

Lesson Title: Charles C. Jackson, an African American Officer in World War I
Lesson Created by: John P. Gurnish
Suggested Class Subject & Grade: American History 9-12
Lesson Duration: one to three 50 minute class periods

Ohio's New Learning Standards

Historical Thinking Skills Content Statements 1, 2, 9, 10, 16, and 18.

Lesson Abstract: Students will use the film *Lost Voices of the Great War: Summit County in the First World War* with supplementary primary and secondary sources to explain the experiences of African American soldiers during and immediately following World War I.

Objectives

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will be able to explain the connection between the prejudices at home before the war and the treatment of African-American soldiers during the war. 2. Students will be able to describe the role of African Americans in the military. 3. Students will compare expectations of African Americans during the war with what actually happened to them afterwards.

Primary/Secondary Sources

# Source	Title	How source is used in the lesson
1	<i>Lost Voices of the Great War: Summit County in the First World War</i> (Video)	Documentary will be shown during class.
2	Textbook – example: <i>American History Reconstruction to the Present</i> HMH Pub. Co. 2010	This will be used in the classroom or as homework to give context and information about the topic.
3	<i>Akron Beacon Journal</i> . Monday, January 13, 1919, pp. 1 and 3 (Newspaper Article) Newspapers.com (subscription required) https://www.newspapers.com	Student handout and reading. Students will read this article and make a timeline of Jackson's service.
4	<i>Akron Beacon Journal</i> . Monday, April 28, 1919, p. 10 (Newspaper Article) Newspapers.com (subscription required) https://www.newspapers.com	Student handout and reading. Students will read this after viewing the video <i>Fighting On Both Fronts: The Story of the 370th</i>
5	"Charles Young, Miscellaneous Letters" (Letter dated March 23, 1917) https://www.ohiomemory.org/digital/collection/p15005coll34/id/669	Student resource. This letter written by the highest ranked African American in the U.S. Army just prior to the war will give readers insight as to how Young believed participation by African Americans in the war would prove their value and patriotism to the country.

6	<i>Fighting On Both Fronts: The Story of the 370th</i> (PBS Video) https://www.pbs.org/show/fighting-both-fronts-story-370th/	Shown in class to give the overall story of 370th Infantry in which Charles C. Jackson served.
Additional Source 1	<i>The Negro Soldier</i> (You Tube Video) https://youtu.be/sWFOKPUyJXA	Teacher resource. This is a World War II propaganda film used to recruit black men into the U.S Armed Services. Possible question to pose to students: How is the experience of African Americans during WWI portrayed in this film different than how their experience is portrayed in the <i>Fighting On Both Fronts</i> film? Does the purpose of this film have anything to do with this difference?
Additional Source 2	“The Long Road Home, African American WWI Veterans return to their communities” (Online Article) https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/index.php/ohio-in-ww1-articles/5821-the-long-road-home.html	Article written for the Ohio WWI Committee by Paul LaRue which contains additional web resources on African Americans in the First World War.

Sequence of Instruction

Lesson Element	Allotted Time	Describe Task & Teacher Responsibilities
Introduction	5-15 min.	Teacher will review the historic treatment of African Americans prior to the war based on what has already been covered in class. Topics should include loss of voting rights, challenges of finding jobs, getting an education, racial discrimination, segregation, Jim Crow, and the Great Migration.
Activity 1	30-50 min.	Students will read selections from the text on World War I and the 1920s.
Activity 2	10-50 min.	Students will view selections of <i>Lost Voices of the Great War</i> and answer the Guided Questions about Charles C. Jackson’s role during the war. Use the following sections from the video: Segment 6- “The Demands of Neptune” (15:05-16:10), Segment 12- “The Drive” (35:30-36:23), Segment 14- “Armistice and Peace” (42:32-42:45), and (48:25-48:42).
Activity 3	20 min.	Use student answers to guided questions to frame a teacher-directed review of the film.
Activity 4	50 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View the film <i>Fighting on Both Fronts: The Story of the 370th</i>. (26:06 Total Running Time) Read the letter by Charles Young and the articles about Charles C. Jackson.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss: Did African Americans meet the expectations of the nation during the war? Did they meet their own expectations? How did life change for them after the war? Compare Jackson's experience in the 370th with other officers within that same unit.
Assessment	30-50 min.	<p>Students will write a one page paper answering the question: Would Charles C. Jackson agree or disagree with the following statement: <i>"American soldiers looked down on the African-Americans who served with the French."</i> Support your answer based on what you've learned about the American and French Armies' treatment of African American soldiers as well as Jackson's service record and his perspective as an officer.</p> <p>Students answer the question backed with at least two facts (½ of grade). Include two details from Jackson's service in the argument (¼ of grade). Presentation, neatness, spelling, grammar, and clarity (¼ of grade).</p> <p>Alternate Assessment: Students will create a letter from a soldier of the 370th Infantry to his parents back home in Akron, Ohio.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The letter will be at least ten sentences in length. • The letter should cover a minimum of three subjects. Subjects may include: food, living conditions, and other soldiers in the unit, treatment by the French, activities, and questions relating to life in Akron. • Students will need to write about three different subjects.(½ of grade). • Length will need to be a minimum of ten sentences. (¼ of grade). • Accuracy, believability, format of a letter, and clarity (¼ of grade).

Watch the segments listed below from the film *Lost Voices of the Great War* and answer the following questions

Segment 6- “The Demands of Neptune” (13:15 - 16:01)

1. What company did Jackson work for before the war?
2. What unit and division was Jackson assigned to?
3. Who provided the arms and equipment for Jackson and his unit?

Segment 12- “The Drive” (33:33 – 36:15)

1. What rank was Jackson promoted to?
2. What is another name for the *Croix de Guerre*?
3. What word did the French people use to describe the work of the African American troops in the war?
4. How do you think the French made Jackson feel about his service?

Segment 14- “Armistice and Peace” (41:05 - 49:22)

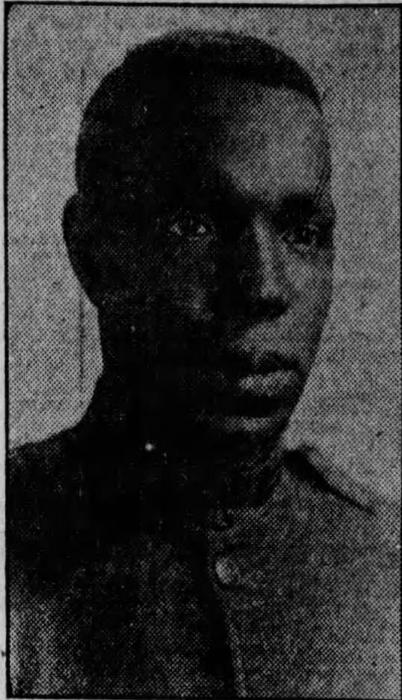
1. Jackson believed that his “faithful service” would bring results after the war. What results do you think he and other African Americans expected?
2. What work did Jackson do when he returned home after the war?

Watch the video *Fighting on Both Fronts: The Story of the 370th* and answer the following questions:

1. What made the 8th Illinois Regiment different from other African American regiments in the service?
2. What kind of duty did most African American units receive when they arrived in France?
3. Why was General John Pershing given the name “Black Jack”?
4. How was the 370th discriminated against in France?
5. Captain William Braddan of the 370th said of the unit that the officers could inspire their men to “charge hell with a bucket of water.” What does that imply about the quality of the officers?
6. How did the French treat the 370th?
7. How was the 370th treated when they returned home?
8. What was the “Red Summer”? Name one thing that happened during that time.
9. Why were the former 370th soldiers disillusioned after the war?

Newspaper article, *Akron Beacon Journal*, January 13, 1919, pp.1 and 13

**AKRON NEGRO IS
WAR CROSS WINNER**



Lieut. Chas. C. Jackson

Lieut. Charles C. Jackson, Akron's only colored officer in Pershing's army, has been awarded the French Croix de Guerre.

Lieutenant Jackson, who before the war was a cement block manufacturer and road builder, living at 367 Cleveland st., East Akron, mentions the decoration during the course of a letter to his father, J. R. Jackson.

It came to him for "capturing a

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**CHARLES C. JACKSON, AKRON NEGRO,
AWARDED FRENCH CROIX DE GUERRE**

**Akron's Only Colored Officer
is Now With Army of Occu-
pation Near Rhine River**

(Continued From Page One.)

town in the last Belgian drive under heavy machine gun fire and under adverse circumstances." Lieutenant Jackson was himself a machine gun officer serving with the "suicide squad" of the 91st division that trained at Camp Grant, Ill.

He had gone to Camp Sherman with the first draft in the fall of 1917. Within two weeks he was made a corporal and set to drilling "awkward squads." He had been for two years a student at Ohio State university and had taken military training there. Within a month he was advanced to regimental supply sergeant, and when the next officers' training camp opened at the Chillicothe cantonment, he applied for it and was accepted.

He was one of three colored men to take the training for officers at Camp Sherman. On receiving his commission he was sent to Camp Grant to join the 365th infantry, later being assigned to the 370th with a machine gun unit.

Lieutenant Jackson is 32, and unmarried.

Extracts from a letter recently received from Lieutenant Jackson by his father follow:

"My trip to France is one that I would hardly have taken as a civilian. It has certainly been instructive and, under the circumstances, very pleasant. From Brest, our landing place, to Alsace, then back through Paris to just southwest of Laon where I joined the 370th (the

famous Black Devils). We drove the boches all the way to the Belgian border. I had the distinct honor of being on the front line during the last 20 miles of the drive.

"We were in a town on the Belgian border at 11 o'clock a. m. on Nov. 11. The Germans occupied one side of the town and we had the other side. I consider this drive as one of the greatest experiences of my life, if it is not the very greatest. I saw more happiness on that trip than I have ever seen anywhere. Can you imagine yourself the liberator of a lot of people who have been enslaved for over four years? Well, that's just what we were. And those liberated people didn't fail to show us their appreciation of our deed. I'll have to save full details of this trip till I return, for I just can not write it all.

"We know that by having rendered faithful service here in France, we, as negroes, have bettered conditions for the negroes' future in the U. S. A.

"While the actual fighting is over, our service over here is not yet complete. We are to be a part of the army of occupation. We expect to leave in a few days for either Germany or Austria. We may be there all winter.

"I forgot to tell you, I've been appointed judge advocate of the special court of my regiment. And one more little thing I'll mention: On our drive to Belgium, I won the French war cross, the Croix de Guerre, for capturing the town Lorgny in the face of machine gun fire, and under adverse circumstances."

"I don't know how soon I'll get home, but however long it may be, you don't need to worry anymore, the actual fighting is over and from now on we will be seeing Europe."

Courtesy, *Akron Beacon Journal*

Newspaper article, *Akron Beacon Journal*, April 28, 1919, pp. 1

AKRON COLORED CITIZENS PLAN BIG RECEPTION FOR NEGRO SOLDIERS

Lieut. C. C. Jackson, Akron Officer, Will Be One of Speakers on Program

AT ARMORY ON THURSDAY

Akron's colored citizens have planned a mammoth "Welcome Home" reception for their soldier heroes of the world war which promises to be one of the biggest demonstrations of its kind held in Ohio. It will be held at the Armory on May 1 at 8 p. m. Three prominent colored men will speak. They are Lieut. Charles C. Jackson, Akron; Sergeant Major George, Chicago, and Professor George Thompson, noted Y. M. C. A. worker.

Sergeant George is said to be an exceptionally entertaining talker who mingles many humorous episodes with his tales of daring. He will bring with him his entire collection of war trophies, among which is a handsome fur overcoat he captured with its contents—a German officer—and which will be displayed at the Armory along with helmets, shells, revolvers, etc.

Lieut. Jackson, Akron boy, will tell of his capture of the Belgian town of Lorgny from the Germans, and of many other thrilling exploits of his company of machine gunners.

Professor George Thompson, who was Y. M. C. A. physical instructor with Col. Otis B. Duncan, 370th infantry, will relate his experiences in his characteristically pleasing manner. Colonel Otis said the following of Prof. Thompson. "His knowledge of physical training and the way he entered the spirit of the work had much to do with the wonderful stamina exhibited by our men in withstanding the rigors of war."

In the musical section of the program will be Miss Courtney Cain, Akron, solo; Miss Iva Haines, Akron, solo; Miss Margaret Higgin, Indianapolis, solo; and a recitation by Mrs. Truesdale Jones. Thompson's Jazz band will furnish music.

All of Akron's 300 colored soldiers will be admitted free while a charge will be made to the public. According to the Goodrich colored girls, who with the assistance of William Hampton, arranged the program, white people are urged to attend and help



Lieut. C. C. Jackson

welcome the city's colored boys who risked their all for America.

YOUR BLOOD POISONED

Foul life destroying poisons accumulate in the human system during the winter months. Frequent colds, close indoor confinement in homes, offices and workrooms, overheated and badly ventilated, cause the blood to become sluggish and contaminated.

Never in the history of America has there ever been such a terrible epidemic. The Flu has left thousands of its victims mere human wrecks—filled with the poisonous dregs of this disease. Every sensible person must realize that in order to successfully fight Life's Battle, robust health is absolutely necessary. Rich, pure blood is needed in the body. Why not begin at once in the spring time to purify and freshen the blood stream, drive out of the system poisons, germs and disease dregs. You need Mother Nature's Great Blood Remedy—Bulgarian Blood Tea. It cleanses the system most effectively. Every member of the family should use it. Sold by all Druggists, everywhere including Day Drug Co., 15 store.—Adv.

SHOULD BE KEPT IN THE HOUSE AS

Courtesy, *Akron Beacon Journal*