

Letters from Great Migration Migrants

Selma, Ala. May 19, 1917

Dear Sir: I am a reader of the Chicago Defender I think it is one of the Most Wonderful Papers of our race printed. Sirs I am writeing to see if You all will please get me a job. And Sir I can wash dishes, wash iron nursing work in groceries and dry good stores. Just any of these I can do. Sir, who so ever you get the job from please tell them to send me a ticket and I will pay them. When I get their as I have not got enough money to pay my way. I am a girl of 17 years old and in the 8 grade at Knox Academy School. But on account of not having money enough I had to stop school. Sir I will thank you all with all my heart. May God Bless you all. Please answer in return mail.

["Documents: Letters of Negro Migrations of 1916-1918," *The Journal of Negro History* 4, no. 3 \(July 1919\): 317.](#)

Memphis, Tenn. 4-23-17

Gentlemen: I want to get in tuch with you in regard of a good location & a job I am for race elevation every way. I want a job in a small town some where in the north where I can receive verry good wages and where I can educate my 3 little girls and demand respect of intelegence. I prefer a job as cabinet maker or any kind of furniture mfg. if possible.

Let me hear from you all at once please. State minimum wages and kind of work.

["Documents: Letters of Negro Migrations of 1916-1918," *The Journal of Negro History* 4, no. 3 \(July 1919\): 337.](#)

New Orleans, La. August 27, 1917

Dear Sir: i am wrighting you for help i haired of you by telling my trouble i was told to right you. I wont to come there and work i have ben looking for work here for three month and cand find any i once found a place \$1 a week for a 15 year old girl and i did not take that. now you may say how can that be but New Orleans is so haired tell some have to work for food and the only help i have is my mother and she have to work 2 week now and she have four children young then me and i am 15teen and she have such a hard time tell she is willing for me to go and if you will sin me a pass you will not be sorry i am no lazy girl i am smart i have not very much learning but I can do any work that come to my hand to do i am set here today worry i could explain it to you i have ben out three time to day and it only 12 oclock. and if you please sire sine me a pass. it more thin i am able to tell you how i will thank you i have clothes to bring wenter dress to ware. my grand mama dress me but now she is dead and all i have is my mother now please sire sin me a pass and you wont be sorry of it and if you right and speake mean please ancer i will be gald of that but if you would sin a pass i would be so much glader i will work and pay for my pass if you sin it i am so sorry tell i cant talk like i wont to and if you and your famely dont wont to be worry with me I will stay where i work and will come and see you all and do any think i can for you all

from little A--- V---

excuse bad righting.

["Documents: Letters of Negro Migrations of 1916-1918," *The Journal of Negro History* 4, no. 3 \(July 1919\): 316.](#)

Mobile, Ala., April 25, 1917

Sir: I was reading in that paper about the Colored race and while reading it I seen in it where cars would be here for the 15 of May which is one month from to day. Will you be so kind as to let me know where they are coming to and I will be glad to know because I am a poor woman and have a husband and five children living and three dead one single and two twin girls six months old today and my husband can hardly make bread for them in Mobile. This is my native home but it is not fit to live in just as the Chicago Defender say it says the truth and my husband only get \$1.50 a day and pays \$7.50 a month for house rent and can hardly feed me and his self and children. I am the mother of 8 children 25 years old and I want to get out of this dog hold because I dont know what I am raising them up for in this place and I want to get to Chicago where I know they will be raised and my husband crazy to get there because he know he can get more to raise his children and will you please let me know where the cards is going to stop so that he can come where he can take care of me and my children. He get there a while and then he can send for me. I heard they wasnt coming here so I sent to find out and he can go and meet them at the place they are going and go from there to Chicago. No more at present. hoping to hear from you soon

from your needed and worried friend

["Documents: Letters of Negro Migrations of 1916-1918," *The Journal of Negro History* 4, no. 3 \(July 1919\): 332.](#)

Alexandria, La., June 6, 1917

Dear Sirs: I am writing to you all asking a favor of you all. I am a girl of seventeen. School has just closed I have been going to school for nine months and I now feel like I ought to go to work. And I would like very very well for you all to please forward me to a good job. but there isnt a thing here for me to do, the wages here is from a dollar and a half a week. What could I earn Northing. I have a mother and a father my father do all he can for me but it is so hard. A child with any respect about her self or his self wouldnt like to see there mother and father work so hard and earn nothing I feel it my duty to help. I would like for you all to get me a good job and as I havent any money to come on please send me a pass and I would work and pay every cent of it back and get me a good quite place to stay. My father have been getting the defender for three or four months but for the last two weeks we have failed to get it. I dont know why. I am tired of down hear in this -----/ I am afraid to say. Father seem to care and then again dont seem to but Mother and I am tired of all of this I wrote to you all because I believe you will help I need your help hoping to here from you all very soon.

["Additional Letters of Negro Migrants of 1916-1918," *The Journal of Negro History* 4, no. 4 \(Oct., 1919\): 413](#)