

ABSTRACT

From Bridgetown to Baraguá: Barbadian Migration to Cuba, 1900-1935

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This dissertation looks at aspects of British West Indian migration to Cuba in the early twentieth century, particularly Barbadian migration to the town Central Baraguá. It traces the rise and fall of this movement of labour, and the impact which it had on both Cuba and Barbados.

During this migratory wave, West Indians were able to earn money, much of which they remitted to their homelands, while maintaining their ethnic identity under extremely harsh conditions.

Chapter one examines the history of Barbadian migration, and attitudes of the government of the day towards migration.

The second chapter focusses on economic factors in Cuba which rendered it an attractive destination for Barbadians in search of work. It looks

at recruitment methods, and the system by which they were transported to this new land of opportunity.

The next chapter is devoted to an examination of migration to Panama during construction of the Panama Canal, and its impact on Barbadian society. Panama as a route to Cuba is also discussed.

Chapter four examines official attitudes in Cuba towards immigration; the reaction of Cuban citizens to these foreign labourers; and the living and working conditions of the West Indians.

The fifth chapter deals with Central Baraguá; its history, the day-to-day lives of the migrants and their descendants, their integration into Cuban society, and West Indian cultural survivals.

The sixth chapter, which is concerned with how the migrants used their earnings, discusses their investment in real property in Cuba and remittances to relatives in the West Indies.

The factors which brought an end to this migration are considered in the seventh and final chapter, as well as the eventual repatriation of the British West Indians.

Keywords: Sharon Milagro Marshall; Barbadian migration to Cuba; Baraguá.