

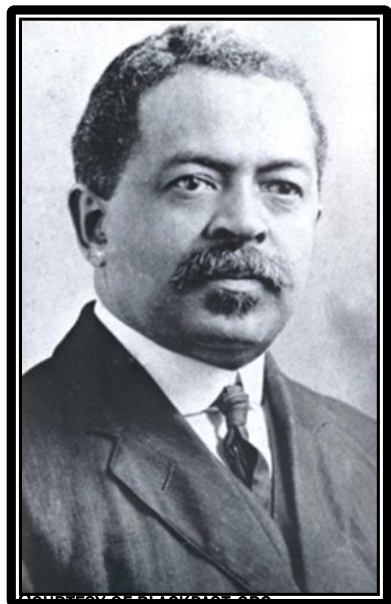
PROFILE OF RESISTANCE

William Monroe Trotter

Journalist, Businessman, Activist

“We are not here as wards. We are not here as dependents. We are here as full-fledged American citizens.”

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Background Information

Born: April 7, 1872

Death: April 7, 1934

Trotter was born in Chillicothe, Ohio in 1872. He and his family moved to Boston, Massachusetts when he was six years old, where he grew up and his father worked under President Grover Cleveland as the Recorder of Deeds. His father was the highest-ranking black federal official at the time. Trotter attended predominantly white schools in Boston and was very successful. He attended Harvard University earning a Bachelor's degree in International Banking and a Master's degree in Finance.ⁱ After his graduation from Harvard, he was prevented from working in Business because he was Black, so he worked in real estate instead. He married a childhood friend, Geraldine Pindell in 1899, and made the radical decision to open his own newspaper.

Trotter's Resistance

Trotter started his own newspaper, *The Boston Guardian* with business partner George Forbes. Through *the Guardian*, Trotter published weekly newspapers that advocated against the views of Booker T. Washington, a prominent black figure in history. Washington believed that Black people should try to prove themselves by working hard, not fighting for the political and social rights of Black people.ⁱⁱ Trotter disagreed, so he, along with twenty-eight others who disagreed with Washington's ideals, founded the Niagara Movement. He championed the ideal of “unapologetic Blackness.”ⁱⁱⁱ Trotter was also very outspoken in his endeavors and did not hesitate to mention something he felt was wrong. He used his newspaper to endorse many democratic candidates and publicly criticized presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson.^{iv}

Achievements

Trotter's legacy of radical journalism and unflinching critique of governmental actions had produced tangible results. His activism helped to shut down the play *“The Clansman”*, a racist film. The Niagara Movement later became known as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He also helped establish the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as well as the National Equal Rights League.⁴

