Communities growing apart: housing segregation in the twentieth ward of North Philadelphia, 1900-1920

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COMMUNITIES GROWING APART

Housing Segregation in the Twentieth Ward of North Philadelphia, 1900-1920

by

Brian Alnutt

A Thesis
Presented to the Graduate and Research Committee of Lehigh University in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Arts in History

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ABSTRACT

According to a number of urban historians, the large-scale migration of African-Americans from the south into the cities of the northern United States during the early decades of the twentieth century was accompanied by a significant increase in the residential segregation of blacks within those cities. The purpose of this work is to test this thesis using the experience of one predominately white section of North Philadelphia which underwent substantial black population growth from 1900 to 1920.

The method of study included the collection of ten percent samples from the 1900, 1910, and 1920 manuscript census returns of the black population in North Philadelphia's Twentieth ward. Only heads of household were selected. Information was then recorded on a number of household attributes, the most important of which, for the purpose of the study, was the race and ethnic group of each sampled household's neighbors to each side.

The study found that black households were overwhelmingly located in poorer housing on the Twentieth ward's secondary streets and alleys, and that segregation from whites grew substantially from 1900 to 1920 as the black percentage of the ward population increased from six percent to eighteen percent. In 1900, thirty-five percent of black households were flanked by two black neighbors, while by 1920 fifty-three percent were. Furthermore, available information indicates that segregation may have been advanced by the activities of some realtors and at least one prominent community organization.
INTRODUCTION

Even the casual observer is probably aware that residential segregation by race is a fact of life in most present-day American cities. The housing of African-Americans in particular tends to be located in sub-communities identifiably distinct from those of the white majority. This paper will investigate, at the micro-level, how such segregation came to be the rule as large numbers of blacks migrated from the rural south to northern cities early in this century. We shall see that in at least one portion of North Philadelphia, census information clearly indicates that blacks and whites grew apart residentially as the black percentage of the population increased during the period from 1900 to 1920, and we shall see that this separation was not entirely accidental.

Although Africans and their descendants have been present in most regions of British North America and the United States since early Colonial times, the vast majority of blacks dwelled in the states of the south and border south through the early twentieth century. However, after 1890, a significant number of southern blacks began relocating to the growing industrial and commercial cities of the north and Midwest. Drawn by employment opportunities more promising than those in the south, and repelled by limited agricultural earnings and outright persecution in Dixie, these migrants represented the advance guard of an enormous black population transfer that continued into the 1970's.

The steady trickle of northward migration surged into a high tide during World War I, as wartime industrial needs and a sudden shortage of European immigrants created a multitude of additional northern job openings. Cities from
New York to Chicago received many thousands of new black residents, in addition to the throngs of Europeans whom had been absorbed during several prior decades. Many noteworthy scholars, working during and after the years of peak wartime migration, have studied aspects of this northward Exodus. Most have concluded that, among other effects, the intense influx of black newcomers stimulated increased levels of racial tension and residential segregation in northern metropoli.

In 1918, for instance, historian Carter Woodson noted the deadly 1917 riots in East St. Louis and Chester, Pennsylvania, and predicted that segregation and further violence would attend continued black migration since blacks competed with whites for jobs and scarce housing. Blacks were seeking homes "in residential districts heretofore exclusively white. There they encounter prejudice and persecution." Louise Kennedy, commenting in 1930 on the northward migration, asserted that, while residential segregation clearly predated 1910, the sudden "arrival of hordes of Negroes from the South made segregation more prominent."

In a study done for the Federal Housing Administration nine years later, Homer Hoyt also testified that the sheer numbers and proportion of nonwhites in a city worked to intensify their segregated residential concentration. And Kenneth Kusmer, writing in 1976 on Cleveland's experience, concluded that "the new (World War I) migration accelerated the process of residential segregation which had already

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begun" before the war.\textsuperscript{1}

More recently, and on a contrasting note, Robert Jackle performed a detailed study of West Philadelphia residence patterns from 1860 to 1910 at the block front level. His findings suggested that, whatever the effects of the later wartime migration, Philadelphia was already deeply segregated at the block level by 1900, with black and native white household heads "both approaching a frequency of 100%" on many blocks.\textsuperscript{1}

As a northern industrial city located just above the Mason-Dixon line, Philadelphia received a major share of black migrants, most of whom were natives of the Chesapeake region and states further south along the Atlantic seaboard. As the migration continued at a high level from the beginning of the Great War into the 1920's, many newcomers found homes in or near long-established, contiguous African-American neighborhoods in the Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Seventh wards just south of the city's commercial center. However, under the press of numbers, the population density of this area increased and adjoining districts, such as the Thirtieth ward immediately to its southwest, became increasingly black.

Blacks also began moving in sizeable numbers into other neighborhoods of the city not as traditionally associated with them, such as central North Philadelphia. The purpose of my study has been to examine the validity of the thesis


that the arrival of substantial numbers of blacks in
Northern cities early in this century led to increased
residential segregation. I proposed to accomplish this by
exploring the effects of a noticeable black influx into a
neighborhood in which African-Americans had not previously
been a major presence.

Therefore, this paper will investigate the evolving
residence pattern of blacks in Philadelphia's Twentieth ward
between 1900 and 1920. The Twentieth ward was then and is
still a largely residential district of North Philadelphia,
bounded on its east by N. Sixth street, on its west by N.
Broad street, on its south by Poplar street and on most of
its north by Susquehanna Avenue. In 1900, the Twentieth ward
hosted only 2,821 blacks (6%) among its total population of
43,276; but by 1920, it was home to 8,269 blacks, who
comprised 18% of a total ward population of 47,007. To
discover to what degree the considerable increase in the
black population was accompanied by increased segregation
from whites, this study utilized the manuscript records of
the 1900, 1910, and 1920 censuses as its basic resource.

METHOD OF STUDY

The methodology of this work involved the gathering of
a ten percent sample of black heads of households from each
of the 1900, 1910, and 1920 Federal censuses. Since, as
attested in the narrative accompanying the 1900 published
census, enumerators had wide latitude to determine who was
African-American, anyone coded in the manuscripts as
"black," "colored," or "mulatto" was included. Information

U.S. Census Bureau, Twelfth Census, 1902, and
Fourteenth Census, 1923, both Washington, DC, Government
Printing Office.
was recorded on a number of factors. These included the composition of the household, whether "nuclear," "extended" (a family including related individuals beyond parents and children), or "augmented" (a household incorporating apparently unrelated individuals, possibly in addition to related family members). Information was also recorded on the age of the household head (only to the decade), whether the home was owned or rented, and whether the property was located on a primary street or secondary alley.

Occupational information was recorded, utilizing Alba M. Edwards' 1937 *Alphabetical Index of Occupations* (Professionals; Proprietors, Managers and Officials; Clerical; Skilled; Semiskilled; Unskilled Labor; Personal Service).\(^5\) Most importantly, the degree of racial segregation was measured by recording the ethnic group of the two neighboring households, following the method used earlier by Spencer Crewe in his study of Camden and Elizabeth, New Jersey, *Black Life in Secondary Cities*. In my investigation, heads of neighboring households were classified as "Anglo-Saxon" (native whites and English immigrants,) Irish, German, Italian, Jewish, Eastern European, black, and "other." Both individuals who had themselves immigrated and native-born individuals whose fathers were such immigrants were included in the appropriate ethnic category. Classification of this sort based upon census material is unfortunately rather subjective and necessitates some educated guesswork. For instance, to determine the ethnicity of immigrants from Austria or Russia, I considered names and native languages to determine whether individuals might best be considered

German, Jewish, or Eastern European gentiles. Furthermore, only the 1920 census provided information on respondents' native languages, so more extensive speculation was necessary with the earlier censuses.

COMMUNITY BEGINNINGS

Of the dozens of ethnic groups who today call the Delaware Valley home, African-Americans have had one of the longest continuous residential tenures. Their seventeenth-century forerunners arrived in the area prior to the founding of its premier city, Philadelphia, as slaves of English, Swedish, and Dutch settlers. By the 1760's, approximately 1,400 black men, women, and children worked and lived in the city, comprising roughly 8% of a total urban population of around 18,000.6

Slavery in Northern port cities such as Philadelphia differed from the agricultural form the institution took in regions further south. Most Philadelphia slaves served as household servants or artisans, and thus lived in or close to their masters' homes. Therefore, the commercial core of the city and its compact adjoining suburbs shared an essentially even distribution of the black population.

However, by the 1790's, as Gary Nash has documented, a number of developments promoted the growth of an identifiable black residential community in the humble environs of Fifth and Lombard streets, in the "Cedar Ward" just southwest of the city center. These included increased manumission in the city, which severed the close dependence of slave to master; the escalation of property values which

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placed the city center out of financial reach for the less affluent, while this new peripheral area of workingmen's housing remained affordable; and the establishment of Philadelphia's first two "African" churches in the neighborhood. This initial cluster of black residents was by no means a ghetto; blacks remained a minority among the area's primarily white population. However, this was the most heavily black concentration of the city, and blacks' homes actually predominated in a number of poorer residential alleys.\textsuperscript{7} The latter tendency was in accordance with a distinctive pattern which characterized Philadelphia residential construction from the Colonial era well into the nineteenth century, whereby city blocks were "crisscrossed with alleys and courts, along which stood houses that were smaller and humbler than those that lined the nearby (primary) streets." Stuart Blumin, among others, has established that this corresponded with class segregation at the block level, with a far more prosperous class of citizens inhabiting the primary block-front homes than those along the secondary alleys.\textsuperscript{8}

Philadelphia, being the northeastern urban center closest to the slaveholding south, received significant numbers of southern black migrants throughout the early nineteenth century. As Theodore Hershberg has pointed out, the city held, in 1860, the largest black population of any non-southern municipality. Hershberg further noted that residential segregation, indicated by the factors of

\textsuperscript{7}ibid., p 165-171.

\textsuperscript{8}Stuart M. Blumin, The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City 1760-1900, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p 48.
distribution and concentration, increased measurably during the Antebellum years.9

BLACK PHILADELPHIA IN 1900

An eighteenth-century observer would have been stunned by the Philadelphia of 1900. By that year, the city, now a dynamo of commerce and specialized industry, had engrossed enormous amounts of land and increased its population nearly a hundredfold, to 1,293,697, of which blacks made up 62,613 (4.8%).10 Among other changes, most of these blacks now lived in neighborhoods readily identifiable as zones of black settlement. The old Cedar ward cluster had, over time, become the nucleus of a "black belt" that expanded south and west with the city. The principal black residential district unfolded in the city's Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Seventh wards, between Spruce and Washington streets, comprising an east-west span just south of Philadelphia's commercial center. A lesser concentration could be found on secondary streets between Poplar and Vine in lower North Philadelphia, on the opposite side of Center City.11 Far smaller numbers of blacks lived in portions of West Philadelphia and Germantown, white-majority neighborhoods geographically far removed from the traditional black core.

Since the Colonial era, the percentage of the Philadelphia population made up of African-Americans had waxed and waned; while the 1900 black percentage was less


10Twelfth Census, 1902.

than that of the 1760's, it represented a sharp increase of the black share of the city's population since 1890.

By 1900 the traditional South Philadelphia black belt was under intense population pressure. Many European immigrants arriving at the Delaware River ship terminals near its eastern end settled in the area. For example, the Jewish population of South Philadelphia, mostly within the Second, Third, and Fourth wards, increased from roughly 3,000 to 30,000 between 1882 and 1894. The James Forten Elementary School in the Fourth ward, named after a prominent antebellum Afro-American and heretofore a primarily black school, had only a 13% black enrollment by the latter date.¹²

As W.E.B. DuBois attested in his 1899 work *The Philadelphia Negro*, there had been a corresponding extension of the black belt west toward S. Twentieth street in the Seventh ward, from 1870 on. While this expansion slowed upon reaching working-class Irish blocks west of Twentieth, and levels of residential crowding increased, blacks remained inclined to stay near the black belt: "...the life of Negroes of the city has for years centered on the Seventh ward...the Negro who ventures away from the mass of his people and their organized life, finds himself alone, shunned and taunted."¹³

North Philadelphia's Twentieth ward, at the turn of the century, was a densely-settled warren of single- and two-


family row homes, bisected by the elevated main line of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad over N. Ninth street. Like other sections of North Philadelphia above Spring Garden Street, the Twentieth ward had undergone the major phase of its construction and settlement prior to the Centennial Exposition. Its 1860 population of 29,963 increased dramatically to 56,642 by 1870, of whom all but six hundred and twenty six were white (and mostly of native birth). By 1890, the area's population had declined somewhat to 44,480, including 1,353 blacks. A more detailed breakdown of the white population in the published 1890 census illustrates that the ward's white population was largely of immigrant stock; more that 23,000 of the roughly 43,000 whites were immigrants or of immigrant parentage.¹⁴

However, as mentioned above, a visible black population could be found not far to the south. Sam Bass Warner concluded that turn-of the-century blacks and Jewish immigrants could both settle in the "lower Northwest," just above Vine Street from N. Sixth Street to the Schuylkill River, but could not successfully move into the "lower Northeast," the industrial/residential neighborhoods north of Vine and east of Sixth. DuBois wrote of blacks inhabiting "small streets with old houses, where there is a dangerous intermingling of good and bad elements" in parts of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth wards between Vine and Poplar, and an 1896 city vice survey identified the area between N. Sixth and Broad streets above Vine as a center of (mostly white, but some black) prostitution, housing two hundred and eighty brothels. Philadelphia's primary vice district of the time, however, was in the Fifth and Seventh wards of the

¹⁴U.S. Census Bureau, Ninth Census, 1872; Eleventh Census, 1895.
Furthermore, the ambitious activities of the expanding Berean Presbyterian Church, located on College Avenue near the intersection of Ridge Avenue and N. Nineteenth street, had helped invite increasing numbers of blacks into North Philadelphia's Twenty-ninth ward, another network of brick residential rowhouses situated just west of the Twentieth. Berean Presbyterian, an aggressive African-American "institutional" church, offered extensive vocational schooling and building-and-loan services in addition to the Gospel.  

THE 1900 CENSUS SAMPLE

The 1900 manuscript census sample, as might be expected, involved very small numbers (as noted above, blacks now comprised 2,821 of a total ward population of 43,276). Information was recorded on only forty-nine black heads of household. On average, these individuals, as is the case with the 1910 and 1920 samples, were in their thirties.

To provide a graphic illustration of the general location of African-American households, two ward maps are included in the appendix, one for the 1900 sample and one for the 1920, both of which were photocopied from a 1910 Bromley city atlas. Street blocks on which two or more of the households in each sample lived are outlined in black. This is not meant to suggest that blocks so outlined were

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necessarily all-black, but does give an overview of streets on which a significant number of blacks lived.

Households in the 1900 sample lived at addresses throughout the western portion of the ward, and an overwhelming 94% of them lived on secondary alleys. As Blumin suggested, housing stock on alleys such as Darien and Warnock streets was substantially inferior to that on primary streets such as Oxford or N. Eleventh streets. While nearly all the homes in the Twentieth ward were brick rows with small wooden additions, alley housing was far smaller than primary street housing. For instance, the rowhouse at 1224 N. Alder street was approximately one-fourth the depth of those in the nearby 1200 block of N. Eleventh street, and homes in the 1200 block of Harper street, while larger, were still merely one-half the depth of those on the nearby 900 block of N. Twelfth.

Of the sample, seventeen households, or 35%, had black neighbors on both sides, while a total of thirty-three households, or 69%, had at least one black neighbor. Therefore, areal or even block-front segregation of African-Americans was clearly not yet the rule in the Twentieth ward. While most black households were close to the homes of other blacks, nearly two-thirds were in immediate proximity to white households. We can conclude that, in general, the two communities were interlaced on the back streets of the ward.

Thirty-seven year old William Ashley, born in Maryland, was one of these North Philadelphia blacks. Ashley, a teamster, lived in a rented home at 954 N. Warnock street with his wife, four children, and two lodgers. His neighbors were German-born Julius Furber, a courier, who lived with his wife, four grown children, and a lodger; and German-born
widow Julia Binney, who lived with two grown children and two lodgers.

In a crowded home at 1309 Cambridge street lived twenty-six year old Virginia-born Douglas Ball, a hack driver renting with his wife, four grown children, two minor children, and two lodgers. Their neighbors were a Delaware-born black laborer, Charles Barber, and his wife; and English-born white shoemaker Alfred Hicks, his wife and five children. Another illustration of the turn-of-the-century black population would be Maryland-born William Smith, a club waiter who lived with his wife and two lodgers in a rented house a 1749 N. Camac street. They lived between the homes of Virginia-born black hostler Beauregard Gibson, and his wife, daughter, and three lodgers; and Irish-born policemen Patrick Lynch, his wife, their daughter, his two brothers, and a cousin.

Lynch was one of only six Irishmen living next to black households in this sample; the most common white neighbors were Germans, followed by native and immigrant Anglo-Saxons. Unfortunately, even the most detailed published census reports used in this study, which indicating aggregate native vs foreign-born white population figures at the ward level, do not provide the nationalities of foreign or first-generation whites. Therefore it is not now feasible to determine the numbers or relative proportions of the various white ethnic groups in the ward to ascertain whether a given group was disproportionately located near or apart from black households.

Having seen that our sample population lived interspersed among whites on the Twentieth ward's back streets, let us now consider how it measured occupationally against the larger metropolitan community. Twenty-one of the
sample heads of household (42%) worked as unskilled laborers, while the second most common employment was personal/domestic service with eleven (22%) so employed. Eight individuals were skilled workers (12%). Excluding the three female heads of household, one of whom worked in personal service, and the other two of whom were unemployed, 45% of the males in our sample were unskilled laborers.

Unfortunately, none of the three published censuses here utilized list occupational statistics at the ward level. The best estimate we can make of the relative occupational status of the household heads in our survey is to compare them with the aggregate citywide data for workers ten years of age or older, as in the following table. This is not a really equivalent comparison, but may serve to better define the situation of the household heads in our study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>MALE EMPLOYMENT - 1900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sampled Black Household Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled Labor</td>
<td>21(42%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/ Domestic Service</td>
<td>11(22%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sample data; U.S. Census 1900 Published Report.

Among the 147,653 employed females citywide, 50,799 (34%) worked in personal service, while of the 14,095 employed black females, 12,774 (91%) were personal servants.
Therefore, our sample of black male household heads ranked slightly below the citywide black percentages for unskilled labor and personal service, but, as was the case with African-Americans in general, was still greatly overrepresented in those fields compared with city workers as a whole.

This occupational handicap of Philadelphia blacks, which resulted in significantly lower wages than the city population as a whole, appears to have interacted with the inferior social status of blacks to confine their housing selection in this area to the secondary streets and alleys. This represents the continuation of the earlier pattern described by Blumin and others.

THE 1910 CENSUS SAMPLE

By 1910, Philadelphia was home to 84,459 blacks, and the African-American percentage of the city population had increased to 5.4%. The small black population of the Twentieth ward had virtually doubled, now amounting to 4,500 out of a total ward population of 45,356, and consequently the 1910 census sample, at ninety-eight cases, is considerably larger than that of 1900. In terms of our principal focus, residential segregation, we see very little change. Thirty-five of the sample households (36%) had black households on both sides, and a total of sixty-nine (70%) had at least one black neighbor.

Eighty-five families, the vast majority of the sample, resided on secondary streets. Among those captured in this group were 34-year-old Pennsylvania native William Crawford, a waiter living in rented quarters at 943 N. Warnock with his wife, son, and two lodgers. His neighbors were German-American upholsterer Charles Bloom, who lived with his
spouse, two children, his mother and his sister; and black Virginia-born coal-wagon driver Andrew Blackman and his wife. At 1500 N. Warnock, on one end of an otherwise all-white block, Virginia-born Ida Dorsey, a black domestic, housed five black male laborers and two other black female domestics in an apparent boarding house enterprise. Her immediate neighbor was Irish-born Katherine Connard and her four children.

One rare example of a more prominent class of blacks was also one of the few homeowners in the sample, thirty-two year old Maryland-born minister Jabez Beckett, who resided at 1123 N. Eleventh street. Reverend Beckett, his wife and 2 children were flanked by two native white nuclear families: that of stationary engineer Samuel Tobias and that of canning factory "skilled worker" Lewis Link. His fortunes contrasted with those of forty-two year old Virginia-born Mary Butcher, of 1949 N. Alder, a laundress who was probably struggling to maintain her household of four children and two lodgers. She rented quarters between Pennsylvania-born black laborer Edward Sharp, his wife and two lodgers; and forty-eight year old Maryland-born black laundress Laura Pattman, with her four children.

James Wright, whose family arrived in North Philadelphia from Miami, Florida a few years later (1914) has left us this impression: "I was about four...we moved to 1010 Berks St., the neighborhood was fine...the majority of people in the neighborhood was from the South." 17

Twenty-seven household heads of German background dwelled next to blacks in the 1910 sample, far and away the

most common single white ethnic group. The Irish were the second most frequent white neighbors, at sixteen, followed by fifteen Anglo-Saxons (including one immigrant Scot). Four Italians and four Jews also lived next-door to blacks.

Rev. Beckett was the only surveyed party holding a "professional" occupation. 44% of the total surveyed worked as unskilled laborers, and 22% in personal/domestic service. There were six managerial/proprietary individuals, three clerks, eight each skilled and semiskilled workers, and eight unemployed household heads.

Eighteen of these ninety-eight households were headed by females. To adjust the male percentages accordingly, 12% of the male heads worked in personal service, and four percent were skilled workers. Table 2 compares these figures with the approximate citywide distribution for the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampled Black Household Heads</th>
<th>Black Males Philadelphia</th>
<th>All Males Philadelphia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>29,561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled Labor</td>
<td>44(44%)</td>
<td>11,479(39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/Domestic Service</td>
<td>12(12%)</td>
<td>8,665(29%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sample Data, U.S. Census 1910 Published Report.

Of the eighteen sampled female heads of household, only twelve were employed. Ten of these (83%) worked in personal/domestic service and the other two (16%) were skilled workers. To compare them to their female counterparts citywide, of 200,298 employed females aged ten
and older in Philadelphia, 63,445 (31.6%), worked in personal/domestic service, while of the 22,535 black women workers ten and older, 20,262 (90%), were in this category. The Colored Directory of Pennsylvania, published in 1908, provides a useful snapshot of the business and institutional facet of the Twentieth ward black community at roughly this time. It is unfortunate that the black journalist and social investigator R.R. Wright only issued one edition of this comprehensive directory. While most of the Philadelphia listings in the volume were located in the established South Philadelphia black belt, as one might expect, a substantial number of enterprises had Twentieth ward addresses.

Black barbers, for instance, operated shops at 932 Poplar, 1237 Poplar, and 1341 Poplar, as well as Tenth and Thompson, 1013 Thompson, Alder at Thompson, and 1844 N. Tenth streets. A black-owned poolroom lured unwary spenders at 1306 Poplar Street; five black-owned restaurants were active in the 1200 and 1300 blocks of Poplar Street; another being located at the corner of Tenth and Thompson Streets. E.C. Dawkins' grocery was open at 1339 Poplar Street, while a second African-American grocery, the "Unique Mercantile," was located at 926 N. Eleventh street. This simple compilation of addresses indicates that black proprietors, locating themselves to conveniently serve a predominately black clientele, were clustered in particular portions of the southwestern quarter of the ward.18

The Directory listed twenty-six black Masonic chapters in Philadelphia, none of which was located in the Twentieth ward; and of twenty-one black Odd Fellows lodges in the

city, only three were located in the ward, at 1643 N. Darien street, 1615 N. Alder, and 1241 N. Tenth street.

Like many other newspapers of pre-First World War era, the Philadelphia Tribune devoted a considerable amount of space to social notes; recording a wide array of visits and social events from the truly notable to the profoundly mundane. Several such events, which took place in the years following the 1910 census, provide a glimpse into Afro-American community life in North Philadelphia, and reveal that residence on an alley did not necessarily prevent social entertainment. For instance, the Tribune noted in its May 5, 1913 "Flashes and Sparks" column that "The president, Mr. Charles Hudson, of the Philadelphia Defiance Base Ball Association, gave a birthday party... at his residence, 1252 N. Warnock St., and it was a grand success, the cake being a beautiful design of a base ball diamond." Hudson was identified as a professional painter in the 1913 City Directory, and therefore probably enjoyed the monetary perquisites of the small minority of skilled workers.

In a typical entry, the October 31, 1916 Tribune noted that "on last Thursday evening, Miss Beatrice Price of 1208 Harper Street gave a beautiful reception in honor of Miss Lizzie Nicholas. Service was laid for twelve." An event of apparently more regal scale had occurred during the closing days of 1911: "One of the most delightful events of the Christmas season was a whist and tea given by Mrs. Charles C. White of 1029 Thompson St. in honor of Miss Hallie L. Smith of New York... the guests began to arrive at 2:30 and there was a continuous stream of carriages, limousines and taxicabs until the 36 ladies had arrived." It would appear that Edwardian-era pretensions percolated far down the
socio-economic scale; Mr. White appeared as a laborer in the 1912 City Directory.

Looking at the less mannered end of North Philadelphia black society, the Tribune of Oct. 28, 1916 noted the arrests of James Johnson and James Black, both of Poplar Street near N. Ninth, for attacking saloonkeeper Joseph Gensler with razors after he attempted to eject them from his tavern at 913 Poplar.¹⁹

DRAMATIC WARTIME CHANGES

By January 1917, shortly prior to the American entry into World War I, a tide of southern blacks heading northward was noticeable enough to prompt the Russell Sage Foundation of New York to hold a Conference on Negro Migration. The Philadelphia Housing Association, which had been formed earlier in the century to work for improved housing conditions among the poor, sent a representative and shortly thereafter formed a Negro Migration Committee, which wrote to charitable organizations in cities above and below the Mason-Dixon line for any information they possessed on this surprising movement. A few months later, more than eight hundred black migrants from points south were arriving in Philadelphia railroad stations each week.²⁰

A PHA survey conducted in August, 1917, concluded that most of the newcomers were entering the traditional black belt, blocks south of Pine street and north of Fitzwater street between Ninth and Twenty-first streets. John Ihlder,


²⁰Philadelphia Housing Association, Negro Migration Study correspondence 1917-1920, Box 21, Temple Univ. Urban Archives; letters to Southern urban charities Feb.-March 1917.
director of the Association, wrote to the Charity
Organization Society of Hartford in September, 1917,
claiming: "while Philadelphia has no legal segregation of
Negroes, the feeling here on the part of owners and agents
against Negro tenants is so strong that it is almost
impossible to get houses for them in districts now inhabited
by whites."21 This conforms with Carter Woodson's nationwide
conclusion: blacks were "forced by restrictions of real
estate men into congested districts." Louise Kennedy
observed that migrants' move to established black areas was
"to a great extent...necessitated by the prejudice of white
people," but still "the newcomers had a natural desire to
live among their friends and members of their own race
during the period of adjustment."22

Papers of the PHA confirm that the Association was
actively seeking housing for migrants throughout
Philadelphia, including the Twentieth ward, during the early
spring of 1917. A letter on file from mid-April of that year
indicates that homes were "available to Negroes" in the 900
block of N. Alder St. A separate document complained of
unsafe, crowded Negro houses at 920 N. Sartain St., 1132
Poplar, and 1411 N. Alder; and a memo dated July 1917 listed
three houses available for blacks in the 900 block of Alder,
one of which was "in bad repair and...filled with rubbish".
A report written two months earlier noted that 862 N. Darien
St., one block below the ward's southern border at Poplar,
"in the Negro quarter," was available to migrants.23 Taken

21Ibid., survey report Aug.-Sept. 1917, letter from
John Emlen to COS of Hartford, CT, Sept. 9, 1917.

22Woodson, Century of Negro Migration, p 186; Kennedy,
Negro Peasant Turns Cityward, p 152-153.

23Phila. Housing Assn., Negro Migration Study
correspondence, reports March-April 1917.
together, these suggest that the secondary streets in the vicinity of Poplar were gaining a generalized reputation for low-income black housing.

The racial violence Carter Woodson expected the Northward torrent of migrants to spark did eventually erupt in Philadelphia, in July, 1918. Adella Bond, a black city probation officer, moved into a home in the 2900 block of Ellsworth street, on the border between the expanding South Philadelphia black belt and a traditionally Irish neighborhood to its southwest, and a three-day riot ensued which claimed two lives and left many injured.24 That border zone had witnessed several smaller incidents of vandalism or attacks on new black residents in the first two decades of this century, which obviously served to brutally define limits to black settlement.

However, in the area of expanding black residence in North Philadelphia we are investigating, there is little evidence that violent barriers were erected to segregate blacks. A general review of Philadelphia newspapers with predominately white and black readerships from 1900 through 1920 (The Philadelphia Inquirer 1916-1920, the primarily black Christian Recorder 1900-1912 and Tribune 1913-1920) found a single hint of racial tension just west of the neighborhood we are examining. The Tribune reported that a black youth was attacked by a white gang at 16th and Thompson streets on May 27, 1917. He returned with black companions and a brawl between gathering crowds of blacks and whites ensued. The article noted that the "neighborhood

this series of incidents commanded the attention of Twentieth ward residents of both races, but there were no reports of any such disturbance, either major or minor, within the bounds of the Twentieth ward.

THE 1920 CENSUS SAMPLE

Our 1920 sample consists of two hundred and seventeen cases, indicating the magnitude of war-era black population growth in the Twentieth ward. By now, we can clearly see that the increase in numbers was accompanied by a material increase in segregation as measured by neighbor: one hundred sixteen (53%) of the sample households now had two black neighbors, and one hundred ninety (88%) had at least one black neighbor.

Table 3, which compares the neighbors of sampled households in each of the three censuses, illustrates the progression.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Two Black Neighbors</th>
<th>At Least One Black Neighbor</th>
<th>No Black Neighbors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900 (49 Cases)</td>
<td>17(35%)</td>
<td>33(69%)</td>
<td>16(31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910 (98 Cases)</td>
<td>35(35%)</td>
<td>71(71%)</td>
<td>27(27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920 (217 Cases)</td>
<td>116(53%)</td>
<td>190(88%)</td>
<td>27(12%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sample Data

Here we have clear evidence of increased black residential concentration and differentiation from whites. How did this come about? We have noted above the complaint

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24
of the PHA's Holder about community and realtor opposition to black newcomers; and in the unfortunate absence of written records of real estate firms or relevant period journals such as the "North Philadelphia Realty Review," we do not have written material proof of segregation overtly enforced by realty agents. But partial insight into the forces shaping this development can be found in a memo directed to the PHA on March 27, 1917 by the North Philadelphia district office of the Society for Organizing Charity (a joint enterprise of several private relief agencies), probably in response to an inquiry regarding housing availability. This document provides a clear example of non-violent limits governing black residential choices.

Within a district located between Poplar and Lehigh Streets, and between N. Sixth street and the Schuylkill, thereby encompassing the whole of the Twentieth ward as well as large tracts to its north and west, the memo listed "streets where houses are available for negroes." Under the sub-heading "colored sections," specific blocks were then listed where, presumably, black households might find lodging; and of the scores of residential blocks located within this expansive district, we see that only a small proportion were so defined, almost all of which were on secondary alleys. Furthermore, that an effort was being made to place African-Americans in almost-entirely homogeneous blocks is evident in the fact that four out of all the blocks listed were designated as "mixed", as if on a cautionary note. It was thereby implied that very few whites
resided on the rest of the blocks in these so-called "colored sections."
( Please refer to Appendix).

At the time of the 1920 census, Virginia-born James Groves, a forty-three year old laborer at Cramp's Shipyard on the Delaware River, was renting at 938 Alder street with his wife and three daughters. To one side lived widower Benjamin Johnson, a black Maryland-born plumber; and to the other dwelled German-American grocer William Gerstner and his wife. James Howell, a Nova-Scotia born black business manager, was apparently rather better off, renting at 1349 N. Eleventh street with his Massachusetts-born wife and two lodgers. His immediate neighbors were a native white insurance agent and an Italian-born pharmacist (names illegible on the record) living with their nuclear families.

James Brown's household was perhaps more typical. This Florida-born Naval Yard laborer rented at 1953 N. Warnock with his wife, mother-in-law, and five lodgers. To one side lived Thomas Hall, a black North Carolina-born grocery wagon driver, with his wife, parents, and two lodgers; and to the other lived Delaware-born black laborer William Minus and his wife.

Thirty-one Anglo-Saxon households lived next to blacks in the 1920 group, and thirty German households. There was an apparent increase in black proximity to Jews, as twenty Jewish homes had black neighbors. Irish were the fourth-most-common white neighbors, at twelve, followed by eight Italian households. This pattern was apparently influenced by the changing demographics of the larger city: from 1880 through 1900, the numerically largest groups of foreign-born

26 Philadelphia Housing Association, Negro Migration Study Correspondence, reports and documents March-April 1917, Temple Univ. Urban Archives.
or foreign-parented whites in Philadelphia were ethnically Irish, German, and English, but in 1920 the largest blocs among the immigrant category had origins in Russia (primarily Jewish), Italy, and Ireland. Moreover, residential blocks centering on Franklin and Marshall streets in the eastern portion of the Twentieth ward had gradually become "a center of Jewish residence" after the turn of the century, while more affluent Jews had moved westward into sections of the Twenty-ninth ward, supporting the impressive synagogues of Kenneseth Israel and Rodelph Shalom on the Twentieth ward side of N. Broad street.

Apparently as the black and Jewish communities expanded, they were becoming more immediately proximate. Table 4 reviews the changing profile of white neighbors' nationalities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Anglo-Saxon</th>
<th>Irish</th>
<th>German</th>
<th>Italian</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>E Europe</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sample Data

Caroline Golab, in her studies of Polish immigrants, asserted that, while most Philadelphia neighborhoods housed


a mix of ethnic groups during the first decades of this century, these groups merely coexisted, with little social interaction. In an analysis of neighborhood racial transition during the 1960's, David Varady also concluded that residential racial intermingling failed to promote social contacts. While Twentieth ward residential segregation had increased by 1920, the larger black population still dwelled among a white majority. Several oral histories shed light on the resulting social environment:

Odessa Cathrom arrived in the area from South Carolina in 1921. "...we moved to Alder St. in North Philly right off of Jefferson St. In the neighborhood it was mixed: white and colored. All different nationalities, but they was nice to us. I lived right next door to an Italian lady..."

Helen Stewart, born in 1908, grew up on an alley between Jefferson and Master Sts. and Twenty-first and Twenty-second streets, some blocks west of our study area. Her recollections of relations between area blacks and whites were less benign: "the neighborhood was...mixed. Most of the whites in the neighborhood were sort of on the poor side. I played mostly with the colored children...the colored and the Irish kids used to have their little fights, the colored didn't like the Irish and the Irish didn't like the colored. It seemed that as the neighborhood became more colored that they could not stand one another."

These testimonies, different in tone as they are, tend to confirm Golab's point that interaction between neighbors

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of different races or ethnic groups at the time was essentially a kind of coexistence between parallel social worlds. While some neighbors could no doubt be quite cordial, Mrs. Stewart's recollection and the May 1917 brawl referenced above both illustrate the fact that young males, in particular, could serve as flashpoints for conflicts that could serve to alienate ethnic communities from each other. If, as Mrs. Stewart remembers, white/black antagonism increased somewhat as the black proportion of the population grew, a growing physical separation of the two groups might be one understandable by-product.

The occupational profile of the 1920 sample differs to some degree from the previous sample. One hundred fourteen of the male household heads worked as laborers, a noticeable increase. However, only twenty worked in personal/domestic service, a substantial decline. Table 5 presents the figures.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sampled Black Household Heads</th>
<th>Black Males Philadelphia</th>
<th>All Males Philadelphia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled Labor</td>
<td>114(58%)</td>
<td>19,996(39%)</td>
<td>65,517(11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/ Domestic Svc</td>
<td>20(10%)</td>
<td>11,573(23%)</td>
<td>31,235(5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sample Data, U.S. Census 1920 Published Report

Five of the twenty-three female heads of household in the sample were unemployed. Of the eighteen remaining, fifteen (83%) worked in personal/domestic service and two (11%) were semiskilled operatives. For comparison, among
the 27,972 employed black females citywide, 23,344(83%) were in personal service, while of the entire population of 215,763 female workers citywide, 53,189 (25%) were personal servants.

Thus, our Twentieth ward male sample was more likely to provide unskilled labor and less likely to provide personal service than blacks citywide; while the percentage of female heads in personal service exactly corresponded to that of their peers citywide.

Table 6 summarizes the changing occupational characteristics apparent from the samples of each census.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATIONS OF SAMPLED HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof.</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial/Proprietary</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semiskilled</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Svc.</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sample Data

In the 1900 and 1910 samples, occupation did not seem to correlate meaningfully with the race of neighbors, but this appears to change in the 1920 sample, as is shown in table 7. In fact, among those in the 1920 sample with two
white neighbors, 28% were skilled workers. The implication of this data is that, as the black population became increasingly segregated, it became more likely that those African-Americans living in close proximity to whites would be only the most skilled and affluent.

Table 7  
OCCUPATIONS and NEIGHBORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbors</th>
<th>Two Black Neighbors</th>
<th>At Least One Black Neighbor</th>
<th>No Black</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Unskilled Laborers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sample Data

Another clear link that appears is that between black occupation and primary or secondary street address. Unskilled laborers and personal servants were always among the categories with the highest percentage living on secondary streets. The percentage among higher-prestige groups sometimes came close to or exceeded theirs, but residence in a larger primary-street home was substantially less likely for those in lower occupational categories, as shown in table 8:

The most important development for the purposes of this study is that the percentage of blacks living on primary streets increased consistently, from six percent in the 1900 sample, to 13% in 1910, to 23% in the 1920 group. Hence, we have a situation in which black households of all occupational classes were becoming less confined to
secondary streets, but also becoming increasingly segregated from whites. If we refer again to the 1917 memo from the Society for Organizing Charity, we note that among the "colored" blocks designated as appropriate for black residence are sections of Poplar, Tenth, and Eleventh streets, among other primary arteries. In other words, we see that black North Philadelphians are becoming less likely to live amongst (presumably) poor whites, and more likely to dominate entire primary and secondary blocks. What is apparent is that a more class-oriented social segregation of 1900 (alley vs primary street residents) is giving way to a more racially-oriented segregation by area in 1920.

Table 8  PRIMARY and SECONDARY STREET ADDRESSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Alley</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Sample</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of each category:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prof.</td>
<td>Mgr/Prop</td>
<td>Clerical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sample Data

32
Very few individuals in any of the three samples owned their homes. Only one person out of forty-nine sampled in 1900 owned his home, and it was on a secondary street. There were six homeowners out of the ninety-eight sampled in 1910; two dwelled on primary streets, four on secondary streets. Finally, only seven of two hundred seventeen were homeowners in 1920; one on a primary street, the other six on secondary alleys.

Surprisingly, the head of that single homeowning household in the 1900 sample was unemployed at the time of the census, but two relatives in his extended family worked as laborers. The homeowners in the 1910 sample included one physician and one clerical worker (both of whose homes were on primary streets), two laborers and two unemployed females, one of which was supported by a professional daughter, the other by a daughter in personal/domestic service. Homeowners in the 1920 sample included a professional, a manager/proprietor, a skilled worker (whose home was on a primary street), and four unskilled laborers.

Many of those who commented on the often-crowded conditions found by black migrants in the north were especially concerned about the "lodger evil," the need for families to sell room and board to strangers. The sample data suggests that this may have been a problem diminishing with time, at least in this part of North Philadelphia, as shown in table 9.

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31Kennedy, Negro Peasant Turns Cityward, p 164.
Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Nuclear</th>
<th>Extended</th>
<th>Augmented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sample Data

From Philadelphia documentary sources of the World War I era, it is clear that concern over black residential overcrowding and lodgers was acute in Philadelphia during this time; Ihlder of the PHA was among others who lamented that thousands of newly-arrived Southern blacks were sharing accommodations in the South Philadelphia black belt. The information presented here suggests that those blacks who took up residence in North Philadelphia, away from the traditional black "center," did realize some reduction of household crowding, even though their housing choices in North Philadelphia were still closely circumscribed.

PROCESSES OF COMMUNITY TRANSITION

We have been to this point largely occupied with a description of the subtleties of black population growth in the Twentieth ward; and with a confirmation that physical, and perhaps social, segregation of these newcomers within a majority white area increased with numbers and time. Within the descriptive framework of neighborhood transition developed by Taueber and Taueber, the Twentieth ward functioned between 1900 and 1920 as a "succession" area; a zone of nonwhite population increase accompanied by white
population decline. It is an overall portrait of a distinctive population group expanding its physical presence in the community, while becoming noticeably more isolated from its white neighbors.

Our task, of course, is to establish a reasonable understanding of the reasons why an African-American colony took root and was eventually molded into a nascent ghetto in this area. We have above noted the lack of any overt neighborhood disturbance or riot establishing informal borders against black newcomers. If a more comprehensive array of records, such as the documents of real estate firms operating in the area, as well as those of the business groups and other informal associations in the area were available, it would be tempting to speculate that we could achieve a detailed day-by-day view of the reactions of the white majority to the African-American newcomers among them. However, even lacking such materials, we can arrive at sustainable conclusions about the shaping of segregation. Physical environment certainly played a role in defining the early foundations of black settlement; we have already noted that blacks were heavily concentrated among other less affluent households on secondary alleys early on, and one alley that went on to become a consistent focus of black concentration was Alder street, which, at a mere twenty feet wide for most of its length, was one of the very narrowest, and thus least desirable, alleys in the ward.

It also appears that job opportunities played a role in establishing the core area of black settlement from which the incipient ghetto was spreading by 1920. A formal

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tabulation of the specific occupations of those in the survey was not attempted, since enumerators recorded only general employment information and did not, in most cases, indicate the location of a respondent's employment. However, I noted that on the 1900 and 1910 returns a high percentage of those in the "laborer" category were employed in coal yards and as coal wagon drivers. A 1907 E.V. Smith Atlas showed an abundance of coal yards lining the Reading Railroad mainline tracks throughout the ward. In fact, the ward's only center of industry, which included several breweries, small foundries, laundries and workshops in addition to the coalyards, flanked the north-south route of the railroad along Ninth street. We can note the proximity of the coalyards and other enterprises to the growing black "strip" of residence along Alder and other secondary streets near Ninth and Tenth streets.

Stephanie Greenberg's study of racial transition in Philadelphia neighborhoods argued that change proceeded quickly in areas of older homes and stagnant or declining industrial employment, since whites would present less competition for housing than in areas of growing industrial employment. That one portion of the Twentieth ward attracting large numbers of black settlers was an area characterized by older housing but also the neighborhood's only center of industry, suggests some qualification of Greenberg's theory, although we do not know whether employment in these firms was growing or declining. Since coal-yard employment was largely the sort of unskilled labor that blacks were commonly hired for, as opposed to the semiskilled factory positions Greenberg focused on, this may be a case where blacks were able to settle close to jobs.
that whites found less than desirable.\textsuperscript{33}

To understand the mechanism of neighborhood change, it is helpful to discover where an area's former population has moved. To this end, I noted the addresses of my 1920 sample, then referred to the 1900 manuscript census to record the names of whites who had inhabited those dwellings in 1900. Unfortunately, the illegibility of many of the manuscripts limited the names available, and only seventy household heads could be identified. I then utilized 1905, 1910, 1915, and 1919-20 city directories to track their movements. The vast majority of these names simply vanished or could not be confirmed due to multiple listings, but twenty-two could be followed, enough to draw some conclusions about destinations.

For instance, Fergus Bardsley of 921 N. Jessup street had moved to 1423 N. Fawn by 1905, and was living on 55th street in West Philadelphia by 1910. William Brill of 928 N. Alder street had relocated to 828 N. 11th by 1905; while George Geasey of 911 Watts street was living at 1306 Girard by 1905, and at 1334 Girard by 1920. Three individuals, including Brill and Geasey moved from secondary streets to primary streets within the same ward, while one person moved to an address on N. Tenth street much closer to Center City. Two moved to the Frankford section of the city, two ended up in West Philadelphia, and five could last be located on primary streets in North Philadelphia neighborhoods west of Broad street and generally northwest of the Twentieth ward. Finally, five households relocated to other secondary alley addresses within the ward but north of their 1900 addresses.

Geasey was the only person whom I could identify still living in the ward in 1920, and his address was on a block of Girard Avenue not in the SOC's so-called "colored section."  

Two tendencies are thus revealed. First, housing on the alleys was being vacated by those "moving up" to primary street addresses. Secondly, a prevailing movement away from the city core is evident. Whether whites moved northeast to Frankford, northwest to outer portions of North Philadelphia, or just northward within the ward, many people were opting for housing somewhat nearer the urban periphery.

CONCLUSIONS

Traces of the Twentieth ward environment as it would have appeared in the first decades of the century are today elusive. This is one of the areas of North Philadelphia most dramatically affected by public housing and urban renewal; the old housing stock and even much of the street grid have been thoroughly submerged beneath the Richard Allen Homes and Yorktown developments, and the expanded campus of Temple University. The area underwent an accelerating pace of racial transition after 1920; by June, 1925 a writer to the Public Ledger newspaper complained that the district was becoming a Negro slum, and by 1930 the ward population had fallen to 41,382, of whom 14,849 (36%) were black. By the 1960's the Twentieth ward was almost completely African-American.


36 U.S. Census Bureau, Fifteenth Census, 1932.
The story of residence in this one corner of Philadelphia during the first two decades of the twentieth century is, in large part, the story of comprehensive neighborhood transition. A significant number of blacks resided in a number of the ward's humbler corners in 1900, and as much as they were proximate to each other, their rented homes were not infrequently interspersed with those of the Northern European whites who predominated in the area. By the close of our study period, blacks were consolidating into monolithic, racially-defined core areas. Such a development was manifestly not a statistical accident, but represented an obvious inclination among white households and community groups such as the S.O.C to avoid residential integration with an significantly increasing black population, with the evident exception of that "elite" of blacks holding relatively prestigious occupations. In time, such a tendency would mean that continuing black influx into such homogeneous "African-American nuclei" would necessarily result in an isolated, almost solidly black ghetto with ominously expanding borders, a virtual prescription for community polarization and "urban blight."

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NEWSPAPERS

Christian Recorder (AME Church), 1900-1912

PUBLISHED WORKS


**PUBLISHED ARTICLES**


REDUCTION RATIO 14:1
REDUCTION RATIO
11:1
REDUCTION RATIO
14:1
REDUCTION RATIO 11:1
SOCIETY FOR ORGANIZING CHARITY

NORTHERN DISTRICT OFFICE
1457 N. MARRIALL STREET
HOURS: 10 TO 12
1816 W. MONTGOMERY AVE.

PHILADELPHIA. March 27, 1917.

 Streets from which houses are available at present.

From Poplar (900) to Lehigh Ave. (2700);
   " 6th Street to Schuylkill Ave.

N. Darien St. (west of 8th) 900 to 2000
N. Percy St. (" 9") 900 to 1400
N. Hutchinesen St. (" 9") 900 to 1900 (mixed)
Tenth St. 900 to 2000
Alder St. (west of 10th) 900; 1600, 1700-colored; 1800-mixed
Warnock St. (" " 9") 900 to 2100
Eleventh St. 900 and 2000
Fawn St. (12th) 1400 to 1600
Camac St. 1400 to 1600
N. Watts St. (E. of Broad) 900-mixed
Carisle St. (W. of Broad) 1518
Opal St. (W. of 19th) 1400 to 1700
Woodstock St. (W. 20th) 1500 to 2000
Beechwood St. (E. 22nd) 2300
Twenty-first St. 1600 and 1700
Twenty-second St. 1400 to 1700
Stillman St. (W. of 25th) 1700 to 1800
Dover St. (E. 29th) 2300

Poplar St. 700 to 1400
George St. 1200 to 1400
Cambridge St. 1200 to 1400
Harper St. 
Cabot St. 1200
Stiles 1500 and 1600
Seybert St. 1500, 1600, and 2100
Master St. 2300
Harlan St. 2200-mixed
Stewart St. 2300 and 2400
Jefferson St. 2000 2100
Nassau St. 2300 (bad row; row of stables on south side.)
Belton St. 2100 and 2400
Oxford St. 1000 and 2300
Turner St. 2200 and 2300
Montgomery Ave. 1980
Euclid Ave. 1000
Berks St. 1000 and 1100
Page St. 1600, 1700
Fontain St. 1600
Edgery St. 2900
Colona St. 2800
Gordon St. 2800
York St. 2600
Brian Alnutt, a graduate student in History at Lehigh University, was born on September 12, 1957, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His parents, Richard and Shirley Alnutt, now reside in Medford, New Jersey.

Alnutt graduated from Moorestown Friends School in Moorestown, NJ in 1975, and graduated from Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA in 1979 with the BA degree in History. He was a member of Phi Alpha Theta while at Muhlenberg.

After leaving college, Alnutt served in client relations and marketing positions, holding responsibilities as a business taxpayer representative and negotiator with the New Jersey Department of Labor, as a senior client representative with First Data Resources Inc., and as an advertising representative with the Morning Call newspaper of Allentown, PA.
END OF TITLE