of 1898: “Go to the polls tomorrow, and if you find the negro out voting, tell him to leave the polls, and if he refuses, kill him.” Not merely in the Lower Cape Fear, but across the state, armed Democrats kept their opponents away from the polls.³ Two days later, white mobs raged through Wilmington, leaving black bodies and broken dreams in their wake.

Almost immediately, however, the revolutionaries of white supremacy became the guardians of social order. In North Carolina, the violence of 1898 gave birth to “the spirit of Aycock,” as V. O. Key wrote in 1949, which “recognizes a responsibility to [black] citizens who long were unable to participate in their own government.”⁴ It was the illegitimate and bloody seizure of power in 1898 that gave birth to the state’s moderate posture of white supremacy, but it was the resilient and effective nature of that “progressive mystique” that preserved white supremacy. The racial paternalism embodied by Governor Charles Brantley Aycock, one of the leading architects and beneficiaries of the white supremacy campaigns, served to consolidate a social order carved out in murder and violence but preserved by civility and moderation. The racial etiquette that emerged after 1898 featured “patterns of paternalism and accommodation that had to be broken before change could occur.”⁵ As Governor Broughton’s speech in 1943 reminded his African

American listeners, beneath the green ivy of civility stood a stone wall of coercion.

World War II presented fresh political opportunities for African Americans in North Carolina to challenge the social order born at the turn of the century, opportunities that they moved quickly to seize. Even before the United States had entered the war, black North Carolinians began to press for first-class citizenship. From 1941 to 1945, the number of branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in the state more than doubled, and total membership swelled toward 10,000.⁶ Ella Baker, a Shaw University graduate whose radically democratic politics had its roots on her grandfather’s farm in Littleton, North Carolina, became the NAACP’s national director of branches in 1943 and soon thereafter became midwife to the North Carolina Conference of Branches.⁷ Fiery editor Louis E. Austin of Durham’s *Carolina Times* published a weekly wartime platform that demanded, among other things, an end to discrimination in the military and in the defense industries, higher wages for domestic workers, the employment of “Negro policemen where Negroes are involved,” equal access to the ballot box, and improved housing for black citizens.⁸ Black residents in Wilmington jammed city council meetings to insist that the city hire “Negro policemen [who] could be employed in the Negro districts of the city” and to demand that “a place where Negroes might swim at [whites-only] Greenfield Lake be reserved, the place to be supervised by Negroes recommended by Negro citizens.”⁹ Mayor Bruce Cameron promised concessions but privately complained to Governor Broughton that in Wilmington “the Negroes are ready and willing at all times to go en masse to the court house.” The mayor pleaded with Broughton to “tell them as long as you are governor the colored people will have to behave themselves.”¹⁰ But official proclamations could not stem the determination of black citizens. “Negroes are organizing all over the state to secure their rights,” NAACP official Roy Wilkins wrote after a wartime visit to North Carolina. “They are not frightened.”¹¹

African American activists in North Carolina first had to fight for “the right to fight.” A white physician in Rocky Mount observed that about 80 percent of the black draftees in his community were rejected because “it seemed easier to say IV-F—and send the negro home—and close the case. The army had rather have them in munitions or anything but the army.”¹² In Charlotte, a black high school teacher with a master’s degree from Columbia University accompanied four of his students to an army recruiting station in 1940 to get enlistment information. Told that the station was for “whites only,” he pressed for an explanation. White sol-

diers beat the teacher severely, breaking his jaw.¹³ Fighting for the right to face Hitler, however, was only the first part of the struggle for democracy. "We have to think of the home front whether we want to or not," one black North Carolinian argued. "No clear thinking Negro can long afford to ignore our Hitlers here in America."¹⁴

The determination of African Americans in North Carolina to confront "our Hitlers here in America" mirrored the attitude of African American activists across the nation. A. Philip Randolph and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters organized the all-black March On Washington Movement in 1941, which not only foreshadowed the all-black militancy of "Black Power" but also introduced large numbers of African Americans to the Gandhian "disciplined non-violent demonstrations" that Randolph correctly predicted would bring the victories of the postwar black freedom movement.¹⁵ Threatening to bring thousands of black Americans to the nation's capital, Randolph forced President Franklin D. Roosevelt to issue Executive Order 8802, which banned racial discrimination in the defense industries and created the Fair Employment Practices Commission. "One thing is certain," Randolph vowed in 1941, "and that is that if Negroes are going to get anything out of this National Defense, we must fight for it and fight for it with the gloves off."¹⁶

The international political logic of the war ushered in a global revolution in racial consciousness of which the African American freedom struggle must be seen as a part.¹⁷ "The problem of the Negro in the United States is no longer a purely domestic question but has world significance," Randolph declared in 1943. "We have become the barometer of democracy to the colored peoples of the world."¹⁸ It was Hitler, Roy Wilkins wrote in 1944, who "jammed our white people into their logically untenable position. Forced to oppose him for the sake of the life of the nation, they were jockeyed into declaring against his racial theories—publicly."¹⁹ The Germans air-dropped leaflets in North Africa that depicted police brutality in Detroit; the Japanese highlighted Western white supremacy in propaganda to promote their "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."²⁰ The distance between democratic rhetoric and American reality—and the fact that race relations in the United States had become a significant pawn in the international struggle—gave wartime black activists new leverage.

African Americans wielded these contradictions like weapons of war. Randolph, at the time the most influential black political figure in America, argued in 1943 that there was "no difference between Hitler of Germany and Talmadge of Georgia or Tojo of Japan and Bilbo of Missis-

sippi."²¹ The black press beat the drum for "Double V" campaigns beneath banners urging Americans to "Defeat Mussolini and Hitler By Enforcing The Constitution and Abolishing Jim Crow." Black citizens responded; circulation of African American newspapers increased by 40 percent during the war.²² Ella Baker set out "to place the NAACP and its program on the lips of all the people . . . the uncouth MASSES included."²³ NAACP membership grew nearly 900 percent during the war, and the number of branches tripled, three-quarters of the new branches in the previously sluggish South.²⁴ The Congress of Racial Equality pursued nonviolent direct action campaigns in Northern cities that laid the groundwork for the organization's important campaigns of the 1960s.²⁵

In North Carolina, University of North Carolina sociologist Howard Odum reported, the arrests of numerous young black men for defying lunch counter segregation reflected a mood of African American insurgency that terrified white North Carolinians, whose fears about the racial consequences of the war bordered on the paranoid. One rampant rumor asserted that "the Negroes were buying up all the icepicks" in the state and "waiting for the first blackout to start an attack."²⁶ Perhaps because these rumors resonated in the recesses of memory where slave insurrections and the mythical "black brutes" of Reconstruction once dwelled, whites could not see the ludicrous humor in their image of a black guerrilla army wielding icepicks in the dark, overrunning a state whose borders contained tens of thousands of white soldiers with machine guns and armored tanks. Another fearful murmur along the white grapevine asserted that the state police had "raided a Negro church in which was found an arsenal of firearms and ammunition" intended for a black revolution. Less refutable—and thus perhaps even more chilling—was the rumor that black North Carolinians were mail-ordering massive amounts of munitions from the Sears, Roebuck catalogue.²⁷

Not all white fears rested upon mere rumor. In 1942, Jonathan Daniels, whom President Roosevelt had selected as his chief adviser on race relations, wrote to the head of the National Urban League to express his alarm at "the rising insistence of Negroes on their rights now" and "the rising tide of white feeling against the Negroes in the South and other sections." Daniels feared both "bloodshed at home" and "material for dangerous anti-American propaganda abroad." Black demands were "logically strong," he conceded: "If we are fighting for democracy and human freedom, it is logical to insist that our pretensions in the world be proved at home."²⁸ But Daniels was willing to go only so far; he could see the racial crisis only as a problem of silencing black protests. "We thought we had to get a little justice to keep [black citizens] in line," he

recalled years later, evoking images of fierce African predators: white liberals like himself, seeking to stop black protests, he said, only wanted to “throw a little meat to the lions.”²⁹ So powerful was the legacy of 1898 that, fifty years afterward, white supremacy still could not be challenged among North Carolina’s elite; conservatives differed from liberals largely on the question of whether white supremacy was best defended with raw coercion or with paternalist civility. Liberals like Jonathan Daniels firmly believed in the latter, and they proved to be right.

In part, Jonathan Daniels’s apocalyptic sense of the nation’s growing racial conflict rested upon a broad bedrock of fact: his post in Washington required him to collect information pertaining to racial tensions across the country. But his anguish flowed also from a source closer to home and closer to heart. After years as editor, Daniels had left the *News and Observer* to the management of his older brother, Frank Daniels, and had accepted the post as adviser to the president. In the summer of 1942, Jonathan Daniels received an angry letter from his brother attacking him for being “in with all the pinkeys and liberals tied up with advancement for the Negro race.” “The situation here in Raleigh regarding the feeling of the white people toward the more or less new ideas of negroes,” Frank Daniels wrote, “is really alarming.” If black Americans continue to “keep on insisting for more privileges,” he warned, “a worse condition is going to exist in North Carolina before very long than [in] the period from 1895 to 1902, because white people just aren’t going to stand for it.” This was a threat that every black and white North Carolinian would have understood, and few better than the Daniels brothers. It required little explanation: Josephus Daniels, father of both men and still the Democratic elder statesman of North Carolina, had played a key role in the white supremacy campaign at the turn of the century, returning the state to what the father celebrated as “permanent good government by the party of the white man.” If African Americans continued to press for “equality,” Frank Daniels told his brother, “the white people are going to rise in arms and eliminate them from the national picture.” Lest there be any confusion about his meaning, the state’s most influential publisher warned that the black effort for racial advancement “is going to mean that all of [the blacks] that can read and write are going to be eliminated in the Hitler style.”³⁰

Words spoken in anger and in private, perhaps, but given this passionate depth of opposition among Southern elites, it is not surprising that white liberals and upper-class black leaders appreciated the benefits of caution even as they moved to address the growing crisis of race. In 1942, Jessie Daniel Ames, the white president of the Association of Southern

Women For The Prevention of Lynching, and Gordon B. Hancock, a conservative black sociologist at Virginia Union College in Richmond, organized the Southern Race Relations Conference. Black college presidents, business leaders, and clergymen met in Durham to confront the ways that the war “had sharpened the issue of Negro-white relations” and reopened “the basic questions of racial segregation and discrimination, Negro minority rights, and democratic freedom.” The resulting “Durham manifesto” did not bluntly advocate the outright abolition of segregation, but instead envisioned “in the South a way of life consistent with the principles for which we as a nation are fighting throughout the world.”³¹ White “moderates” responded favorably, and sixty-six Southerners—thirty-three black, thirty-three white—met secretly in 1944 to found what would become the Southern Regional Council, an interracial organization that would play a significant role in the coming decades of struggle.³²

Not all wartime resistance to white supremacy in North Carolina was as decorous and sedate as the Durham gathering. As Northern blacks poured into military training camps across the South and as Southern black soldiers took up arms for their country, they inevitably collided with Jim Crow.³³ North Carolina, which had more training camps than any other state, was hardly exempt from such collisions.³⁴ On 6 August 1941, a furious gunfight near Fort Bragg in Fayetteville left one black soldier and one white military policeman dead; five other soldiers were wounded in a clash over seating arrangements on a bus. Afterward, the provost marshal ordered all black soldiers who were not in their barracks rounded up and herded into the stockade. Angry white guards beat many of the men and the MPs forced more than 500 black soldiers to stand all night with their hands above their heads, even though most had been nowhere near the shooting.³⁵ Secretary of War Henry Stimson wrote to NAACP leader Roy Wilkins that “in no respect did the incident itself, or its after-effects, acquire any semblance of a conflict of racial sentiments.”³⁶

Whatever Secretary Stimson might say, few of the military training camps in North Carolina escaped serious racial tensions and many experienced severe interracial violence. At Camp Sutton, near the town of Monroe in the western Piedmont, racial fights were practically a daily affair and larger clashes commonplace. E. Frederic Morrow, later the first African American presidential aide, under President Dwight D. Eisenhower, remembered Monroe as a “racist hellhole.” “Every payday,” Morrow recalled, “trucks and M.P. vans drove up to our area and dropped off the bloody, beaten hulks of [black] men who had run afoul

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of the lawmen in Monroe." The violence frequently carried a sexual subtext; white police beat African American soldiers, according to Morrow, because the black men were "thought to be rapists or 'social equality' seekers, and they had to be kept in their place."³⁷

Most of the racial violence in Monroe consisted of white police officers beating individual black soldiers. But black soldiers frequently fought back. On 22 September 1943, according to a War Department investigation, when military police tried to arrest a black soldier, "a disturbance occurred at the Negro Service Club at Camp Sutton which threatened to assume riot proportions." A mob of black soldiers fought the MPs, and "shouts were heard from the colored soldiers that 'We may as well die here as over there.'" Authorities considered the affray not "evidence of a planned outbreak but rather further evidence of the volatile character of the general Negro situation."³⁸

Editor Roland Beasley of the *Monroe Journal*, a well-known liberal Democrat, claimed that "though the Negro has in this country every right and opportunity that a white man has . . . the agitators are fanning the flames." Despite "white only" signs posted all over town and glaring racial inequalities of wealth and privilege, white editors insisted that "no man can deny that the white majority is seeking honestly and earnestly" to achieve racial justice. The problem, they argued, was that African Americans sought "amalgamation"—the old "social equality" bugaboo. "The races are distinct and that fact may as well be recognized," Beasley declared. "The white race can amalgamate with the black only by committing suicide and any arrangement which tends to encourage amalgamation cannot be encouraged." While the editor remained unwilling to endorse "mob violence, the Ku Klux Klan, or in any way cheating the Negro," racial lines must be preserved inviolate. At bottom, Roland Beasley maintained, the race "problem" was rooted in the biological reality that justified white supremacy: "No one could doubt that upon the whole the white race is superior to the black." Anyone who might "suppose that the two races can mingle socially without restriction" and "have no race riots," Beasley asserted, "is foolish."³⁹

If "race-mixing" caused riots, as white editors in Monroe claimed, segregation apparently did little to prevent them, at least not in the wartime South. In late 1943, an intelligence report indicated that "colored soldiers . . . stationed at this post were gathering live ammunition for the purposes of retaliating against taxicab and bus drivers." When military authorities searched several black enlisted men from Camp Sutton, the inspection "resulted in the recovery of substantial amounts of ammunition" and other weapons. Though authorities uncovered this

particular insurgency, black resistance to ill treatment and racial discrimination persisted. In a letter to Jonathan Daniels, Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J. Edgar Hoover described a racial clash on 8 February 1944 in which "350 Negro soldiers from Camp Sutton resisted military police as well as civilian authorities," injuring several soldiers and police officers. Hoover blamed the fracas on "friction which has been existing between Negro soldiers and white officers." A few weeks later, the white commanding officer at Camp Sutton was "struck in the back of his head by a Negro private" with a bottle and "had to have stitches in his head." An informer among the black trainees reported that "the Negro enlisted men were planning a concerted program of insubordination."⁴⁰

In the summer of 1944, four black soldiers from Camp Sutton walked into a cafe in nearby Concord and asked to be served. "They were told that colored persons would not be served and they started to leave," a War Department investigator reported. "As they were leaving, a white patron also left and as he started out he shoved one of the Negroes telling him to get out of his way." The black soldier whipped out a knife and stabbed the white man. When the white counterman jumped into the fight, the soldier stabbed the second man as well, killing him. A white lynch mob assembled outside the cafe, but the black soldiers outran them. "The soldiers made their getaway," the report stated, "but had the town's inhabitants caught them undoubtedly they would have been lynched."⁴¹

One of the closest white observers of wartime racial politics, University of North Carolina sociologist Howard Odum, reported in 1943 on "a surprisingly large number of the ablest and best Negro leaders who had concluded sadly that it might be necessary to 'fight it out,'" and "a growing hatred on the part of many Negroes for the whites."⁴² At times, the observation seemed self-evident, particularly in relations between black citizens and law enforcement officials, whom white citizens relied upon to preserve racial etiquette. In Kershaw, North Carolina, for example, a black army sergeant named Smith inquired at the police station about the arrest of one of his men. Apparently, Sergeant Smith's tone or manner somehow violated the code of deference that governed race relations. A white police officer threw Sergeant Smith into a cell, struck him, and then shot him in the leg.⁴³ "The police can handle these [African American] bad eggs quite handily," one North Carolina editor wrote, "if the uplifters—i.e. social workers and those who think like them—don't barge in. A zoot-suiter should be no great problem."⁴⁴

But the police were not always able to contain black anger over police

brutality. In 1943, after white officers first shot an unarmed black man and then bludgeoned him to death on his front porch in Greenville, a tobacco market town a hundred miles north of Wilmington, "a crowd of Negroes—men and women—assembled and threatened the officer," one of the white policemen testified, until he brandished a pistol and promised to "drop them one by one," waving his gun at the protesters.⁴⁵ In a separate incident, "several hundred Negroes at Grifton Saturday night attempted to storm the jail," the *Carolina Times* reported, "and prevent police officers from placing a Negro woman, Mrs. Rosa Lee Picott, in jail on a charge of being disorderly and creating a disturbance."⁴⁶ The threads that had held white supremacy together in North Carolina since the Wilmington Race Riot of 1898 were beginning to unravel.

A few weeks later in the mill village of Erwin, North Carolina, twenty-two black men wrote a letter informing Governor Broughton of "the disturbment between the white and colored people, of this town." The men told Broughton that "we can't go up the street at night in peace, they are throwing rock at us and threating us with pistols and rifles." The black community would not endure much more abuse, they warned: "If something don't be done in the furture, evidently someone may be killed." Soon thereafter, Governor Broughton received a letter of explanation from Herbert Taylor, a leading white businessman in Erwin. He acknowledged the incidents of white violence but discounted them as "just a case of some young fellows throwing rocks, following some very insolent remarks having been made by some colored men." The trouble was "nothing but the negroes taking advantages of conditions," Taylor protested, and "little by little easing into things the best they can, under their belief that 'they are as good as anybody else.'"⁴⁷

"Social equality," the euphemism of choice for the ancient taboo of sex between black men and white women, provided at least the rhetorical center of gravity in Southern racial politics during the war. White politicians denounced any manifestation of it, and African American leaders denied any interest in it, but sexual anxiety undergirded all discussions of race. Virtually any self-assertion on the part of African Americans seemed to conjure images of "amalgamation" in the minds of white Southerners. Howard Odum, who examined Southern racial politics in his 1943 *Race and Rumors of Race: Challenge to American Crisis*, ranked this taboo "first and foremost" among white racial fears. Racial hierarchy, "although it reflected the cumulative racial and economic heritage of the South," Odum wrote, "was primarily one of sex." Odum felt that this underlying reality barred most discussion of reform among

black and white Southerners. "If it were not for the sex-caste foundation," he believed, "it might have been possible to make adjustments."⁴⁸

Even in Chapel Hill, supposedly the enlightened seat of Southern liberalism, "the sex-caste foundation" perched atop pure dynamite. According to a War Department intelligence report entitled "Commingling of Whites and Negroes At Chapel Hill, N.C.," the Reverend Charles M. Jones, a liberal Presbyterian minister, "entertained some members of the Navy Band (Negroes) at his church" on 12 July 1944, along with "some co-eds of the University of North Carolina (white, of course)." The local chief of police reported that "the coeds and negroes were seen walking side by side on the streets of Chapel Hill." A state highway patrol officer claimed that Rev. Jones's teenage daughter "had a date with one of the Negro members of the band on the same occasion and they were seen walking together in a lonely section of the campus late at night." Many members of the Presbyterian congregation "refuse[d] to attend the church so long as the present minister remains," according to the report, but the board of trustees voted four to three to retain Rev. Jones. Among the board members who supported the minister were Dr. Frank Porter Graham, president of the university, and Dr. F. F. Bradshaw, dean of students. The chief of police later "talked with Mr. Bradshaw and pointed out to him the seriousness of the situation if Rev. Jones is not dismissed at once."⁴⁹

Black leaders found it necessary to navigate the treacherous political eddies that swirled around the question of "social equality." Many African American speakers, confronted with the intermarriage question, joked to the effect, "Well, I'm married already myself"—but it was not a question that could be easily laughed off. "It stirs Negroes to ironic laughter," Sterling Brown noted, but "on all levels they recognize that the white man's fear of intermarriage is deep-seated."⁵⁰ Six of the fourteen African American contributors to Rayford Logan's 1944 landmark collection *What the Negro Wants* address "social equality" at some length. W. E. B. Du Bois's essay spends four pages on the issue, concluding that "there is no scientific reason why there should not be intermarriage between two human beings who happen to be of different race or color." But Gordon B. Hancock was more typical, arguing that "the social and economic advancement of the Negro has not resulted in greater intermarriage but definitely less."⁵¹ James S. Shepard, the conservative black president of North Carolina College for Negroes in Durham, stated in a national radio address in 1944 that "Negroes do not seek social equality and have never sought it."⁵² Across town at the *Carolina Times*, Louis Austin stated his own markedly different views

with characteristic candor: "Social equality," Austin declared, perhaps thinking of the Wilmington riot, "is the age-old scarecrow that is always brought out of the attic and dusted off to frighten the weak-minded whenever Negroes ask for better jobs, better wages, better schools, and other improvements." Besides, Austin noted dryly, echoing the words of black editor Alexander Manly in Wilmington half a century earlier, "our streets are crowded with Negroes, the color of whose skin bears testimony to the fact that there are individuals in both races who have been engaging in the highest point of social equality."⁵³

Louis Austin's militancy matched the spirit of African Americans across wartime North Carolina, thousands of them newly minted soldiers who defied Jim Crow every day. Black soldiers at Camp Butner flouted the segregation laws as a matter of course. White officials from the bus company that operated the Durham-Butner line complained that black soldiers from the camp made it "utterly impossible" to enforce the segregation statutes.⁵⁴ Clashes were common even though the legislature had amended the Jim Crow laws in 1939 to give bus drivers "police powers and authority to carry out the provisions of this section."⁵⁵ An African American captain at Camp Butner acknowledged that "our men tipped over a couple of buses because they had to wait while whites boarded first."⁵⁶ The chair of the State Utilities Board complained to Governor Broughton that "in spite of the [bus drivers'] efforts to control the [African American] passengers, in many instances it is beyond their power to do so."⁵⁷ Local white editors argued that racial trouble in North Carolina "was not home grown" but attributable to outsiders who failed to "conduct themselves in an orderly manner and in keeping with the laws and customs of this section."⁵⁸ State officials affirmed this view, blaming the troubles on "Northern negro soldiers at Camp Butner and Northern white officers who do not believe in our segregation laws and encourage the negro soldiers to break them."⁵⁹

On 3 April 1943, that spirit of resistance exploded into a riot in the Hayti section of Durham where many black soldiers from Camp Butner spent their free time. An argument about ration books turned into a brawl between an African American soldier and a white liquor store clerk. The clerk brandished a blackjack and the soldier drew a knife. Their violent scuffle spread into the streets, where white police and then hundreds of African American soldiers and local citizens joined the melee. Rioters hurled bricks, rocks, and hunks of cement, injuring a white bus driver and several policemen. Though local police tried to disperse the men with tear gas, the mob slashed tires, smashed windshields, and demolished storefronts until machine gun trucks and mili-

tary police units from Camp Butner finally restored order.⁶⁰ "Durham is one of the worst places we have, due to the large negro population," one state official reported to the governor afterward. "We have already had some open trouble there and I apprehend that we will have more. It is a bad situation."⁶¹

As the war for democracy raged on around the world, African American soldiers from Camp Butner continued to battle racial oppression in North Carolina. On a Saturday night in June of 1944, a black private named Wilson had accompanied a comrade from Camp Butner into Oxford, North Carolina, a small tobacco market town thirty miles north of Durham. Walking into a downtown cafe, Private Wilson asked for a beer. Told that there was no beer, the young private tried to buy a package of Lucky Strikes. According to the white proprietor, he informed Private Wilson that "we only serve white patrons." As Wilson and his companion stalked out the door, one of them muttered that the proprietor was a "poor white son of a bitch." Chief of Police H. J. Jackson, eating dinner in one of the booths, ran outside and collared Wilson from behind, clubbing him to the sidewalk with his pistol. Wilson's companion fled back to Camp Butner while Chief Jackson dragged the black private to the jailhouse.

Less than an hour later, sixty men from Camp Butner launched what the *Raleigh News and Observer* called "an unsuccessful effort by a squad of Negro soldiers to storm the Oxford jail and release one of their number."⁶² Approaching the double front doors, the soldiers sent two representatives to negotiate Private Wilson's release. Chief Jackson met the men on the steps, slapped one, and jabbed the barrel of his pistol into the face of the other. The two men retreated into the crowd. Chief Jackson ordered the black soldiers to disperse, and police fired tear gas grenades into the crowd, but the soldiers decided to rush the jailhouse doors. Swinging the doors wide, Assistant Chief J. L. Cash confronted the oncoming black mob with a large, tripod-mounted .50 caliber machine gun, "expressly purchased for such a purpose," according to the *Oxford Public Ledger*. Only in the face of certain annihilation did the soldiers scatter and flee.⁶³

This near-tragedy was, however, only a prelude to the fiery upheavals that rocked Durham five weeks later. By nightfall on 9 July 1944, smoldering embers and what one reporter described as "a vast spread of destruction" were all that remained of a large downtown section of the city. The charred skeletons of horses and cows sizzled in the ruins; frightened livestock bolted through the streets. Automobiles circled far into the night, bumper-to-bumper and packed with the curious. Author-

ities dispatched 4,000 soldiers and police officers to fight the flames and stop the looters; bone-weary men labored to restrain throngs of onlookers, some homeless, many angry, who milled along the edges of the destruction. Local newspapers noted that such scenes were not uncommon in a world at war. "The heart of the city," one reporter observed, "might as well have been a section of Berlin or some other European Axis-controlled city after a roaring raid by Allied bombers." As one white woman in Durham stated flatly: "Those niggers burned down a whole block of downtown Durham."⁶⁴

The violence began early on Saturday evening, 8 July 1944, when Private Booker T. Spicely stepped onto a Durham city bus driven by Herman L. Council. Council was short and small, thirty-six years old, an ill-educated white man with "a chip on his shoulder," according to a friend. He was in the habit of driving under the influence of alcohol, though Council denied that he had been drinking on this particular day.⁶⁵ Tall and broad-shouldered, the twenty-nine-year-old Spicely had until recently served as the assistant business manager of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Spicely mounted the steps in uniform, cradling a watermelon that he was carrying for a five-year-old African American boy he had met at the bus stop. Private Spicely, the little boy, the boy's mother, and another African American soldier all took seats at the front just behind the driver.⁶⁶

When two white soldiers approached the bus at a later stop, Council gruffly ordered Spicely and his companions to move to the rear. Carrie Jackson, the mother, took her son's hand and hurried to find seats in the back of the bus. Private Willie Edwards, the other black soldier, likewise complied. But Spicely demanded to know why he had to move; he had paid his fare, he said, and should be permitted to "sit where he damn well pleased." Furious, Council pointed to the North Carolina segregation law posted close at hand and angrily insisted that Spicely move on back. As the white soldiers clambered onto the bus, Spicely stood up and flashed a broad smile, seeking to enlist their support as fellow soldiers. Wasn't he "just as good to stop a bullet" as they were, he implored? Why should he have to give up his seat? "I thought I was fighting this war for democracy," Spicely told the men. The white soldiers "engaged in good natured banter with Spicely," according to one report, "agreeing with him that, since all were in the same uniform, it was ridiculous that he should make room for them."⁶⁷ Confused for a moment, the two white soldiers then made a bold and curious gesture: the pair gingerly made their way to seats in the "Negro section" at the back of the bus. What had begun as black insolence now smacked of social overthrow: first a black

man in uniform had defied his place in the social order, and now white soldiers followed suit. The humiliated bus driver unleashed a shower of profanity at the servicemen. Spicely was not prepared to match Council's venom, but as the black private turned to join his white comrades in the back of the bus, he muttered, "If you weren't 4-F, you wouldn't be driving this bus."⁶⁸

Amid the atmosphere of national crusade in the United States in 1944, to be called "4-F"—unfit for military service—impugned a man's worth, his patriotism, his very masculinity.⁶⁹ To be shamed by a black man who had just defied his authority in front of a busload of passengers was simply too much for Council. "I've got something that will cool you off," he snapped. Perched on the rearmost bench of the bus, Spicely must have sensed that a perilous line had been crossed. As he prepared to leave the bus, Spicely loudly apologized to the driver, trying to re-enter the traditional dance of deference and civility. "If I have said anything that offended you," he reportedly said, "I am sorry." Spicely then departed the bus quickly by the rear doors. But Council snatched a .38 caliber pistol from beneath his seat and lurched down the front steps to the sidewalk. Stalking to within three or four feet of the soldier, Council shot Spicely twice in the chest, killing him almost instantly. It was 7:40 in the evening.⁷⁰

Before night had finished falling, flames began to crackle and sirens began to wail among the tobacco warehouses downtown. "Great clouds of flame and smoke shot hundreds of feet into the air," the *Durham Morning Herald* reported. "Within a matter of seconds," flames engulfed the Big Four Warehouse, whose wide wooden floors were stacked high with furniture. Four large warehouses, several private homes, Dillard's Stables, Brock Motor Company, and the Avalon Cafe were consumed in the blaze. "An estimated 4000 servicemen, firemen, and civilians battled the fire," according to reporters. Without outside help, the Durham fire chief observed, "there is no telling where the fire might have spread." Flames licked hundreds of feet into the night sky; flaming debris fell into residential yards five miles away. Durham's skyline flickered red but fell otherwise dark, as power failures swept the city. The war for democracy had come home.⁷¹

Riots like the ones in Durham raged across the nation during World War II; according to the Social Science Institute at Fisk University, blacks and whites fought 242 racial clashes in 47 cities in 1943 alone.⁷² On 20 June 1943, ten weeks after the first racial battle in Hayti, Detroit exploded in two days of rioting that left 38 people dead, 676 injured, and \$2 million worth of property destroyed. The cataclysm in Detroit both

concerned and comforted Governor Broughton. A wave of racial violence in North Carolina and across the South had embarrassed and alarmed the governor; Detroit, at least, was above the Mason-Dixon line. "We have been disturbed by the recent Detroit situation which again reveals that racial problems are not sectional," Broughton wired the editor of *Collier's* magazine. "We are apprehensive that the situation has created a state of mind that may be provocative of other riots in other sections of the country," he continued, "and we are taking every step here . . . to avoid such contingencies in this state."⁷³

The simmering focus of Governor Broughton's fears was the city of Wilmington, the port and shipbuilding center at the mouth of the Cape Fear River. Just on the outskirts of Wilmington, racial antagonism in the fishing hamlet of Hampstead struck its flashpoint soon after the Detroit riot. The local sheriff reported to state officials that Hampstead had "reached the point where the white people have now refused to let the colored people come to town after dark." Armed white terrorists controlled the streets of the little coastal village. "Sheriff Brown's situation is very unfortunate," a State Bureau of Investigation report stated. "If he says anything in favor of letting the negroes come back to town, it would be interpreted by the whites as meaning that he was taking sides with the colored people." The sheriff had little help restraining the violence, investigators reported to the governor, because some of his own deputies were themselves engaged in racial terrorism against the black community. "Your agent who is familiar with the people in the community wishes to state that *this information should not be taken lightly*. The nearness of this town to Wilmington might start a general race riot in event that trouble were to start in Hampstead."⁷⁴

It was with these things in mind that Governor Broughton decided to make the christening of a new Liberty ship in Wilmington the occasion for a major pronouncement on race relations. The launching was not in itself a singular event; the Wilmington shipyards produced 126 Liberty ships during the war.⁷⁵ But this craft would be the first one named after a black man. Flanked by "conservative and reasonable" black leaders C. C. Spaulding of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company and Dr. James E. Shepard, president of North Carolina College for Negroes, Governor Broughton noted that the first warship launched here in 1941 had been named for "North Carolina's greatest governor, Zebulon B. Vance"—Confederate governor and enduring icon in state politics after the Civil War. This ship, however, would be called the *John Merrick*. The governor reminded his listeners that Merrick, born a slave, had become "the foremost Negro in North Carolina" by the time of his

death in 1919. As a hod carrier and bootblack in Raleigh, Merrick put away enough money to open a barber shop in Durham, where he shined the shoes and cut the hair of "outstanding leaders of the white race." Because of Merrick's "unfailing qualities of courtesy and character," he continued, these white men gave the barber "not charity" but "the benefit of wholesome advice which he was wise enough to follow." Thus Merrick was able to open, in the rear part of his barber shop, the first offices of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, which had become, by 1943, the largest black-owned business in the world. Merrick's life proved, according to the governor, "the almost unlimited opportunity for the Southern Negro where the virtues of hard work, honesty, and unflinching character prevail."

Broughton painted Merrick's life not merely as a bootstrap homily, however, but as a cautionary tale about the perils of black political activism. Even though "there were radical Negro leaders in his day even as there are today," Broughton asserted, Merrick had advised against "stirring up racial strife" and had urged his fellow black citizens to save their money and to "be courteous to those that courtesy [is] due." The governor charged that "certain inflammatory newspapers and journals" were now "dangerously fanning the flame of racial antagonism." Black editors and activists "who are seeking to use the war emergency to advance theories and philosophies which if followed to their ultimate conclusion would result in a mongrel race" should watch their step. "Forty-five years ago, in the city of Wilmington, where this launching is being held, there occurred the most serious race riot in the history of North Carolina," the governor reminded listeners, referring to the racial pogrom and political coup d'état by white Democrats in 1898. "Blood flowed freely in the streets of this city, feelings ran riot and elemental emotions and bitterness were stirred." Governor Broughton headed the party that had come to power by the bloodshed he now described; the black citizens of Wilmington could only interpret these words as an ominous ultimatum. But having made himself forcefully clear, Governor Broughton concluded his address with a gesture of the civility that in the years since 1898 had become known as "the spirit of Aycock." North Carolina had "come a long way since that event," the governor added. The Tarheel State could now be proud of its great strides in the field of race relations, which "have been accomplished by harmonious cooperation and mutual respect."⁷⁶

At that very moment, only two blocks from the shipyard where Governor Broughton was delivering his oration, a black woman named Mamie Williamson refused to get off a city bus. The driver sought to have

her arrested for violation of the segregation ordinance, but Williamson maintained that she had a legal right to her present seat. According to the police report written by Officers Wolfe and Leitch, Williamson asserted "that she had not done anything but that if the driver would give her money back she would get off and get another bus." The two policemen, aided by the white bus driver, dragged Williamson off the bus. "She was fighting and kicking," Mayor Bruce Cameron reported, "and when she attempted to bite Mr. Wolfe on the hand he slapped her." Officer Leitch then slapped Mamie Williamson also, apparently without the desired effect. "She continued to fight, kicking and biting," according to the police report, "and had to be slapped again." The two men knocked out several of Mamie Williamson's teeth during the struggle. The officers had "used only such force as was necessary to subdue the prisoner and keep her in custody," Chief of Police C. H. Casteen reported to the mayor. "I do not feel that the officers in this case did anything except what they should have done under the circumstances." In a letter to Governor Broughton, Mayor Cameron downplayed the incident: "This is just another case of [those] which we have been having for several months."⁷⁷ If Mamie Williamson had somehow obtained a newspaper in jail and read the accounts of Governor Broughton's speech—her own story, like most of the wartime violence in North Carolina, did not appear in the white press—one wonders what she would have thought about the "racial harmony and progress" that the governor celebrated from the platform.

If Broughton's lofty pronouncements of racial conciliation seemed odd amid all the violence, that paradox reflected perfectly the framework of civility that had governed racial politics in North Carolina since 1898. There was a mutually accepted framework for race relations—agreed upon at the turn of the century by white North Carolinians with guns and black North Carolinians without options. So long as African Americans made no overt challenge to white domination, "the spirit of Aycock" prevailed and the violence that had built the reigning social order need not recur; it was peace, but a peace firmly rooted in the triumph of white supremacy. When World War II provided realistic chances for African American citizens to resist white domination, they did so in large numbers, sometimes organized by the local NAACP chapter, more often as groups of friends or defiant individuals who refused to dance for Jim Crow any longer. Black citizens who violated the framework of civility risked the violence that had undergirded it all along, frequently the violence of white police, sometimes the violence of white mobs or individual enforcers along the color line. But even bloodshed

could not contain black insurgency much longer; World War II marked a genuine watershed in racial politics in North Carolina and across the nation. When the black veterans that historian John Dittmer has called "the shock troops of the modern civil rights movement" returned to North Carolina, white supremacy would come under two decades of sustained assault.⁷⁸ But World War II marked the decisive moment, when African Americans broke away from the decades of patient black institution-building that preceded the war and pointed toward the decades of black political activism that followed it. In 1944, one defiant black soldier from Winston-Salem could already reply to Governor Broughton with great confidence about the shape of the postwar world. "There will have to be a change in the old form of Democracy that has been handed down to my group I mean the colored people," O. E. Clanton wrote to the governor. "If I could bear arms and shed blood for this Great Democracy my people should share in the spoils."⁷⁹ The wars for democracy in North Carolina did not end with World War II, but the "old form of Democracy" would never be the same.

Notes

Two students in my 1993 and 1994 seminars at Duke University, Jo Hunt and Tanisha Bostick, uncovered evidential gold mines that completely altered my understanding of the period of World War II in North Carolina, and I am grateful to them for sharing their findings.

1. J. Melville Broughton, "Address by Governor J. Melville Broughton at the launching of the Liberty Ship *John Merrick* at Wilmington, N.C., Sunday, July 11, 1943, 5:15 P.M.," box 82, Race Relations folder, Governor J. Melville Broughton Papers, North Carolina State Archives, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh (hereafter, RRF, BP).

2. Ibid.

3. 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), 110–11 and 271 n. 92.

4. V. O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Knopf, 1949), 209–10.

5. William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 3.

6. Jeffrey J. Crow, Paul D. Escott, and Flora J. Hatley, *A History of African Americans in North Carolina* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1992), 151.

7. Raymond Gavins, "The NAACP in North Carolina during the Age of Segregation," in *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies*, ed. Armistead L. Robinson and Patricia Sullivan (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991), 109.

8. Clipping of the masthead from the *Carolina Times*, n.d., box 82, RRF, BP.

9. *Wilmington Morning Star*, 15 July 1943, 5.

10. Bruce Cameron to J. Melville Broughton, 11 August 1943, box 82, RRF, BP.
11. William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 22.
12. Dr. C. T. Smith to Nell Battle Lewis, 26 November 1944, Nell Battle Lewis Papers, North Carolina Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.
13. Roy Wilkins, "It's Our Country, Too," *Saturday Evening Post*, 14 December 1940, 61.
14. Charles S. Johnson et al., *A Preliminary Report on the Survey of Racial Tension Areas* (Nashville: Julius Rosenwald Fund, 1942), 119.
15. Neil Wynn, *The Afro-American and the Second World War* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1976), 47. For an excellent account of the wartime transmission of nonviolent direct action to large audiences of African Americans by the March on Washington Movement, see Sudarshan Kapur, *Raising Up a Prophet: The African-American Encounter with Gandhi* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 101–23.
16. A. Philip Randolph, "Call To Negro Americans," 1 July 1941, Office File 93, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Papers, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.
17. John Dower, *War Without Mercy* (New York: Pantheon, 1976).
18. *Philadelphia Tribune*, 10 July 1943, 7.
19. Roy Wilkins, "The Negro Wants Full Equality," in *What the Negro Wants*, ed. Rayford W. Logan (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), 115.
20. Walter White, *A Man Called White* (New York: Viking, 1948), 260; Dower, *War Without Mercy*.
21. A. Philip Randolph, "A Reply to My Critics: Randolph Blasts Courier as 'Bitter Voice of Defeatism,'" *Chicago Defender*, 12 June 1943, 13.
22. Harvard Sitkoff, "Racial Militancy and Interracial Violence in the Second World War," *Journal of American History* 58, no. 3 (December 1971): 662.
23. Charles Payne, *I Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 88–89.
24. Harvard Sitkoff, "African American Militancy in the World War II South: Another Perspective," in *Remaking Dixie: The Impact of World War II on the American South*, ed. Neil McMillen (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1997), 77.
25. Sitkoff, "Racial Militancy and Interracial Violence," 662.
26. Howard Odum, *Race and Rumors of Race: Challenge to American Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943), 93, 97.
27. *Ibid.*, 100, 103.
28. Jonathan Daniels to Lester B. Granger, 14 August 1942, Jonathan Daniels Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (hereafter, JDP).
29. Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 162.
30. Frank Daniels to Jonathan Daniels, 25 August 1942, JDP. The quote from Josephus Daniels is from J. Morgan Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880–1910* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 76.
31. "A Basis For Interracial Cooperation and Development in the South: A Statement by Southern Negroes," Southern Race Relations Conference, Durham, N.C., box 82, RRF, BP. The delegates included thirty-seven academics—twenty-two of them college presidents—eight labor representatives, four ministers, and five newspaper editors. Interestingly, the NAACP did not have a delegate.

32. John Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (New York: Knopf, 1994), 305–12.
33. See James Albert Burran, "Racial Violence in the South during World War II" (Ph.D. diss., University of Tennessee, 1977).
34. Lindley S. Butler and Alan D. Watson, *The North Carolina Experience: An Interpretive and Documentary History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 388.
35. This account is drawn from Burran, "Racial Violence in the South," 46–51. See also Ulysses S. Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* (Washington: Center for Military History, 1990), 351; Lou Potter et al., *Liberators: Fighting on Two Fronts in World War II* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992), 69–71; Herbert Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 306; Sitkoff, "Racial Militancy and Interracial Violence," 668.
36. Henry Stimson to Roy Wilkins, 10 November 1941, NAACP Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
37. E. Frederic Morrow, *Forty Years a Guinea Pig: A Black Man's View from the Top* (New York: Pilgrim, 1980), 37–38.
38. "Camp Sutton, N.C. Racial Tensions," JDP, 1–2.
39. *Monroe Journal*, 3 August 1943, 2.
40. "Camp Sutton, N.C. Racial Tensions," JDP, 1–2.
41. *Ibid.*, 2.
42. Odum, *Race and Rumors of Race*, 6–7.
43. Johnson et al. *A Preliminary Report on the Survey of Racial Tension Areas*, 98.
44. *News-Journal and Durham Messenger*, 15 July 1943, 5. Zoot suits, with their baggy trousers, loud colors, and swinging watch chains, became a potent wartime symbol of racial identity and political dissidence. "By March 1942, because fabric rationing regulations instituted by the War Department forbade the wearing of zoot suits," Robin D. G. Kelley writes, "wearing the suit (which had to be purchased through informal networks) was seen by white servicemen as a pernicious act of anti-Americanism—a view compounded by the fact that most zoot suiters were able-bodied men who refused to enlist or found ways to dodge the draft." See "The Riddle of the Zoot: Malcolm Little and Black Cultural Politics during World War II," in Robin D. G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics and the Black Working Class* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 161–81.
45. *Carolina Times*, 3 July 1943, 1.
46. *Ibid.*, 1 May 1943, 1.
47. Petition to J. Melville Broughton, 27 July 1943; Herbert B. Taylor to J. Melville Broughton, n.d.; both in box 82, RRF, BP.
48. Odum, *Race and Rumors of Race*. While the quotes in the text are from pp. 30–31 and 54–55, Odum's survey finds the idea of interracial sexuality at the center of racial conflict across the region; for more examples of "sex-caste" tension in North Carolina, see also pp. 27–28, 54–57, 61–62, 64–65, 117. The *Raleigh News and Observer*, 5 June 1945, 4, reported that a black man was sentenced to two years on the chain gang for "assault on a female" and "forcible trespass" for making "improper advances" to a white woman over the telephone. The man was accused of trying to persuade a white woman to go on a date with him.
49. War Department memo, "Subject: Commingling of Whites and Negroes at Chapel Hill, N.C.," 19 August 1944, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y. I am grateful to Christina Greene for sharing these and other documents.

50. Sterling Brown, "Count Us In," in Logan, *What the Negro Wants*, 329.
51. Logan, *What the Negro Wants*, 66–69, 233. Logan himself argues on p. 28 that "mixed schools, mixed employment, even social mingling in the more liberal parts of the United States have resulted in very few mixed marriages." F. D. Patterson states on p. 260 that "the argument that the common use of restaurants and public facilities by Negroes and whites will lead inevitably to race admixture has much evidence to the contrary." Langston Hughes, on p. 306, exclaims: "Why [white Southerners] think simple civil rights would force a Southerner's daughter to marry a Negro in spite of herself, I have never been able to understand." Sterling Brown on p. 326 states flatly that "Negroes have long recognized [the sexual question] as the hub of the argument opposing change in their status" but assures white readers that "intermarriage is hardly a goal that Negroes are contending for openly or yearning for secretly."
52. James E. Shepard, "Race Relationships In North Carolina," 17 February 1944, box 82, RRF, BP. In an interesting response to the broadcast, sociologist E. Franklin Frazier of Howard University wrote to Shepard and accused him of supporting "the ignorant and barbarous elements of the South" by "engaging in the old game of southern Negro leaders who have pretended that the Negro feels and believes that he is different from other people and is, therefore, unfit to associate with whites. . . . I believe in *Social Equality*." See E. Franklin Frazier to James E. Shepard, 19 February 1944, box 82, RRF, BP.
53. Crow, Escott, and Hatley, *A History of African Americans in North Carolina*, 147.
54. Stanley Winborne to J. Melville Broughton, 17 June 1943, box 82, RRF, BP.
55. Chapter 147, section 3537, *Laws of the State of North Carolina*, North Carolina Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
56. Mary Penick Motley, *The Invisible Soldier: The Experience of the Black Soldier, World War Two* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975), 320–21.
57. Stanley Winborne to J. Melville Broughton, 17 June 1943, box 82, RRF, BP.
58. *Oxford Public Ledger*, 2 May, 5 May 1944, in Hays Collection, vol. 22, 139, Richard B. Thornton Public Library, Oxford, N.C.
59. Stanley Winborne to J. Melville Broughton, 17 June 1943, box 82, RRF, BP.
60. Jean B. Anderson, *Durham County: A History of Durham County, North Carolina* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1990), p. 254; *Durham Morning Herald*, 4 April 1943, 1; *Carolina Times*, 10 April 1943, 1–2.
61. Stanley Winborne to J. Melville Broughton, 17 June 1943, box 82, RRF, BP.
62. *News and Observer*, 3 May 1944, 3.
63. Hays Collection, vol. 22, 139, Richard B. Thornton Library, Oxford, N.C.; *News and Observer*, 3 May 1944, 1. See also *Heritage and Homesteads: History and Agriculture in Granville County, North Carolina* (Oxford, N.C.: Granville County Historical Society, 1988), 121. Walter White of the NAACP reported that "a number of Southern cities and towns and a few in the North had invested huge sums in machine guns, grenades, tear gas, armored trucks, and other riot-quelling equipment." See White, *A Man Called White*, 308.
64. *Durham Morning Herald*, 10 July 1944, 1; the last quote is from Jo Hunt, "Beans and Potatoes: Booker T. Spicely and the Bus Driver's Daughter" (unpublished paper, Duke University, 1993, in possession of the author), 4. See also Tanisha Bostick, "One Act of Defiance: Booker T. Spicely's Story" (unpublished paper, Duke University, 1993, in possession of the author).
65. *Durham Morning Herald*, 11 July 1944; according to city records, Council had

been convicted of drunken driving three times. The quote is from Hunt, "Beans and Potatoes," 4.

66. Carrie Jackson testimony, quoted in *Durham Morning Herald*, 12 July 1944, 4.
67. Murray, ed., *The Negro Handbook, 1946–47*, quoted in Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States* (New York: Citadel Press, 1968), 4:538.
68. War Department report, "Subject: Racial Incident, Shooting of Negro Soldier, Durham, N.C. on 8 July 1944 at about 1940," Headquarters Fourth Service Command, 12 July 1944, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y.; *Durham Morning Herald*, 11 July 1944, 1; testimony by Private Willie Edwards, Catherine Tembers, Corporal Rudolph Hass, Herman Council, and "Miss Fuller," quoted in *Durham Morning Herald*, 10, 11, 12 July 1944. See also *Pittsburgh Courier*, 22 July 1944, 1.
69. See, for example, Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Free Press, 1990), 4.
70. C. Jerry Gates to Thurgood Marshall, "Re: *State v. Herman Lee Council* (for murder of Booker T. Spicely)," 11 August 1944, NAACP Papers, Reel 14, No. 9.
71. *Durham Morning Herald*, 11 July 1944, 1, 18 September 1944, 1; *News-Journal and Durham Messenger*, 13 July 1944, 1.
72. Dominic J. Capeci Jr. and Martha Wilkerson, *Layered Violence: The Detroit Rioters of 1943* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 87, 90. An excellent short account of the Detroit riot of 1943 can be found in Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response*, 311–30, 337.
73. J. Melville Broughton to Walter Davenport, 30 June 1943, box 82, RRF, BP.
74. J. F. Bradshaw to SBI Director, State Bureau of Investigation Intra-Bureau Correspondence, 24 August 1943, box 82, RRF, BP. The emphasis is in the original.
75. Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, *North Carolina: The History of a Southern State* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 624.
76. "Address by Governor J. Melville Broughton at the launching of the Liberty Ship *John Merrick*."
77. Complaint report, Wilmington Police Department, 11 July 1943, 5:10 P.M.; C. H. Casteen to Bruce B. Cameron, 11 August 1943; Bruce B. Cameron to J. Melville Broughton, 11 August 1943; all in box 82, RRF, BP.
78. John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 9.
79. O. E. Clanton to J. Melville Broughton, September 1944, box 82, RRF, BP.