

KIRKLAND TOWN LIBRARY



CLAUDIE

1922

HARLEM, NY

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NATALIE BROWN

CLINTON DURING CLAUDIE'S TIME

Harlem is a neighborhood in New York City, and by the end of the 1920s, over 200,000 people lived there. Clinton was a much smaller village, with less than 2,000 people living in it by the end of the 1920s. Despite their different sizes, both places had a feeling of community, with local businesses and friendly neighbors.

There were boarding houses in Clinton from the 1800s through at least the 1960s. They were an important housing option for people all over the country, including Harlem, where Claudie lives in a boarding house with her family.



Photo courtesy of the Clinton Historical Society

BLACK AMERICANS IN CLINTON AND HARLEM

There were very few Black residents in Clinton in the 1920s, although Hamilton College began to admit more Black students after World War I.

Claudie, however, was surrounded by Black Americans in Harlem. Many of the residents of Harlem had come from the South, hoping to find better jobs and



opportunities in the North. They were part of a movement called the Great Migration. At the end of *Meet Claudie*, Claudie is embarking on a journey to Georgia with her mother to better understand her roots, and to see a place very different from Harlem.

ARTISTS

A Clinton Band was reorganized in 1919, after the end of World War I. Porter probably would have enjoyed playing his cornet in this group!

Music was an important part of the Harlem Renaissance, which is the name for the cultural celebration and exploration that happened in Harlem from the 1910s-1930s. It was a time when Black artists of all kinds presented their experiences as Black Americans, through incredible literature, art, music, and more.



MEMORIAL DAY — 1919
First public appearance of the re-organized Clinton Band.
Front Row, left to right: Lynn C. Hamlin, Onyan, Charles B. Hamlin, Cornelius Stevens, Albert Stevens, Ivan "Duke" Armstrong, Edwin M. Tournay, W. Darwin Hamlin, Robert A. Tournay, Willard Terry, Byrle Johnson.
Back Row, left to right: Carl Ellinwood, Marr, Ernest Marsh, Elbert B. Matoon, Louis Sawner, Harry M. Williams (director), Grant Fox, Gordon Franklin, Joseph Searle, William Risley.

Photo courtesy of the Clinton Historical Society

PERFORMANCE SPACES

Claudie is surrounded by all sorts of artists, including musicians, painters, writers, and dancers. At the end of *Meet Claudie*, she is planning a variety show to help save the boarding house where her family lives.

In Clinton, the Scollard Opera House opened in 1885 and was located on West Park Row. Despite its name, it wasn't really a place for opera performances. Instead, it was a social center for the village. In the 1920s, it hosted dances, meetings, and films (both silent and, later, talking).



Photo courtesy of the Clinton Historical Society

Claudie's friends and family would have enjoyed showcasing their talents here!

NEWSPAPERS

In 1922, the weekly newspaper was a major source of information for Clinton residents. Claudie's mother is a newspaper reporter for the *Amsterdam News*, which began in 1909 and is still published today.

The *Clinton Courier* was originally named the *Clinton Signal* and then the *Oneida Chief*, but amidst all its name changes, it remained one of the longest-running businesses in town, from 1846-2015.

In 1922, it was housed in a building at 1 Kirkland Avenue.



Photo courtesy of the Clinton Historical Society

TRANSPORTATION

Claudie uses her scooter to get around Harlem. She and Jody take the train with Porter to go see the baseball game in the Bronx, one of New York City's boroughs. Claudie also mentions the subway, which is a complicated network of underground train tunnels stretching across New York City.

In the 1920s, buses and trolleys were important parts of public transportation in Clinton, taking residents to nearby towns and back again.



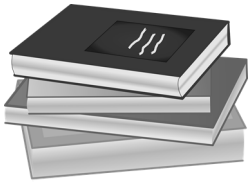
SUGGESTED READING

Easy Fiction

Because by Mo Willems (EASY WIL)
Parker Shines On: Another Extraordinary Moment by Parker Curry (EASY CUR)
The Me I Choose to Be by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley (EASY TAR)
Harlem Renaissance Party by Faith Ringgold (EASY RIN)

Juvenile Fiction

Zora and Me: the Cursed Ground by Tanya R. Simon (J Fiction SIM)



Juvenile Nonfiction

Harlem's Little Blackbird by Renee Watson (J B Mills)
Harlem Stomp!: A Cultural History of the Harlem Renaissance by Laban Carrick Hill (J 810.989)
Legacy: Women Poets of the Harlem Renaissance by Nikki Grimes (J 811.54 GRI)
Take a Picture of Me, James Van Der Zee! by Andrea J. Loney (J BIO VAN)
Story Painter: The Life of Jacob Lawrence by John Duggleby (J 759.13 LAW)
What Was the Harlem Renaissance? by Sherri L. Smith (J 974.71)

Young Adult

Iron Cast by Destiny Soria (YA Fiction SOR)

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CLAUDIE

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Thank you to Fiona Helmuth and Barbara Grimes for researching
and writing these history cards.