The Afro-American Community in Kansas City Kansas

This study was published under the auspices of the Community Development Program of the City of Kansas City, Kansas

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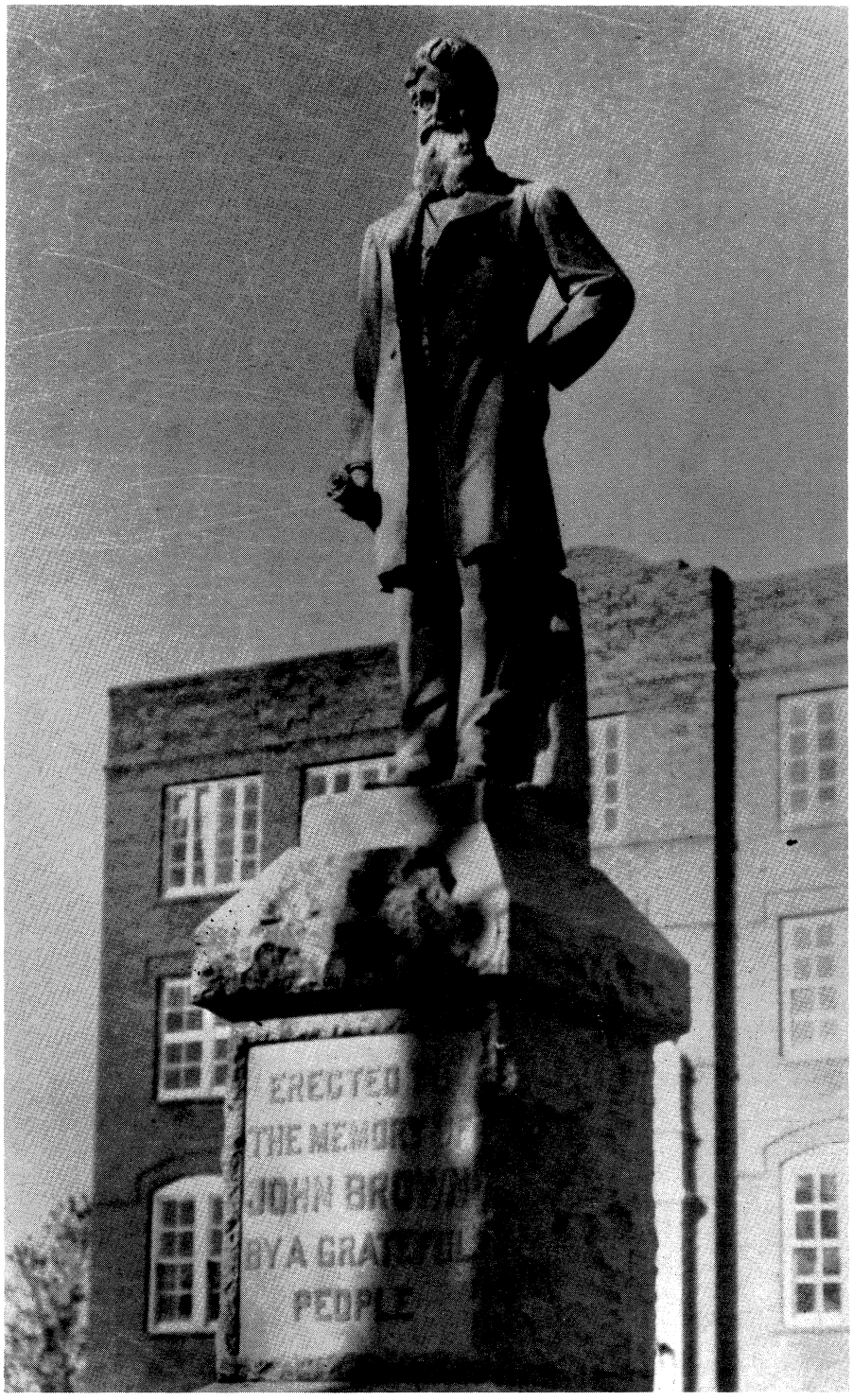
The AFRO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY in Kansas City, Kansas



JOHN BROWN MEMORIAL
Western University, 1911

The Afro-American Community in Kansas City Kansas

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a history

CITY OF KANSAS CITY KANSAS

1982

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Foreword

The principal concern of the historic preservation component of our city's Community Development program has been with buildings and sites of historic or architectural significance — in its broadest sense, with the conservation of the built environment. But we have always recognized that the buildings themselves could not be considered separate from the history of the people who built them and used them. Thus, research and presentation of the general history of our community has been an integral part of our historic preservation efforts from the beginning.

In a sense, this publication is a culmination of that concept. The history of the Afro-American community in Kansas City, Kansas has, for the most part, been neglected. Yet it is precisely this portion of our history that most often links our community to events of national significance. The houses that were built, the churches, the schools, are an essential part of our city's fabric, and the people and events recorded here have helped give shape and meaning to the present. It is my sincere hope that, in helping to restore to Kansas City, Kansas this portion of its past, we have helped to create a greater understanding of our common heritage, its value, and the need for its preservation.

Edward C. Smith
Director of Community Development

Introduction

Our purpose in preparing this publication was to document, and thereby help to preserve, the early history of the Afro-American community in Kansas City, Kansas. Within the city today, approximately one resident out of five is Afro-American. This ratio has remained roughly the same for more than one hundred years, and the experiences and contributions of Afro-Americans comprise a major portion of the history of the city. This is true not only from the standpoint of numerical representation, but also in relationship to the broad historical forces that have shaped the city's growth.

During the 1850s, a major chapter in the struggle to eliminate slavery was enacted in this area. Two of the city's earliest churches were established during that period by Afro-Americans who came here both as refugees from slavery and as participants in the effort to abolish it. Along with many other groups who settled in this area after the Civil War was over, the labor of freed slaves helped build the railroads and later supplied much of the manpower for the packinghouses and stockyards. These industries were the cornerstone of a rapidly expanding urban economy, and by the turn of the century the frontier village of Wyandotte had been transformed into a booming city known as Kansas City, Kansas.

The collective experiences of Afro-Americans during the period when the city was first taking form offer a unique lens through which to view the city's past. Moreover, the experiences of the Afro-American community have in many respects typified those of all the groups who came here seeking a refuge from hardship and opportunities for a better life. The values and traditions of the freed slaves were expressed in the churches that they built and in the mutual aid societies that they formed. From these institutions emerged other, more complex and far-reaching efforts to ease the transition from slavery to freedom, and from rural to urban. Although urban life has often been portrayed as lacking in "community," it was the very size and diversity of the group of Afro-Americans who assembled in

this place that initially made possible the development of a viable and progressive community life. In this respect also, the Afro-American experience mirrors that of the city as a whole.

The text that follows is an effort to reconstruct the unfolding process of community development among Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas—the origins of community life, the growth and change in basic institutions, and the factors that have given rise to a sense of common identity. The discussion includes early residence patterns; social, cultural and religious activities; schools, and the central role played by Afro-American educators; and finally, the lives and contributions of a number of early Afro-Americans in the city. Through this reconstruction, we have attempted to draw a descriptive profile of various aspects of the community, together with a group portrait of some of the people whose accomplishments have had a lasting influence on our city. In view of the expansive scope of the inquiry, we were required to set limits on the time span that could be encompassed. Thus, the material presented does not substantively extend beyond World War I.

The main focus is on the community as it existed at the turn of the century. This period, which is beyond the memories of most people who are now living, was critical in the development of the modern Afro-American community. The first generation after emancipation had just grown up at the turn of the century. The children of former slaves reached out to the challenge of their newly won freedom, and a wide range of ambitious and successful projects were undertaken. In contrast, this was a time of widespread racial intolerance in the United States, and many Jim Crow laws and customs had their origin in this period. Of the early institutions and organizations that were begun by Afro-Americans, many arose in direct response to segregation and ironically owed their existence to the injustices of the larger society. In focusing on the turn of the century, our objectives were to record the legacy of this first generation after slavery and to illustrate the effects of segregation in constraining and defining their endeavors.

The information that we gathered came from a variety of sources. The major source was Mr. Orrin Murray Sr., who served as a consultant during all phases of the project. His writings and recollections are central to the text that was developed. Since the early years of the century, when he was still a child, Mr. Murray has had a compelling interest in the history of Kansas City, Kansas. Because of his expansive knowledge, we have been able to supply texture and details about life in this distant period that we believe are unusually informative. Of perhaps greater significance, we have had the capacity to more accurately describe the meaning of events that transpired and the characters of the people who were involved.

Additional information was obtained from oral history interviews with twenty-five people, who represented a cross-section of different perspectives on the history of the Afro-American community. From these conversations came further details and a more fully rounded understanding of the significance of the facts that we were attempting to fashion into a narrative. We spoke primarily with older people who have lived most or all of their lives in the city, and whose careers have brought them in touch with a broad spectrum of community affairs. However, we also spoke with people who are younger or who had arrived in Kansas City, Kansas more recently. From all these interviews we were able to gain insight into continuities and contrasts in experiences across generations, as well as an understanding of some of the opportunities and problems that have confronted newcomers in the community at different periods in the past.

Documentary sources of evidence were used to corroborate and expand the oral information and, of necessity, were the only basis for describing the very early periods. *The American Citizen,* which was the local Afro-American newspaper between 1888 and 1907, was a rich and fascinating source of primary information about events and personalities of that period. Another useful source of information was raw census data, which is available for Wyandotte County for decennial periods between 1855 and 1915. This information consists of microfilmed copies of the census takers' original forms. On the forms are listed the names and personal data of the people who lived here in

each of these early decades. It was possible to determine such things as where the people had come from and how long ago, the size and make-up of their families, what they did for a living, and who their neighbors were. These were bare facts, but taken together they yielded or served to confirm the larger patterns. Similar kinds of information were obtained from the 1899 Hoye Directory for Kansas City, Kansas. The directory lists the names, addresses, and occupations of all the residents of the city for that year. Conveniently for the historian, at that time it was considered appropriate in such publications to print a "c" next to the names of Afro-Americans.

Church histories were an especially valuable source of information. We were able to obtain these documents from all the Afro-American churches which, as far as we could determine, were in existence in Kansas City, Kansas at the turn of the century. A number of other histories have been written about organizations, institutions, and individuals within the community, which also proved essential in compiling this account. We were very fortunate that a great deal of this local documentary material, as well as many of the photographs that have been reproduced here, had already been collected at the time this study was begun. These items were included in the "Black Americans in Wyandotte County" exhibit, which was assembled at the Wyandotte County Museum by an ad hoc committee of local citizens in the fall of 1978. Special thanks are owed to Mrs. Rozella K. Caldwell Swisher, chairperson of the Exhibit Committee, who gave us much valuable assistance all along the way.

Although the two efforts were not directly linked, the exhibit provided a major thrust and direction for the subsequent development of this publication. Many of the people who helped with this project had also been involved with the exhibit, and it thus provided an important catalyst for effective community participation in the research. In addition, the information and ideas that were represented in the display at the museum were the core around which the research developed. In publishing this text, we have attempted to extend and give permanence to the effort that went into assembling this unusual exhibit and to provide an even wider opportunity for people to learn about the history of the Afro-American community in Kansas City, Kansas.

Susan D. Greenbaum
May 30, 1980

1 The Prelude

The Afro-American history of this area could be regarded as commencing with the first recorded resident of African descent. This was a 32-year-old woman named Dorcas, who came here in 1847. Her arrival in the company of William Walker Jr., a prominent member of the Wyandot Indian tribe, no doubt stirred controversy within the Wyandot settlement which had been built four years earlier at the mouth of the Kaw. Mr. Walker had purchased his companion at a slave auction in Missouri for the sum of $350.00. By bringing her back home into Indian Territory he had violated the law, offended the sensibilities of many other Wyandots who found slavery objectionable, and had further inflamed a local conflict that was destined to lead, in the not too distant future, to Civil War and ultimately to the end of chattel slavery in the United States. For these reasons, we will begin this account with the Wyandots and the troubles that ensnared them in the land that would soon earn the name "Bleeding Kansas."

The Wyandot Indians were a remnant of the Huron Confederacy, which was reduced and fragmented by the wars that were waged between France and England over who would control the North American continent. From 1812 to 1843, one segment of the tribe lived on a large reserve in northwestern Ohio, centered about the present town of Upper Sandusky. Most were farmers or tradesmen, and individuals of the tribe were well-assimilated, both socially and economically, into the surrounding white community. Due to a long-standing practice of inter-marriage with Europeans, very few, if any, of their number were fullblooded Indians and a sizable number were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

With the Federal Government's adoption of the Indian Removal Policy in 1830, the Wyandots were ordered to vacate their lands in Ohio, and move their group to what is now Kansas. At that time this section of the country was known as the "Great American Desert," and the prospect of moving there was most unappealing to the Wyandots. Through a series of court challenges, they managed to avoid

relocation for nearly twelve years. After the assassination of one of their chiefs in 1840, however, they despaired of the possibility of ever winning the struggle and began preparation for removal.

The tract of land that was originally intended to serve as the new Wyandot reserve was located in a remote section of southeastern Kansas, which the Wyandots determined was incompatible with their previous life-style. They decided instead to purchase land from the Shawnees, whose reserve was in the northeastern part of the territory. The Wyandots preferred this location because it was close to other Indian and white settlements, and offered the transportation facilities they would need to re-establish the way of life they had known in Ohio. They deliberately attempted to place themselves on the easternmost perimeter of Indian Territory, but in so doing, they chose to occupy land that would soon be incorporated in the battle lines that were forming between free and slave states.

The Wyandots travelled here by riverboat from Cincinnati, arriving at the mouth of the Kaw on the afternoon of July 31, 1843. Once here, they were forced to camp for several months in the marshy west bottoms. After the Wyandots arrived, the Shawnee repudiated the agreement to sell their land (perhaps at the instigation of Thomas Johnson, who might otherwise have been obliged to move his mission). A few Wyandot families were able to rent houses in Westport, but the majority had to make do with improvised shelters. In less than three months time, sixty had died from disease and exposure. As the situation grew increasingly desperate, the Delaware were finally persuaded to give up an unused portion of their land in the triangle formed by the convergence of the two rivers. The purchase papers were signed on December 14, 1843, but the Wyandots had already begun moving to the higher ground. In November, the Wyandot Tribal Council had established a ferry where the Lewis and Clark viaduct now bridges the Kansas River, and four days before the land sale was concluded, the first cabin was finished at what is now 5th and Freeman. This first structure was the home of John and Lucy Armstrong, a lawyer and a missionary's daughter who were the leading voices among the Wyandots in support of the abolition of slavery — a cause that would become synonymous with Kansas.

The home of William Walker Jr., who was the leading pro-slavery advocate among the Wyandots, was near 6th and Virginia (now 6th and Richmond). A tribal store was built at what is now 3rd and Minnesota, and there was a blacksmith shop near 3rd and Nebraska. The Methodist Episcopal church was completed in April of 1844. It was a crude log structure located near 23rd and Washington, so far from the rest of the settlement that it became known as the Church in the Wilderness. By July, a house for the Methodist missionary had been built near the Walker home, a proximity that foreshadowed a future conflict that was to seriously divide the Wyandots. Also in July, John Armstrong began the operation of a free school at what is now the northeast corner of 4th and State.

The Wyandot Purchase was surrounded on three sides by intensely pro-slavery settlements—Parkville, Westport, and Thomas Johnson's Shawnee Methodist Mission, located south of the Kaw River. The Wyandots' entry into this politically charged setting would inevitably force the members of the tribe to adopt a position on the extension of slavery. With regard to the question of slavery, the Wyandots reflected about the same diversity of interests and opinions that existed within most northern communities of that time. There were many who believed that economic progress and national unity were more important concerns than the moral question of human bondage, and there were several who argued that slavery was an appropriate status for Africans, and that emancipation was a folly that would be contrary to the interests of all races. There were even slaveowners among the Wyandots. This latter fact about them was undoubtably encouraging to the nearby pro-slavery forces, whose cause would have been boosted through an alliance with the newcomers. As a group, however, the Wyandots' experiences had been different from their pro-slavery neighbors in several significant respects, and as a consequence, there was also a substantial number of dedicated abolitionists among them.

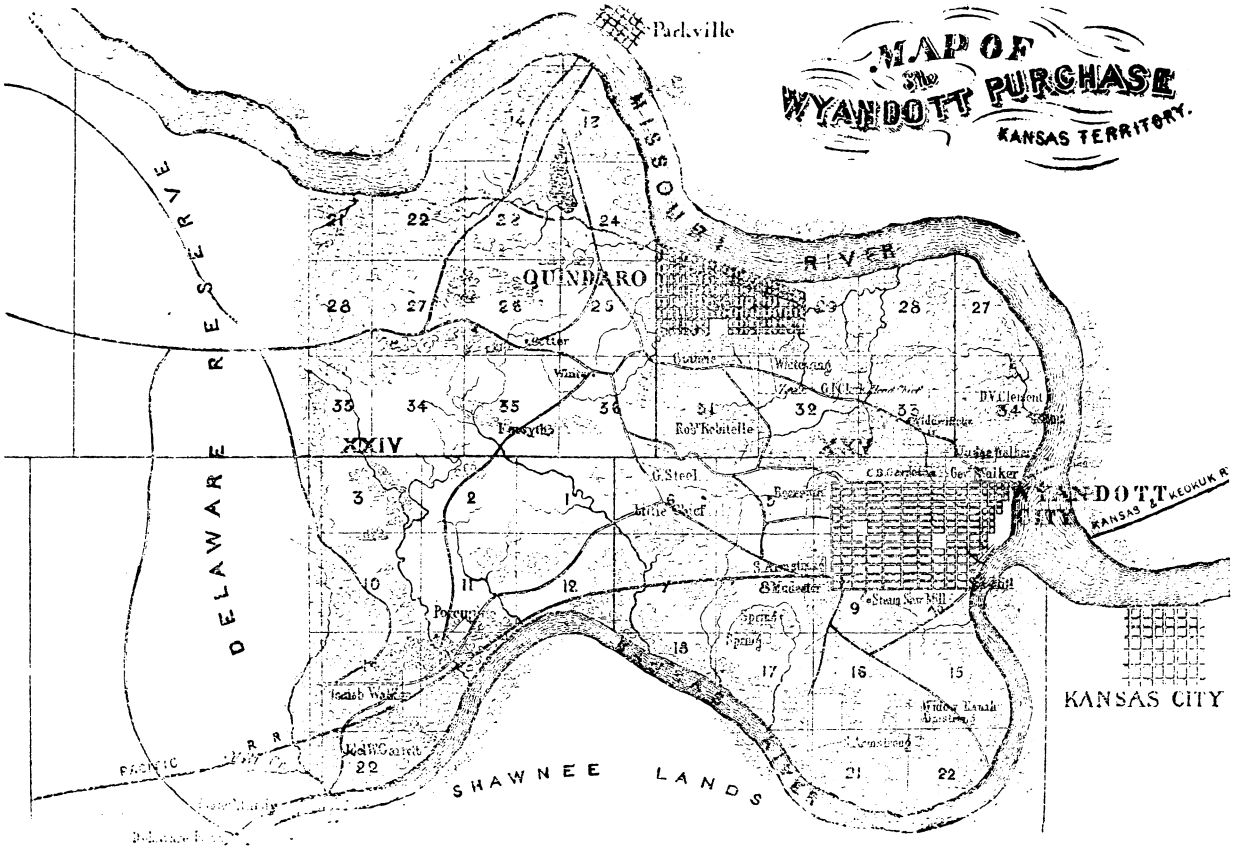
HOME OF JOHN AND LUCY ARMSTRONG, 5th and FREEMAN, 1843

The hardships and injustices the Wyandots had already experienced in connection with the government's Indian policies caused many to recognize that their own fortunes were ultimately tied to changes in the legal system that would repudiate racialism. Another, more direct and compelling influence on abolitionist sympathies among the Wyandots came from a man named John Stewart, founder of the Wyandot Methodist Episcopal church.

John Stewart was born in Powhatten County, Virginia, in 1786, the son of free parents of mixed African, European, and Indian blood. He received a common school education and became a blue-dyer. In the early 1800s, his parents moved to Tennessee, but he was unable to go with them because of chronic ill health. When he set out to follow them west, he was beaten and robbed of his life savings near Marietta, Ohio.

In despair he lapsed into alcoholism, which together with his tuberculosis would probably have led to a quick death. But the religious movement known as the Second Awakening was sweeping the frontier west of the Appalachians, and at a camp meeting in Marietta in 1816, John Stewart was converted to Methodism. Without a license or instruction, he then plunged into the Ohio wilderness determined to bring the word of God to the Indian.

He eventually arrived at the main Wyandot settlement at Upper Sandusky, Ohio. Here he was taken in by the family of William Walker Sr., an adopted Wyandot captive who was serving as Indian sub-agent. Mrs. Walker persuaded her husband to allow Stewart to preach to the Wyandots, and Jonothan Pointer, an Afro-American Wyandot captive, was appointed to interpret. Stewart's ministry enjoyed considerable success, with the result that chiefs of the tribe petitioned the



THE WYANDOTT PURCHASE, CIRCA 1857

Methodist Episcopal Church to grant Stewart a license and aid in building a school. This was done in 1819. The mission thus established is considered to be the first Methodist mission in North America.

John Stewart's African heritage, together with the egalitarian Methodist doctrines he espoused, reinforced predispositions among the Wyandots to embrace the anti-slavery cause. John Stewart died on December 18, 1823, twenty years before the Wyandots departed for Kansas. Nonetheless, his influence on the spiritual development of the Wyandots in Ohio had an impact on the outcome of moral and political decisions that group was forced to make three decades later in Kansas.

In their new home, the Wyandots were immediately drawn into the emerging conflict. The line separating pro- and anti-slavery factions split the Wyandot settlement in two, and the church begun by John Stewart was sundered as well. Prompted by a division that had already occurred in 1844 in the national Methodist Episcopal organization, William Walker Jr., and the Wyandot missionary, E. T. Peery, forced a vote of the congregation in 1848 concerning alignment with either the pro-slavery "South" church, or the anti-slavery "North" church. At that time, the congregation had 160 members. Sixty-five voted to adhere to the southern church[1], and the remaining ninety-five voted for the North. Although the majority had voiced their opposition to the South church, the pro-slavery faction succeeded in gaining control of the newly built brick church at 10th and Walker. This was accomplished because the local Indian agent had supported the claims of the pro-slavery faction, to the point of expelling a missionary sent by the Methodist Episcopal Church to minister to the dissident congregation. The fact that a federal representative was willing to intercede in behalf of the

[1]Not all sixty-five were pro-slavery. Some simply could not bring themselves to vote against the recommendation of their missionary.

South faction offers an indication of the strength of the pro-slavery forces in Kansas at that time. The anti-slavery group was not completely defeated, however, and continued to meet in members' homes. By 1850 they were able to erect their own church on land owned by Lucy Armstrong, who was an outspoken abolitionist. That structure stood at what is now the northeast corner of 38th and Parallel Parkway.

At the time these events occurred, it would have been far simpler for all of the Wyandots in Kansas to have yielded to the tide of pro-slavery opinion. A significant majority remained steadfast in their opposition to slavery in spite of ensuing material losses and the division of some families. In so doing, the abolititonist Wyandots posed an obstacle to the early consolidation of pro-slavery forces at the mouth of the Kaw, which was a highly strategic location. They continued to impede the further advancement of the pro-slavery forces while a national movement of free state settlers was being mobilized to counteract the extension of slavery into Kansas.

The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 signalled the onset of that movement. This law provided that the admission of Kansas as either a free or slave state would be determined by vote of the residents of the territory—"popular sovereignty" as it was then called. The chief problem with this concept, as it applied to Kansas Territory, was that the definition of who was a legal resident of the territory was left ambiguous. This left the way open for large numbers of people to enter the territory for the sole purpose of voting, without the need of establishing any sort of permanent residence. At the time of its passage, the Kansas-Nebraska Act was believed to have been a victory for pro-slavery forces. Given the proximity of Missouri, it was expected that settlement in the new territory would inevitably lead to an extension of slavery. But Eli Thayer, a schoolmaster from Worcester, Massachusetts, thought otherwise.

In February, 1854, while Congress was still debating the Act, Thayer began organizing the New England Emigrant Aid Company. He soon obtained the support of prominent New Englanders such as Dr. Samuel Howe, the Rev. Edward Everett Hale, and Amos Lawrence, the pioneering industrialist. A charter was issued to the Company by the Massachusetts Legislature in April, a full month before the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed and signed into law, and by July, 1854, the first Company-aided settlers were on their way to Kansas.

This first party, led by Charles Robinson, reached the site of Lawrence on August 1 and began staking out a town. On December 5, Topeka was founded by Company emigrants at a point where a branch of the Oregon Trail crossed the Kansas River. But the pro-slavery forces had also not been idle. The pro-slavery leader was Senator David Atchison of Missouri. He was a bitter rival of Thomas Hart Benton, whose support was centered in pro-Union St. Louis, and the Kansas question seemed to provide him with the issue he needed to gain the support of western Missouri and defeat the Benton forces. In speeches and in the newspaper that he published, Atchison urged settlement of Kansas by pro-slavery Missourians, and openly advocated violence against "free-soil" settlers.

The first governor of the new territory, Andrew Reeder, arrived in the pro-slavery settlement of Leavenworth in the fall of 1854. He designated the little town of Pawnee near Fort Riley as the territorial capital, and called for the election of a territorial legislature on March 30. What followed may have been the most fraudulent election in United States history. A total of 6,307 votes were cast, although the territorial census showed only 2,905 qualified residents. The vote was overwhelmingly pro-slavery.

Missourians had crossed the border in wagon loads to vote and to receive the $1.00 a day that Atchison's forces offered. The ferries from Weston to Kickapoo and Fort Leavenworth were so crowded that the river steamer, the *New Lucy*, had to be pressed into service to handle the overflow. Ballot boxes were stuffed, free-soil voters turned away from the polls, and in the few instances where free-soil representatives managed to get elected, they were refused their seats by the majority in the

new legislature. This "bogus" legislature met in Pawnee from July 2 to 6, where their one act was to move the capital, over Governor Reeder's veto, to Thomas Johnson's Shawnee Indian Mission so as to be closer to their homes in Missouri.

When they reconvened at the Shawnee Mission, the bogus legislature began to draft a set of laws for the territory. They did this by going through the Missouri code, crossing out "State of Missouri" and substituting "Territory of Kansas." But when it came to the question of slavery, the legislature decided that Missouri law was too lenient. Under the infamous "bogus laws" that were drafted, a man could be jailed for reading a free-soil newspaper, lose his right to vote by refusing an oath to uphold the Fugitive Slave Law, be hanged for aiding a slave to escape, and the governor of the territory could not pardon any of the offenses so listed. When Governor Reeder lodged a protest against the abrogation of his power, he was removed from office by President Pierce.

The free-soil settlers were not, however, idly waiting for the slaughter. On April 2, just three days after the bogus election, Charles Robinson wrote Eli Thayer from Lawrence requesting 200 Sharps rifles and two field guns. The arms were shipped, though not officially by the New England Emigrant Aid Company. Certain shipments entering the territory were marked "agricultural implements" and "bibles," but they actually contained rifles and ammunition, a subterfuge necessary to get the arms past the river ports which were entirely under the control of the pro-slavery forces.

The free-soil advocates felt they had no choice but to organize an alternate territorial legislature of their own, for the purpose of drafting a constitution that would allow Kansas to enter the Union as a free state. But there were ironic divisions within the free-soil group which soon became evident when James Lane (as great an opportunist as Atchison, and a political enemy of Charles Robinson) proposed that freedmen, as well as slaves, be barred from the territory. The measure passed with scarcely a dissenting vote.

The group that had been mobilized by the Emigrant Aid Company was highly diverse in their opinions about slavery. There were, to be sure, a substantial number of staunch abolitionists who had come to Kansas in order to take part in an organized effort to end slavery once and for all. There were many others, however, who regarded themselves merely as pioneering settlers in a territory that was currently in dispute. A free-soil victory was needed to assure the protection of their holdings. They had originated from northern states, and had come under the sponsorship of the free-soil contingent. Thus, they were free state supporters. These sentiments were not necessarily related to their feelings about slavery, and it is probably fair to say that most opposed only the extension of slavery into Kansas, and would have favored a compromise that would have retained the "peculiar institution" in the South.

Among the free-soil settlers there were many who regarded the abolitionists as extremists and even as outlaws for their violations of the Fugitive Slave Law. These sentiments were even more strongly expressed by the pro-slavery faction. In an address before a public gathering in the pro-slavery town of Lecompton, David Atchison declared that "the squatters in Kansas and the people in Missouri (might) give a horse thief, robber, or homicide a fair trail, but . . ., hang a negro thief or Abolitionist, without judge or jury." It is reported that "this sentiment met with almost universal applause."[1] Admonitions like this one did much to escalate the border clashes into open bloody conflict.

Violence simmered below the surface, but except for rhetoric and fist-fights, there were few real confrontations in 1855. The most publicized incident occurred in mid-August, in the pro-slavery river town of Atchison. The Reverend Pardee Butler, with more courage than common sense, came to

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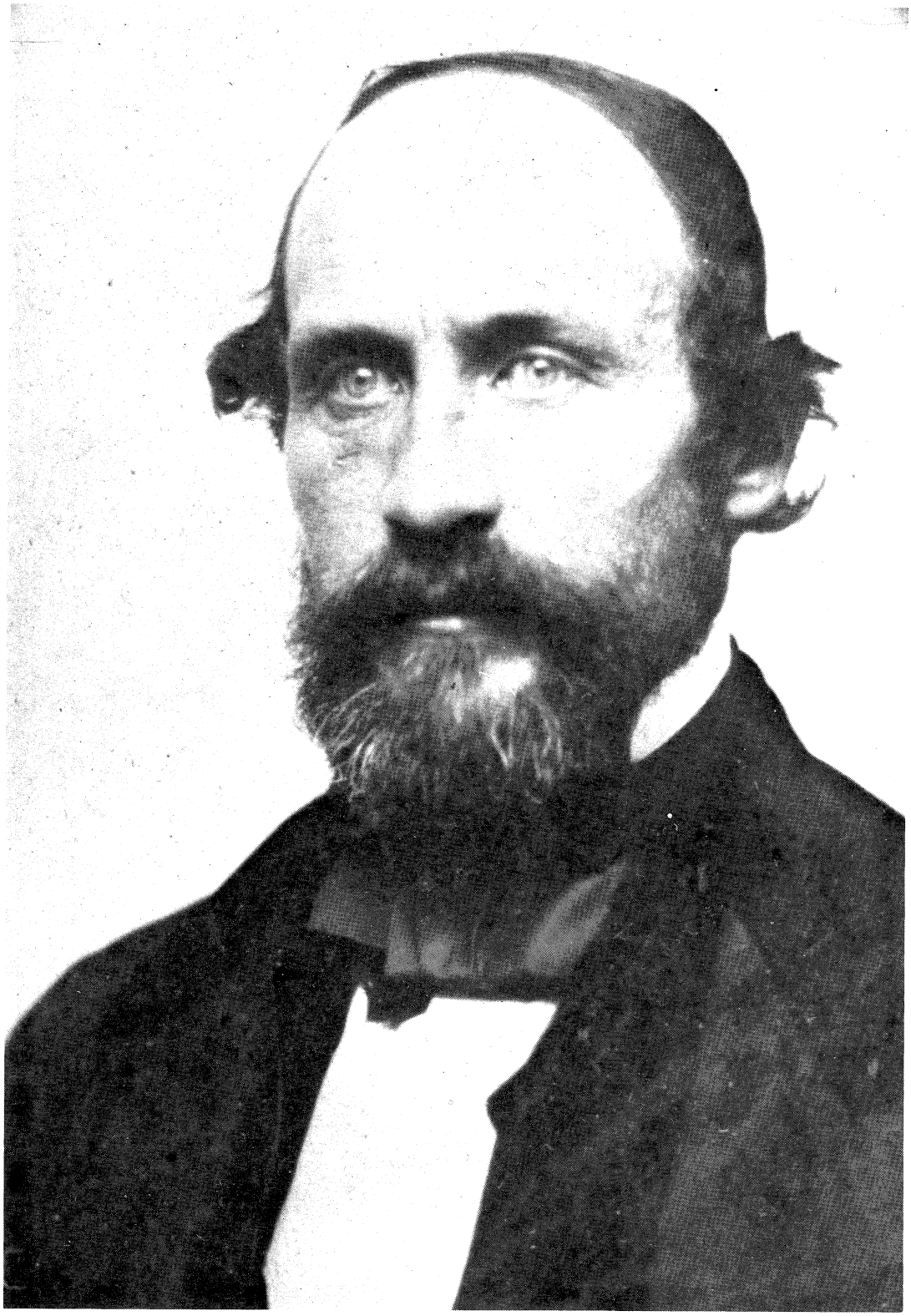
[1]Rawley, pg. 86



DR. CHARLES ROBINSON
1818 - 1894
First Governor of the State of Kansas

the town and openly preached abolition. He was taken by a mob, beaten, threatened with hanging, and finally set adrift in the Missouri River lashed to a two-log raft with an "A" painted on his back.

Most abolititionists sought to avoid confrontation and strenuously rejected being compared with robbers and horse thieves. The majority considered themselves to be respectable, God-fearing people. Nearly all advocated temperance, and a goodly number were Quakers who devoutly espoused non-violence. John Brown, the most celebrated of all Kansas abolitionists, was neither Quaker nor a pacifist, and the time soon came when he willingly accepted the mantle of outlaw. As far as can be determined, John Brown was never in Wyandotte County,[1] but the legend that surrounds him has been memorialized here, and for this reason he deserves mention in this text. Moreover, the acts he committed in Kansas (however they may be regarded) provided a catalyst for action among the free-soil forces, and centered the question of statehood clearly on the issue of the abolition of slavery.

John Brown followed five of his sons to Kansas in October of 1855. Their trip from North Elba, New York, had been financed in part by Amos Lawrence, and the Emigrant Aid Company was subsequently blamed for Brown's actions. He was an uncompromising opponent of slavery, and he viewed the accommodationism and relative timidity of most free-soil settlers with contempt.

His views in this regard continued to harden, for by the spring of 1856, the free-soil position was growing desperate. On instructions from President Pierce, a company of dragoons from Fort Leavenworth had forced the Free State legislature in Topeka to disband. Charles Robinson, Andrew Reeder, and other prominent free-soil advocates were placed under indictment by a pro-slavery grand jury on a variety of charges including treason. As all territorial authority was in pro-slavery hands and backed by the President and the Army[2], the free-soil forces were unprotected and sought to avoid violence at all costs.

Pro-slavery forces felt no such compunction. On the pretext of serving the indictments against Reeder, Robinson and others, a pro-slavery posse entered Lawrence on May 21, 1856. They totaled nearly 800, had five pieces of artillery, and included contingents from Georgia and South Carolina in addition to the Missourians led by David Atchison. The people of Lawrence offered no resistance, and those under indictment who were present surrendered peacefully to the federal marshal, who then washed his hands of what followed.

Denied the fight they had hoped for, the posse turned into a mob. Led by the duly-appointed sheriff of Douglas County (who also happened to be the deputy postmaster of Westport, Missouri), they looted the town, burned Charles Robinson's house, and destroyed the Eldridge Hotel with artillery fire and explosives. The two Lawrence newspapers had their presses smashed and their type dumped into the Kansas River. In all it was regarded as a great pro-slavery victory, but in reality it marked the beginning of a fight that the pro-slavery forces had no real hope of winning.

John Brown and his band were camped at Osawatomie when the sack of Lawrence occurred. It is reported that moments after he learned of the attack, he resolved to "cause a restraining fear" among the pro-slavery forces. On May 23, he rode with four of his sons and two other men to the nearby pro-slavery settlement of Pottowatomie Creek, where it is alleged he coldly executed five pro-slavery men.

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[1]The Brown family of Quindaro were Wyandots from the Detroit area, and were no relation to the fiery abolitionist.

[2]Jefferson Davis was Secretary of War, and widely regarded as the "power behind the throne" in the Pierce Administration.

JOHN BROWN OF OSAWATOMIE
1800 - 1859

These were scarcely the first violent deaths on either side in the Kansas crusade, but the manner in which the killings were enacted raised the conflict to a new level. In retaliation for the Pottowatomie massacre, a pro-slavery party led by Henry Pate raided nearby Palmyra and took three prisoners. Early on the morning of June 2, Brown attacked Pate's camp in a grove of black jack oaks about three miles east of Baldwin. Both sides had several wounded and numerous desertions before Pate and his men surrendered to Brown's numerically inferior forces.

It was during that long summer of 1856 that the phrase "Bleeding Kansas" was coined. Civil war had begun in all but name, and John Brown's role in these events earned him national renown—with opinion varying between those who viewed him as the liberator of Kansas and those who regarded him as a fiend and a fanatic. There were few Afro-Americans, however, who did not consider him a hero for the stand that he took and the martyrdom he eventually suffered.

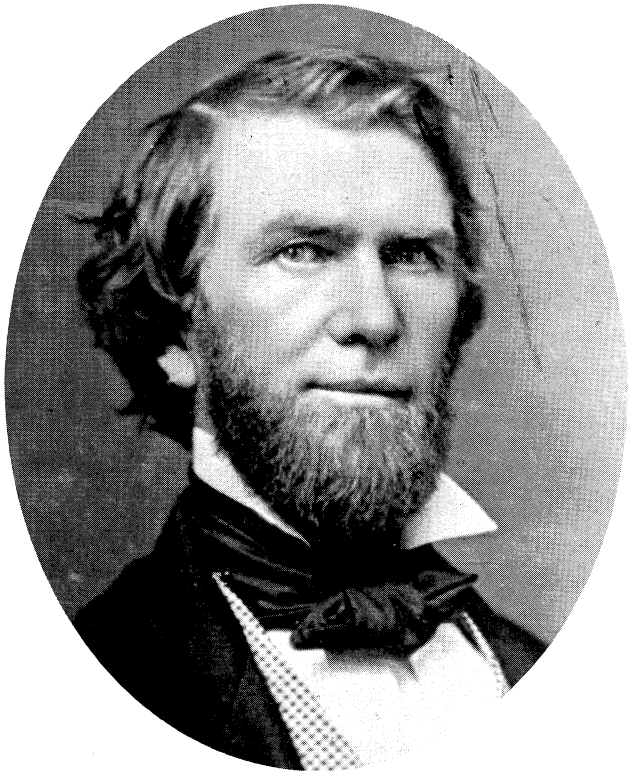
The events that earned Kansas its bloody reputation occurred considerably to the west of the Wyandot settlement. The Wyandots were, nonetheless, directly affected by the escalating conflict. It was during this period that the town of Quindaro was founded by a coalition of Wyandots and the Emigrant Aid Company. For several years following the split in their church, the Wyandots had struggled to maintain tribal unity in spite of their differences. The advent of large numbers of armed pro-slavery and free-soil settlers in the area seriously destabilized the precarious balance that had been achieved. Conflict erupted into violence; and on the evening of April 8, 1856, mobs burned both the Methodist Church North and the Methodist Church South. With the river ports of Atchison and Leavenworth already in pro-slavery hands, the town of Wyandott now seemed too dangerous. The abolitionists decided to repair to the countryside and establish a safer point of entry for free-soil settlers.

The new settlement was named in honor of Nancy Brown Guthrie, whose Wyandot Indian name was Quindaro. Literally the word Quindaro translates as a "bundle of sticks," but it was interpreted to mean "strength thru union." Nancy's husband, Abelard Guthrie, was one of the principal founders of Quindaro, and their property from the Wyandot Tribal Allotment of 1856 formed the nucleus of the town site. The town site was platted by Owen Bassett in December of 1856. The area that was eventually incorporated in 1859 extended from what is now 17th Street on the east to 42nd Street on the west, and from Parallel Parkway north to the Missouri River, but the plat only covered the area north of what is now Parkview Avenue. The incorporated area included the site of the recently destroyed Methodist Episcopal Church, whose two acre allotment became the town cemetery. The church itself, however, was not rebuilt on this ground. The plat also included Quindaro Park, making it one of the oldest public parks in Kansas.

The Nearman Bend of the Missouri River has gradually shifted east over the years. At the time of Quindaro's founding, a long limestone ledge lay exposed at the foot of the bluffs, and this formed a natural levee for steamboat landings. The principal north-south street was Kansas Avenue, now 27th Street, but due to the rough topography this street was never cut through to the levee. This same topography confined actual development in the town to the valley leading back from the levee, and many of the 5,355 platted lots were neither sold nor developed.

But within this valley, Quindaro boomed. In addition to stores and houses, there were three hotels including the stone Quindaro House, with forty-five rooms in its four story structure. A red brick Methodist Church was completed in September of 1857, followed a month later by the stone Congregational Church of the Reverend S. D. Storrs of the New England Emigrant Aid Company. The Company also provided funds for a sawmill and a gristmill.

The Company's representatives with the Quindaro enterprise included, in addition to Rev. Storrs, Charles and George Glick, Sam Pomeroy, and Charles Robinson of Lawrence who was named treasurer of the Quindaro Town Company. In an effort to heal the breach among the Wyandots, Joel



Abelard G. Guthrie
1814 - 1873

Nancy Brown Guthrie
1820 - 1886

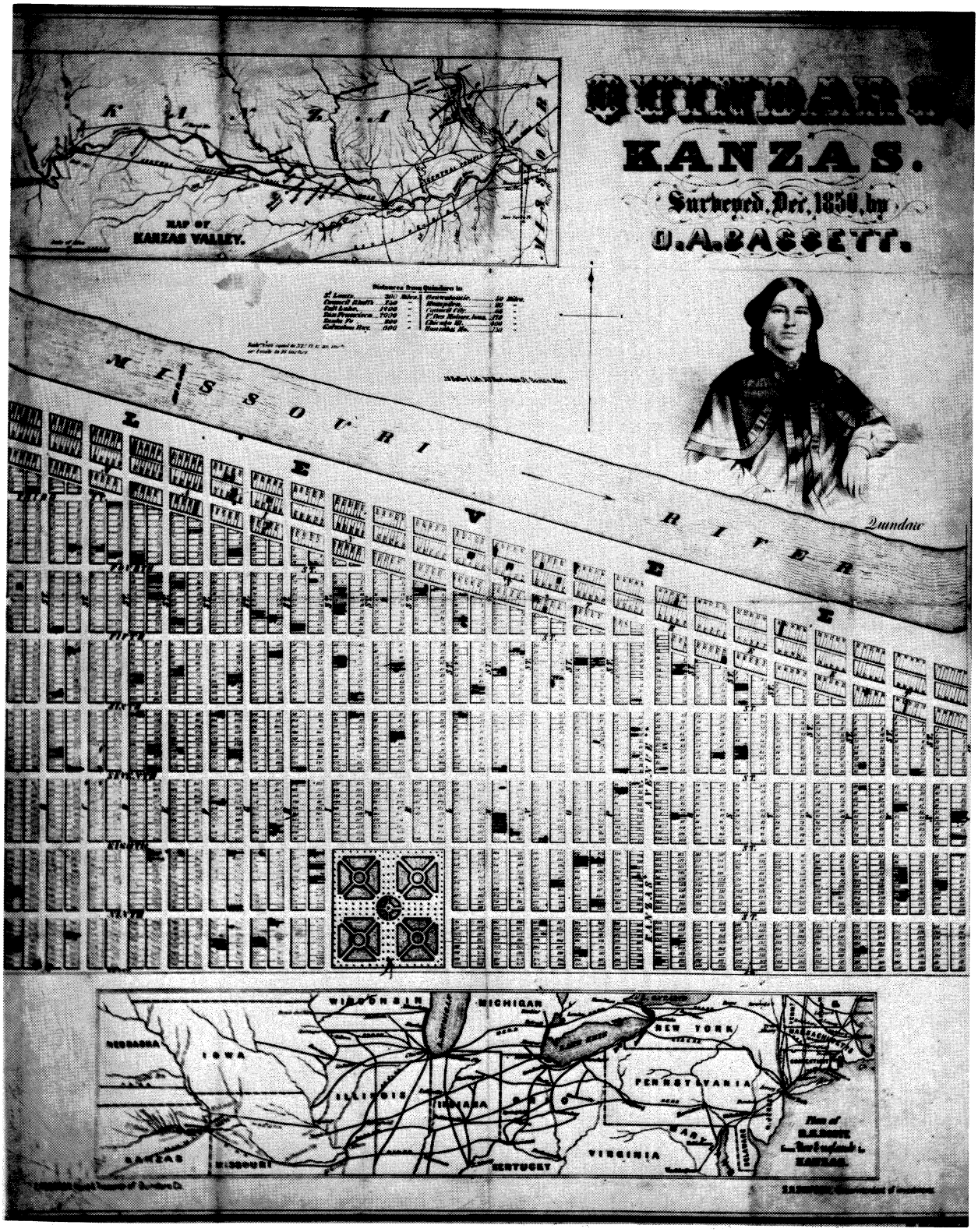
Joel Walker
1813 - 1857

BROWN (later BLACHLY) RESIDENCE, 3464 North 26th STREET, circa 1850

Walker (brother of William Walker Jr.) was named company president and Abelard Guthrie became vice-president.

The Emigrant Aid Company's involvement in the development of Quindaro was inspired by two rather distinct motives which reflected the twin interests of the free-soil group. Quindaro was at one and the same time a boom town on the western frontier and a paramilitary outpost in the abolitionist crusade to eliminate slavery. Parkville lay directly across the river from Quindaro. Weston, Missouri was located some twenty-two miles on upstream. Slaves escaping from these and other nearby settlements could be assured of aid from abolitionist farmers in the vicinity of Quindaro. Alone or in small groups, the escapees made their way across the river under cover of night. Once on shore, they were able to conceal themselves in caves at the foot of the river bluff and move from there into the thickly wooded ravines. There was a road which ran just to the east of what is now Bell Crossing Drive, and was known as Happy Hollow. It was a pathway leading through a ravine on the property of the abolitionist, Henry Sorter. When the fugitives reached this point, they knew they were safe, and it was for this reason they named it Happy Hollow. Mr. Sorter and the other local farmers who served as "conductors" for this branch of the Underground Railroad left signals in the woods (like bits of cloth tied to tree branches) which guided the escapees on their way to eventual freedom.

Although a few escapees remained in the vicinity of Quindaro, most of the liberated slaves continued on to points further west where they could be escorted out of the reach of bounty hunters



PLAT OF THE TOWN OF QUINDARO, 1857

and "border ruffians." The Fugitive Slave Laws were still in force, and the Dred Scott decision of 1857 had effectively declared "open season" on anyone of African descent. There were several attempts to kidnap freedmen in Kansas and take them into Missouri, where there was a standing reward of $200 for every fugitive captured and returned. In March, 1859, thirteen freedmen living in Lawrence asked Dr. John Doy to escort them to Nebraska. En route, the party was seized by a posse and taken to Missouri, where Dr. Doy was put on trial for aiding escaped slaves. This was done despite the fact that all in the party had papers proving their free status. A hung jury resulted in a mistrial, and Dr. Doy went free, only to be rearrested two months later and again placed on trial. He was convicted and sentenced to five years in jail. A raiding party from Kansas released him, and he subsequently fled to Canada.

The successful rescue of Dr. Doy was a measure of the growing strength and organization of the free-soil forces. The area around Lawrence became relatively peaceful, and Quindaro enjoyed a remarkably rapid rate of growth. By 1859, Quindaro's population was nearly as large as Wyandott's. In January of that year, both settlements were incorporated as third class cities. After considerable controversy, Wyandott was named county seat of the newly formed Wyandott County, and seven months later became the site of the fourth and final attempt to draft a territorial constitution that would bring about statehood for Kansas. This document officially prohibited the extension of slavery into Kansas. After two years of intensifying debate, the secession of the southern states enabled Congress to confer statehood under the provisions of the Wyandott constitution in 1861. The Kansas question was settled, but these same issues were far from being resolved on the national level. It was scarcely two months after Kansas entered the Union that the guns at Ft. Sumter signalled the onset of the Civil War.

2 The War Years

Ironically, the outbreak of the war finally brought relative peace to eastern Kansas. There were occasional alarms in Wyandott, particularly after Lawrence was burned by Quantrell's raiders, but the presence of Federal troops provided a sense of security. The only real menace to the town was turned back with the defeat of the Confederate forces at the Battle of Westport on October 23, 1864. For the most part, life in Wyandott proceeded at a normal pace as the town's growth continued throughout the war years.

Slaves continued to escape across the border from Missouri. Although they could not live openly, the escapees were now better able to remain safely in the area. The bounty hunters had become less bold, and freedmen were able to establish themselves in the border towns with less fear of being kidnapped. It was during this time that there were the beginnings of a permanent Afro-American community in Wyandott. The census tallies for 1860 reveal the identities of five families living in Wyandott and of another family who lived on a farm west of the city. (There were surely others whose identities were unrecorded because they were escapees.) Among the officially recorded residents of Wyandott in 1860, there were two Afro-American barbers. One was John Templeton, who was 26 years of age and had come from Ohio with his wife Lizzie and their small child. The second barber was J. A. Lute. He was also 26 years of age but single and from Virginia. Other Afro-Americans included Gilburt Drake, his wife Amy, and their three children. He was a 30-year-old laborer who was born in Missouri. His wife was also born there, as were two of their children. Their youngest child had been born in Kansas a year earlier. William Jones, from Pennsylvania, was also a laborer. He was 35 years of age and had a wife and two children. The eldest of the community was Wesley Pope who was 60 years of age and a farmer. He was born in North Carolina. His wife Lucy listed Virginia as her place of birth. Two of their eleven children were born in Alabama, and the other nine had been born in Mississippi. Another Afro-American farmer in Wyandott was Jesse Jones, aged 36, who had come to Kansas from Kentucky as early as 1857. He and his wife Minerva had four

children. Jesse's younger brother William and his wife Sarah also lived in the household. The Jones family was apparently doing very well, with recorded assets of $1,300 in real estate and equipment.

These were most of the people who comprised the Afro-American community in Wyandott in the year after the adoption of the free state constitution. They had come from many different parts of the country—Ohio, Virginia, Missouri, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky. There were nearly as many different origins as there were individuals. No two of the families had come from the same place, and they did not live very close to each other in Wyandott either. The Templetons lived next door to J. A. Lute, but the others appear to have been widely separated within the township. Gilburt Drake's next door neighbor was the family of Henry Carpenter, a white carpenter from New Hampshire. William Jones lived next door to a white laborer from Iowa named George Williams. Jesse Jones and his family lived next to a white farmer named Shively who was from New York, and there were white farmers residing on either side of the Popes—John Van Meiten from Illinois and A. H. Gotzel from Austria. In spite of the diversity of backgrounds and occupations that were represented among these earliest members of the Afro-American community, it was a common set of circumstances that had brought them to Kansas. Once in this setting, they soon found each other.

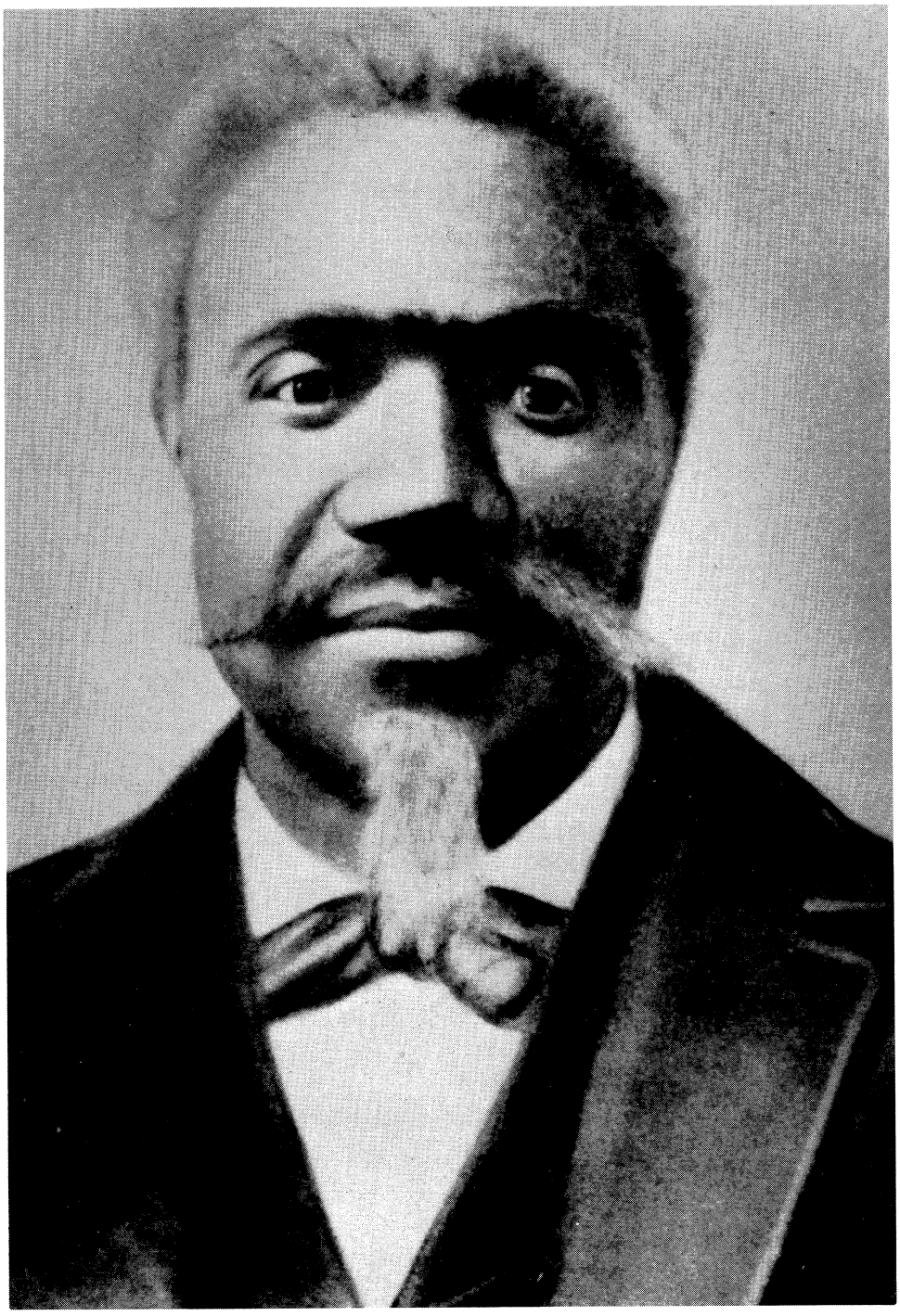
It has been recorded that in 1859, three Afro-American families began holding religious services in the home of a woman named Aunt Dinah Smith. She lived at 5th and State, which at that time was on the western fringe of the town. The small band of worshippers was later joined by two ex-slaves who were ministers. They were Brother Buchanan, a Methodist, and Joe Straighter, who was a Baptist. This division was provident, as the members of the congregation that awaited them were fairly evenly divided between these two denominations. Under the stewardship of their respective preachers, the newly formed congregations achieved separate identities; but because there were so few of them, they met as one group. On one Sunday, the Methodist preacher would conduct the services, and the following week this role would be filled by the Baptist preacher.

With the arrival of more freedmen and escapees in Wyandott, the joint congregation soon became too large to assemble in anyone's home. As a remedy, they secured the use of the Wyandot Council House at 4th and State, where they continued to hold services together until shortly after the end of the war in 1865. This building came to be known as the "Flagpole Church," named for the U. S. flag that flew aloft a tall pole outside the door.

Throughout the war, the small Afro-American community in Wyandott continued to grow, their numbers increasing rapidly towards the end of that period. In 1863, a third church was formed with the arrival of a small group who were of the Christian denomination, and also held services in the Council House. At one point during the war, there occurred what was described as an "exodus" of escaping slaves from Missouri into Wyandott. A woman named Mrs. Judd recounted how they had come in a large group across the Kansas River on the ferry, disembarking at the foot of Minnesota Avenue:

> "It was a sight to make one weep, those poor, frightened, half-starved negroes, coming over on the ferry and the people of the village down at the levee to receive them. Men and women, with little children clinging to them, and carrying all of their earthly possessions in little bags or bundles, sometimes in red bandana handkerchiefs! I recall how they were housed and fed and made comfortable by the good people, and then how they sang and crooned their old songs, forgetful of their misery and their wretchedness of a few hours before. The pastor of the Congregational church, the Rev. R. D. Parker, one of the Andover band that came out to help make Kansas free, was a good man. He held religious services for the negro refugees and organized a Sunday school for them."[1]

[1]Morgan, pg. 232



REVEREND JOE STRAIGHTER

Although statehood had brought a measure of stability and growth to Wyandott, it marked the end of Quindaro's short existence. With the outbreak of the war, nearly all able-bodied men in Quindaro enlisted in the Union army. The wives, children, and elders of the town were evacuated to Wyandott where they would be safe from the predations of outlaws and border ruffians. In order to prevent these forces from plundering the deserted town, troops of the Second Kansas Cavalry under Colonel A. C. Davis were temporarily stationed there. Ironically, these troops proved as destructive as any border raiders. They quartered their horses in the vacant town buildings, pulled down houses for firewood, and generally devastated the abandoned community. The people of Wyandott were infuriated by the troop's actions, and formed a "Committee of Safety" with the object of hanging Colonel Davis. He wisely fled the state before they could achieve their purpose. Quindaro did not recover from this final devastation, and on March 6, 1862 the state legislature repealed the town's charter of incorporation. For the remainder of the war, at least, Quindaro consisted of deserted ruins, and the dense undergrowth quickly reclaimed much of the former townsite.

Presumably, the handful of Afro-Americans who had been living in Quindaro prior to its evacuation were also removed to Wyandott. At that time, the young men among them were not eligible for enlistment in the Union army. From the earliest periods in the war, the government's refusal to deploy ex-slaves as soldiers against the Confederacy had been a contentious issue. Abolitionists and freedmen had argued that escaped and freed slaves had a strong vested interest in the outcome of the conflict, and that their participation in the war effort would afford a sound basis for citizenship when the peace was won. Moreover, they contended that these troops would supply an additional source of manpower to support and relieve white soldiers. The civilian and military leadership in Washington found only the latter argument to be persuasive, and that only when battle losses and casualties were bringing the Union to the verge of defeat. It was not until after the Emancipation Proclamation was delivered in January, 1863, that the formal recruitment of Afro-American troops began.

The irregular use of escaped and liberated slaves had begun somewhat earlier, although in many instances they were regarded more in terms of confiscated property than as soldiers. General James Lane of Kansas was one of the first military officers to undertake the deliberate mobilization of "Colored Regiments." His efforts began in 1862, shortly after Congress had formally emancipated all escaped slaves. By fall, the First Colored Regiment of Kansas had been assembled at Wyandott, with a total of 206 recruits. There were a number of Afro-Americans from Wyandott and Quindaro who enlisted in the regiment, but the majority of the troops consisted of slaves who had recently escaped from Missouri. The early military successes of Union General Fremont in that state had enabled hundreds of slaves to make their way into Kansas, where many immediately enlisted in the Union army. In all, Kansas sent four Afro-American brigades to fight against the South. In Wyandott, recruits for the so-called "Colored" regiments out-numbered their white counter-parts 483 to 477. The First Colored Regiment saw action for the first time in the battle of Prairie Grove, near Rolla, Missouri. The troops next fought against a guerilla named Morgan in Indiana, and then in Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee. The regiment was finally mustered out of service at Ft. Leavenworth in July of 1865. Their casualties had been dreadful. Of the 206 recruits who had departed with the First Colored Regiment, only fifty-two survived.

With the war's end, many Afro-American veterans returned to this area. One of the most common occupations listed by Afro-Americans in the census of 1865 was that of soldier. For many years thereafter, the veterans gathered in uniform on Memorial Day, and stood at attention while taps were played for their comrades who were buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, or who lay in unmarked graves scattered throughout the soil of their former enslavement. In later years, after they had grown old, they commonly sat on the steps of the courthouse at 7th and Minnesota telling war stories to each other and to the young boys who gathered around them on warm afternoons.

In the years that followed emancipation, a steady stream of ex-slaves came to Wyandotte County. By 1870, the Afro-American population had risen to 2,120—more than seventy times the number who

Colored Men Attention!

FREEDOM TO ALL, THE NATIONAL

POLICY,

Now and Forever.

SECOND REGIMENT KANSAS COLORED VOLUNTEERS.

—o—

BY order of Major General James G. Blunt, the undersigned is authorized to

RECRUIT ONE OR MORE COMPANIES

for the above regiment.

Able bodied men will receive $10 per month, clothing, subsistence and medical attendance from date of enlistment.

Hear what FREDERICK DOUGLASS says: "The decision of our destiny is now as never before in our own hands. We may lie low in the dust, despised and spit upon by every passer-by, or we may, like brave men, rise and unlock to ourselves the golden gates of a glorious future. *To hold back is to invite infamy upon ourselves, and upon our children.* The chance is now given us. We must improve it, or sink deeper than ever in the pit of social and political degradation, from which we have been struggling for years to extricate ourselves."

Recruiting Rendezvous—Office of Dr. Bowlby, Fifth Street, opposite Market House.

RICHARD J. HINTON,
1st Lieut. and Adjutant 1st Reg't Kan. Col'd Vols.
junel9 d&wtf

RECRUITMENT POSTER FROM THE JULY 17, 1863 ISSUE OF THE LEAVENWORTH CONSERVATIVE

had lived here in 1860. The majority settled near Wyandotte, but a sizeable number established farms in the countryside. The townsite of Quindaro still lay in ruins, but with the influx of freed slaves, its resident population rose once again to pre-war levels. During the 1860s approximately one-third of the Afro-Americans entering the county took up residence in the vicinity of the deserted abolitionist settlement.

The abandoned farmsteads and wooded hillsides of Quindaro offered a relatively hospitable site to begin life anew. Many of the new residents had previously labored on plantations across the river and were well accustomed to the farming techniques required for this climate and soil. White farmers in the area, many of whom were abolitionists, provided them an opportunity to earn fair wages for their labor.

The most significant development to occur within this emerging rural settlement was the establishment of a school for the children of the ex-slaves. This was begun under the direction of the Reverend Eben Blachly—a Presbyterian minister from Pennsylvania who had come to Quindaro in the early years and still owned much of the surrounding farmland. He and his wife began offering basic instruction to the children of escaped slaves, perhaps as early as 1862. Mrs. Mollie Lewis, who was one of the earliest pupils, left the following account:

> "My folks came to Quindaro in 1862. I was a child ten years old. I went to school to Reverend Blachly. The building where he held his school was under the hill pretty well down to the boat landing. It was on what is now 27th Street, pretty close to the old ruins now there. The Colored children from all around the country came to his school. He used to tell us what a wonderful school this would be for the Colored people. He was a teacher, a preacher and a doctor, and we all loved him."[1]

After the war, the Reverend and Mrs. Blachly had continued their work among the children of the freedmen. This group, which grew quite large, assembled in an old brewery[2] located on Reverend Blachly's property. He and other white property owners deeded the building and surrounding acreage to the school in January, 1867, when it was formally organized as Freedman's University under the governance of the Kansas Synod of the Presbyterian Church. In February, the state relinquished all interest in taxes on the land that had been deeded to the school, and appropriated funds for the Colored Normal School of Quindaro, to function as part of Reverend Blachly's school.

The establishment of an African Methodist Episcopal Church at Quindaro in 1869 further enhanced community life among the freedmen who comprised the settlement. The church was a rough hewn log structure erected at 33rd and Sewell, on property that belonged to Abelard Guthrie.

To observers at that time, the developments in the Quindaro area must have seemed like a hopeful beginning for freedmen in Kansas—a reasoned and logical effort to ease the transition from enslavement to citizenship. The group had built a church, which provided the basis for civic and religious self-determination, and there was land that they could cultivate for the benefit of their families instead of their masters. For the first time, they could expect to receive wages in exchange for their labor and reasonable treatment from those who employed them. Of greatest importance, there was a school where their children could gain the skills needed to take advantage of wider opportunities in an economy where slavery had just been outlawed.

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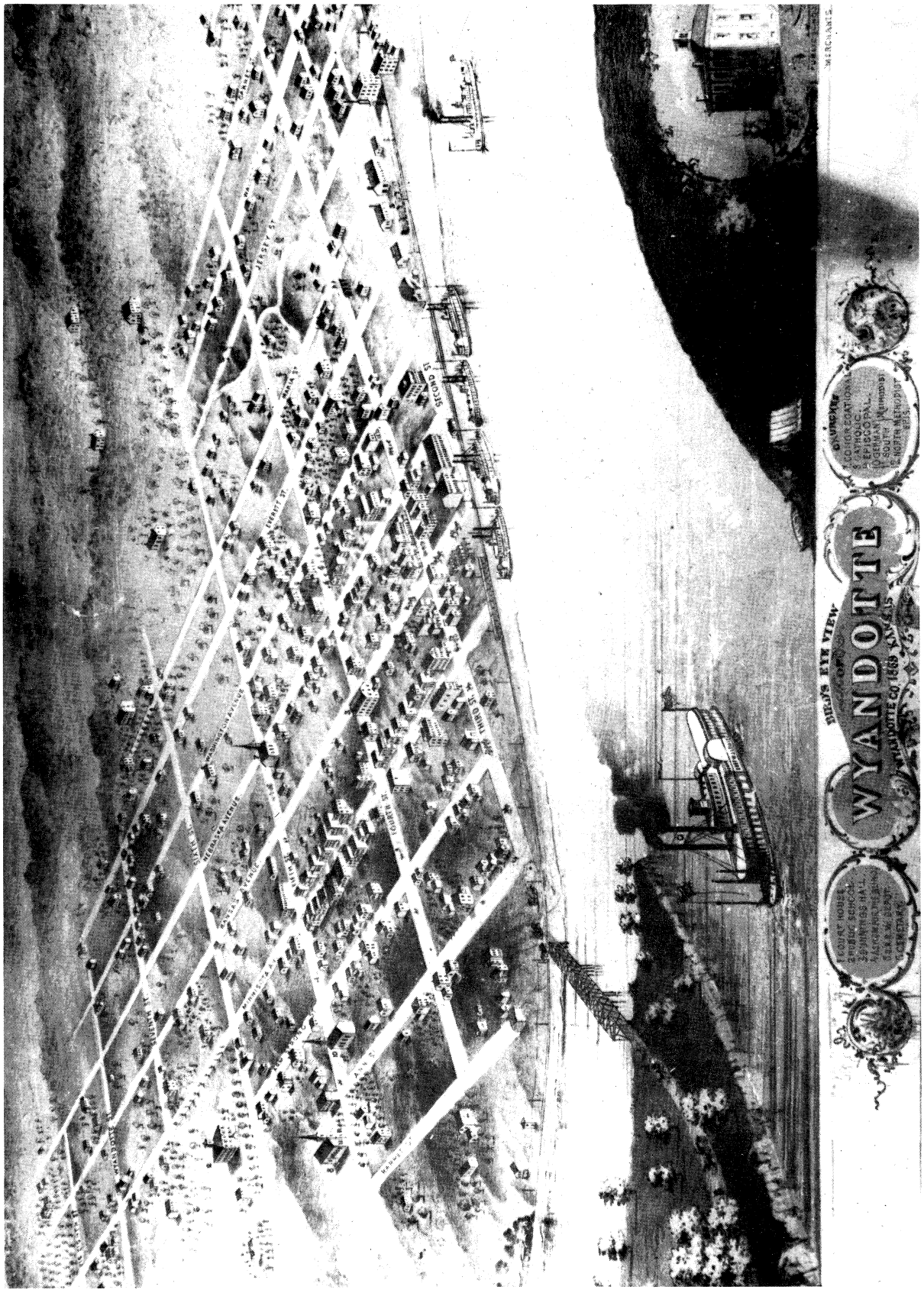
[1]Allen Chapel AME Church history.

[2]Though reportedly built as a brewery, it had never been used as such. The people of Quindaro had been pro-temperance as well as anti-slavery.



WYANDOTTE in 1869

The Quindaro area was an exception, however, when compared with most other parts of the country. In the South, the freed slaves were confronted by the persisting belligerence of former slave-holders and the confusion that reigned in the Freedmen's Bureau. Cities and the countryside had been laid to waste, and there were thousands of homeless refugees. Efforts to institute an economic system based on wage labor and land ownership for the freedmen were rapidly giving way to a system of debt peonage through share cropping. Freedom had scarcely eliminated either poverty or servitude.

Conditions were better in the north but only by degree. Despite emancipation and the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution, few states or cities had rescinded laws that permitted (and in some cases required) segregation and discrimination against Afro-Americans. Theirs was a status most often described as "free, but not equal"—even in Kansas, a state that symbolized the anti-slavery effort. The original Wyandotte Constitution denied Afro-Americans the right to vote, authorized towns and counties to establish racially segregated schools, and very nearly included a provision that would have prevented anyone of African descent from settling within the state.

To those freedmen who had heard stories about how John Brown and other white people in Kansas died to free the slaves, such treatment must have seemed curiously inhospitable. There were, nonetheless, many among this group who remembered a time and place where it had been against the law to teach a slave how to read; and for them, any sort of school for their children truly represented progress. In Wyandotte, they were also permitted to establish churches, own property, move freely about the town, and hold jobs that offered the hope of economic prosperity. These too were options that most had not experienced in the place of their birth. Although it was clear by now that Kansas was not prepared to offer them the equality that citizenship seemed to imply, at least and at last, they were free.

In the early years following the Civil War, the Afro-American community at Wyandotte had grown from a few families to nearly a thousand people. By 1867, four of the eight churches then in existence in the town had been established by Afro-Americans. The Baptist and Methodist congregations had established separate churches in 1864—the Baptists in a storefront at 5th and Washington Avenue, and the Methodists in a stand of cottonwoods at 7th and Ann, where the Scottish Rite Temple is now located. The Christian Church moved into a small building at 8th and Everett, and a second Baptist church (named Pleasant Green) was formed in the west bottoms in 1867.

When Pleasant Green was established, the bottoms district was covered with willows and inhabited by only a few families who subsisted by fishing in the river. The original congregation of Pleasant Green reportedly lived together in a house located on ground that later became part of the river channel.[1] They had been there about a year when the Kansas City Kansas Town Company was incorporated. This body proceeded to transform the river bottoms at the mouth of the Kaw into one of the major industrial centers in the midwest.

In 1869, construction was completed on the Hannibal railway bridge across the Missouri River. This span gave Wyandotte transcontinental rail connections. In the following year, Plankinton & Armour built the first major packinghouse in the west bottoms. Settlers poured into the river towns of Kansas City, Kansas and Wyandotte and scores of buildings were under construction in both places. The city was booming and jobs were plentiful. The Afro-American community began to establish itself. Corrvine Patterson, an Afro-American Civil War veteran, opened a grocery store and prospered from the growing clientele. The churches gained new members, and the community began to articulate its interests within the political arena. In 1872, Corrvine Patterson was elected to the Board of Education; and in 1879 an Afro-American Civil War veteran named George Dudley was elected to the city council as representative of the Third Ward.

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[1]*Andreas, pg. 1240*

3 The Exodus

In the midst of the growth and progress of the late 1870s, there came a vision out of the past. A band of ragged and hungry ex-slaves disembarked on the levee at Wyandotte. They were refugees—fleeing from the South up the river into Kansas, and they formed the leading edge of a mass movement known as the Kansas Fever Exodus.

The Exodus was prompted most directly by the so-called Compromises of 1877. In exchange for southern electoral votes, President-elect Rutherford Hayes withdrew the army of occupation in the South. With their departure, reprobate Confederate soldiers and former slave-owners commenced a program they called "redemption." The objective was to redeem the ante-bellum system and the perogatives of slavery. Throughout the old South, laws were passed that effectively barred former slaves from voting, holding office, testifying in court against white people, and in some places from owning property. The withdrawal of the Union soldiers left them unprotected from the night-riders (called "bulldozers") who loosely comprised the Klu Klux Klan and regarded themselves as the enforcers of redemption. In the period that preceded the election of 1878, these forces committed a ghastly number of atrocities and large-scale massacres of freedmen, who were numerically in the majority in many counties and parishes.

Added to the political repression and terrorism that the freedmen confronted, there was unrelenting poverty. The system of sharecropping had revealed itself to be a form of re-enslavement, providing barely enough to stay alive. In 1878, there was a major crop failure in the South which greatly worsened an already intolerable situation. In the late winter of the following year, tens of thousands of Afro-Americans throughout the river parishes of Mississippi and Louisiana gathered together what possessions and provisions they could, and boarded steamboats headed for Kansas. Their response had been sudden, decisive, and of a magnitude that was amazing in view of the fact that the movement was apparently spontaneous.

A great deal has been written about the Exodus in recent years, but it is still not clear why the migrants were so single-minded in their determination to go to Kansas. Pap Singleton, the former slave who had earlier founded several towns in Kansas, claimed that he was chiefly responsible; and that the Exodus was merely an overwhelming response to his efforts to promote Afro-American towns and rural colonies here. In some measure, he was undoubtedly correct. Many of his promotional circulars were abroad in southern states which (somewhat deceptively) proclaimed the availability of land and opportunity in Kansas. Geography was probably another factor. Kansas was accessible by rail and steamer, and was the free state with unclaimed land that was closest to those parts of the lower South where most of the migrants had originated. The prospect of jobs in the rapidly expanding rail and meatpacking industries was another consideration, and there is evidence that these companies paid the transportation costs of at least some of the Exodusers.[1]

Rising above the complex motives and forces that contributed to the Exodus, however, was the enduring image of "Free Kansas"—the land of John Brown and of flowing milk and honey. Much like the children of Israel, whose flight from Egypt was likened to their own departure from the southland, the Exodusers firmly believed that around the bend at Kaw Point they would find Canaan.

Wyandotte was the first stop inside the Kansas border, and on March 23, 1879, the steamer *Fannie Lewis* disembarked the first of the Exodusers. There were approximately 200 people in the group, and among their number were the grandparents and great-grandparents of many present-day residents of Kansas City, Kansas. As the weary Exodusers stepped down from the boat, citizens of Wyandotte stared in amazement from the shore. There were only a few in the town who knew the Exodus was coming, and there was no one who could then predict how large the movement would be, or how long it would last.

Within the next two weeks nearly a thousand more Exodusers arrived in Wyandotte. The levee was suddenly overflowing with refugees, and the situation was fast approaching a crisis. Few of the Exodusers had been able to bring either money or supplies. Communicable diseases spread rapidly in their midst, adding to the problems. A variety of relief efforts were initiated. Several white congregations and all of the Afro-American churches offered shelter and coordinated the solicitation of food and clothing. Refugee camps were set up on the public levee, just to the west of the Missouri River bank, and to the south of the Kaw in the west bottoms.

The mayor immediately established a committee to raise funds and seek assistance from the state and federal governments. The town of Wyandotte was far too small to handle the massive influx, and the arrival of each new boat excited growing alarm. Rumors began to circulate that there was a group within Wyandotte who were planning to use force to discourage the entry of more Exodusers. Mayor Stockton appealed for reason and compassion, but added that he personally would prevent the steamboat lines from disembarking any more destitute migrants in Wyandotte. The situation was finally alleviated by re-routing steamboats carrying Exodusers upriver to Atchison and Leavenworth. Arrangements were also made to transport a substantial number of the migrants who were already in Wyandotte on to other towns in eastern Kansas. Under the leadership of Governor St. John, a central relief headquarters was established at Topeka. The site of the State Fairgrounds was converted into a large temporary settlement which, from that point on, became the main destination for the newly arrived Exodusers.

The Exodus continued, more or less unabated, for about a year and a half. During this time, at least 40,000 made the journey into Kansas. Then, the movement halted almost as abruptly as it had begun.

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[1]Orrin Murray's maternal grandparents told him that their way had been paid by the packinghouse owners. A second reference to this practice was found in an unidentified newspaper clipping in the Kansas State Historical Society's Exodus Collection.

Ho for Kansas!

Brethren, Friends, & Fellow Citizens:

I feel thankful to inform you that the

REAL ESTATE

AND

Homestead Association,

Will Leave Here the

15th of April, 1878,

In pursuit of Homes in the Southwestern Lands of America, at Transportation Rates, cheaper than ever was known before.

For full information inquire of

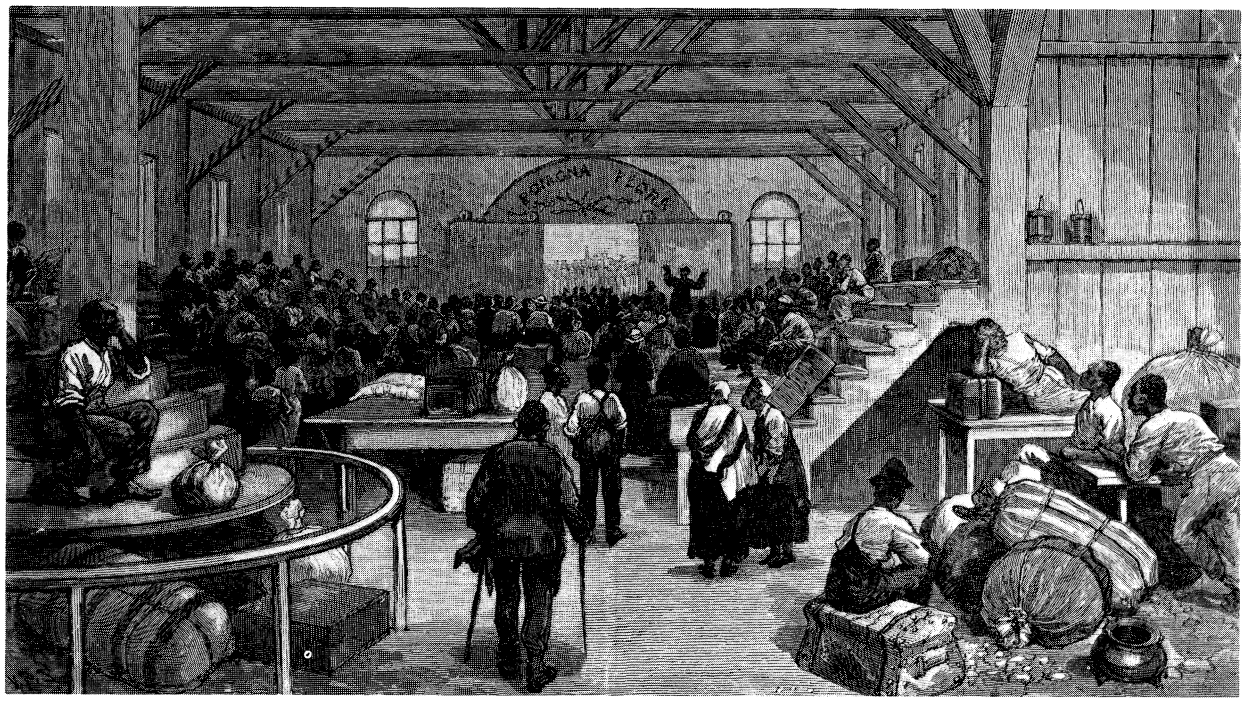
Benj. Singleton, better known as old Pap,

NO. 5 NORTH FRONT STREET.

Beware of Speculators and Adventurers, as it is a dangerous thing to fall in their hands.

Nashville, Tenn., March 18, 1878.

PROMOTIONAL CIRCULAR ISSUED BY BENJAMIN SINGLETON



EXODUSERS IN RELIEF QUARTERS AT TOPEKA, 1879

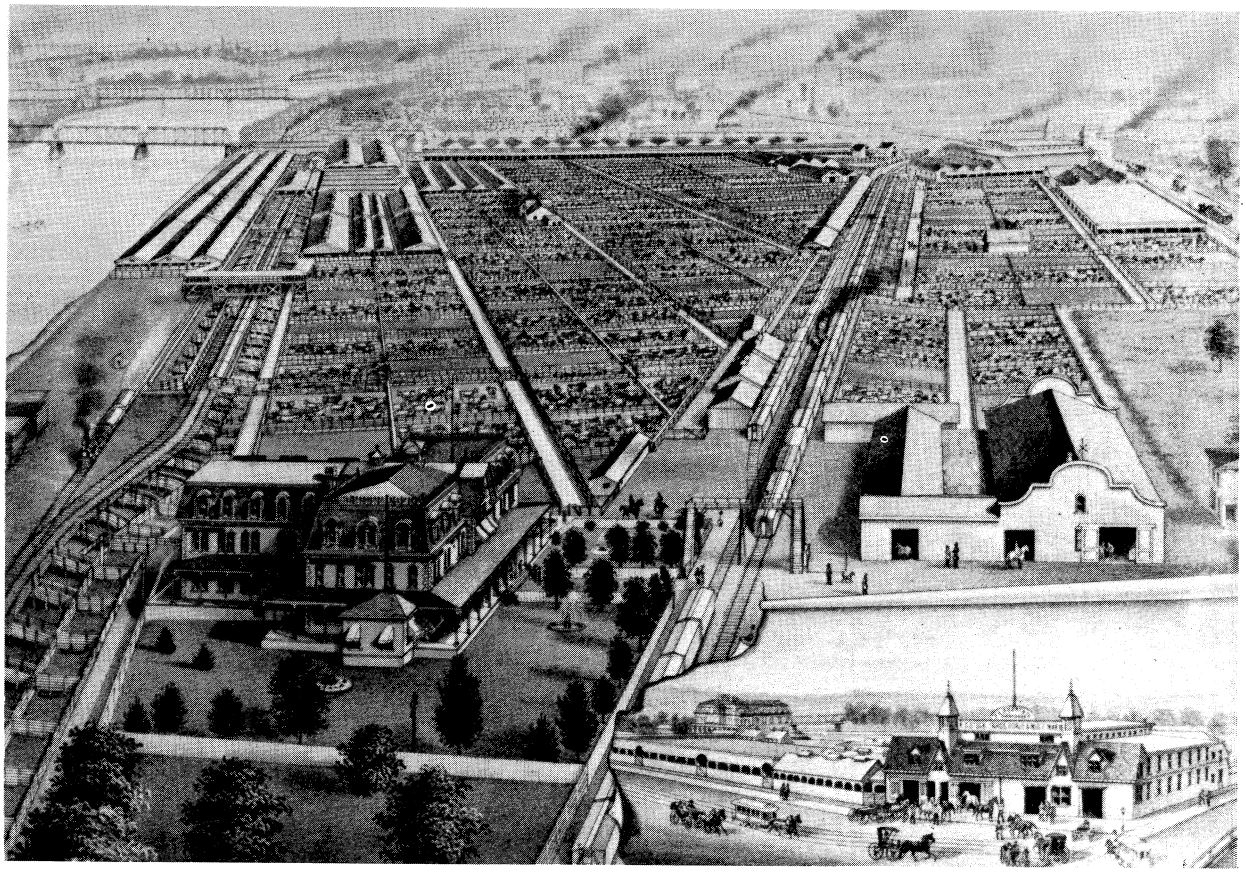
The southern planters, who first had uttered "good riddance" after the departing freedmen, soon became alarmed at the possible loss of all their field labor. As a solution, they successfully persuaded several transit companies to stop carrying Exodusers out of the South. These efforts, coupled with numerous reports about the hardships of life in Kansas, discouraged many would-be emigrants in the South from attempting the move.

Although short-lived, the Exodus was a dramatic episode in Afro-American history. It was to be the first of several great migrations out of the South—journeys which, by the middle of the 20th century, resulted in the redistribution of literally millions of people away from tenant farms and into crowded cities. The people who came to Wyandotte County with the Exodus were among the earliest group of Afro-Americans to make this large scale transition from rural to urban. Their arrival at that particular time was also a factor that facilitated the urban development of this area, and contributed to the increasingly multi-ethnic character of the city that was then forming at the mouth of the Kaw.

4 1880-1918: The Growth of an Urban Afro-American Community

The Afro-American population of Wyandotte and Kansas City, Kansas (the west bottoms) more than doubled as a result of the Exodus, but recent increases in the white population had been nearly as great. In 1879, the same year the Exodus began, the meatpacking companies brought in a large number of German, Swedish, and Irish immigrants who had previously worked in the packinghouses in Chicago. Together with the Exodusers, these new arrivals were destined to comprise most of the work force for this rapidly expanding industry. All five of the major national meatpacking companies had plants in the west bottoms, and there were several smaller operations as well (notably the Fowler Brothers). Within less than a decade, Kansas City had become the site of the second largest meatpacking complex in the United States. The railroads, on which the distribution of the meat products depended, also continued to expand. During this period, and for many decades to come, these two industries provided thousands of jobs for unskilled laborers.

The Exodusers, who had nearly all arrived in a destitute condition, were quick to take advantage of opportunities to earn wages, and many of the women found domestic work among the more affluent families of the town. Industrial working conditions at that time were very arduous and primitive, especially in the packinghouses, where images of the promised land were quickly replaced by the unholy scenes and stench of blood and slaughter. The Exodusers often encountered discrimination in wages and job assignments, and there were a few companies that refused to hire them altogether. In spite of the prejudices of individual foremen and managers, the labor of the freedmen was badly needed; and to that extent, the Exodusers had found a welcome haven.



KANSAS CITY STOCKYARDS, circa 1886

The availability of jobs continued to attract freedmen into the Kansas City area, even after the Exodus stopped. Between 1880 and 1890, the Afro-American population of the county once again increased sharply, from 4,576 to 6,935. There were actually more Afro-American migrants into the city during this decade than had come with the Exodus, but the total population of the area nearly tripled in size.

In 1886 the cities of Wyandotte, Kansas City and the recently developed Armourdale were consolidated into a single municipal entity named Kansas City, Kansas. Also included in the consolidation were the unincorporated subdivisions of Armstrong and Riverview. What had previously been a cluster of small industrial settlements was, administratively at least, unified into an urban area with a population of nearly 20,000 people. Afro-Americans accounted for approximately one-quarter (24%) of the total population at that time, and represented the largest single ethnic group in the city. In that regard, the new Kansas City, Kansas differed considerably from other large industrial cities. The percentage of Afro-Americans in the populations of Detroit, Philadelphia and Chicago at that same time were 5%, 4%, and 1% respectively, and it was not until well after the turn of the century that these, or most other major cities in the north and west, included proprotionally large numbers of Afro-Americans. Kansas City, Kansas developed differently because of early free state activities and the Exodus. As a result, the city provided the setting for the unusually early development of a large, diversified Afro-American community.

With the arrival of the Exodusers, the numbers of Afro-Americans living in this area had become large enough to support a variety of businesses and professional services, social and benevolent

organizations, and eventually such institutions as a hospital and a university. In that sense, the Exodus marked a turning point in the formation of the community. Coming as it did at a time of rapid industrial expansion in the city, the sudden growth in the Afro-American population greatly enhanced the group's capacity to undertake successful cooperative activities. Although the packinghouse wages were low, the sheer number of Afro-American wage earners made a lot of buying power—and a lot of "giving" power. Through tithes, dues, and donations, groups of people within the community were able to accomplish the financing of church and lodge buildings, provide group insurance benefits, and establish programs for self-improvement and cultural expression. Patterns of cooperative activities and social organization emerged from a shared sense of historical identity and in response to needs arising from legal and customary segregation within the society at large. Although there have since been many changes, it was during this period that the basic foundations of the modern Afro-American community in Kansas City, Kansas were established.

NEIGHBORS

In Kansas City, Kansas today approximately three-fourths of the Afro-American population lives in the area north of State Avenue and east of 38th Street. In the section north of State and east of 18th Street, virtually all the residents are Afro-Americans. The very high degree of residential concentration that characterizes the contemporary Afro-American community is one of the major differences between the way things are in 1980 and the way they were at the turn of the century. At that time, Afro-Americans living in the city were dispersed among several different residential districts, and most lived on blocks that were racially integrated. In spite of this difference, the present does bear an imprint of the past. The preponderance of Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas have always lived north of State Avenue, where the older sections of the city are located. In 1885, 68% of the Afro-American population lived in the area east of 10th and north of State Avenue.[1] It was in this general area that most of the early Afro-Americans settled and built churches, which served as the nuclei of developing neighborhoods. The easternmost section of the city and the west bottoms were close to jobs in the packinghouses and railyards, and many Afro-American workers lived in those areas. There were also many Afro-Americans who lived in Armstrong and Armourdale, which adjoined industrial work sites, and there were Afro-Americans living on farms in scattered rural locations that were later incorporated into the city limits.

The passage of time, together with Urban Renewal and several major floods, have extensively altered the landscape of the city and in some cases obliterated residential areas that had been inhabited by Afro-Americans. In the following pages we have attempted to reconstruct the diversity of neighborhoods that existed during this earlier period and, at the same time, establish a clearer perspective on the historical relationship between the Afro-American community and that part of the city known as the Northeast Area.

Juniper

The Juniper Gardens housing development, which is located east of 3rd Street between Stewart and Jersey Creek, had its residential origins at the time of the Exodus. A large number of the refugees established themselves in that location immediately after having set foot on the Kansas side of the river. They formed a large encampment alongside a stand of willows that lined the riverbank, just north of the mouth of Jersey Creek. They had selected a flat, rather marshy area located in the northeast corner of the original Wyandott townsite. Most of the new inhabitants had come from Mississippi, and the settlement was sometimes called *Mississippi Town* in recognition of that fact. It

[1]State Census 1885, ward statistics for Wyandotte County.

was more commonly known as *Juniper,* however, in honor of a favorite tree that grows in Mississippi. (In the southern ante-bellum dialect that was common among the residents, the name was pronounced *Junikie.*) The Exodusers were permitted to occupy land in this area on a squatters' basis. The houses in that vicinity were built by the Wyandots and were old by the time the Exodus occurred. When available, these houses could be obtained relatively cheaply. In most instances, however, the new inhabitants could neither find nor afford existing houses, and were thus required to build their own on empty lots within the area. At the outset, many erected makeshift tents and lean-tos, but these provisional shelters were rather quickly replaced by more durable structures which could withstand the severe weather. Most of the early houses in Juniper were built out of scavenged tin and lumber, and generally consisted of two to three rooms arranged in a long rectangle ("shotgun" style). The houses were set close together in a grid that was three blocks deep and extended from Jersey Creek north to Stewart Avenue. The settlement was well serviced by public transportation. The Brighton Hill and Chelsea Park Railroad ran across one corner of the area. A streetcar line, which linked Lafayette Avenue (Quindaro Boulevard) on the north and the west bottoms on the south, cut through the neighborhood on a diagonal and daily carried a large proportion of the residents to and from work.

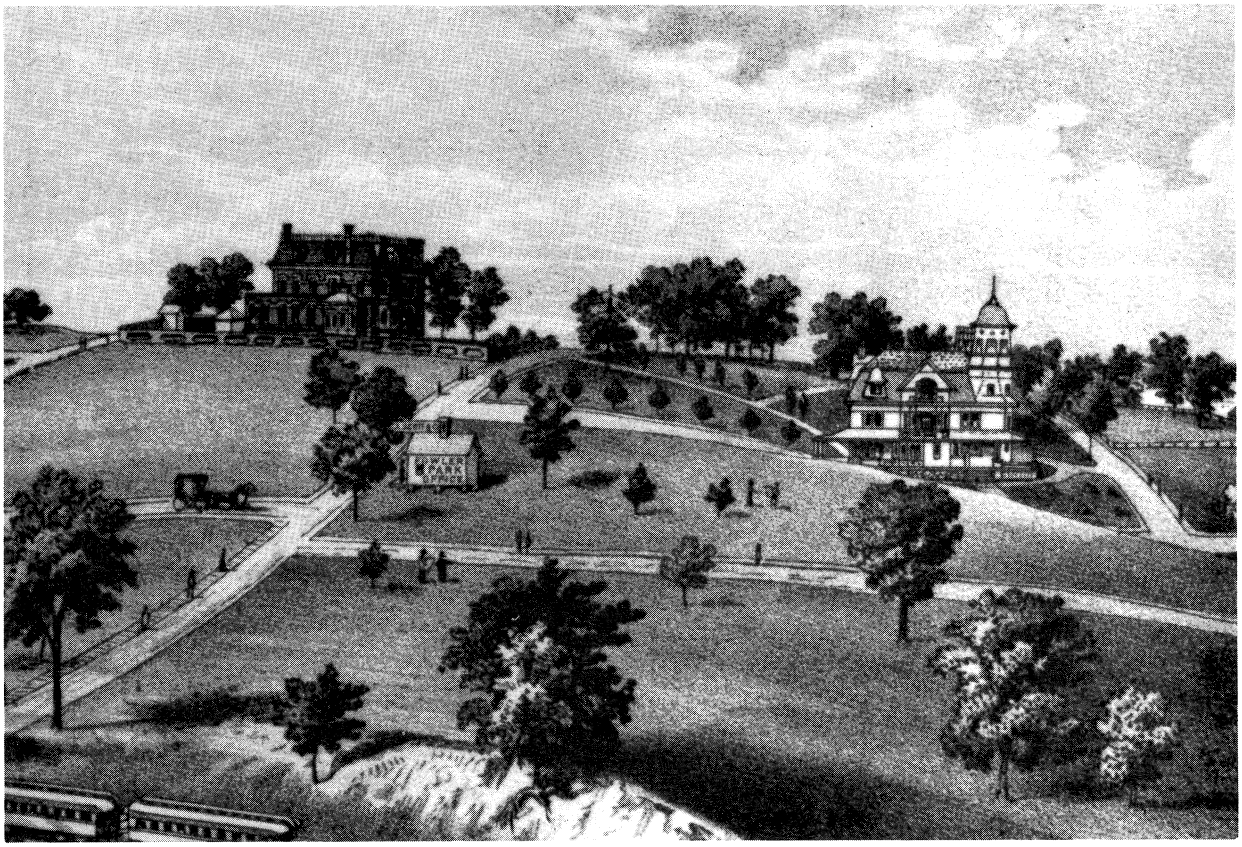
Most of the men in Juniper were employed either in the packinghouses or for the railroads. At that time, the packinghouses didn't employ women, but a number of wives earned money doing washing and ironing. The children helped out by gleaning grain from freightcars and collecting coal and driftwood from the railyards and riverbank. Most families in Juniper had livestock, usually chickens or hogs. Some people were fortunate enough to own cows or horses, and with a horse or two, it was possible to earn money by doing hauling.

Gardens were a major factor in nearly every family's household economy. In the rich soil of the river bottoms, people planted patches of sweet potatoes, okra, blackeyed peas, and other vegetables. The gardens did not adjoin the houses, but were located in a large common area that had been chopped out of the willows which grew between the settlement and the river bank. Individual families set aside their own plots and identified them with some type of marker.

For many years, Juniper afforded a remarkably rural lifestyle within a short distance of the industrial and commercial centers of the city. By living in Juniper, families were to some extent able to offset the low wages they took in as domestics and unskilled laborers. They were also better able to preserve their rural traditions and take advantage of agricultural skills they had brought with them from the South. There were, nonetheless, serious drawbacks to living in Juniper. Because of the low-lying terrain, there were continual problems with flooding. The narrow roads were frequently impassable due to muddy conditions, and it was not possible to maintain proper sanitation. Although there were many people who chose to remain in spite of these problems, many others found it more desirable to move away as soon as they could afford to live elsewhere. To the south of Juniper, on the other side of Jersey Creek, was the downtown area of Wyandotte, where there were still many old houses that had been part of the original settlement. The First Baptist Church and the earliest Afro-American primary school had been built in this vicinity, and this was an area where former residents of Juniper could easily relocate.

Rattlebone Hollow

Another area that drew substantial numbers of Afro-American residents was situated several blocks north and west of Juniper, just beyond the Oak Grove Cemetery. It was called Rattlebone Hollow and was inhabited by recently arrived German and Slavic immigrants as well as by Afro-Americans. This area was developed gradually, beginning probably at the time of the Exodus. Very little is known about who built the first houses or of the actual sequence of occupation.



FOWLER AND BARTLES RESIDENCES, circa 1886

Rattlebone Hollow included all the area extending south from the Missouri Pacific tracks to Haskell, which at that time was the only paved street. It was bounded on the east by 4th Street and the west by 7th Street. Although located at a considerable distance from downtown and the stockyards, there was a streetcar stop nearby at 5th and Lafayette (Quindaro). The settlement was tucked away in the northeasternmost corner of the city. To the south lay the estates of James McGrew, Col. Edgerton, and George Fowler—three of the most wealthy and powerful men in the city at that time. The stately homes of other well-to-do citizens were scattered through the area that separated Rattlebone Hollow from Juniper. Families of immigrant shop-keepers, many of whom were Jewish, were located along 5th Street south of Haskell, and on Greeley between 4th and 5th. Catholic immigrants and native-born whites lived in the area further to the west, their numbers increasing after St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church was built at 7th and Quindaro in 1907. During that period, this whole section of the city was a patch-work quilt of ethnic groups and income levels with housing that ranged from very sub-standard to the princely splendor of Fowler's mansion (located where Northeast Jr. High School now stands).

The houses in Rattlebone Hollow were somewhat larger than those in Juniper, and although not lavish, were of relatively sturdy construction. The houses were laid out according to the requirements of the terrain which consisted of steep hills and ravines that were part of the lower reaches of the Missouri River bluffs. Many of the structures were erected on basement foundations that were cut out of the sides of the hills. Those on the down-sides of the hills were often situated well below the line of the street, with steps leading down to the front doors.

Like Juniper, Rattlebone Hollow supported a semi-agricultural lifestyle. Assorted livestock were kept by the families in this area, and gardens were planted wherever there was a patch of land.

Across the Missouri Pacific tracks, larger gardens were carved out of the willows covering the u-shaped floodplain presently occupied by the Fairfax Industrial District. Partly because of its remote location, the residents of Rattlebone Hollow developed into a tight-knit community. In conversation with older people who grew up in Rattlebone Hollow, many expressed a strong fondness for their memories of the place and the neighbors they had known there.

There are three competing versions of how Rattlebone Hollow was named. While it is not possible to determine which of these accounts provides the most authentic explanation, each offers a somewhat different insight into what life in the neighborhood was like.

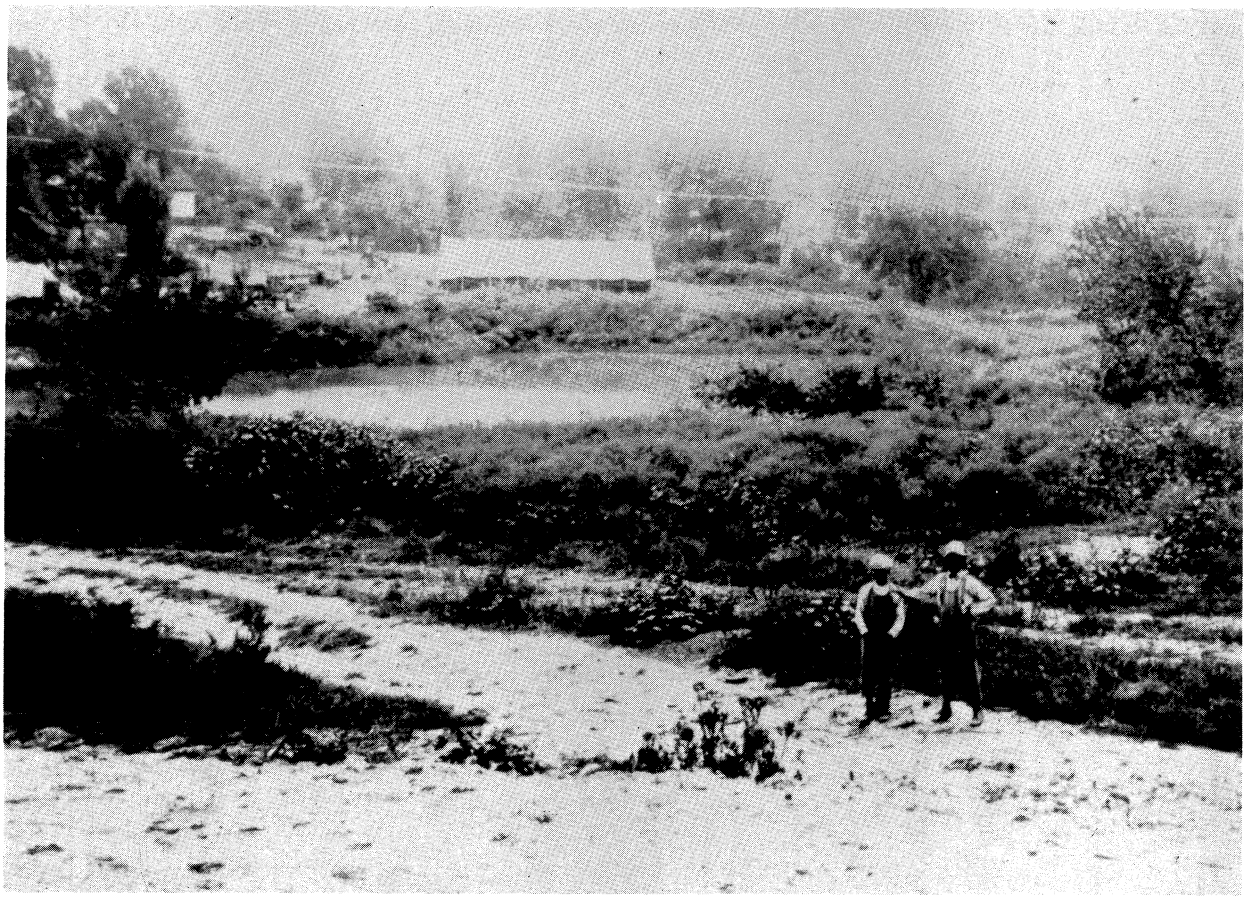
The first version was told in 1911 by Mr. Granville Morgan Sr., and provides confirmation that the different ethnic groups who once lived together in this area were able to recognize their common problems and work together to find solutions for some of them. Nearly all of the heads of the households in Rattlebone Hollow worked in the packinghouses and earned wages that were scarcely adequate to provide good nutrition for their families. In the early days of meatpacking, there were many unused by-products from the plants—organs, tails, snouts, feet, etc. These kinds of meat were not considered worth shipping to eastern markets, so they were routinely discarded. Although such cuts may have been unappealing to restaurant owners and middle-class homemakers, both foreign-born and southern-born packinghouse workers were less selective in their tastes. In addition, both groups had traditionally subsisted on this type of meat and were well-acquainted with methods of preparation that could make it palatable. Two of the older workers who lived in Rattlebone Hollow—one Polish, the other an Afro-American preacher—went together and met with the superintendents of Armour's and Fowler's packing plants, asking to have the unwanted meat products for the families in the area. Both companies agreed to the request, and thereafter wagonloads of entrails and bones were brought into the settlement twice a week. The women of the neighborhood would meet the wagons at various points and load their shares into dishpans. They reportedly could tell when the wagon was approaching in the distance, because when the wheels bounced along the hilly unpaved streets, they could hear the bones rattling against the sideboards.

The second version also traces the origin of the name to meat bones from the packinghouses. This story was recounted in 1912 by a Mr. Fitzgerald, who lived on the southeast corner of 6th and Rowland. In this instance, the bones were used as musical instruments in the churches. In those days the small Afro-American congregations could rarely afford organs. In the South it had been customary for the men to carry two or three beef ribs with them to church in order to provide a percussion accompaniment for the singing. This practice had been continued among some of those who had come to the neighborhood and, according to the story, the sound of rib bones rattling in cadence with the spirituals being sung inside the church was how the nieghborhood got its name.

The final version was told in 1916 by George Bohannon, who was a gambler. According to his account, the name originated with a group of young men who used to assemble each Friday and Saturday on the corner of 5th and Haskell, just outside of a small grocery store owned by a Jewish imigrant. The purpose of these weekend meetings was to hold crap games—a form of recreation that was not strictly legal. The proprietor of the store would occasionally join the game, and the players always kept alert for the possible approach of a constable. The route to watch was down Haskell, which was then paved with broad flint bricks. As soon as anyone heard the sound of horse's hooves on the pavement, they were ready to scramble out of sight. If the approaching rider proved to be one of the mounted policemen who rode that beat, some would sound the phrase "rattle dem bones," which meant a speedy exit was in order.

The Third Ward

There were many Afro-Americans living in the area to the north of State Avenue between 7th and 10th Streets. This area was commonly referred to as the "Third Ward," as it was part of that political



BIG ELEVEN LAKE, LOOKING SOUTH FROM WASHINGTON BLVD., circa 1910

sub-section of the city. As had been the case with Rattlebone Hollow, residential patterns in this neighborhood were racially integrated from the beginning and remained so throughout the period that preceded the First World War. This was a particularly old section of the city, and was an area where Afro-Americans were living well before the Exodus. The earliest of these residents were probably members of the Eighth Street Christian Church, which was established at 8th and Everett in 1869.

The terrain in this area was not quite as uneven as that in Rattlebone Hollow, but was, nonetheless, quite hilly. As one example, the Rose Hill Baptist Church at 823 New Jersey was situated atop a knoll that was twenty-seven steps up from the street. (The church's name came from the fact that this hill was covered with wild roses.) The Kansas Insitution for the Education of the Blind was located on top of another hill on the corner of 11th and State. Across the street there was a large pond, which today is known as Big Eleven Lake. Originally, there were numerous ponds and sloughs throughout this general area. Some of these bodies of water had been created by filling for streets, which effectively dammed the flow of a small tributary which ran diagonally northeastward through the area on its way to Jersey Creek. This stream was fed by underground springs and natural run-off from the hillsides. The streets were platted in a grid-like fashion, but the hills, hollows, and ponds had to undergo considerable filling and grading before actual development could be accomplished according to that layout. In 1886, only about one-third of the lots had structures on them; but as the city continued to expand westward, the empty spaces were gradually filled in.

Much of the development in the Third Ward occurred around the turn of the century, which was a boom period in residential building. Movement into the area was particularly stimulated by the Flood of 1903, which convinced a great many people that they should live somewhere else besides Armourdale, the west bottoms, or Juniper. Several different types of houses were constructed within this area. Most were small three or four room frame cottages, which speculators built for sale or rent to the families of industrial workers. Other houses were of more substantial construction and were more comfortably appointed. They were built for the growing middle class, which consisted of skilled craftsmen, tradesmen, clerks, teachers, etc.

With few exceptions, houses in the Third Ward were made available to whomever had the money to buy them, regardless of race. Although most of the contractors and real estate brokers were white, two apartment buildings (located at 11th and Washington Boulevard) were built by Nat Singletary, an Afro-American entrepeneur and real estate broker. H. F. Johnson, a retired grocer who had come with the Exodus, owned property in this area, as did C. H. Gordon. The latter was a Union Army veteran who settled in Kansas City, Kansas not long after the war, and managed to acquire a good deal of real estate. In 1890, he owned sixteen lots located in the Third Ward and in the area to the south of Juniper.

Another Afro-American who was involved in the local housing construction business was a Mr. Krump, who lived in the 900 block of Walker. His enterprise was an ingenious one that made good use of the natural resources of the neighborhood. For many years, he earned a reasonable living and was able to put his son through college by selling water that he got from the pond across from the Blind School. His customers were plasterers and masons at construction sites, who were willing to pay 25

SINGLETARY APARTMENTS, 1058 - 1060 WASHINGTON BLVD.

cents a barrel for water to mix with lime and mortar. Several times daily, Mr. Krump would fill four large pickle barrels with water from the pond, load them on a wagon, and drive to the various building sites. His old buckskin horse became so accustomed to this routine that the animal learned how to automatically back the wagon up to the exact spot in the lake where the filling process could be most easily done, thus enabling more trips and increasing the profitability of the operation.

In general, the occupations of the Afro-American households in this section of the city were more diversified than was the case in Juniper or Rattlebone Hollow. There were more teachers, lawyers, doctors, and businessmen living in this area, although there were representatives of these vocations in the other areas as well. It was still the case that the majority of Afro-Americans who lived in the Third Ward were laborers, but often they had been in the city longer than their counterparts who lived in or near the river bottoms.

Hogg Town

A very different sort of settlement that arose following the Exodus was named Hogg Town, and was situated on what are now the grounds of Kensington Park. Hogg Town was founded by the five Hogg brothers, Tom, Sam, Hezekia, Green, and Ephraim. They were salvage men who collected old rags, bones, bottles, and anything that was of even marginal value. Particularly valuable items included tin, tar paper and grain doors, which were the materials most needed by home builders in Juniper and the west bottoms. Sometime in the late 1880s, the Hoggs acquired selling rights to a parcel of land which they divided into a number of homesites. Their subdivision was located about a mile west of what was then the city limits (between 29th and 31st, just north of State Avenue).

Prospective buyers of lots in Hogg Town had to meet two criteria in order to qualify. They had to be Baptist, and at least one member of the family had to be very dark-complected—i.e. pure African in appearance. (This was, ironically, one of the earliest residential developments in the area to adopt a formal restrictive covenant based on ancestry and religion.)

The Hogg brothers supplied the building materials and assisted with labor on the houses that were constructed in their colony. At the completion of each structure, the new residents were given a little black pig, as a symbolic gesture and as a donation toward future subsistence. From all accounts, the settlement did well in the early years. In addition to the homes, gardens, and livestock, Hogg Town included the Greater Jerusalem Baptist Church and a grocery store. As the city expanded westward, the settlement was brought close to a car line stop, which better enabled the residents to travel to work in the packinghouses.

It is not possible to estimate what Hogg Town might have become. In 1909, it was part of an annexation to the city, and seven years later was condemned to make way for Kensington Park. The residents were dislocated and the church was moved to 13th and Ann. Some of the people from Hogg Town then settled in that area. Others moved out to the countryside around Edwardsville. This would, unfortunately, not be the last such upheaval experienced by Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas.

Quindaro

Of all the major Afro-American residential areas in the county, Quindaro was the most longstanding. Its development, particularly in the years that preceeded the Exodus, was essentially separate from that of the group in Wyandotte. There had been a heavy movement of Afro-Americans, consisting of between fifty and one hundred families, into Quindaro township just after the Civil War. The farmland and homesites in the vicinity of the abandoned town were rapidly occupied

during this early period. With most of the available land having already been taken, there were few remaining opportunities for newcomers to establish themselves there in the years that followed. As a consequence, the Afro-American population of Quindaro was quite stable and did not experience much of an increase, even after the Exodus. Virtually all of the Afro-Americans who originally settled in Quindaro had come from Missouri. Many of the inhabitants had formerly been slaves near Parkville or Weston, and there were also many who had earlier lived in Kentucky. Before the Civil War, tobacco cultivation was introduced in the vicinity of Weston. The labor for this enterprise was furnished by scores of Kentucky slaves, who had previously lived on tobacco plantations in that state. As a result, the people who lived in Quindaro had an unusually long history of shared experiences.

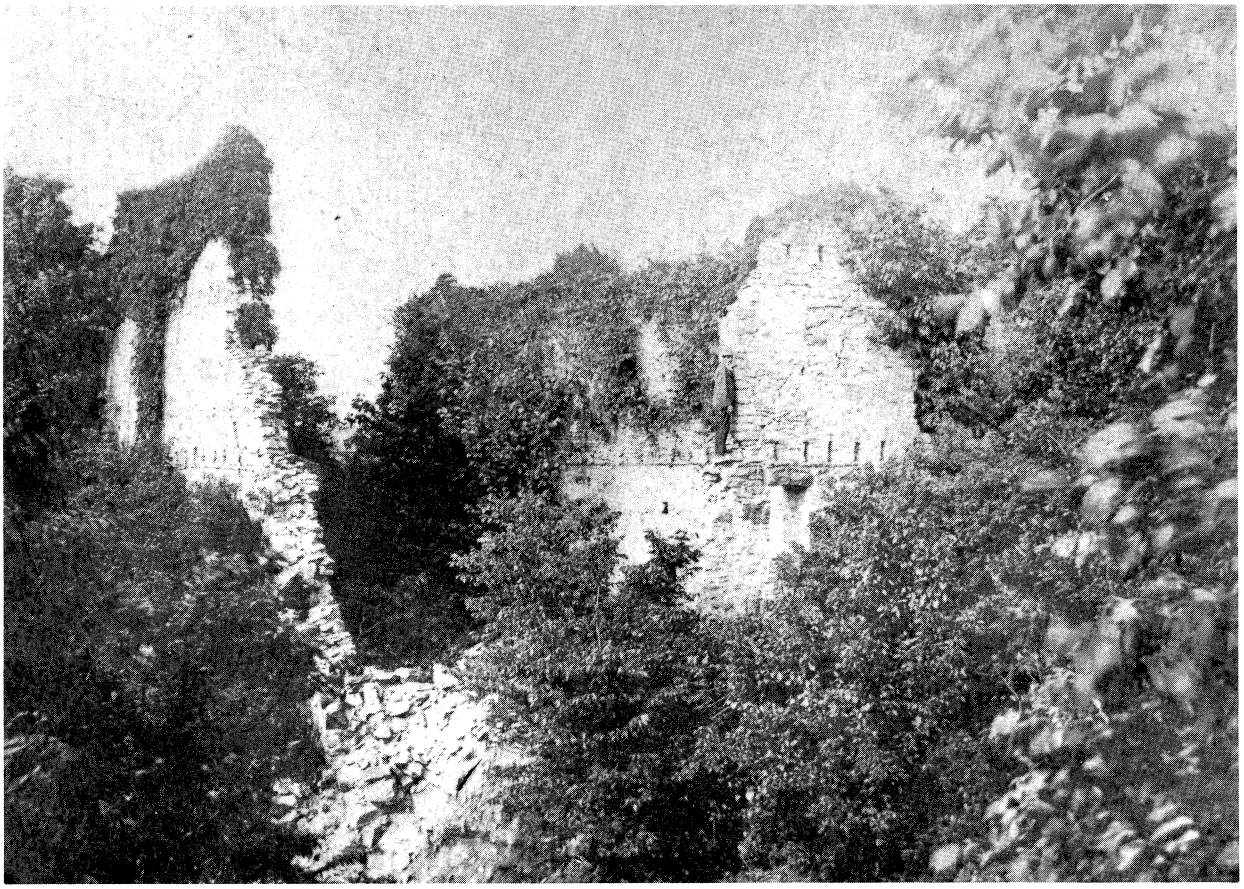
Virtually all of the people in Quindaro earned their livelihood by farming. Most operated family truck gardens, which were planted along strips of land in the wooded hillsides on either side of Bell Crossing Drive, and to the east of the old Quindaro townsite. The farmers grew berries and a large variety of vegetables, and livestock was also kept. A number of men earned wages from laboring in the nearby fields and orchards, but industrial employment in Kansas City, Kansas was too far away to be feasible. All the while the city to the east was growing and changing, Quindaro remained a remote and fairly self-contained rural settlement.

Freedman's University provided the link that eventually joined the two areas together. Between 1867 and 1873, the school continued to function as a state supported normal institute. In 1872 there had been an enrollment of eighty-three students. The following year, however, grasshoppers inflicted such extreme damage on the agricultural output of Kansas (and thus the state's economy) that state revenues were withdrawn. With the loss of this support, enrollment declined; and with the death of Reverend Blachly in 1877, the school seemed to be doomed as well. Prior to his death, Reverend Blachly deeded the school property to the trustees of the school. Members of the AME church in Quindaro (Allen Chapel AME) attempted to keep the school in operation, but they were seemingly waging an uphill battle against insolvency.

In 1879 a mortgage was taken out on the school property in order to keep the institution going. That action coincided with the Exodus, an event that perhaps served to underscore the need for additional educational facilities for Afro-Americans in Kansas. Corrvine Patterson and B. F. Watson (both Afro-Americans) were residents of Wyandotte who had been particularly active in Exodus relief efforts. They joined together with the people of Quindaro, and in 1880 won endorsement by the Kansas Conference of the AME Church to establish a church affiliated school on the site of Freedman's University.

Even with the much needed sponsorship, the school was very nearly lost in that same year. Apparently, the trustees had decided to give up on Freedman's in any case, and to sell the 700 acre tract of land which belonged to the school. The loss of the property was prevented by a 50-year old woman named "Aunt" Mahalia Endicott. As a long time resident of Quindaro and an active member of the AME Church, Mrs. Endicott had known that a number of Reverend Blachly's papers were still in the possession of John McAffee, president and founder of Park College in Parkville. When she heard that the trustees were planning to sell the land, she drove her horse and carriage over to Parkville (a full day's drive back then), and succeeded in obtaining documents which apparently disclosed Reverend Blachly's plans to have 133 acres perpetually set aside for the school. She was thereby able to persuade the trustees to turn that part of the land over to the AME conference. In the following year (1881), the school was officially chartered as a vocational/college preparatory institute, and renamed Western University. (It was, at that time, the only AME sponsored school located west of the Mississippi River.) For her efforts, Mahalia Endicott was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the school.

The growth and contributions of Western University will be discussed in some detail in a later section. At issue here is the school's relationship to the settlement at Quindaro, and the role Western



RUINS OF THE QUINDARO HOUSE HOTEL, 1907

played in cementing ties between the people who lived in its vicinity and those who lived in Kansas City, Kansas. The school had always been a focal point of the Quindaro settlement. It originated to provide an education for the children of ex-slaves who had escaped (and later migrated) into the area. Reverend Blachly was truly loved by the people he served. For the many who had spent a lifetime of despair, his efforts represented the first tangible reason to believe that progress and prosperity were possible. This was why the school was so important to the people who lived in this area—why they were willing to work so hard in order to save it. With the reorganization of Freedman's into Western, the school became an even more prominent feature within the area. As enrollments and faculty increased, the population of Quindaro shifted from being predominantly agricultural to having a heavy representation of educators, administrators, and theologians.

Although many of the young people who grew up in Quindaro attended Western, it was a boarding school which drew heavily from out-of-state, via a national AME recruiting network. (In later years, there were also students from several African countries enrolled at Western.) Recruiting was particularly effective among potential students in nearby Kansas City, Kansas. The First AME Church of Kansas City, Kansas maintained a close relationship with the school, and in general there was considerable interaction among clergymen and eduators from Quindaro and Kansas City, Kansas.

The campus was set on high ground overlooking the Missouri River. Clearly visible in the distance was the former slave-holding town of Parkville, and the shoreline of the river where scores of slaves at one time furtively boarded boats and made their way to Kansas and freedom. The people who lived

in Quindaro were very conscious of the role this area played in the anti-slavery struggle, and this legacy was mentioned frequently in promotional circulars for Western University. Children from the area played in caves in the side of the river bluff, where they sometimes found evidence of the earlier presence of runaway slaves.[1] The overgrown ruins of the abolitionist town and the romantic stories that were told about the area gave the residents of Quindaro a special feeling about their neighborhood, and a strong sense of continuity with their forebears who had first found freedom there.

Conclusions

The residential areas where Afro-Americans lived at the turn of the century were both varied and scattered. The diversity of neighborhoods was a direct reflection of the diversity of the Afro-American community itself. Then (as now), the Afro-American population in Kansas City, Kansas was comprised of people with many different backgrounds who came from many different parts of the country. Moreover, they had arrived in the city at staggered intervals beginning before the Civil War. By the turn of the century, a substantial number of Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas were already third generation residents, whereas there were also a sizeable number who had only recently arrived. With the major exceptions of the settlers at Quindaro and the Exodusers who occupied Juniper, Afro-American migrants who settled in Kansas City, Kansas usually consisted of lone individuals or small family groups who initially settled wherever they were able to find lodging. Those who found jobs in the packinghouses or the railyards commonly secured housing near to where they worked. If they had friends or relatives living in some other part of the city, they might stay first with them, and move to another house in that location when something became available. So long as there were no constraints on occupancy within a particular area (through restrictive covenants, for example), Afro-Americans selected the housing and locations best suited to their individual needs and circumstances.

Gardens and livestock were common features in all the different neighborhoods where Afro-Americans lived at the turn of the century. The Third Ward was somewhat more urbanized than the other areas, but even there most people had food gardens and at least a few chickens. This ability to combine subsistence horticulture with the low and undependable wages that were paid by the packinghouses enabled many families to survive hard times or to consolidate savings during good times.

Much of the neighborhood social life consisted of visiting among workers as they walked to and from the street car, or while they were doing gardening or chores. Children played together and families got to know each other through their children. A common form of entertainment was family group singing, where everyone gathered around and harmonized while one member played the reed organ. But the most significant neighborhood social activities were those sponsored by the churches.

RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Afro-American social and cultural expressions have historically been centered in the churches. Long before emancipation, the church was an institution that supplied an alternative to the organized activities of the society at large, from which Afro-Americans had been systematically excluded. With the persistence of segregation, it continued to serve that purpose, and religion has

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[1]These caves were the apparent source of the persistent legend of an escape tunnel under the Missouri River, an engineering feat that would have been impossible in the Quindaro of the 1850s.

played a major role in defining and shaping a broad range of Afro-American cultural traditions. One example is the uniquely beautiful music that originated in the suffering of slavery and has been given continued expression in the music of church choirs. Within the social and civic realm, several of the churches held regular forums for debates and discussions of current topics and community problems. Literary and dramatic societies were formed within the churches to provide for both improvement in reading skills and the enjoyment of literature. Also among the early organizations of the churches were sewing circles and missionary societies, in which members donated their time to raise funds and give assistance to those in the community who were in need of material or spiritual support. In a similar fashion, the pastors of the Afro-American churches occupied a unique multi-faceted position within the community, and frequently stepped forward to provide leadership in temporal as well as religious matters.

Prior to the Exodus, there had been five Afro-American churches in Wyandotte and Quindaro. By 1900, the number had grown to fourteen. Earlier, the Baptist, Methodist, and Christian (Disciples of Christ) denominations were represented. Although the number of churches increased considerably, the denominational breakdown remained unchanged, except for the addition of an Afro-American mission sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese. The number of Baptist churches grew from two to nine; there were two more Methodist churches established; and one more that was Disciples of Christ. The many different Afro-American churches were yet another reflection of the diversity that has characterized the Afro-American community. At the same time, there were many common features in the development and organization of the different churches, owing largely to the social conditions and historical background that all Afro-Americans shared.

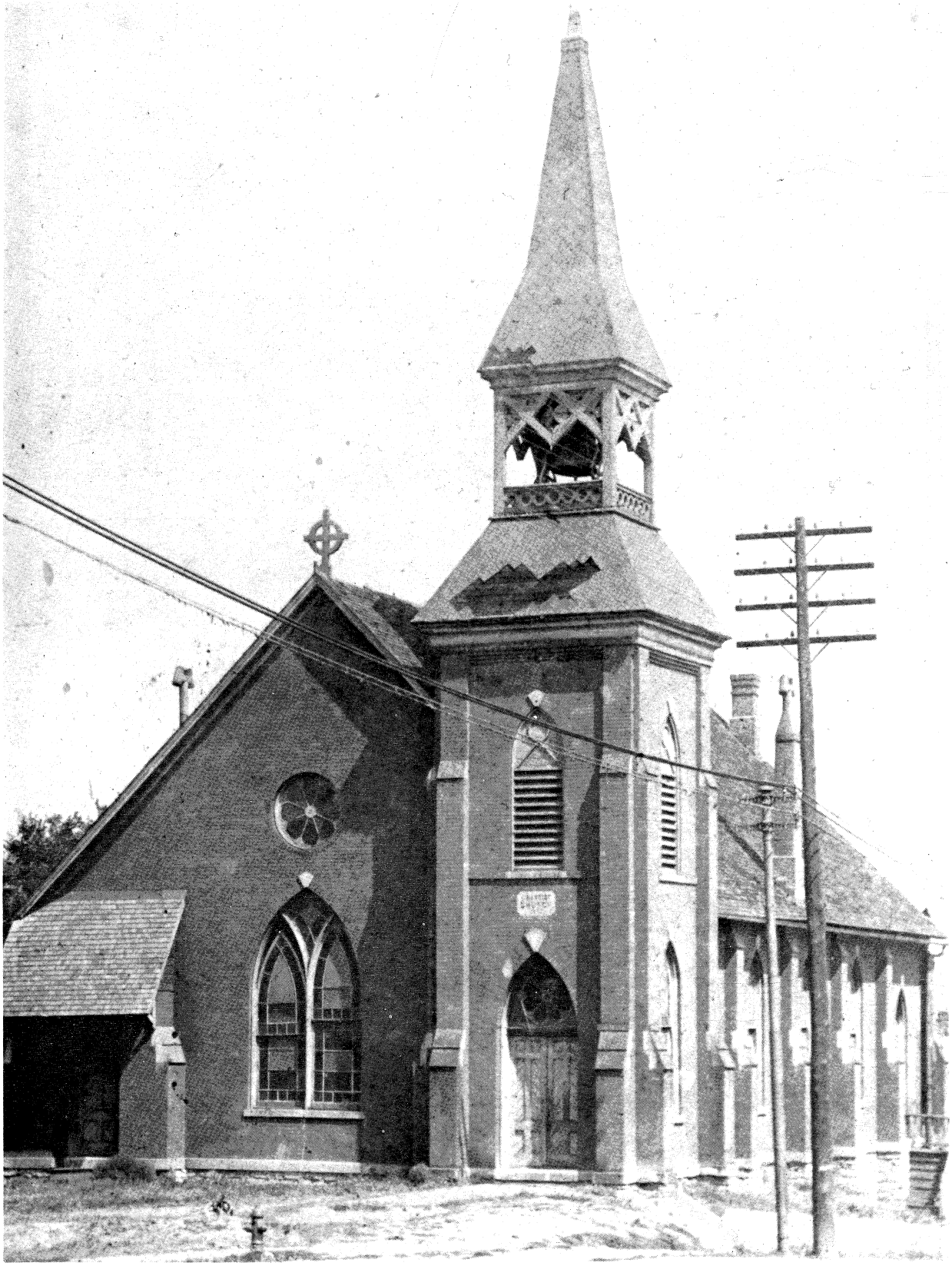
The individual congregations were the principal units of social organization within the Afro-American community. Outside of the family, church acquaintances formed the major source of social contact. Sunday was the day of the week that everyone looked forward to, because the church services and activities which continued on through the day enabled people to come together after the week's work, and enjoy each other's company. Formally and informally, much information was exchanged, and decisions were made concerning group projects. The congregations comprised relatively small groups; the largest ones having 200-300 members, and the smallest consisting of a few families. Under the circumstances, people got to know each other quite well. Moreover, there was a high degree of lay involvement in all of the churches, and particularly among the Baptists, where the congregations had the authority to hire and fire the pastor.

Baptist

At the turn of the century, Baptist congregations accounted for more than half of the Afro-American churches in Kansas City, Kansas. The First Baptist Church at 5th and Nebraska was, literally, the first Baptist church to have been built in the city. There were in fact three Afro-American Baptist churches in Wyandotte prior to the establishment of the first white Baptist church in 1882.[1] Baptist has always been the most populous denomination among Afro-Americans, and within urban communities there have traditionally been a large number of distinct Baptist congregations. This proliferation comes partly from a built-in tendency for Baptist churches to "split," often when they reach a size where it is difficult for all the members to get to know each other well. Of the seven Afro-American Baptist churches in Kansas City, Kansas at the turn of the century, at least three were the products of splits in the earlier congregations.

The First Baptist Church, which was formed in 1859, was referred to earlier in connection with the pre-Civil War community. The first pastor was Rev. Joe Straighter. After the war (in 1866) there

[1]Cowick, pg. 25. There was, however, a Swedish Baptist church in Kansas City, Kansas (the west bottoms).



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 6th and NEBRASKA, 1880

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 5th and NEBRASKA, 1915
Ernest O. Brostrom, architect

were a sufficiently large number of Afro-American Baptists in the city to erect a separate church—a frame structure in the 600 block of Nebraska. It was a small building, only 23 x 36 feet, but it served the congregation adequately until the Exodus, when the church swelled—first with refugees and later with new members. It was in 1879, the year of the Exodus, that the pastor Rev. F. D. Ewing was called to the First Baptist Church. During the nine years he served as leader of the church, a new, larger building was constructed, and an organ was purchased. It was also during his administration that the first literary society was formed. The group gave musical and dramatic performances for the congregation. One example was the presentation of a cantata entitled "Queen Esther." The church experienced a split not long after Rev. Ewing's death in 1888, but the First Baptist continued to grow and by 1900 had increased its organizations to include a Sewing Circle and a Missionary Society.

In 1906, the long administration of Rev. Bowren began. Rev. Bowren, who served until his death in 1933, has been described as the "pivotal minister" of the First Baptist Church.[1] An evangelist, he added many members during his long tenure and held the church together through the changes that followed World War I.

The second oldest Baptist Church in the city is Pleasant Green, which was begun in the west bottoms in 1867. Although the records are fragmentary, this church was formed by a group of southern migrants who arrived in the bottoms prior to the development of heavy industry in that

[1]Freeman, pg. 291

area. Their first pastor was Rev. I. H. Brown. Until 1879, the worshippers met in a small building that had previously been an ice house. The Exodus added greatly to the size of Pleasant Green, and they were able to erect a large frame building equipped with gas lights at 1st and Splitlog. Packinghouse workers and their families accounted for almost all the members of the Pleasant Green congregation.

In 1892, Rev. George McNeal was called to lead Pleasant Green. He had come with the Exodus and was on board the *Fannie Lewis* when it made its first stop on the Wyandotte levee. He never received a formal education, but through his own efforts was able to master the seventh-level reader. He was well-known as a man of courage and integrity, and his reputation and large following gained him considerable influence with city officials and business leaders of that period. He remained pastor of Pleasant Green until his death in 1933.

During his long tenure, the church expanded tremendously. In 1918, Rev. McNeal succeeded in pursuading the Fowler packing company to donate building materials for a new church at 4th and Oakland. The original structure had been damaged several times by floods and fire, and was situated very close to the railroad tracks. It had always been difficult for the pastor to be heard above the noise of the trains, and occasionally the congregation would get stuck inside the building after the end of the services, waiting for a long train to pass. These problems were eliminated with the completion of the new building, which is still a part of the present church at 4th and Oakland.

The church that is today known as the Walnut Boulevard Baptist Church was first established here by a congregation of Exodusers who had arrived as a group on board the steamship named *Grand Tower*. Their church originated before the Civil War in Louisiana, where the slaves on a plantation owned by a family named "Pollard" formed a congregation and called it the Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church. The first pastor was J. C. Pollard (he carried his master's surname). The church history for the Walnut Boulevard Baptist does not record why the group left Louisiana, but they do note that at the time of their arrival at the foot of Minnesota Avenue, they were greeted by Corrvine Patterson and a woman named Mrs. Benjamine who provided them with food and shelter.

The Mt. Pleasant congregation first worshipped under a brush arbor in Juniper, and then in a one-room building that was located in that same area. In the early 1890s, the church moved into a brick structure which is still standing on 3rd Street just to the south of Jersey Creek. The present structure, which is located on Springfield Boulevard at Parallel, was erected during the administration of Rev. J. R. Richardson who was called to lead the church in 1902. He had earlier served as pastor of the First Baptist Church following the death of Rev. Ewing. His tenure at Mt. Pleasant initially promised to be short, for in the beginning there was no money to sustain his salary. After two years, however, the congregation was able to clear the mortgage on their building and provide a living for their pastor. Rev. Richardson remained with the church until his death in 1936.

The name of the church was changed in 1918, when the congregation laid the corner stone for a new building at the corner of Walnut Boulevard and Parallel (Walnut Boulevard is now Springfield Boulevard). The unique architectural design of this building, which still serves the present congregation, was influenced by the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City. Rev. Richardson selected this circular design in order to be surrounded by the congregation while he preached.

Prior to the turn of the century, each of the three early Baptist churches (First Baptist, Pleasant Green and Mt. Pleasant), experienced a split which produced a series of new Baptist congregations in the city. The first of these was established in 1885, when the Rose Hill Baptist Church was founded at 823 New Jersey. This church was started by eight former members of the Pleasant Green Baptist Church who had moved from the bottoms into the Third Ward. The new congregation was led by Rev. Thomas Knapper Sr. who had been pastor of Pleasant Green just prior to the time they departed from that church. Meeting in a small frame structure on top of a rose-covered hill, the congregation held together but remained very small until the arrival of Rev. D. B. Jackson in 1900. Rev. Jackson was an

REVEREND GEORGE McNEAL
? - 1933

WALNUT BOULEVARD BAPTIST CHURCH, SPRINGFIELD and PARALLEL AVE., 1918

effective preacher who soon succeeded in adding sixty-six new members. In the following year, the congregation was able to purchase ground at 8th and Oakland, where the present church building stands.

The lot on which the church was to be built cost $400, and was initially scheduled to be paid off over a four-year period. Not wanting to wait that long to begin their new church, however, the congregation managed to pay the debt in just a little over a year. It nevertheless took quite a while longer before the church itself was completed. The foundation was begun in 1902, and the corner-stone was laid the following year. Work proceeded gradually for two more years, with members devoting spare time to laboring on the basement of the structure. The construction of the basement was completed in time for Christmas services in 1905. At that time, the congregation moved from its rose-covered hillside location and accordingly changed its name to the 8th Street Baptist Tabernacle. For several years thereafter, the congregation continued to worship in the basement of the unfinished structure, waiting until the treasury could again accumulate enough money to undertake construction. Finally, on the first of June, 1913, the auditorium of the church was completed.

Rev. D. B. Jackson pastored the 8th Street Tabernacle throughout the long effort to finance and build the church. His leadership enabled the worshippers to persevere and succeed in creating an institution that would meet their needs and endure to serve their children in a similar manner. Rev. Jackson, who had initially accepted the position as pastor without any dependable remuneration, was rewarded in the success of his congregation. He remained in that position until his death in 1936.

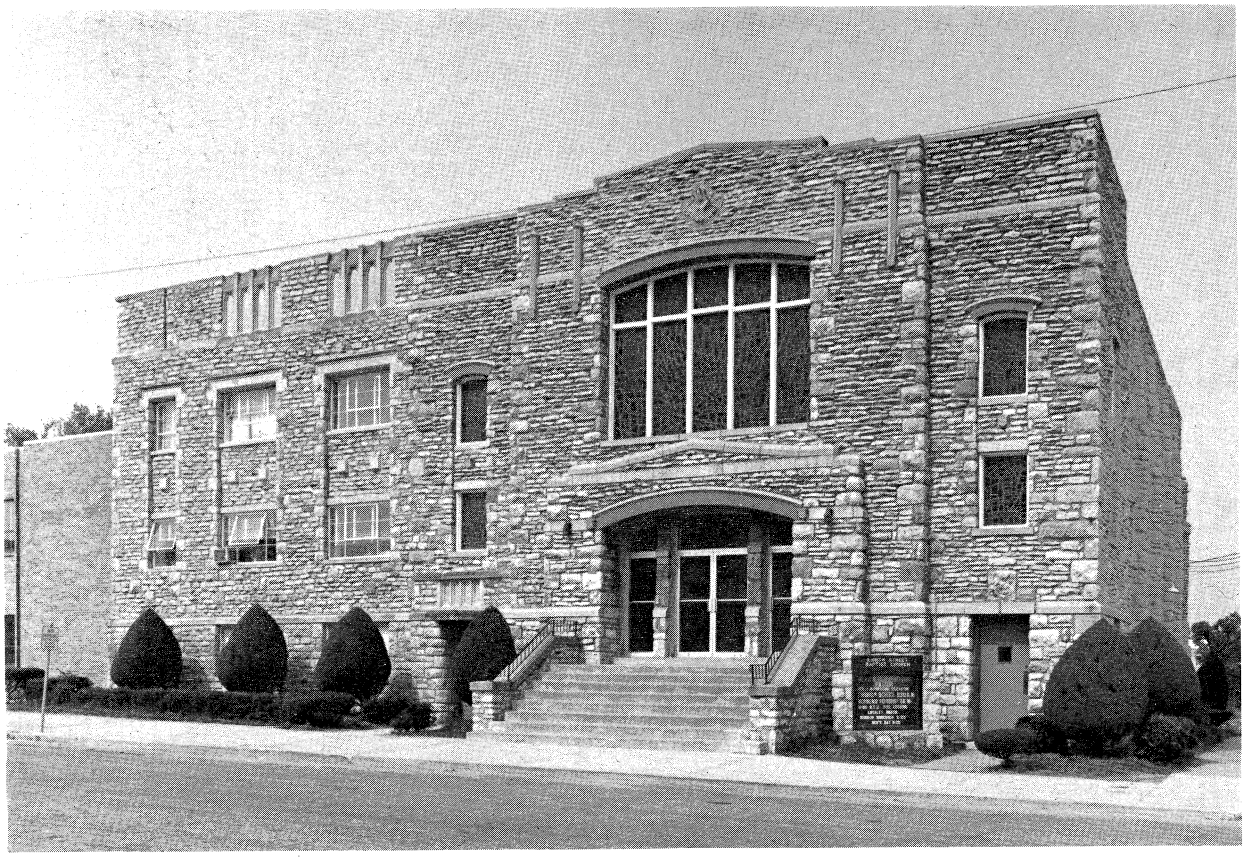
The Metropolitan Baptist Church at 9th and Washington Boulevard was established in 1890, following a split in the First Baptist Church. In February of that year, 118 members of the church

gathered at Dunning's Opera House at 4th and State in order to organize a new church. Two early benefactors of the church were Corrvine Patterson, who was then street comissioner, and Allen Garner Jr., who owned a large farm on the present site of Mt. Calvary cemetery.

The new congregation built a pretty frame church on 9th Street, near its intersection with Washington Boulevard. W. R. Boone was the first pastor, but he remained only a year and a half. Rev. E. A. Wilson was the pastor of that era who had the greatest longevity in the Metropolitan Baptist Church. Arriving in 1898, at the age of 21, he remained with the church until 1912. During that period, he added more than 400 new members and established a number of church organizations. Rev. Wilson was also active in state and national Baptist organizations, serving as president of the State Convention.

The membership of Metropolitan Baptist continued to grow after the departure of Rev. Wilson, and in 1916, the present structure was completed at a cost of $40,000. It was built on a site located just to the north of the earlier church. The lot on which the new church was built had previously been one of the many ponds in the area, most of which were drained and graded during this period.

The King Solomon Baptist Church, which is now located at 1947 North 3rd Street, originated in 1897, following a split in the Mt. Pleasant congregation. King Solomon was begun by thirty-four members of Mt. Pleasant who had developed serious disagreements with the policies of their pastor. The subject of the dispute is not known, but the conflict was significant enough to lead to a withdrawal of the dissenting members.



8th STREET BAPTIST TABERNACLE, 8th and OAKLAND, 1902 - 1913

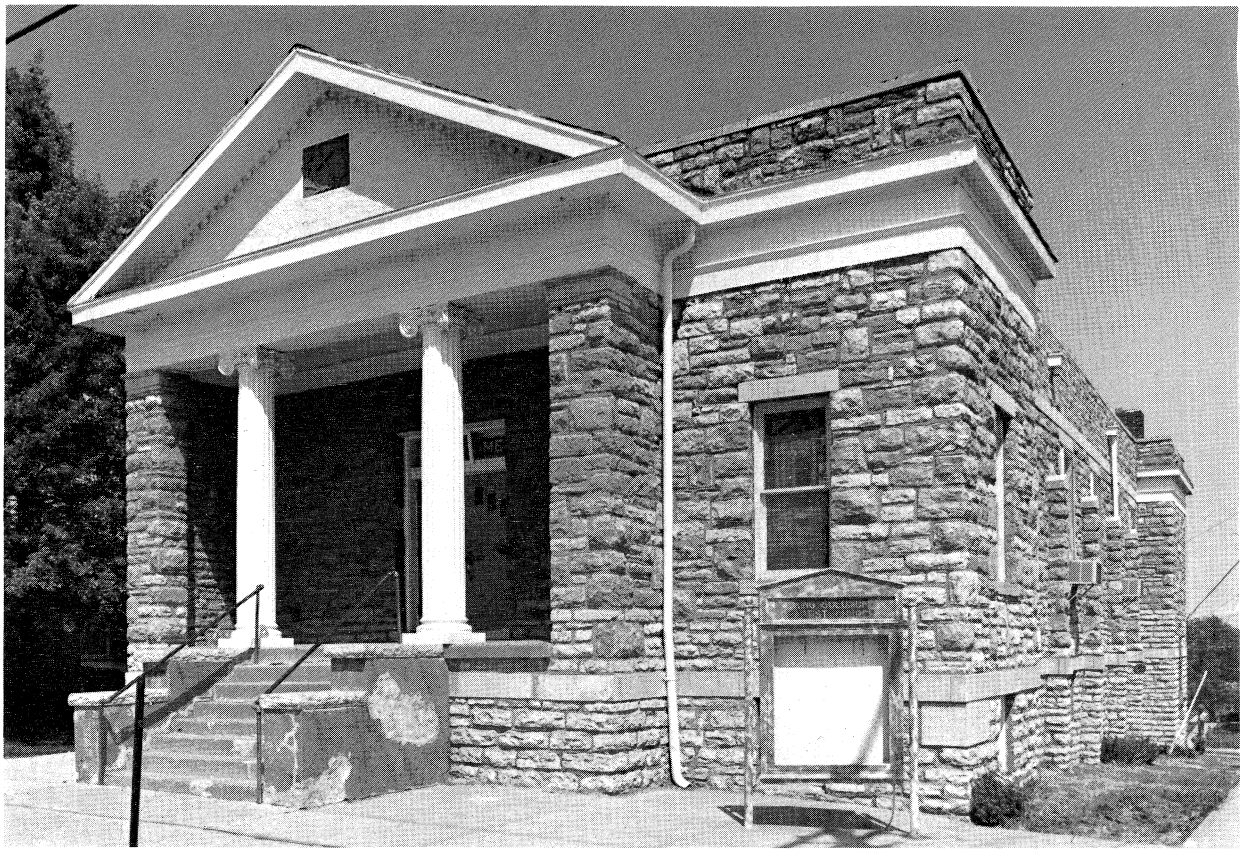
METROPOLITAN BAPTIST TEMPLE, 9th and WASHINGTON BLVD., 1916

The new congregation gathered initially in a meeting hall at 3rd and Nebraska that was known as "Lukebilt's Hall." Within a few weeks, however, they had managed to purchase a lot and building at 3rd and State. After a hasty remodeling of the structure, the first services were held. The assembled group voted to adopt the name King Solomon for their new church, and to call the Rev. Ephraim Green to be their first pastor. Under Rev. Green's direction, the congregation was soon able to construct a new church on their property. The King Solomon Baptist Church remained in that building (which was eventually demolished by Urban Renewal) until about 1917, when the congregation purchased a site at 3rd and Garfield on the edge of the Juniper settlement. A new, larger church was built at that location, which still serves the King Solomon congregation.

The Mt. Zion Baptist Church at 417 Richmond is another early Afro-American church in Kansas City, Kansas. It was first established at the present location in 1889, but very little has been recorded about this early period. It is known that the property was originally purchased for a sum of $125.00, and that the group met for many years in a small frame building located on the site. The present structure was built in 1918 under the direction of Rev. Mose Williams who served as pastor between 1913 and 1925.

Methodists

Historically, Methodists have been second only to Baptists in their numerical representation among Afro-Americans. The African Methodist Episcopal Church, which is the denomination of two of the oldest churches in Wyandotte County, was first established in Philadelphia in 1787. This



KING SOLOMON BAPTIST CHURCH, 3rd and GARFIELD, 1917

church, which was founded in protest against segregated conditions in the Methodist Episcopal Church of Philadelphia, comprised the earliest autonomous Afro-American organization to have nation-wide connections. In contrast to the Baptist mode of organization which is highly decentralized, the AME is a hierarchical church with a national headquarters (in Washington, D.C.), and a Conference of Bishops.

The First AME Church of Kansas City, Kansas (then named St. James AME) originated at the same time as the First Baptist, in 1859. Their earliest pastor was Brother Buchanan, a slave who had escaped from a plantation in Lexington, Missouri. He preached to the joint Baptist and Methodist congregations on alternating Sundays until after the Civil War, when the two denominations were able to establish separate churches. The original site of the First AME Church was at 7th and Ann on the southwest corner of Huron Place (now occupied by the Scottish Rite Temple).

Huron Place was originally intended to have a church on each of its four corners. The southwest corner had been given to the German Methodists by the Wyandots. It was overgrown with brush, and in those days was not easily accessible to the main part of the town. The German congregation declined to build their church on the site and instead gave the land to the First AME Church in 1863.

The AME congregation was glad to have the site, and quickly cleared it, using the timber and brush as building materials for their new church. Seats were constructed out of logs, and they left the stump of a very large tree inside the structure to serve as a pulpit. Upon completion of the church, the first services were held. The Methodists were joined on this occasion by Rev. Straighter and the

congregation of the First Baptist Church. This service marked the beginning of a tradition of annual joint fellowship (called the "Love Feast") between those two churches, which continues still.

The makeshift structure served the congregation for five years, until 1868, when two members who were carpenters designed and directed the construction of a new church building. Large numbers of freedmen, many of whom were Methodists, continued to arrive in the years that followed the Civil War. By 1873, the AME's again needed a larger building. This time, a brick structure was erected, and with the arrival of the Exodusers a few years later, the membership grew still more. Rev. B. F. Watson, pastor of the First AME at the time, became well known for his efforts to assist the refugees, and later testified before the Voorhees Committee of Congress which was convened to investigate the causes of the Exodus.

With the phenomenal growth of the city during the 1880s, the site occupied by the First AME church became a very central and valuable location. No formal title had been drawn up at the time the Germans transferred the land to the AME congregation. In 1887, amidst fears that powerful interests within the city were about to take the church property, the congregation was one day visited by several Indians who told the pastor (Rev. Booth) of the whereabouts of two men who had been trustees of the German Methodist Episcopal Church in Wyandotte at the time the land was given to the AME church. Rev. Booth immediately set forth on a journey to western Kansas, where he successfully located the two former trustees on a farm about forty miles from Nicodemus. From them, he obtained sworn affidavits concerning the AME's rightful claim to the land on which their

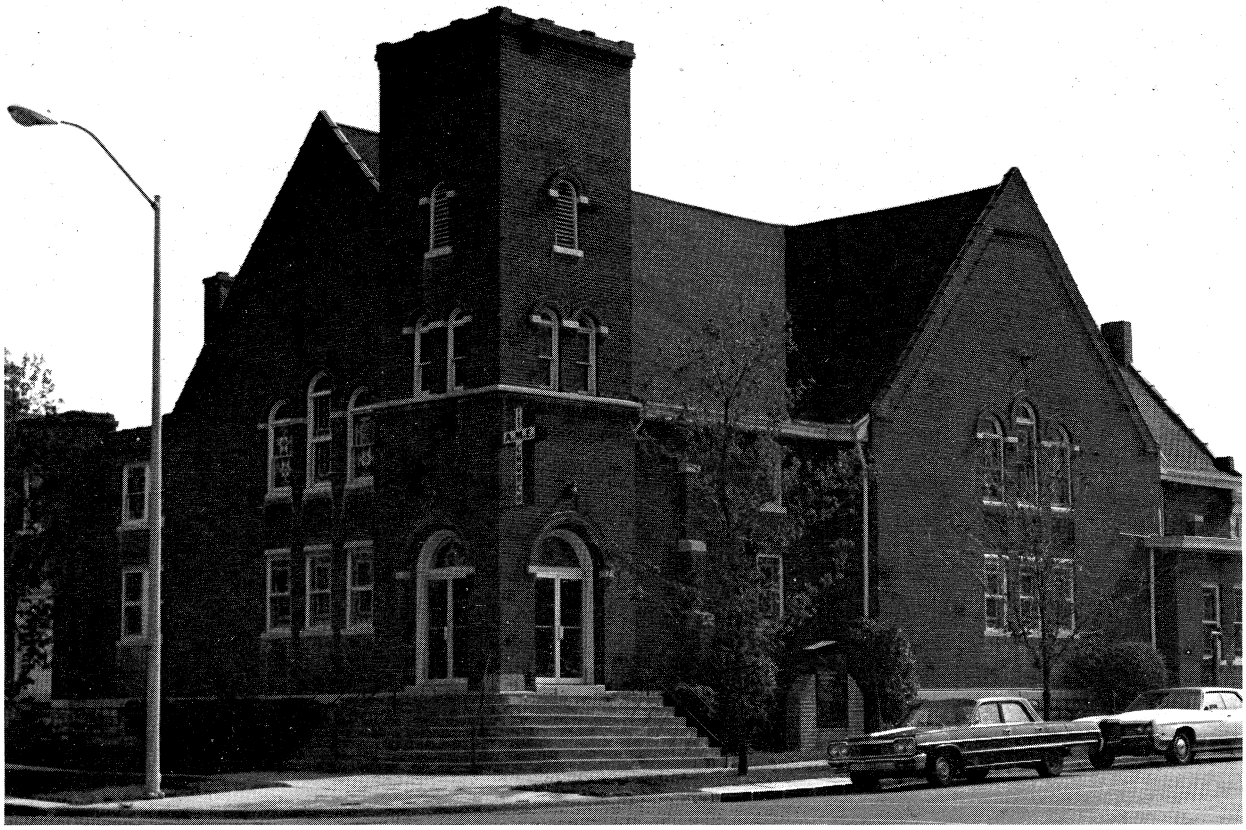
MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH, 417 RICHMOND, 1918

church stood. The documents successfully forestalled the loss of the property for thirteen years. In 1900, however, financial difficulties in the church and a directive from the bishop caused the plot of land in Huron Place to be sold. It was with considerable sadness, and some dissension among the members, that the original church property was given up. Ironically, the church building at 7th and Ann was completely destroyed shortly after its sale, when a fire that started in a street carnival spread to the building. With the proceeds from the sale, the AME congregation began construction on another building at 8th and Nebraska (the present location). The new church was completed in 1904.

It was in that same year that the Rev. Abraham Grant was made presiding Bishop of the Kansas AME conference. Rev. Grant, who lived at 532 Washington Boulevard, was one of the leading churchmen of his time and made numerous contributions to the local community. He was particularly concerned with education and served as president of the board of trustees at Western University. He successfully gained sponsorship from the national AME church for Douglass Hospital, and was personally responsible for the drive to erect a statue of John Brown on the campus of Western University in Quindaro.

The AME church of Quindaro, known as Allen Chapel AME, was established in 1869. Originally built of logs, the church was first located on the northeast corner of 33rd and Sewell. The first pastor of Allen Chapel was Skylar Washington, who had earlier served as pastor of the First AME in Wyandotte.

FIRST A.M.E. CHURCH, 7th and ANN, FOLLOWING ITS DESTRUCTION BY FIRE



FIRST A.M.E. CHURCH, 8th and NEBRASKA, 1904

The log church served the congregation for about twenty years. It was torn down sometime in the 1880s, when they purchased a brick structure that had been built by a white Congregational group when Quindaro was first established. Despite its prior longevity, the Allen Chapel AME Church had occupied this building for less than a month when it was totally devastated by a tornado. The congregation had just spent $600 remodeling the structure, and it would be a number of years before they were again able to raise enough money for a church building. In the meantime, the group worshipped in the stone school house that was located at 27th and Sewell (where the Vernon school building now stands).

In 1893, a church revival was held in the school building. Converts were baptized in a pond that had been created by damming the stream that flowed alongside the Quindaro ruins. The revival added many new members to the small congregation and gave encouragement to the group to try again to secure a building of their own. One of the members loaned $100 for materials, and the congregation performed the labor to construct a small frame building on the ground where the brick building had previously stood.

The congregation met in this structure that they had built until 1910, when it was determined that a larger building was needed. The frame structure was sold to the St. James Masonic Lodge, who moved it to the corner of 29th and Sloan. With $200 from the sale of the building and $700 from a fund-raising rally, the congregation began construction on a new building. The difficulties of the Allen Chapel AME were not at an end, however.

In the words of the church historian, "It seems that disaster was stalking our church." Less than a year after its completion, the new building was destroyed by a fire which also consumed the recently

ALLEN CHAPEL A.M.E., 3421 North 29th STREET, 1914

constructed parsonage. Oddly, not long before this happened, the frame building that had been purchased by the Masons was also destroyed by a tornado. In spite of the adversity they encountered, the congregation once again persevered, and in 1914 began construction on the building which they still occupy at 3421 N. 29th St.

Shortly after the Exodus, an Afro-American church was established by members of the original branch of Methodism, the Methodist Episcopal. This denominational preference had traditionally been very strong in the South, and in the period before the Civil War, many slaves worshipped in Methodist churches that had been established on the plantations (usually in locations where the slave owner was also Methodist Episcopal). Among the Exodusers who arrived in Wyandotte City, there were approximately twenty adherents of this faith who first began their church by gathering for prayer meetings in each others homes.

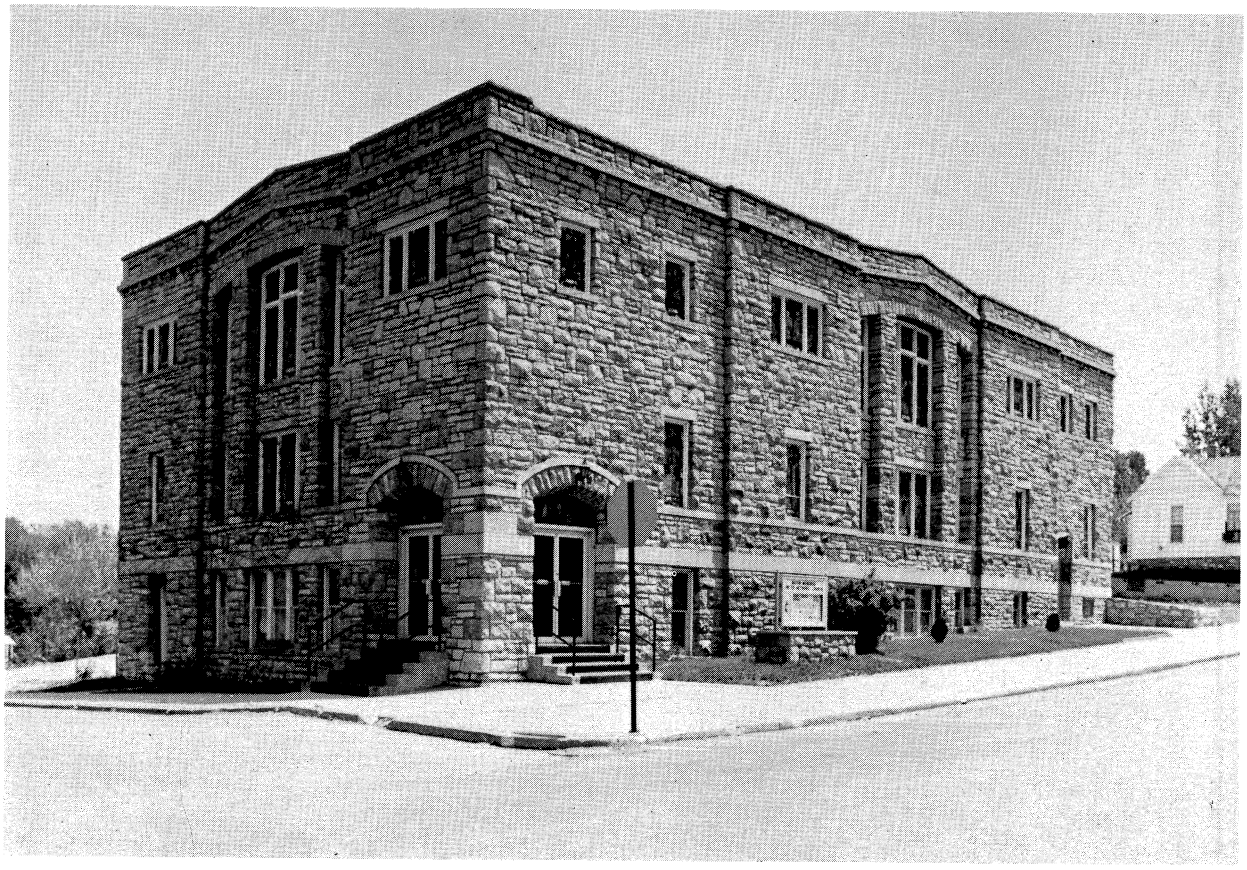
In 1880, the Kansas Conference recognized the mission, which then became known as the St. James M. E. Church. The Rev. Landor was assigned to serve as the first pastor, and under his direction, a building was erected on Freeman Avenue, near 11th Street. In the 1890s, the building was struck by a tornado. It was subsequently rebuilt, but the church was again destroyed in a fire in 1902 and for the next fifteen years, the congregation worshipped in a storefront at 9th and Oakland. During that period the church was called the 9th Street Methodist Church. The congregation purchased a plot of land across the street from their store front and in 1918, under the leadership of Rev. Sterling Sawyer, initial construction was completed on a permanent edifice for the church. In 1919 the name was changed to the Mason Memorial Methodist Church, in honor of Dr. M. C. B. Mason, a member who had recently died. This name has been retained, and the congregation still worships in the same building, although it has been considerably enlarged since 1918.

Another Methodist denomination was represented in the St. Peter's CME church, now located at 8th and Oakland. Today, the letters C.M.E. stand for Christian Methodist Episcopal. In 1956, "Christian" was substituted for the world "Colored," which had previously been the term designated by the letter C. The CME church originated in Jackson, Tennessee in 1870 as a separate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church South.

The CME church in Wyandotte was begun in 1882. It was first located in a house between 9th and 10th on New Jersey. At that time, the church was known as the "Wyandotte Mission." The first pastor was Rev. A. H. Brown, and after his arrival, the congregation moved into a building at 409 Oakland. That structure remained in use until 1914, when a new church was erected at 8th and Oakland, directly across from the 8th Street Baptist Tabernacle.

Other Denominations

In addition to the Baptist and Methodist congregations, there were two Christian churches (Disciples of Christ) and one Episcopal mission in existence in Kansas City, Kansas in the period around the turn of the century. The 8th Street Christian Church, which is now the Quindaro Community Christian Church at 1235 Georgia, originated during the Civil War when a small group of freedmen began holding worship services in the Union fort located at 4th and Nebraska. After the war was over, the group moved their services to the Sons of Protection Hall on State Avenue near 6th Street, and in 1869 acquired a lot at 8th and Everett. A small frame structure was erected on the property.



MASON MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH, 9th and OAKLAND, 1918

ST. PETER CHAPEL C.M.E., 8th and OAKLAND, 1914

The church was originally pastored by charter members Henry Curtley and Elder Blanton. The congregation's first ordained minister was Rev. Malcolm Aires who was from Lexington, Kentucky. The small church building eventually proved inadequate for the growing congregation, and in 1885, it was replaced by a larger structure on the same site. In the following year, the board of education rented the new church building for use during the week until Douglass elementary school was completed at 9th and Washington Boulevard. The church later served as the site of evening adult classes. The church structure was again replaced in 1923 by a brick building with a seating capacity of 500. The congregation moved to its present location in 1965.

In the late 1880s, the Third Christian Church was established at 6th and State. The pastor was Rev. J. D. Smith. Rev. Smith later moved his church to 1011 N. 9th, and shortly after the turn of the century, it was moved once again—this time to Rattlebone Hollow. The move was prompted by a recurring dream, in which Rev. Smith heard children singing. When he prayed for guidance concerning the meaning of his dreams, he felt himself directed to go to a place north of Haskell Avenue. He went there and found a group of families who, like himself, were Disciples of Christ. Prior to his arrival, they had not been able to establish a church for want of a pastor. Their first worship service was held in a tent. When Rev. Smith heard the children of his new congregation singing hymns on that occasion, he experienced the realization of his dream.

The tent was soon replaced by a small converted house on Sanford Avenue near 5th Street. The congregation continued to meet in this facility until 1917, when they were given an opportunity to buy a church building at 5th and Cleveland from a white congregation that was moving to another location. The building they purchased was a small frame structure. It remained the home of the Third

8th STREET CHRISTIAN CHURCH, 8th and EVERETT, 1923

Christian Church until 1969, when it was part of the property condemned by the landfill on which John Garland Park was created. The present location of the Third Christian Church is only a few blocks west of this site at 9th and Quindaro Boulevard.

An Afro-American Episcopal Mission, named St. Luke's, was first established in Kansas City, Kansas in 1888. The church apparently encountered little success in the beginning and subsequently disbanded. The mission was reactivated in 1906, among a small group who met in homes. As the congregation increased in size, the services were moved to a rented hall (Knights of Tabor at 10th and Washington). The name Church of the Ascension was selected in recognition of the mission's return after earlier lapsing into inactivity.

In 1911, the church obtained a building at 319 Stewart, which had earlier housed St. Peter's Episcopal Church (a white congregation). In their new building, the Church of the Ascension was pastored by the Rev. Edwin Willetts from St. Augustine's Mission in Kansas City, Missouri. In 1919, the city condemned the property on which the church was located in order to construct a park. The building was moved a half-block east to the corner of 3rd and Stewart. Since 1961, the Turner House community center, which is sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese, has occupied that site. The contemporary congregation of the Church of the Ascension worships at 16th and Quindaro.

Conclusions

It is scarcely possible to overstate the importance of the churches in the community life of Afro-Americans at the turn of the century. The churches primarily provided a means for expressing

religious values and sentiments. In addition, however, the church supplied a physical structure where people could meet and articulate a wide range of common interests. The pastors of the churches were a significant contingent within the leadership of the Afro-American community, and often served as spokesmen on behalf of their members or of the community as a whole. For example, in 1901 Rev. McNeal travelled to Topeka in an effort to persuade Governor Stanley to pardon a member of the Pleasant Green congregation, who had been unjustly convicted on an assault charge. On another occasion in that same year a group of ministers called a public meeting in the aftermath of a brutal lynching in Leavenworth. They drafted a resolution requesting a state-level investigation, and raised funds as a reward for information leading to the prosecution of the perpetrators.

Although the pastor's role was important, in most cases it was the members who started the churches and through whose efforts these institutions survived and expanded. The costs of building construction and maintenance, and the ongoing operating expenses of the churches were a heavy burden for people whose wages were generally quite low.Fund-raising, therefore, was a continuous activity and served a double purpose by also providing a wide range of social activities.

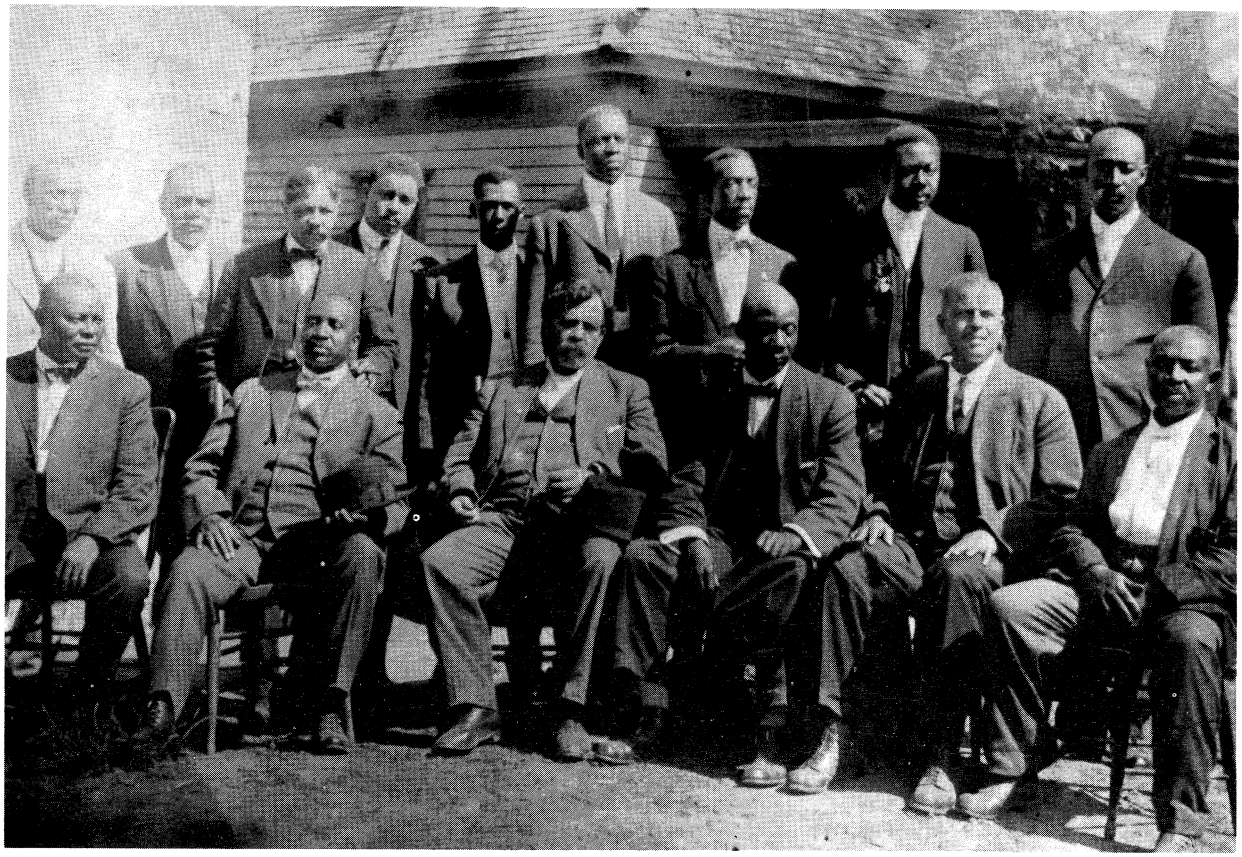
Most of the churches sponsored "basket suppers" during the summer. At these events, the women and girls of the church prepared baskets of food, which were then purchased by their male escorts for about 25¢, with the proceeds going to the church. Ice cream socials were also common in the summer months. During other seasons, there were indoor activities like concerts and dramatic presentations. For example, in 1894 a group known as the "Paper Hangers" gave a literary and musical program at the Metropolitan Baptist Church. The price of admission was 10¢. In 1901, a drama entitled "Turn of the Tide" was presented at the 5th Street Opera Hall, as a benefit for the 8th Street Christian Church. With so many different churches, it was apparently necessary for the program promoters to exercise ingenuity in devising activities. Some of the events were quite unusual. For example in 1894 the Metropolitan Baptist Church sponsored an apple-biting contest, and in April of 1899, Mt. Pleasant Baptist sponsored a wood-sawing contest, with a spectator's admission of 10¢. In an apparent effort to boost interest in the event, the promoters advertised that several women were entered in the contest.

Through these various activities, the churches supplied an important source of recreation for Afro-Americans, particularly in light of the segregated conditions of most public and private recreational facilities at that time. In most instances, church activities were attended by people who belonged to other churches, as well as by members of the sponsoring institution. Attracting a large crowd was an advantage from the standpoint of fundraising, and the scheduling of programs among the various churches was to some extent coordinated in order to avoid overlap, and thus ensure the largest possible attendance for all the different activities. Participation in the activities of the different churches within the Afro-American community reinforced a sense of community-wide identity, and helped bridge individual differences in religious denomination and place of birth.

FRATERNAL, BENEVOLENT, & SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

There were at least six different Afro-American fraternal organizations in Kansas City, Kansas at the turn of the century. The earliest of these were the Prince Hall Masons (established in 1875) and the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, which was founded soon after the Masons. In 1886, these two groups built a lodge hall at 8th and Washington Boulevard. It was a two-story frame building, constructed by an all Afro-American crew. The first floor of the hall was an auditorium and the second floor was divided into meeting rooms. The Masonic lodges included Mt. Olive, Royal Path Commandery, Prudence Lodge #6, Widow's Sons #17, and Mt. Etna #18. There was a Masonic Lodge in Quindaro (St. James), and another in the west bottoms (St. Andrew).

In addition to the Masons and the Odd Fellows, there was also a Knights of Pythias Lodge in Kansas City, Kansas which was begun at least as early as 1894. Each of these three organizations



KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS, circa 1900
Included are J. W. Jones, Junius Groves, and Dr. S. H. Thompson.

strongly emphasized solidarity and mutual aid among their members, and assigned members to visit other members who were ill and provided assistance to the families of those who were deceased or incapacitated. There were also direct economic advantages in the form of sick and death benefits made possible through dues collected from the members. Membership in the fraternal orders additionally entailed adherence to a strict moral code and sworn secrecy concerning the rituals of the organization.

In both rites and organizational structure, the Masons, Odd Fellows, and Pythians were direct counter-parts of the white fraternal organizations which bore the same names. Their separate establishment was made necessary by the fact that the white fraternal orders practiced segregation. There were, in addition, a number of local fraternal lodges that were uniquely Afro-American in origin. Examples of this kind of organization included the Knights of Tabor and the United Brothers of Friendship (UBF). The UBF originated in Kentucky in 1861 as a benevolent organization that was set up principally to provide burial expenses. It later became a secret order. The UBF had a ladies auxiliary known as the Sisters of the Mysterious Ten (SMT).

The Knights of Tabor was founded in 1871 in Independence, Missouri by the Rev. Moses Dickson. Nearly thirty years earlier, Rev. Dickson had founded the Knights of Liberty, a secret anti-slavery organization in the South which was an instrumental part of the Underground Railroad. The Knights of Tabor was established to provide insurance benefits and foster civic self-improvement among Afro-Americans. The members were urged to buy land, practice temperance, and help spread education and Christianity. The UBF and the Knights of Tabor shared a lodge hall at 11th and

Washington Boulevard. It was a two-story frame building which was moved to 9th and Everett around 1910. The building is still standing in that location.

Although most of the lodges were secular with regard to specific denominations, there were strong ties between the various fraternal and benevolent societies and the churches of the community. Nearly all active lodge members also took a leading role in the laity of their churches. Lodge officers were sometimes called on to officiate at church ground-breaking ceremonies, and the lodge halls commonly served as temporary meeting space for churches that were just getting started or were unable to occupy their regular structure. For example, the Masons and Odd Fellows Hall at 8th and Washington Boulevard was the home of the First AME Church for a time in 1887, when the new church building was under construction. The Masons and Odd Fellows Hall was also used by the 8th Street Baptist congregation after a fire destroyed their church in 1917, and the Church of the Ascension was reorganized in a meeting that took place in the Knights of Tabor Hall at 11th and Washington Boulevard in 1907. Each of the lodges sponsored an "annual sermon." On these occasions, one of the ministers would deliver a sermon in a church that was not his own, and the receipts from the collection were divided between the pastor and the church where he spoke. It was also a common practice for lodge members to periodically attend each other's churches as a demonstration of friendship.

Several of the lodges regularly sponsored dances—social activities that could not occur within the churches at that time—and occasionally the lodges organized picnics. Whenever lodge members went somewhere formally as a group, particularly in the case of funeral processions, they hired a brass band to accompany them as they marched through the streets. This was also done on the occasions of the annual sermons, and for other events like officer installation or ground-breaking ceremonies. In this manner, and in connection with the dances they sponsored, the lodges offered a major source of support for aspiring young musicians within the community. The lodges were also involved with civic activities and fund-raising for such things as scholarships and charitable institutions. Perhaps the most singular accomplishment of the lodges during that period was the establishment of the Widows and Orphans Home in 1901. Organized by the Knights of Tabor and the Sisters of the Mysterious Ten, the home was located at 1058 Oakland.

There were, in addition to the lodges, a large number of early civic and cultural organizations established by Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas. There were social clubs like the Oak Leaf Club, the Apollo Club, and Olympian; and there were clubs begun by those who were interested in art or music, such as the Alpha Art Club, the Amateur Dramatic Club, the Pleasant Hour Dramatic Club, and the Musical Club. There were at least five literary societies, which included The Light-bearers Literary Club (sponsored by the First AME), the Dewey Club, the Negro Author's Literary Club, the Phyllis Wheatley Society, and the Pierian Club. The Pierian Club, which is still in existence, began in 1894 in the home of Mrs. D. F. Rivers. The charter members consisted of fourteen women. Both married and unmarried women were eligible for membership. The name, *Pierian,* refers to the spring of knowledge described in Pope's "Essay on Criticism." The group met twice a month to discuss novels and essays they had been reading and to listen to formal presentations by individual members.

Some of the same women who belonged to the Pierian Club also became members of the Inter-City Dames which was formed in about 1900. This organization, which is also still in existence, originated partly in response to the problems that confronted Afro-American performers and lecturers who traveled from city to city during the Jim Crow era. Because hotel and restaurant accommodations were not available to Afro-American travelers, visiting dignitaries usually lodged in the homes of prominent Afro-American residents of the cities where they stayed. Although a direct consequence of segregation, one result of this practice was to develop and reinforce personal acquaintances among a variety of Afro-American artists and professionals living in different parts of the country. The initial purpose of the Inter-City Dames was to organize entertainment for these out-of-town

WIDOWS AND ORPHANS HOME, 1058 OAKLAND, 1901

guests. The club grew out of a gathering that was held in honor of the concert artist Madam Azalia Hackley who was visiting in the home of Miss Sallie Rogers. It was on this occasion that the group decided to formally coordinate this type of hospitality. The name Inter-City Dames was selected because women from both Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri were members. In addition to hostessing out-of-town visitors, the group sponsored social events four times a year and staged an annual Musicale at the Lyric Hall during the Christmas season.

Civic and political organizations were also formed within the community during this period. These included the Ida B. Welles Club, which was named after a nationally prominent and highly outspoken critic of lynching, convict labor leasing, and institutional segregation. Another club, the Frederick Douglass Memorial Society, was named in honor of the well-known abolitionist; and there was the Toussaint L'Ouverture Club which bore the name of the 18th Century liberator of Haiti. In 1891, members of the community began holding weekly meetings each Sunday afternoon to discuss civic topics of current interest to Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas. Known as the Citizens' Forum, these meetings were generally held in the 9th Street Methodist Church (now Mason Memorial) at 9th and Oakland. As one example of the topics discussed, in April of 1901 the manager of the American Commercial League, a cooperative feed and grocery store, spoke on the subject of not letting business conflict with Christian principles.

Yates Branch YWCA

The establishment of an Afro-American branch of the YWCA represented the culmination of early club activity within the community. The first efforts to form this organization were begun in 1909 by a group of club women, several of whom were teachers. Initially, a meeting was called of the ministers in the community, where the women outlined the need for a social and educational facility for women and girls. They requested that the ministers study the matter, and consult with their congregations about aiding in the development of a YWCA. For the next two years, the women worked through their clubs, parent organizations, and missionary societies to organize support for the Y. The requirements for establishing a YWCA branch were that 300 memberships be sold—each at the cost of $1.00 per year. A dollar was not a nominal sum in 1911, expecially for packinghouse workers who barely earned that much in a day. The membership drive formally began at a mass meeting that was held at the First Baptist Church in 1911. The organizers had attempted to build a broad base, and all of the churches that were earlier described (as well as the Argentine Baptist Church) were represented on the steering committee. A large share of the needed memberships were obtained at the meeting, but it was not until the next year that all 300 were enlisted.

Once the requirements had been met, the Central Office of the YWCA authorized the establishment of a "colored" branch. For a short time the newly created facility occupied a second-floor office in a building at 5th and State. The first permanent location was at 9th and Nebraska.

The program envisioned for the organization was religious, but in a highly nondenominational sense. The emphasis was on "applied Christianity in everyday life." The initial activities consisted of classes for women in sewing, cooking, quilting, and other home-making skills. Similar classes for girls were added later, and there were also activities designed to benefit men and boys, because Afro-Americans were barred from participation at the central YMCA at that time. Ironically, the Yates Branch did not practice segregation, and there were a number of white children living in the vicinity who also took part in activities there.

The name *Yates* was adopted in 1919 in honor of Mrs. Josephine Yates, who had been instrumental in establishing the branch. Mrs. Yates was an active club woman who gained national prominence. In 1899, she delivered an address to the convention of the National Association of Colored Women in Chicago (entitled "An Equal Moral Standard for Men and Women"), which W.E.B. DuBois, one of the

LOOK! READ! COME!

MASS MEETING

For Colored Branch of The Young Women's Christian Association

March 26, 1911, 3:00 P. M.

All persons interested in the above named organization are urged to be present; those who have pledged themselves will confer a favor by bringing the money which they have so kindly promised. It is hoped that many more will add *their names to the list of* supporters.

Addresses by the following persons:

MISS ANNA H. JONES ..... LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL
THE CORNER STONES OF THE BUILDINGS
MRS. IDA M. BECKS ..... FLORENCE CRITTENDEN RESCUE HOME
THE MAN OF THE HOUR
PROF. H. T. KEALING ..... WESTERN UNIVERSITY
PAYING EVE'S DEBTS
MUSIC BY CHOIR OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
DUET—JESUS LOVER OF MY SOUL
MRS. C. MERRITT EVANS, MRS. GERTRUDE MERRITT OWENS

TO BE HELD AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Corner Fifth St. and Nebraska Ave., Kansas City, Kansas,

On Sunday, March 26, at 2:30 P. M.

Kathryn M. Johnson ..... Chairman
Mrs. Pauline Freeman ..... First A. M. E Church
Mrs. Ida M. Becks ..... Metropolitan Baptist Church
Mrs. Alice M. Bailey ..... First Baptist Church
Mrs. Fitzhugh ..... Eighth St. Baptist Church
Mrs. J. W. Jacobs ..... C. M. E. Church
Mrs. Terrell ..... Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church
Mrs. Ollie Jackson ..... Mt. Zion Baptist Church
Mrs. F. B. Watson ..... Pleasant Green Baptist Church
Mrs. L. Richards ..... St. Paul's A. M. E. Church
Mrs. Fannie Johnson .. Allen Chapel A. M. E. Church, Quindaro, Kan.
Miss Eddie Lou Harris ..... King Solomon's Baptist Church
Miss Lizzie Davis ..... Christian Church
Miss Minnie Howell ..... M. E. Church
Mrs. Boren ..... Seventh Day Adventist
Mrs. Ewing ..... Episcopalian
Mrs. Hettie Morgan ..... Argentine Baptist Church

Provisional Committee.

N. B.—If any church is not represented on this committee, please let us know. The omission is unintentional.

Y.W.C.A. MEMBERSHIP DRIVE NOTICE, 1911

YATES BRANCH Y.W.C.A., 644 QUINDARO BLVD.

founders of the NAACP, judged to be the best paper given at the conference. He added that, "Perhaps the finest specimen of Negro womanhood present was Mrs. Josephine Yates of Kansas City, a dark brown matron with a quiet air of dignity and earnestness."[1]

The Yates Branch developed into an important community center. Parents who were otherwise opposed to dancing would often permit their children to dance at the Y. The classes and programs were diversified to meet changing needs, and the members always took an active part in planning and evaluating the programs. The Yates Branch also functioned as a supplement to the schools by providing extra classes and tutoring. Many teachers were active in the Yates Branch YWCA, and it served as yet another link among the various institutional facets of the Afro-American community.

SCHOOLS

One of the ironies of segregated schools was the level of ethnic solidarity they engendered. All Afro-Americans shared this common circumstance, and strong bonds developed between teachers and students, and between parents and teachers. School-related activities were a significant part of the social life of the community, and issues concerning conditions in the schools were a persistent focus of community mobilization.

Prior to the municipal consolidation in 1886, there had only been one elementary school for Afro-Americans. This was the Lincoln School at 6th and State. It had originally been built in 1867, but

[1]Aptheker, pg. 777

after the Exodus was reconstructed to accommodate increased enrollment. It was a substantial brick building with nine rooms and a good heating system, but as migration into the city continued, it became badly overcrowded. In 1894, the enrollment at Lincoln School was 588, and the seating capacity was 450.[1]

Overcrowding was one of the inevitable side effects of segregated schools. Construction of Afro-American schools necessarily lagged behind in-migration, because there had to be a sufficiently large school-age population already living in an area in order to justify the establishment of a school. In most instances, the Afro-American population of residential areas increased gradually, which meant that for a long period of time many Afro-American children were unable to attend school in their own neighborhoods, because separate schools had not yet been built there. In order to obtain an education, children as young as six were often required to travel long distances over unpaved roads to sit in classrooms that were uncomfortably crowded. In time, separate elementary schools were built in all of the areas where there were significant numbers of Afro-American households, although the physical structures thus afforded were rarely on a par with the white schools.

The choice of locations where Afro-Americn schools were built, and the sequence of their construction, corresponded closely to the early Afro-American residence patterns previously described. In 1886, the year that the city was consolidated, two additional Afro-American elementary schools were established. These were the "Third Ward" school and the Bruce School. The Third Ward school began in rented quarters. In 1890 the classes were moved to a large six room building that had been constructed between 9th and 10th on Washington Boulevard (which at that time was an unpaved road with a very steep grade). The school was subsequently named Douglass, after Frederick Douglass, the famed abolitionist writer and orator. The Bruce School was a small two-room frame building located in the west bottoms at 1st and Ohio. This school was mainly attended by the children of Afro-American packinghouse workers.

The construction of these two schools substantially eliminated the travel problems of Afro-American pupils in the bottoms and to the west of the downtown area. The Douglass School had a particularly significant impact on the residential development of the area that surrounded it. It had been built to accommodate anticipated expansion, and was a good facility with a highly competent principal (Mr. J. J. Lewis). The presence of the school enhanced the attractiveness of the neighborhood, especially for families, and served to stimulate increased Afro-American settlement in that area.

All Afro-American pupils indirectly benefited from the additional schools, because they relieved much of the overcrowding in the Lincoln School at 6th and State. Problems remained, however, for those children whose parents lived in Juniper or Rattlebone Hollow. At its closest point, the Juniper settlement was ten blocks away from the Lincoln school, and Rattlebone Hollow was twice as far. These were long distances for the children to travel, a situation made all the more galling by the fact that children in Rattlebone Hollow walked past a white school at 6th and Waverly on their long trek to Lincoln; and those in Juniper also passed by a white school at 4th and Everett. The Afro-American parents in these two areas repeatedly petitioned the Board of Education to provide elementary schools for their children located within a reasonable distance of where they lived. Their demands were partially granted in 1894, when two rooms were rented in a building located at 4th and Walker. This facility was designed the "Walker Street Colored Annex." The two rooms proved insufficient for the large enrollment, and within a year classes occupied additional space within the building. Conditions at the school remained generally unsatisfactory, however, and in 1899 a four room brick building was constructed on Richmond between 1st and 2nd Streets. The new school was named Stowe, after Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

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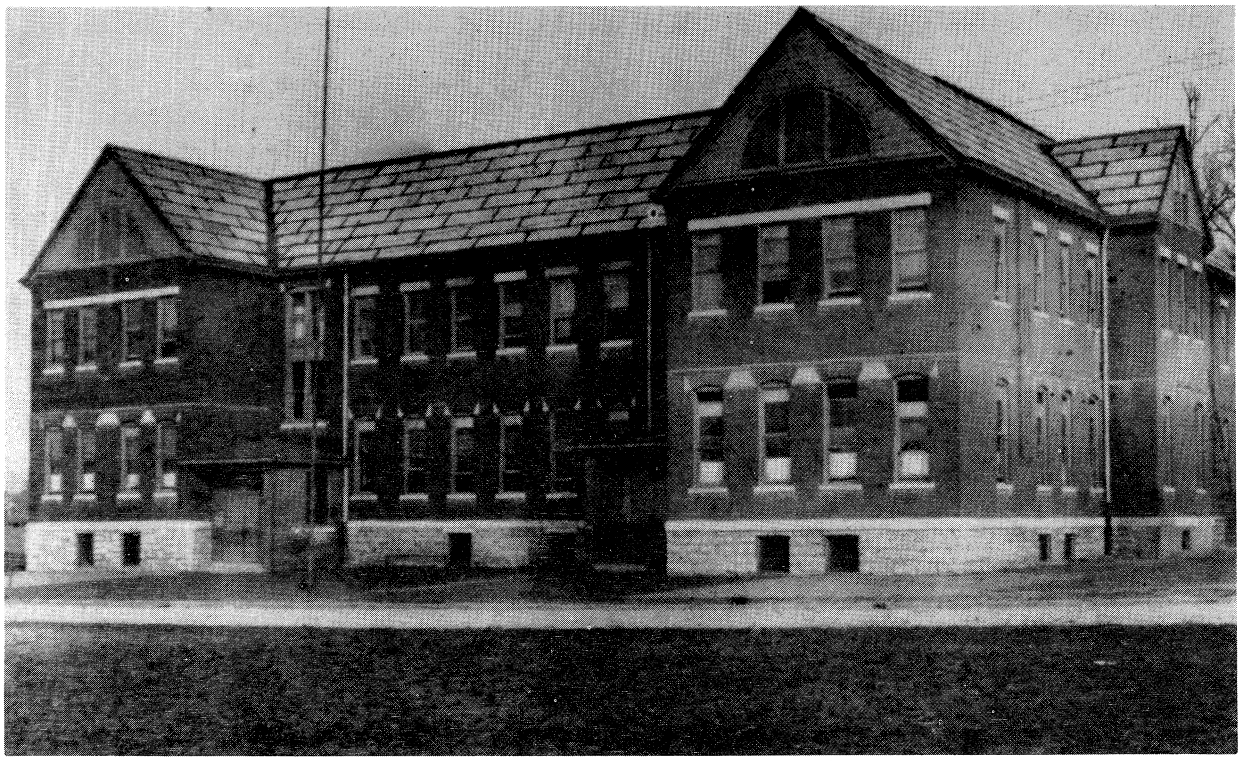
[1]*American Citizen,* March 14, 1894.



LONGFELLOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (LATER DUNBAR SOUTH), 6th and WAVERLY

The Stowe School was located in the heart of Juniper and became an important feature of that neighborhood. For the children in Rattlebone Hollow, however, school was still at least ten blocks away. There was no relief for this problem until 1904, when a one room wooden building at 5th and Georgia was converted to be used as a school for the first three grades. Older students were still required to travel to either Stowe or Douglass. After four more years of intense lobbying by parents in the area, the Board of Education was persuaded to issue bonds and build a more acceptable elementary school in Rattlebone Hollow. The new school was constructed on a site that was carved out of a steep hillside at 6th and Rowland. It was a four room brick building that was named Dunbar, after the poet Paul Lawrence Dunbar.

Several years earlier, an elementary school had also been erected in Quindaro. It was built of native limestone and was known simply as the "Colored School of Quindaro." The school was unique in the fact that it was directed by an all Afro-American school board. At that time, Quindaro was well beyond the city limits of Kansas City, Kansas and comprised its own school district (#17). Sometime after the turn of the century, the old stone school was replaced by a four room brick building situated just to the south and east of the campus of Western University. It was later named the Vernon School, after W. T. Vernon, one of Western University's most dynamic presidents.

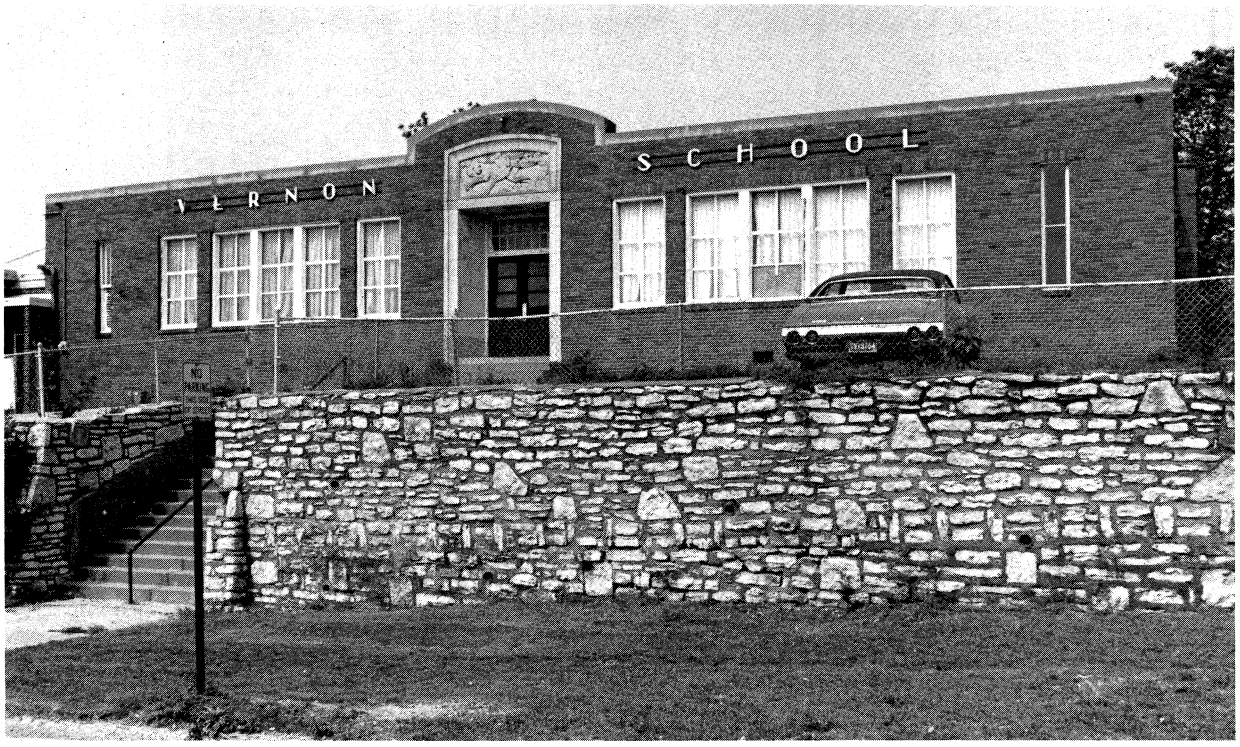
The elementary schools were neighborhood-based institutions. Like the churches, they brought families who lived within the same general area into frequent contact with one another. Their children's education provided an additional basis for common interests among the Afro-American parents, and parent groups were an early feature in these elementary schools. At Dunbar, shortly after it was built, a group formed that was known as the Mother's Guild. They met weekly to discuss ways to make improvements to the school, and they also coordinated the collection of food and clothing to provide emergency relief for families in distress. They began a "hot lunch program" by making soup in the boiler room of the school. Additionally, mothers from several of the schools

operated a sewing center at Stowe, where clothes were made or repaired and distributed to children in need of them. Parents also staged fund-raising events in order to provide the schools with needed equipment and supplies.

Conditions in the schools in those days were extremely primitive. Classes were often combined, and crowded together in a small, poorly heated classrooms. There were no paved play areas nor recreational equipment, and the educational materials provided were generally inadequate. In spite of the disadvantages that were conferred by the dual system, parent involvement introduced a measure or pride and a sense of self-determination in the crucial task of educating their children. In like manner, teachers of that era were part of the first generation of Afro-Americans to have graduated in large numbers from the "normal institutes," and commenced the task of propagating their knowledge to still greater numbers of the next generation. In nearly all cases, these young teachers approached their work with a singular idealism. In cooperation with the parents, they were willing to work beyond the limits of their responsibility to establish additional activities like music and athletics. Books were lent in order to supplement skimpy libraries, and many hours were spent in tutoring or counseling the children. These extra efforts were born of the solid conviction that if the children were to overcome the limitations that society had imposed, they would have to achieve undisputed excellence. This tradition was strongly carried on among the faculty of Sumner High School, which was established in 1905.

Sumner High School

Until 1904, the high school in Kansas City, Kansas had been racially integrated. Kansas state law had originally provided for segregation at the primary level only, and local governments were mandated to establish integrated high schools. In compliance with the law, students of all races had attended Kansas City, Kansas High School for many years in relative harmony. There had been a



VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 27th and SEWELL

minor incident in 1890 when Miss Dora Evans, an Afro-American student, graduated from the city's high school. At the commencement ceremonies, a white pupil named Lawrence Mason caused a stir when he refused to take his assigned seat next to her. The unpleasantness was cut short, however, when another white student (a boy whose name was Helwig) offered to exchange places with him.

The 1890s and the early years of the twentieth century represented a period of unprecedented racial intolerance in the United States. Throughout the country, customs of segregation were being codified in a rigid set of "Jim Crow" laws. Theatres, hotels, restaurants, stores, public transporation, waiting rooms—all either excluded Afro-Americans or afforded them separate facilities and unequal treatment. In 1896, the constitutionality of segregation was upheld by the Supreme Court in the infamous Plesey vs. Ferguson decision. Even more menacing than adverse court rulings was the escalating level of mob violence in the South and in several northern cities. During the 1890s there was an average of 150 lynchings per year in the United States.

There was never an actual lynching in Kansas City, Kansas, but in 1904 there was an altercation that very nearly resulted in the mob execution of an Afro-American teen-ager named Louis Gregory. Events surrounding this incident led to the establishment of Sumner High School. It was no ordinary beginning for an educational facility, and the story of what transpired reveals something of what Kansas City, Kansas was like during this grim period in our nation's history. The following account was compiled by Orrin Murray Sr., who as a young child lived not far from where the incident took place:

> "In the early Spring of 1904, a young Negro boy (18 years of age) went out to snag some frogs in a pond that was located in the southwestern part of Kerr's Park. That pond was near where the present parking lot of Wyandotte High School is now. The boy, Louis Gregory, carried a single shot .22 caliber with him. Nothing unusual in this, because nearly all men snagging bullfrogs then carried a rifle, so if a large bull should be seen on the banks he could be shot before he could jump back into the water. So it was that young Gregory had a rifle with him while he was snagging bullfrogs. As he was walking slowly along the bank of the pond, he was suddenly confronted by two white boys. These boys were members of the baseball team of the Kansas City, Kansas High School, which was then located at 9th and Minnesota Avenue. These two boys who had left their teammates, came over to have some fun and make Louis Gregory run off and leave his frogs (Louis Gregory reportedly was badly crippled, with one of his legs being several inches shorter than the other one). An argument followed, and one of the white boys started after Gregory with a ball bat. Gregory did run but he ran in the direction of his rifle. He reached the rifle, picked it up and fired it. One of the boys (William Martin) was hit, and that shot was fatal."[1]

Louis Gregory was arrested and taken to the Wyandotte County Jail, which was then located at 7th and State. Rumors about the killing circulated rapidly. Members of the Afro-American community grew concerned for their own safety, and were particularly anxious about what might happen to Louis Gregory. Their fears were well grounded, for an angry mob (it is said that most were from Missouri) was assembling with the aim of removing him from the protective confines of his jail cell. In response, the Afro-American community had mobilized its own "vigilance committee" composed of about fifteen uniformed veterans of the Spanish-American War. With the Reverend George McNeal at the lead, and the Rev. Thomas Knapper close behind, the contingent marched with

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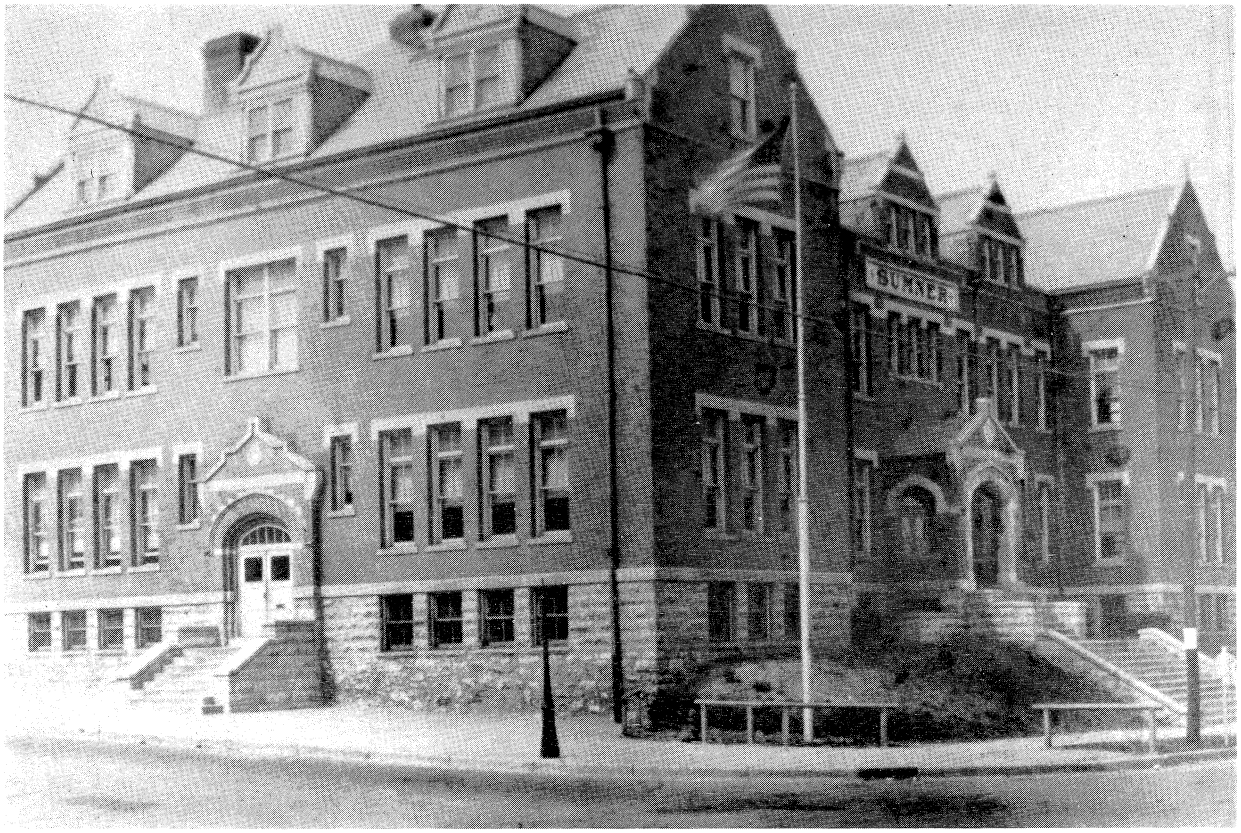
[1]Excerpt from the *Contributions of Negroes in Kansas City, Kansas.*



SUMNER HIGH SCHOOL, 9th and WASHINGTON BLVD., 1905

Springfield rifles in hand and positioned themselves in front of the jail house door. As the mob approached, Reverend McNeal reportedly made the following pronouncement: "The first man to cross this line is eating breakfast in Hell in the morning."[1] As these words were spoken, his troups readied their rifles. It is difficult to imagine the tension of that moment, but it was apparently an entirely convincing display. The would-be lynch mob rapidly dispersed, and Louis Gregory was saved, although he later received what was considered an extremely harsh prison sentence.

The aftermath of the confrontation provoked diverse kinds of reactions within the city. The regular law enforcement personnel had failed in their responsibility to protect the prisoner. Members of the Afro-American community were forced to take the law into their own hands; and two notably gentle clergymen had prepared to oversee the use of lethal weapons in defense, not only of Louis Gregory, but of the rights and safety of all Afro-Americans in the city. In several other places where groups of Afro-Americans had banded together to prevent a lynching, there had been even greater violence done to them in response. In Kansas City, Kansas at least the bloodshed had been averted; and tacit recognition was given to the rightfulness of their acts, when several of the participating veterans were subsequently hired as municipal police officers.

Within a large segment of the population, however, the incident engendered increased racial polarization and hostility. There had been immediate outbreaks of fighting at the high school, where the slain boy had been a student. Proponents of segregation seized on the occasion as a pretext for demanding the establishment of separate high school facilities. To avoid further violence, the

[1]Quoted in Eklund, 1976.

SUMNER HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY, including J. J. Lewis (lower left), G. B. Buster (lower right), John Hodge (upper left), and J. P. King (upper right).

students were racially divided and put on half-day shifts. Under the circumstances, the education of all was diminished. The situation presented a dilemma for those who were opposed to segregation, and in the end all yielded to the decision to create a separate high school for Afro-American students.

Plans for the new high school were worked out in a meeting that included Afro-American clergymen, lawyers, and educators along with school district personnel. The meeting was chaired by Superintendent M. E. Pearson, who was well-known for his fairness and progressive outlook. A resolution was drawn up which requested that the state legislature set aside the prohibition against segregated high schools under the exceptional circumstances that prevailed in Kansas City, Kansas.[1] Governor E. W. Hoch opposed the measure, maintaining that it was an injustice to penalize and to further handicap an entire group for the actions of one person. He signed the ensuing bill under protest, and only on provision that the building housing the new high school be truly equal to the one used for white students. Plans were drawn up to construct the building next to Douglass Elementary School at 9th and Washington. Pending completion, students attended classes at Western University. The school was named Sumner, after Charles Sumner who had been a U.S. Senator from Massachusetts, and an ardent abolitionist. He gained national prominence during the pre-Civil War debates on the Kansas question. Several days preceeding John Brown's actions at Pottawatomie Creek, Sumner was beaten senseless on the floor of the Senate by a "southern gentleman" who claimed to have been deeply offended by Sumner's anti-slavery oratory.

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[1]See Appendix

LOOKING WEST FROM 8th and WASHINGTON TOWARD SUMNER HIGH SCHOOL.

Sumner High School opened in the fall of 1905 with eighty students and four teachers. In spite of the gloomy circumstances which brought it into being, Sumner was later to be described as a "blessing in disguise . . . the bud had a bitter taste, but sweet indeed is the flower."[1] The faculty included some of the most gifted young teachers in the entire region. Sumner was the only Afro-American high school in Kansas. It represented both a challenge and an opportunity, and it offered a unique setting where Afro-Americans could apply their skills in guiding the careers and aspirations of a great many young people.

The establishment of Sumner had a unifying influence on the Afro-American community within the city, which somewhat counteracted the fragmenting effects of geographic dispersion. Whereas the primary schools increased contacts among the parents of particular neighborhoods, Sumner brought people from all different parts of the city together. And not just Kansas City, Kansas: Afro-American students from the towns of Argentine, Rosedale, and even Johnson County were also required to attend Sumner. As a result, the high school became the nucleus of a broad network of relationships among students and their parents. Friendships formed in this manner helped to bind the parents of the community together and provided another basis for common action on matters of general importance to Afro-Americans.

Largely because of the dedication of the faculty, Sumner High School developed in a fashion that was consistent with the governor's directive, i.e. it was in no way inferior to the other high school in

[1]From *The Story of Sumner High School,* 1935.

the city. Within several years of its founding, it was accepted into the Northcentral Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges. The certification (which was difficult to obtain, especially for Afro-American schools) greatly facilitated the graduates' acceptance into college. As a result, Sumner turned out a large share of college graduates. There were three early teachers who were directly responsible for the school's acceptance into the Northcentral Association, and who together exerted a lasting and positive influence on the high caliber of education at Sumner. Of the three, Mr. John J. Lewis was the first to arrive. He came from Baton Rouge, Louisiana at the time of, or shortly after, the Exodus; and in 1886 was appointed principal of Douglass School. After Sumner was built, he became the first vice-principal. Mr. Greene B. Buster arrived in Kansas City, Kansas in 1905 from Ohio. He was among the original faculty members of Sumner. He taught history, but also was responsible for initiating music and athletics at the school. Mr. John Hodge first arrived in Kansas City, Kansas from Indiana in 1908. He had been trained as a chemist and accepted a teaching position at Sumner on a "temporary" basis until he could secure employment in his field. Once there, however, he never left. He became principal of the school in 1916 and served in that capacity for nearly forty years.

Separately and as a team, these three men worked tirelessly for the improvement of Sumner High School. Mr. Lewis, the eldest, had been one of the pioneer Afro-American teachers in Kansas City, Kansas. He also had been the first to hold a university degree. He was known and respected throughout the community, and by the time Sumner was built he had already overseen the education of one whole generation. Mr. Hodge and Mr. Buster both had Master's degrees, and both had published in professional journals. Mr. Buster was a contributor to the well-known *Journal of Negro History* and was visited in his classroom by Carter Woodson, the journal's editor. Mr. Buster was also the author of an historical novel entitled *The Brighter Sun*. In his book he chronicled the experiences of three generations of his family in their long but successful effort to free themselves from slavery. It is an extremely well written book, in which a simple, but moving story is told against the backdrop of historical events that Mr. Buster had come to understand very well. In his lectures and through his writing, he shared with his students the things he had learned and the pride he felt for the unheralded accomplishments of his ancestors. Through the influence of Mr. Buster and his colleagues Sumner High School developed into a place where students and teachers expressed the belief that they were working together to overcome the handicaps of racism, and to dispel the myths upon which this pernicious doctrine was founded.

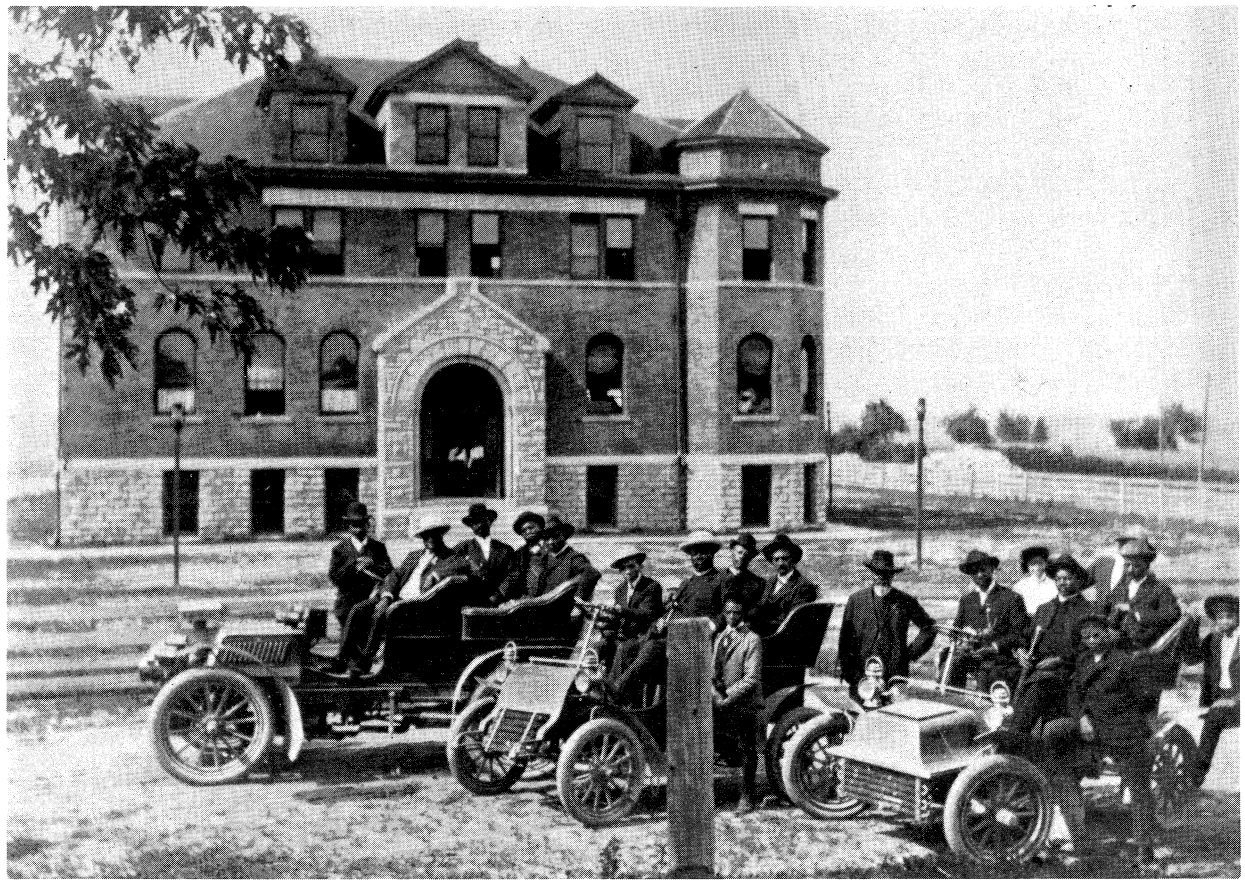
Western University

The development of Western University was in many respects an extension of the same philosophy, and by the turn of the century this institution was exerting a broad influence on the community. Western also provided an additional source of leadership. In 1896, a young AME minister named William Tecumseh Vernon took over the presidency of the still struggling school. Reverend Vernon, who was born in Lebanon, Missouri in 1871, was educated at Lincoln Institute in Jefferson City and at Wilberforce College in Ohio. Prior to his arrival, Western University had been operating solely on revenue from tuition and contributions from the AME church. In 1895, the Kansas AME Conference gathered only $460.53 for the school; and with less than a dozen students, tuition did not add appreciably to this small operating budget.[1] Ever since state appropriations stopped in 1873, the patrons of the school had been unsuccessfully trying to get state funding restored. Vernon succeeded where the others had not, and in so doing led Western University into a period of impressive growth.

Although Reverend Vernon's personal capabilities deserve much of the credit, several factors combined to make the resumption of state aid possible. The most important of these was the overall

[1]Smith, pg. 50

BISHOP WILLIAM T. VERNON
1871 - 1944



STANLEY HALL, 27th and SEWELL, 1900

influence of Dr. Booker T. Washington during that period. Dr. Washington's program of industrial education for Afro-Americans, which had been developed at Tuskegee Institute shortly after the Civil War, was favorably regarded by many Kansas Republicans as a workable approach for correcting the persisting economic problems of freedmen and their children. In 1898, the state of Ohio set an important precedent when the legislature appropriated $80,000 for the AME-sponsored Wilberforce College to establish an industrial training program. Vernon was well aware of the developments in Ohio. He had spent a good part of the previous year on the Wilberforce campus, and may have been directly involved in securing the appropriation. The Ohio initiative provided a model for the state of Kansas to follow. In 1898, Vernon convinced Republican gubernatorial candidate William Stanley of the merits of state support for Negro industrial education, and then Reverend Vernon campaigned hard and well for Governor Stanley's election. In the new governor's first address to the legislature in 1899, he included the following pronouncement:

> "One of the most recent movements in the state is the school at Quindaro for the Negro. No race ever emerged from slavery, and in so short a time reached such advanced position in all branches of industrial pursuits as the colored race in America. The one great need of the Negro today is progress and development in the things fostered and encouraged by industrial education. The fame of Booker T. Washington is national and his work in the south in connection with his great industrial school for the education of the Negro is attracting wide attention. The school of Quindaro

> is under the supervision of the Reverend W. T. Vernon, a gentleman of culture, who is fully devoted to the uplifting of his race. If within the limits of the constitution, I would suggest that the Quindaro movement be given aid and encouragement by the state."[1]

These words of support were followed soon after by the Bailey Bill (authored by Representative William Bailey of Kansas City, Kansas), which resulted in the establishment of an industrial department at Western University. A sum of $10,000 was appropriated, $5,000 for a new building named Stanley Hall, at the corner of 27th and Sewell, and $5,000 for the operating costs of the industrial department. The new building became the second on the campus. In 1891, the original brewery in the valley had been replaced by a structure near 29th and Sewell that was named Ward Hall, in honor of then-presiding Bishop T. M. D. Ward of the AME conference.

With the receipt of the state funds, and the annual appropriations that came each year thereafter, Western University grew rapidly. In 1901 an annex was built to the north of Stanley Hall, and in the following year two stock barns were constructed. A power plant and reservoir were added in 1904, and in 1905 work was begun on the girls' trades building. Within another two years, a boys' trades building was constructed; and by the close of the decade a four-story girls' dormitory named after Bishop Abraham Grant had also been built at the north end of 27th Street. Enrollments at the college grew by a commensurate amount—from twelve in 1895 to over 200 in 1906.

The curriculum at Western University reflected Vernon's educational philosophy of training the "head, heart, and hand for the home."[2] Although the state industrial department was an important feature in the development of the school during this period, the course offerings were diversified and included a strong emphasis on theology, the classics, and music. Western provided teacher training and college preparatory classes in addition to basic instruction in such vocations as printing, drafting, carpentry, tailoring, and business. Agriculture was also stressed, and a portion of the food consumed by faculty and students was raised on campus.

The teachers and administrators of Western University enforced a rigid code of demeanor and discipline. Church attendance was mandatory, and alcohol and tobacco were prohibited. Boarding students were required to rise early and have their rooms cleaned before 8:00 in the morning. Strict study hours were observed, with lights out at 10:00 p.m. The girls were closely chaperoned, and all students were required to wear uniforms which were fabricated by the tailoring students.

National recruiting efforts were the life blood of the school. Western University attracted students from throughout the United States, and a majority of those who attended were boarders. One of Western's strongest promotional assets was its music department. The department was begun in 1902 by R. G. Jackson, who was a recent graduate of the music department of the University of Kansas. In 1907, Professor Jackson founded the Jackson Jubilee Singers—a musical troupe similar to the Fisk Jubilee Singers of Fisk University. Such noteworthy musicians as Etta Moten and Eva Jessye at one time performed with the Jackson Jubilee Singers. The group traveled across the country, giving concerts and publicizing Western University.

Reverend Blachly would no doubt have been pleased to view the progress his school made in the decades that followed his death. Reverend Vernon, who had been the building force behind Western's growth and consolidation, gained a national reputation for his accomplishments at the school. He

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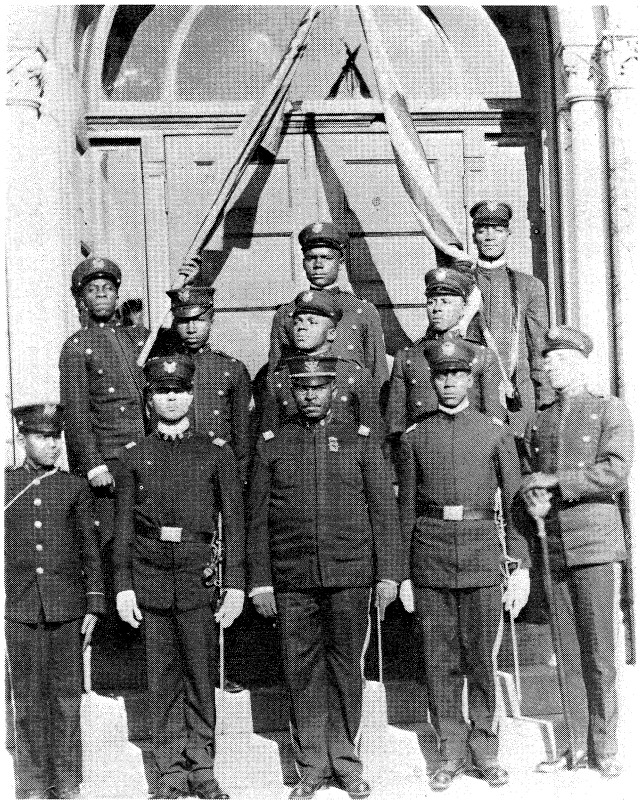
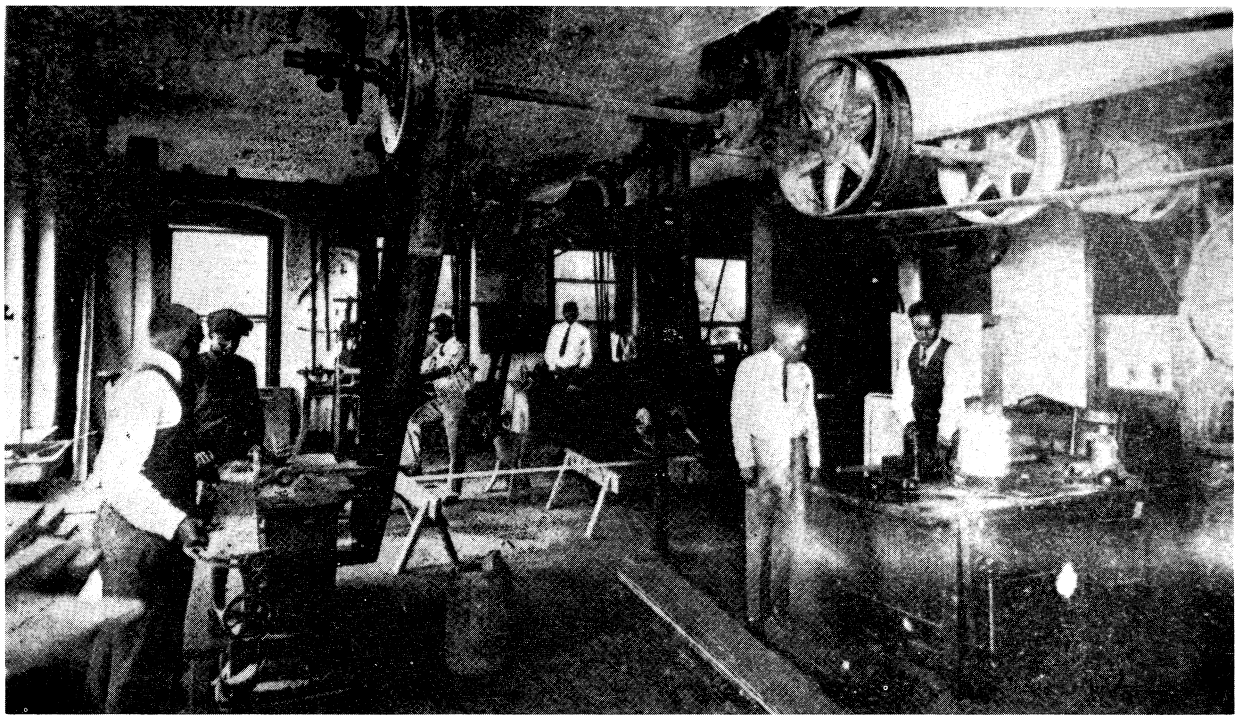
[1]Smith, pg. 35

[2]The emblem of Western University, four Hs displayed on a four-leaf clover with a large W in the center, was later adopted as the symbol of the 4H movement.

WESTERN UNIVERSITY

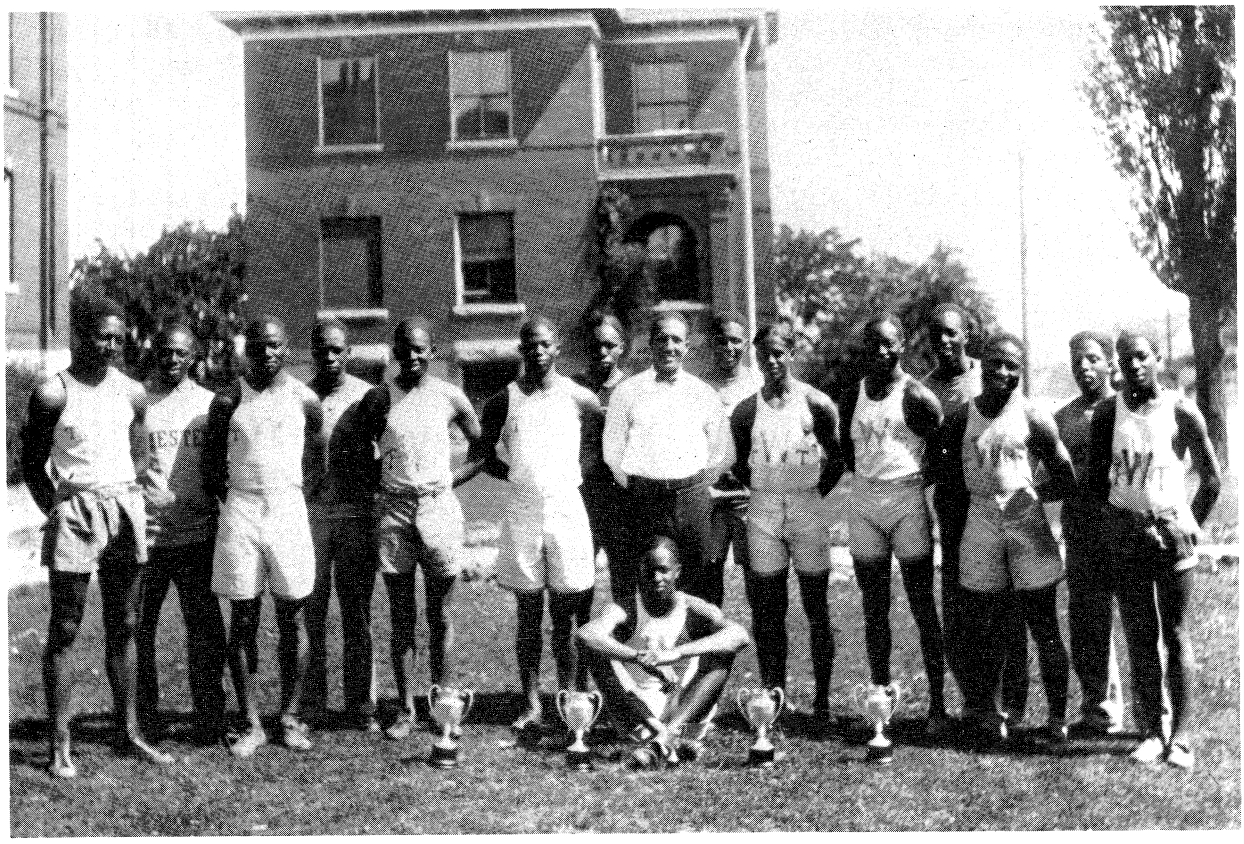


COMMANDANT
and CADET STAFF



CARPENTRY DEPARTMENT

BUSINESS EDUCATION CLASS



TRACK and FIELD TEAM

traveled extensively, lecturing and conferring with other Afro-American educators. In 1906, President Roosevelt appointed him Registrar of the U.S. Treasury, which at that time was the highest position in government to be occuped by an Afro-American. Upon receipt of the appointment, Reverend Vernon took a leave of absence from Western. In 1910, he was reappointed to the Treasury post by President Taft. With the prospect of yet another four years in Washington, Vernon stepped down as president of the university.

Reverend Vernon's position was very capably filled by Hightower T. Kealing, who held both a Ph.D. and an LL.B. He had formerly been editor of the AME Church *Review*. Under the Kealing administration, Western University continued to prosper. In the first year he was President, the faculty expanded from sixteen to thirty teachers. He also greatly increased the number of different trades that were offered, and intensified the teacher training course to keep pace with more rigid state regulations. Doctor Kealing's tenure as president lasted eight years, until his death in 1918. Several years after he died, H. T. Kealing's name was given to a newly established Afro-American primary school in Kansas City, Kansas. The decision to confer this recognition on the deceased president of Western illustrates the bond that existed among all of the schools and faculty that served the Afro-American community during the period in question.

THE EMERGENCE OF BUSINESS AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

By the mid 1880s a whole generation of Afro-Americans had grown up under nominal conditions of freedom. Even though emancipation had not lifted the handicaps of poverty and discrimination, it had at least made possible the acquisition of skills and property. Among the early Afro-American settlers in Kansas City, Kansas, there were a growing number who had managed to parlay their wages into successful businesses, and others who had taken advantage of opportunities for higher education. During this same period, there was also a substantial in-migration of young Afro-American physicians and lawyers who were especially attracted to Kansas City, Kansas because of its "free state" reputation and recent industrial growth. With the increase in the size of the Afro-American community, and the coming of age of this first generation up from slavery, conditions became progressively more favorable for the establishment of a full range of business and professional services, operated by and for Afro-Americans. As part of the same process, the community was gaining the numbers, financial resources, and leadership required to participate more effectively in the political processes of the city and state.

In the period around the turn of the century, Corrvine Patterson was the political elder statesman in the Afro-American community, and had been the pioneering businessman as well. He was born in 1848 in Howard County, Missouri, and arrived in Wyandotte at the age of 20 after serving in the Union Army during the Civil War. For several years he worked as a laborer for the railroad, and from the time of his arrival took an active interest in his church and community. He lived in the 500 block of Nebraska, a few doors down from the First Baptist Church where he was originally a member. (He later became one of the founders of the Metropolitan Baptist Church.) Sometime in the early 1870s, he opened a grocery store and apparently did well as a businessman. His most striking successes, however, were in politics. In 1872, he was elected to a position on the Board of Education, and was subsequently re-elected to serve a second term. He was appointed street comissioner in 1889, and also held the post of city marshal and deputy sheriff. He reportedly gave up his grocery business not long after the Exodus in order to devote full attention to politics, although he retained ownership in several valuable parcels of land between 5th and 6th on State Avenue and Nebraska. Late in the 19th century, he established a cesspool and vault cleaning service, which he operated with his son-in-law, Ernst Gayden Sr.

The son of slaves and largely self-educated, Corrvine Patterson became a successful and influential individual within the city even before the Exodus occcurred. He was one of the main

CORRVINE PATTERSON

figures in organizing efforts to assist the Exodusers, and he later took a leading role in preventing the demise of Freedman's University. In view of the fact that Afro-Americans represented no more than a quarter of the electorate at any time during his career, his political achievements were truly remarkable.

A number of the individuals who later gained prominence within the Afro-American community of Kansas City, Kansas arrived at the time of the Exodus. Along with thousands of others, they came in search of greater freedom and better opportunities in the legendary state of Kansas. One example was Junius Groves, who became known as the "Potato King of the World." He came to Kansas City, Kansas from Louisville, Kentucky in 1879. He initially settled in the west bottoms where he worked in one of the packinghouses. After two years, he married and moved to a ten-acre tenant farm near Edwardsville. Within a short period of time he managed to purchase eighty acres of rich bottom land, and was on his way to becoming one of the wealthiest farmers in the state. His holdings and productivity expanded rapidly. By the turn of the century he owned in excess of 500 acres of farmland, and in 1902 his potato harvest exceeded that of any other farmer on record in the world—thus earning for himself the title of "Potato King."

Groves' agricultural output was so large that the Union Pacific Railroad built a special spur line across his property to expedite shipment. He lived in a stately twenty-two room house, complete with a third floor ballroom, that was situated on a knoll overlooking the Kaw River at Edwardsville. It is reported that Mr. E. H. Heim, then president of the Kaw Valley Railroad, attempted to buy the house and grounds for more than $100,000 because he considered it unseemly for an Afro-American to live in such elegant surroundings. The offer was declined.

In 1913, Groves founded a rural community which he named Groves Center. It was located at what is now 98th and Kaw Drive. Through the development of Groves Center, other Afro-Americans were able to purchase farmland in the rich Edwardsville bottoms. In the off season, a number of these farmers also earned wages in the nearby cement plant at Bonner Springs. In 1914, the inter-urban line was extended near the colony, and at that time a number of people from Kansas City, Kansas bought land in Groves Center, which they farmed while still commuting to jobs in the packinghouses. When Hogg Town was condemned, some of the former residents relocated in Groves Center.

Although he lived at some distance from Kansas City, Kansas, Junius Groves was active in the business community there. He was a partner in the Kansas City, Kansas Casket and Emblaming Company (which will be discussed shortly), and was a director in the Twin Cities Business Association—an organization that included Afro-American businessmen from both Kansas Citys.

Another officer in the Twin Cities Business Association was Anthony Overton, who owned the Overton-Hygienic Products Company at 3rd and Edgerton. As a boy, Overton had come to Topeka with the Exodus from Louisiana. His parents later operated a boarding house in that city, and in 1888 he earned a Law Degree from Washburn University. In that same year he was appointed Municipal Court Judge of Shawnee County. He became involved with Afro-American town development in Oklahoma during the 1890s, and didn't arrive in Kansas City, Kansas until 1898. By this time he had apparently lost interest in politics and real estate. He nonetheless had developed acute business skills and enough capital to build a small factory, where he manufactured baking powder, flavor extracts, and toiletries. He operated out of a two-story brick building that was located on the edge of Juniper, and lived about a half block to the north on 3rd Street. His products, especially the baking

J. G. GROVES RESIDENCE, EDWARDSVILLE, KANSAS

MR. and MRS. JUNIUS GROVES

J. H. CLAYBORNE GROCERY STORE, 10th and WASHINGTON BLVD.

powder, became quite successful. His business continued to grow, and in 1911 the Calumet Baking Powder Company reportedly purchased his formula. At that time, Overton relocated to Chicago and continued to manufacture cosmetics under the label of *High Brown*. He became even more successful in Chicago, where he subsequently owned a bank and an insurance company. He died there in 1946.

Many early businessmen in the Afro-American community got their start selling groceries. At the turn of the century, there were one or more grocery stores owned by Afro-Americans in each of the main residential districts, with the largest number having been located in the Third Ward. J. H. Clayborne's grocery store at 10th and Washington Boulevard became particularly well-known for the high quality meats he sold. Mr. Clayborne devised the innovation of purchasing yearling beef from local farmers and offering it in lieu of the older, tougher cattle that were generally marketed during that period. He called his product "baby beef," and it became popular with housewives all over the city. During that same period, there was a grocery store at 9th and Freeman which was operated by Mrs. L. J. Maddox, and Wilson's Market at 10th and Freeman. There were two Afro-American owned grocery stores in the vicinity of Juniper—Ed Cannon's at 3rd and Garfield and Shannon's near 4th and Richmond—and there were two grocery stores in Rattlebone Hollow that were owned by Afro-Americans. These were Johnny Moorehead's on North Sixth Street and Dan Herrington's at the corner of Sherman and Haskell.

Mr. J. W. Jones, who became one of the leading local businessmen of his time, also started with a grocery store. Born in Shelby County, Tennessee in 1861, Jones migrated first to Oklahoma and then to Kansas City, Kansas in 1894. For three years he worked in the packinghouses, saving all the while to start a business. In 1897, he was able to open a small grocery store at the corner of 4th and Oakland.

He and his family lived in two rooms in the rear of the shop. In 1903, he became a stockholder in the recently formed Kansas City, Kansas Casket and Embalming Company. This enterprise was begun by several local businessmen and civic leaders who believed that there was a need for someone within the Afro-American community to provide dignified burial services, along with assurance of fair treatment for bereaved families. Jones became very active in this business and, as a result, opened a funeral home in connection with it.

The J. W. Jones Funeral Home was begun in a two-story brick building at 440 State Avenue. The potential demand for these services had been accurately predicted, and the business was soon on a sound financial footing. The enterprise was expanded to include a unique set of funerary accoutrements. These consisted of three different horse-drawn hearses—one black, one white, and one gray. The color employed depended on the age of the deceased. The white hearse was for children, the gray for middle-aged, and the black was for the elderly. Each of the hearses came equipped with horses of the same color, and the drivers' uniforms and stove pipe hats were also color-coded to match the rigs. This innovation became popular throughout the city, and other mortuary establishments frequently rented Jones' white and gray rigs when they had funerals for younger people. Jones always insisted that his own drivers go along when the rigs were rented.

J. W. Jones used the profits his business returned him to again diversify his interests. Together with Fred Gleed of Kansas City, Missouri, he started the Gleed and Jones Livery Stable. This was located at 444 State Avenue, next door to the funeral parlor. The livery stable accommodated sixty-one horses and had been constructed entirely by Afro-American carpenters and masons. Jones also contracted to do heavy hauling and house moving and, with all of his different activities, became

AFRO-AMERICAN INFANTRY, SPANISH - AMERICAN WAR, 1898

quite wealthy. He died in 1921, but through the efforts of his wife Mary, the funeral home continued in existence and is now located at 10th and Barnett.

One of the Spanish-American War veterans who had protected Louis Gregory was a leading Afro-American financier during that same period. His name was Nat Singletary, and he first acquired his seed capital during his stint in the army. This was accomplished by loaning money at high rates of interest to soldiers who wanted to gamble. He also made money through the resale of surplus equipment he had acquired overseas. Upon his return in 1900, he opened a saloon at 3rd and Oakland. The profits derived from that establishment were invested in real estate, and in this fashion he amassed a sizeable fortune.

Singletary had grown up in Kansas City, Kansas and at an early age began working in one of the packinghouses. He became interested in politics and in 1898, just prior to his enlistment, was elected deputy assessor. Because of the war he didn't serve his term, and his only other recorded venture into politics was an unsuccessful campaign for mayor in 1915. Singletary is mainly remembered for his real estate interests, particularly the development of Heathwood Park (located just west of 10th Street and south of Parallel Parkway). This park was at one time a broad open lot covered with brush and debris, alongside of which ran the foul and polluted stream of Jersey Creek. Although the tract was surrounded by all-white residential areas, it was centrally located in relation to Rattlebone Hollow, Juniper, and the Third Ward. Singletary envisioned it as a site for an Afro-American recreation area. To that end he acquired the property, cleared it, and installed recreational facilities. One account of the development states that the city later condemned the property rather than permit Singletary to operate a park on the site. It was subsequently made into a public park, and Singletary reportedly realized a profit of $15,000 from the condemnation procedures. Included among his other accomplishments was financing the construction of housing in the Third Ward, which was the area where he also resided (at 1105 New Jersey).

Although space does not permit a complete listing, there were quite a number of other Afro-American businessmen operating in Kansas City, Kansas during this period. These include Nathan Thatcher, who in 1912 founded an undertaking establishment at 5th and Freeman in a building that had previously been occupied by the Young Men's Hebrew Association. (The Thatcher Mortuary is still in operation at that location under the direction of Nathan Thatcher Jr.)[1] Two other well-known businessmen of that time operated coal yards. Mr. New owned a coal yard on 3rd Street, and I. B. Blackburn had a large yard at 9th and New Jersey.

The business enterprises that were begun during this period represented positive benefits for the Afro-American community. They made available badly needed goods and services, and provided one of the few avenues of employment for Afro-Americans outside of the packinghouses. More significantly, these businesses were operated by persons who had an enhanced sympathy and understanding for their customers, arising out of common experiences with even the most needy. This first generation of freedmen had known conditions of poverty first-hand, and most had at one time worked in the packinghouses. In nearly all cases, the individuals previously described were well-known for both philanthropy and active participation in church and lodge activities. J. W. Jones was particularly active in support of higher education, and provided many scholarships for young Afro-Americans. I. B. Blackburn, who was left without family after the death of his wife and daughter in the 1890s, provided similar educational assistance and devoted a great deal of his time and money to fraternal and philanthropic activities. One of the local Masonic Lodges now bears his name in recognition of these efforts. Both Blackburn and New frequently donated coal for families in distress during the winter, and Nat Singletary risked his fortune (not to mention his life) when he took up arms in defense of Louis Gregory.

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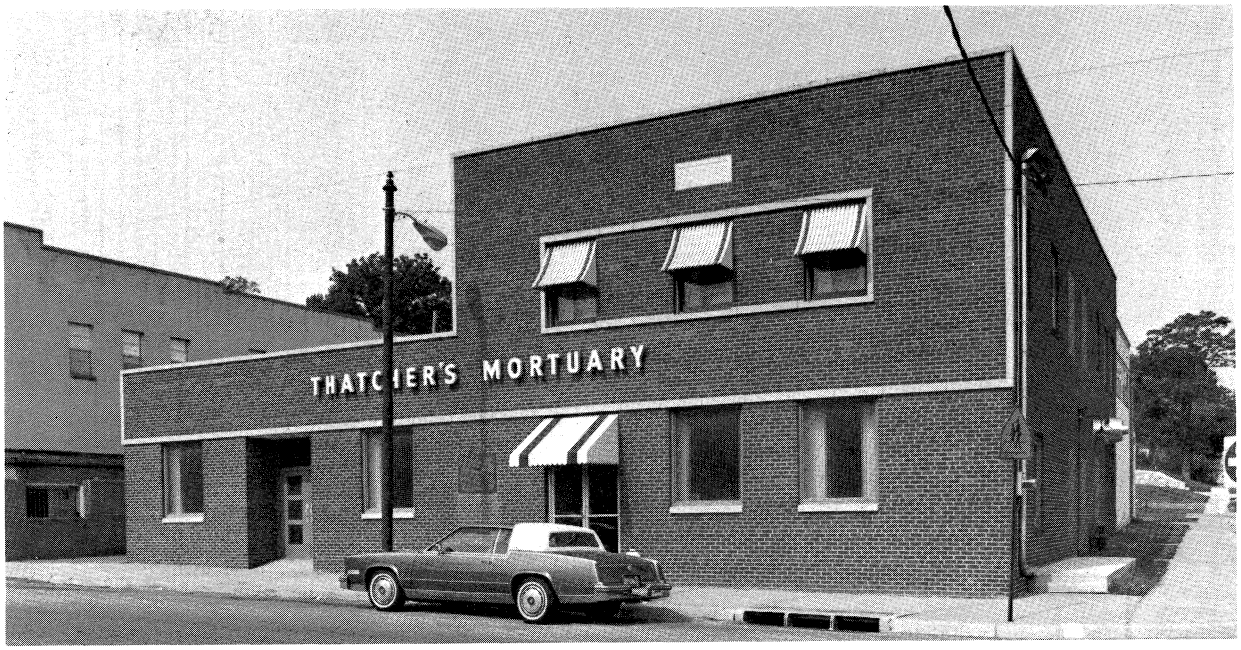
[1]Nathan Thatcher Jr. passed away on March 19, 1980.



THATCHER MORTUARY, 1520 North 5th STREET

There were also a number of cooperative business ventures launched by Afro-Americans who acquired property and capital during this period. These consisted of organizations like the Twin Cities Business Association, and corporate enterprises like the Kansas City, Kansas Casket and Embalming Company. In these combinations, which were designed to take advantage of the potential benefits of pooling wealth and skills, the business leaders of the Afro-American community were frequently joined by those who were involved in politics. The relatively large size of the Afro-American population of Kansas City, Kansas in the latter part of the 19th century represented not only a substantial clientele for the businesses but also a large share of the electorate. As a result, during that period there were a good many Afro-American elected officials in the city and county. Several young Afro-American lawyers who practiced in Kansas City, Kansas gained national political prominence.

The combination of business and political interests within the turn of the century Afro-American community was best exemplified in the joint stock enterprise known as *The American Citizen*. This was a weekly newspaper that was originally begun in Topeka in 1888. The paper was moved to Kansas City, Kansas in the following year, where it was in continuous publication for eighteen years until 1907. Between 1897 and 1900, it was published on a daily basis.

The American Citizen served a variety of functions. The paper carried announcements about church and club activities, references to the comings and goings of prominent Afro-American citizens, and notices about illness and death. In this way, the paper served as an important means of communication within the Afro-American community. A large part of the layout consisted of local and national advertising, and there were always several nationally syndicated news stories. In these ways, *The American Citizen* differed little from any of the other local or city newspapers of that era. It served a smaller community than the city paper, and in that sense afforded coverage to individuals and events that would otherwise not be considered newsworthy. The main distinction in *The American Citizen*, however, was that it served as a medium for expressing a side of the "race question" which was not aired in the establishment press of that time. Additionally, the paper provided news stories about matters of general interest to Afro-Americans that were not likely to

appear in the city paper. Virtually every issue carried stories about lynchings. In their reports of lynching incidents, the editors commonly presented both versions of the story—one from the establishment press and the other an account given by Afro-American news sources. In these ways the paper contributed to an increased understanding on the part of the community concerning the issues most directly affecting Afro-Americans, and served as a basis for debate and consensus over appropriate political positions.

The American Citizen wielded political influence in its own right because of its large circulation. During elections the paper officially endorsed candidates at all levels and editorialized freely about local political figures and issues. The individuals involved in managing and editing the paper were also very active politically. Two of the editors had previously held presidential appointments as U.S. Foreign Ministers, and another was a graduate of the Yale Law School.

The paper's founder was John L. Waller, who established himself in Topeka soon after the Exodus as a prominent businessman and Republican. He had begun *The American Citizen* in February of 1888, but withdrew the following August in order to travel the state campaigning for candidates in the fall presidential election. The paper was then sold to two men from Kansas City, Kansas—H. F. Johnson and George Dudley. H. F. Johnson, who lived at 852 Freeman, was an Exoduser who had developed a grocery business, and later owned real estate. In 1884 he and John Waller attempted to start an earlier newspaper in Kansas City, Kansas (known as *The Western Recorder*), apparently without success. George Dudley, Johnson's partner in *The American Citizen*, was among the earliest Afro-Americans in the city. He arrived directly after the Civil War from Xenia, Ohio. In 1879 he was elected to the City Council, as a representative of the Third Ward, and in 1885 was elected deputy city marshal. He also owned considerable real estate and rental property.

Dudley and Johnson were the paper's owners for the entire time it was published in Kansas City, Kansas, but there were several different editors during that period. The first editor was Warner McGuinn, a native of Baltimore and an 1887 graduate of the Yale Law School. He arrived in Kansas City, Kansas the same year he graduated, and became editor of *The American Citizen* in 1889. He remained in that position for little more than a year, and then returned to Baltimore. It is not clear why McGuinn left the paper, but it may have had something to do with the fact that he editorially expressed a great deal of animosity toward C. H. J. Taylor, the man who succeeded him as editor.

C. H. J. Taylor came to Kansas at the time of Exodus, settling first in Leavenworth. He already possessed a law degree from the University of Michigan. In the early 1880s he moved to 822 Oakland Avenue, Kansas City, Kansas, and during that period served as assistant city attorney. Taylor was a Democrat, which at that time was a very unusual party affiliation for Afro-American political aspirants. He nonetheless gained considerable personal influence within the party, and in 1884 was selected to be a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. Three years later, in 1887, President Cleveland appointed him Minister to Liberia.

Taylor's tenure in Liberia was terminated within less than a year as a result of the Republican presidential victory of Benjamin Harrison in 1888. Upon his return to Kansas City, Kansas, Taylor attempted to develop a statewide movement for political unity among Afro-Americans of all parties. In a move toward accomplishing that objective he became one of the organizers of an explicity non-partisan leadership convention in Salina in 1888. Afro-American clergymen, educators, and political figures from all parts of the state attended the conference. George Dudley was among those in attendance, although Warner McGuinn's editorial in *The American Citizen* expressed opposition to the conference. In 1890, however, Taylor replaced McGuinn as editor of the paper. Under Taylor's direction, the newspaper expressed an adroitly bi-partisan viewpoint, which strengthened ties with Democratic supporters locally and Republicans at the state level. The main political thrust of the paper, however, was the promotion of Afro-American political solidarity and support for Afro-American businesses.

THE AMERICAN CITIZEN.

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 12 1906

The Oldest Negro Paper devoted to the Race in thisSection

LIBERAL COMMISSION PAID RELIABLE AGENTS FOR THIS PAPER CALL HERE

Up From The Lowly.

ANCE OF A KANSAS CITY, KANSAS NEGRO FROM A TRAMP TO A BUSINESS MAN

JOHN W. JONES.

City Locals.

Mrs. Julia Jackson of Denver Colo. is spending some time in the city, the guest of her sister Mrs. O. B. Johnson of 1203 North 5th street.

Miss Annie Smith who event some time in the city, the guest of Mrs. Matthews, leaves returned to her home in Salina Kansas last Monday morning.

Miss Hattie Madison will leave on the 23rd for Denver to attend the convocation.

Mr. Henry Meade for probate judge is the right man in the right place. Vote for him.

Mrs. E. P. Smith, wife of Texas Secretary of the city, have returned and will remain.

Williams & Walker.

Remember the First Grand Carnival Ball given by the Wyandotte Social club at the M and O. Hall doubtless the only Williams and Walker will participate on Thursday night Oct. 18, when you have attended the show or carnival come out and meet the star leaders of the world who will entertain you with some of their latest songs and dances.

Bishop Arnett Dead.

XENIA, O. Oct. 8.—Bishop William Benjamin Arnett of the African Methodist Episcopal church died Monday at the Wilberforce university. He was a native of Pennsylvania and has been a Bishop since 1884. He was a member of the legislature in 1890—97, was chaplain of the national Republican convention at St. Louis in 1896, presided over the parliament of religions in Chicago September 15 1900, and presided at the international conference of Methodists, London, England in 1901. He was a member of the Ohio Archaeological and Historical society and trustee of the United Society of Christian Endeavor.

SEPARATE SCHOOLS LEGAL.

Wichita, Kans., Judge Wilson in the district court decided today that the board of Education has the power under the law to establish and maintain separate schools in Wichita. Negroes say that the case will be taken to the state supreme court.

Too Hasty.

Police Judge Jno. T. Simms has been selected by the Republican city central committee to make the race for mayor to fill out the unexpired term of resigned Mayor Rose. The special election will be held Dec. 11th. The democracy has not yet selected their man. There is much dissatisfaction in the ranks of the Republicans owing to the somewhat hasty "slap judgment" selection and a break in the republican ranks is sure.

Political Notes.

Sam McConnell for sheriff of Wyandotte county, is one of the old war horses and is a winner.

Lon Claypool for register of Deeds is a general favorite.

Vote for E. A. Enright for register.

Hon. E. H. Arthur will go to Fort Scott Kansas in the interest of the Republican party, and will speak in Chicopee, and Crawford counties.

The Republicans will have a grand rally and Barbecue at Bonner Springs October 13th, this will be a great day in Bonner as some of the best speakers in the State will be there and also a good county of the State, and county candidates.

Marcus J. Reis as the incoming recorder was used no introduction for upon to attorney is true and true a gilt edge youngster, a sure winner.

Hon. R. L. Marshman for county commissioner from the ranks of that reliable class of men who has won a name and a place in the estimation of the public and will be re-elected as a matter of course.

The entire Republican county ticket is alright to get them all votes straight.

The individual manhood to be found in each and every gentleman whose name appears upon the Republican county ticket bespeaks in glowing term of the ticket as a whole. Its winner beyond all questions of a doubt.

The extreme efforts of the Democracy to the contrary in real facts. Hoch is in the race, the grand old party is the one and the people know it therefore it is apparent why the Kansas City Star should make such assertions efforts as does time was Friday.—Cal. Hirra. We do not believe the Republican party is weak, is as strong now as ever. We are, since is our belief that the people are on the side of right, progress and manhood hence consequently on the side of republicanism.

REPUBLICAN STATE TICKET.

Governor—E. W. Hoch.
Lieutenant Governor.—William J. Fitzgerald.
Secretary of State.—C. E. Barton.
Auditor—James M. Nation
Attorney General.—Frederick S. Jackson.
Treasurer.—Mark Tally.
Superintendent of Schools.—E. T. Fairchild.
State Printer.—Thomas A. McNeal.
Member of the Supreme Court.—W. A. Johnson, (six years), R. A. Burch, (six years), Silas Porter (four years), Charles B. Graves (four years).
Superintendent of Insurance.—Chas. W. Barnes.
For Railroad Commissioner.—Frank L. Ryan, George W. Kanaly, Charles A. Reed.

REPUBLICAN COUNTY TICKET.

Sheriff.—Sam McConnell.
Probate Judge.—Henry Meade.
County Attorney.—Marcus J. Reis.
Clerk of the District Court.—W. J. Wood Jr.
Coroner.—Dr. A. W. Little.
County Clerk.—E. A. Kope.
Superintendent of Public Instruction.—George E. Rose.
County Treasurer.—J. V. Longfellow.
Register of Deeds.—Leo H. Chapman.
Clerk of Court of Common Pleas.—Frank L. Kanley.
County Surveyor.—J. H. Lasley.
Public Administrator.—Mamie L. Alden.
Commissioner, Second District.—R.L. Marshman.
Representative, Ninth District.—E.K. Rebinett.
Representative, Tenth District.—E.A. Representative, Eleventh District.—C. D. Dall.

Publication Notice.

In the District Court of the 29th Judicial District of Kansas.
John W. Redmond, Plaintiff,
vs.
Effie Redmond, Defendant.

To the above named defendant, you are hereby notified that you have been sued in the above named court by the above named plaintiff and that unless you appear and answer on or before the 23d day of Nov. 1906, the petition filed in said cause will be taken as true and a judgment rendered the nature of which will be a decree dissolving the bonds of matrimony existing between plaintiff and defendant and divorcing plaintiff from defendant and for costs of this suit.

John W. Redmond, Pltf.
Attest: R. F. Beattie, Atty.
Wm. Needles, Clerk.

Publication Notice.

In the District Court of Wyandotte County, Kansas.
Bridie Smith, Plaintiff
vs.
Peter Smith, Defendant.

To the above named defendant, you are hereby notified that you have been sued in the above named court by the above named plaintiff and that unless you appear and answer on or before the 23d day of Nov. 1906, the petition filed in said cause will be taken as true and a judgment rendered the nature of which will be a decree dissolving the bonds of matrimony existing between plaintiff and defendant and granting plaintiff the custody of the minor children.

Bridie Smith, Pltf.
Attest: W. Needles, Clerk.
Elsie Pate, Atty.

Notice of Final Settlement.

State of Kansas,
County of Wyandotte } ss.
In the Probate Court in and for said county.
In the matter of the Estate of Peter Rosencrans, deceased.

Creditors and all persons interested in the aforesaid estate are hereby notified that I will apply to the Hon. John of the Probate Court in and for said county, to be begun and held at the Probate Court room in Kansas City, County of Wyandotte and State aforesaid on the first Saturday in the month of October A. D. 1906. I shall apply to the said Court for a full and final settlement of said estate.

Susanna Van Lear,
Executrix of Peter Rosencrans, deceased.

In science's hereof and empowered Probate Judge in and for the County of Wyandotte and State of Kansas, have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court this 5th day of October A. D. 1906.

[SEAL] John Lee Judge.

Too now that this was the hour and he met it unflinchingly.

"It's a compact, Dorothy! I'll part my hair in the middle or anywhere if you will get up in the morning and occasionally consult a timepiece."

That same evening Dorothy received the first piece of advice ever bestowed upon her by her adoring father.

"You are quite grown up, Dorothy," he suggested gently, "and don't you think it would be a little more appropriate, of general in your mode of life."

"It is, Bryan!" she thought, sighing aloud, "but no more pegs! I have promised Tom to get up to breakfast every morning and that I would try and be 'on time' generally."

"Tom Dalton!" he exclaimed in surprise, and with the thought that she surely must love Tom.

"Yes—for a consideration. He is to part his hair in the middle."

"Tom Dalton part his hair in the middle! Is as soon think of Abraham Lincoln dressed as Little Lord Fauntleroy."

This comparison amused Dorothy and she began to wonder how Tom would look.

"I've invited him to breakfast with us tomorrow, so we will have an opportunity to see how his hair becomes him."

Dorothy did not face the next morning in a spirit of buoyancy. She came into the dining room listlessly and with a feeling that life was a desolate waste.

Her father and mother were already at the table and Tom soon entered looking sheepish and conscious. An unwilling wave of amusement was forced back by Dorothy as she looked at his hair that expression. It was incongruous, but she was not going to admit it.

Her words were few, her voice sad, her manner overtyred, throughout the meal. When, later, Tom came to bid her for a drive she was patiently and dejectedly waiting for him. In the evening she was again on schedule time.

Three days of methodical life dragged on and then Tom felt that he could no longer endure the new life and the surprised glances at his head.

"Dorothy," he said impulsively, "it's seem unhappy. Will you tell me why? Is it coming to breakfast?"

"No, Tom," she replied with a little laugh that was more like a sob, "I think it's your hair. I can't bear to look at you," and she burst forth into tearful laughter.

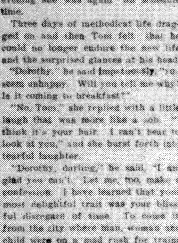
"Dorothy, darling," he said, "I am glad you can't. Let me, too, make a confession. I have learned that your most delightful trait was your blissful disregard of time. To come in from the city where man, woman and child were on a mad rush for trains and see your delicious oblivious to the restless figures on a timepiece was most restful."

"Then shall we go back to our old life?" she cried joyfully.

"Yes—or will you begin a new life with me, Dorothy?"

Without breakfast?" she asked enthusiastically.

"Without breakfast," he replied solemnly.



A Definition.

Jimmy—What does "unseemly hour of four?"

Tommy—That's when somebody's laughin at you.

Chance in the Vegetable World.

Chance plays an important role in the vegetable world. In autumn the

Let us Pray.

The million Negroes in the United States of America and all other countries where are asked to bow in fervent prayer on Sunday, Oct. 7th, 1906. In Bishop A. Walters, President of the 13th Negro Bishop Council a National Negro organization. In the lengthy proclamation we clip the following:

"In these days when we need more than ever power and influence added to our prayers, all races are using their influence to call upon their Heavenly deposits and destroy the multitudinous diseases and the grave perplexity of every ardent people. Such is a season, it is time for the test. Nations oppressed to turn to their arms deliverance.

When the Israelites were oppressed Moses and called them to their knees and he with them, in fast and ardent, cried unto the God of the oppressed who heard them. At a crisis, in the early history of the struggle of the American people for independence, George Washington turned to that same God and the yoke of bondage fell off. When President Lincoln realized that it would take more than the generalship and strategy of a Head to put an end to Northern secession, he called into covenant with the Almighty God, that if He would save the day for the Union at Gettysburg he would sign the Emancipation Proclamation. The day was secured and the proclamation was signed.

The clash of arms, the smoke of cannon was once banned when Lord stooped of to the immortal Lincoln "Enough! of those people Tom." And now God is calling this same people who have wandered away from Him, to return unto me and I will have mercy. I will make your enemies to be at peace with you. This is not, therefore, a call from man but a call from God through man. The Afro American Co. call and I with this People nation with these authority

Executors Notice.

NOTE LETS.

For Rent—To desirable parties, upstairs, parlor well furnished, rooms in one of the best families in the city, inquire at this office.

Mrs. S. T. Meadows of 3th Minn. ave. is prepared to do all kinds of dressmaking up to date. Reasonable. Leave in the city charges at Grays restaurant.

For Nice Fare, short Hours call on Mrs. Hay Easly at 1217 Ohio st. where comfort, health and cleanliness are the order.

Mrs. Kent, 1206 North 9th. has a few good boarders, come in.

Publication Notice.

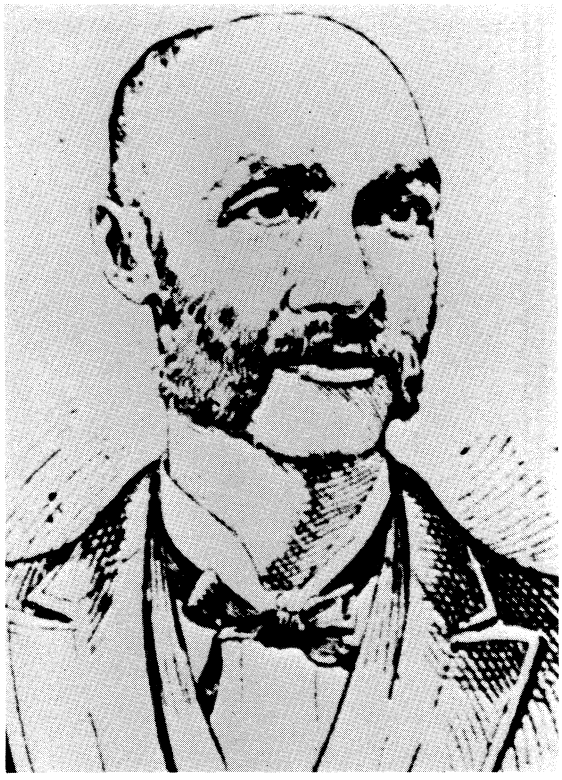
FLANNERY & KEY ART

Publication Notice.

THE AMERICAN CITIZEN

JOHN L. WALLER
1850 - 1907

I. F. BRADLEY
1862 - 1938



GEORGE DUDLEY

In 1892 Taylor made an unsuccessful bid to be elected to the state legislature. In that same year his former patron Grover Cleveland was returned to the presidency. Shortly after he resumed the office, President Cleveland appointed Taylor to be Minister to Bolivia. The Senate refused to confirm his nomination to that post, and he was subsequently appointed Recorder of Deeds for Washington, D.C. In 1893, C. H. J. Taylor moved to the nation's capital to assume his new position.

For three years following Taylor's departure, *The American Citizen* was distinguished for having a woman editor (although her title on the masthead was that of "associate editor"). She was Mrs. F. Jackson who previously had been in charge of the Missouri page. Mrs. Jackson, who was born in Chester, South Carolina in 1861, was a graduate of the University of Atlanta Normal Institute. She came to Kansas City in 1887 and taught school in Kansas City, Missouri, Argentine and Kansas City, Kansas before joining the staff of *The American Citizen* in 1891.

During the period when Mrs. Jackson was in charge, two of the former editors (Taylor and Waller) were engaged in a remarkable international political intrique. Waller, a Republican, had been appointed to the Consulate of Madagascar in 1891 by President Harrison (the man who retired Taylor, the Democrat, from his post in Liberia). When Harrison was defeated by Cleveland in the following year, Waller was slated to be replaced by a Democratic appointment. All of this was occurring during a period of intense resistance against the French colonial government in Madagascar, in which Waller had taken the side of the subject Hovas. His activities eventually led to his arrest in 1895 by the French government, and he was subsequently sentenced to twenty years in a French prison.

Back home in Kansas City, Kansas, *The American Citizen* became the center of an organized effort to secure Waller's freedom. The editorial staff was aided in this effort by Kansas Republicans who loudly contended that it was an outrage on the part of the Cleveland administration to permit an American to be treated in this fashion. The "Waller Affair" became a national cause. Despite mounting pressure from Republicans and Afro-American organizations, it was nearly a year before the State Department was able to obtain Waller's freedom. During that period, his most tenacious ally was C. H. J. Taylor. Although Taylor and Waller had once been bitter political antagonists, they became good friends during their mutual association with *The American Citizen*. Taylor's position in Washington, and his influence with the President, have been credited as the major factors that led to Waller's eventual release by the French authorities in 1896.[1]

Following his release, Waller came to Kansas City, Kansas and resumed the editorship of the newspaper he had originally founded. He remained only until 1898, when he enlisted in the 23rd Kansas Volunteers along with Nat Singletary, and went to fight in Cuba. After the war, he moved to New York where he remained until he died in 1907. As for Taylor, he left Washington for Atlanta in 1897. There he served as dean of the Law Department for Morris-Brown College, and edited a weekly magazine known as the *Appeal*. He died of pneumonia in 1899, at the age of 43. Prior to his illness, he was preparing to return to this area and teach Political Economy at Western University.

Another prominent local Afro-American political figure of that period was B. S. Smith, a graduate of the University of Michigan Law School. He received his degree in 1886, and arrived in Kansas City, Kansas the following year. He established a law office in his home at 840 Freeman, and became very active in civic affairs. He served as deputy city attorney, and in 1892 was elected councilman for the Third Ward. He was later appointed assistant state's attorney. B. S. Smith was among those involved in negotiating the conditions under which Sumner High School was created. In 1905, the year Sumner was built, he became a charter member in the Niagara Movement. This was a national organization of Afro-Americans that was begun by the Harvard-trained historian and sociologist W.

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[1]R. Woods, 1977.

E.B. DuBois. This organization was the first of its kind to publicly speak out against lynching and other forms of racial oppression. It is regarded as the direct antecedent of the NAACP, but at the time of its formation the membership was small and it required considerable personal courage to join.

Kansas City, Kansas actually had two representatives among the charter members of the Niagara Movement. The other was I. F. Bradley Sr., who was also a lawyer and an elected official. Born in Cambridge, Missouri in 1862, I. F. Bradley graduated from the K.U. Law School with honors in 1887. He then moved to Kansas City, Kansas and established an office at 518 Minnesota. Two years later, in 1889, he was elected justice of the peace. From that initial election until his death in 1938, I. F. Bradley took a leading role in local political and civic affairs. He was a gifted lawyer, scholar, editor, and businessman who was part of a national network of Afro-American leaders, but he devoted most of his energy to the betterment of the local community.

Following his term as justice of the peace, Bradley was elected county attorney in 1894. A Republican, in 1900 he was named as a presidential elector for the state, and in 1908 was nominated to be attorney general. He was a charter member in the National Afro-American Council as well as the Niagara Movement, and was the author of several well-known political pamphlets (titles include *The Reign of Reason,* 1912; *Lion and the Lamb,* 1921; and *Social Equality,* c 1930).

Judge Bradley lived in a large frame house which he had built at 400 Haskell, on the edge of Rattlebone Hollow. When the parents of that area were attempting to secure a primary school, Bradley reportedly served as their spokesman in bringing the issue before the Board of Education. He was also founder of the Civic League of Kansas City, Kansas, an organization dedicated to improving inter-ethnic relations, and was generally active in promoting voter registration, political participation, and co-operative businesses.

I. F. Bradley's main ally in these civic efforts was Dr. S. H. Thompson Sr., who together with others in the community, succeeded in founding a hospital and at least three co-operative business enterprises. Dr. Thompson was born in Charleston, West Virginia in 1870. He graduated from Howard University Medical School in 1892 and moved to Kansas City, Kansas that same year. There were only two Afro-American doctors in the city at that time, and the arrival of another was welcomed within the community.

Dr. Thompson was both a surgeon and a family practitioner. He traveled all over the countryside in a horse and buggy, administering to his patients and gaining a thorough familiarity with the multitude of economic as well as medical problems that confronted his people. These kinds of observations possibly motivated his early involvement with the American Commercial League. The ACL, as it was called, was a joint stock company which dealt in coal, feed, flour and groceries. Established in the early 1890s, I. F. Bradley was president of the board and Dr. Thompson was one of the directors. Another director was Mr. J. J. Lewis, who was then principal of Douglass School. Mr. Albert Neely, principal of Lincoln School, was a stockholder. The ACL was set up to provide basic commodities at reasonable prices, and credit on reasonable terms. Their motto was "the best goods, the quickest sales, the smallest profits, and the promptest deliveries." They operated a coal yard at 3rd and Minnesota and a grocery outlet at 437 Minnesota. The main office was at 402 Minnesota. The enterprise lasted until 1902. The reasons for its closing are unknown.

Dr. Thompson and I. F. Bradley were involved in other co-operative business activities. In about 1900 they, and a pharmacist named Frank Davis, began the Wyandotte Drug Company (later the Home Drug Company) at 1512 North 5th. This venture grew into one of the largest drug stores in the city, employing two clerks and a delivery boy. Dr. Thompson and several other doctors and dentists in the community had their offices on the floor above the drug store, thus affording a centralized location for a wide range of medical needs. Additionally, I. F. Bradley and S. H. Thompson were

DOUGLASS HOSPITAL, 312 WASHINGTON BLVD., 1900

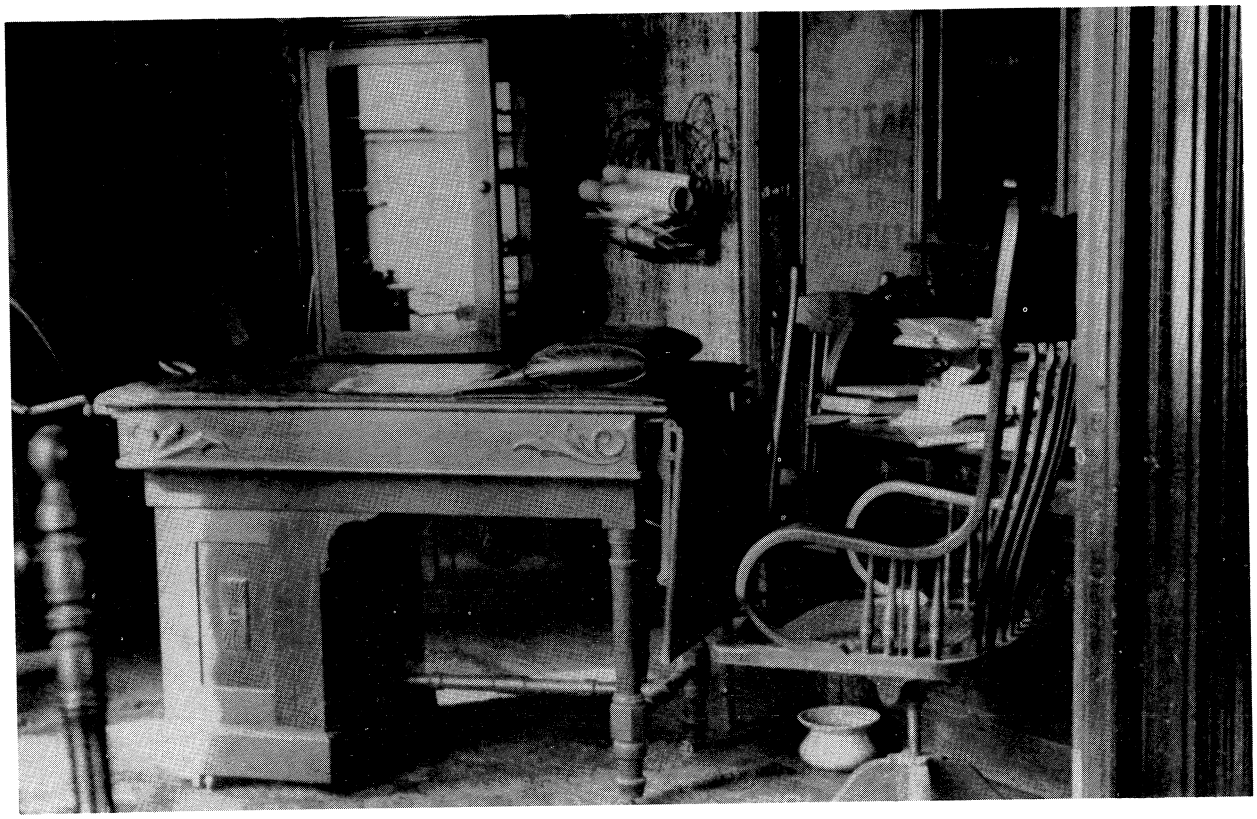
partners with J. W. Jones, Junius Groves and several others in the Kansas City, Kansas Casket and Embalming Company located at 1014 North 5th.

Together with the churches, clubs, and schools, the jointly established Afro-American businesses represented yet another dimension of what amounted to a "parallel" community structure among Afro-Americans at the turn of the century. Created out of necessity to counter the social and economic deprivations of segregation, the institutions and organizations of the Afro-American community also provided a framework for the development of leadership and solidarity. Afro-Americans who gained professional skills and/or monetary resources found that they were no less subject to the indignities of segregation, and were confronted with few alternatives outside of serving their own community. It was a situation that led many to conclude that their individual interests were indivisibly tied to uplifting the entire race. In response, there was considerable collaboration among the people who occupied leadership roles in the various secular and religious organizations of the Afro-American community. These joint efforts at community problem-solving were best exemplified in the establishment of Douglass Hospital in 1898.

DOUGLASS HOSPITAL

The need for a hospital arose from the fact that Afro-American doctors were not permitted to perform surgery or attend patients in any of the existing hospitals. Moreover, there were no facilities in the area where Afro-Americans could be trained as nurses. Dr. S. H. Thompson, who was the driving force behind the hospital, was joined in this effort by I. F. Bradley. The task was begun at a

DR. S. H. THOMPSON SR.
1870 - 1950



DR. S. H. THOMPSON'S OFFICE

WYANDOTTE DRUG COMPANY, 1512 North 5th STREET, circa 1910

meeting that took place in September of 1898, and also included Reverend George McNeal of the Pleasant Green Baptist Church; Reverend Calvin Douglass, of Western University; Dr. H. S. Howell, a physician whose office was located at 1317 N. 8th St.; and Dr. T. C. Unthank, a physician from Kansas City, Missouri. Although it is commonly assumed that the hospital was named for Frederick Douglass, the name was actually chosen in recognition of the efforts of Reverend Calvin Douglass.

Within a few months, the group secured the use of a two-story brick and frame building at 312 Washington Boulevard. (This was the same building that had originally housed Bethany Hospital.) At the time the lease was signed, each of the founders advanced $100 toward the eventual purchase of the facility. The hospital was outfitted for a capacity of ten patients, and two upstairs rooms were converted for use as nurses' quarters. The opening ceremonies were held at the First AME Church early in 1899, and the hospital and nurses' training school were officially chartered in December of that same year.

Douglass Hospital was established to provide medical care to those in need regardless of their ability to pay. As a charitable institution, it was eligible for an annual state appropriation of $300. This sum was hardly sufficient to operate the hospital, however, and fund-raising to meet operating costs was an ongoing community activity. The backbone of this effort was the Douglass Relief Union—a ladies' auxiliary founded in 1899. For many years Mrs. Cynthia Henderson served as the donation collector for the Relief Union. She regularly drove her buggy all over the county collecting fresh meat and produce from farmers, and cash and goods from merchants and housewives. She was occasionally able to garner a load of coal for the hospital from one of the several coal yards described earlier. Raising money for Douglass Hospital became the objective of many social events. For example, in August of 1900 there was a three-day barbeque on the lawn of the hospital to raise funds. On another occasion, Mrs. Unthank (wife of one of the founders) netted $50 at a supper she gave for packinghouse workers. Many of the lodges and service organizations made contributions to the hospital or raised money on its behalf. The churches, particularly Reverend McNeal's congregation, were also a major source of support.

By 1900, the hospital had served more than 300 patients and had a staff of fifteen consulting physicians. Doctor Thompson, who was not yet 30 years old, was the resident director. Nurses' training was in active operation, offering a two-year course for registered nurses and a one-year course for practical nurses and hospital workers. In 1901, commencement exercises were held for the first graduating class. In 1905, the hospital gained the formal sponsorship of the AME Church. Reverend Abraham Grant, presiding Bishop of the Fifth Episcopal District at that time, was a strong supporter of the institution. He brought his personal influence to bear in raising funds for the hospital, and later provided for it in his will. In 1915, the nursing school became affiliated with Western University.

THE JOHN BROWN MONUMENT

The establishment of Douglass Hospital and Western University, as well as the churches, lodges, and many organizations and businesses, represented an impressive record of accomplishment for a group of people who only a generation before began with nothing but the bitter patrimony of slavery and an unshakeable belief in essential Christian values. The early 1900s should have been a time of satisfaction and optimism for Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas. As illustrated in the Louis Gregory incident, however, the city was not unaffected by the racism of that period. Although less rigid than in the South, segregation was practiced here in the schools, hotels, restaurants, and theatres. Most clothing and shoe stores would not permit Afro-Americans to try on goods before purchasing them. There were scores of such indignities and inconveniences to which Afro-Americans were subject on a daily basis. Despite the progress that had apparently been made, these customs persisted and their proponents became even more strident.

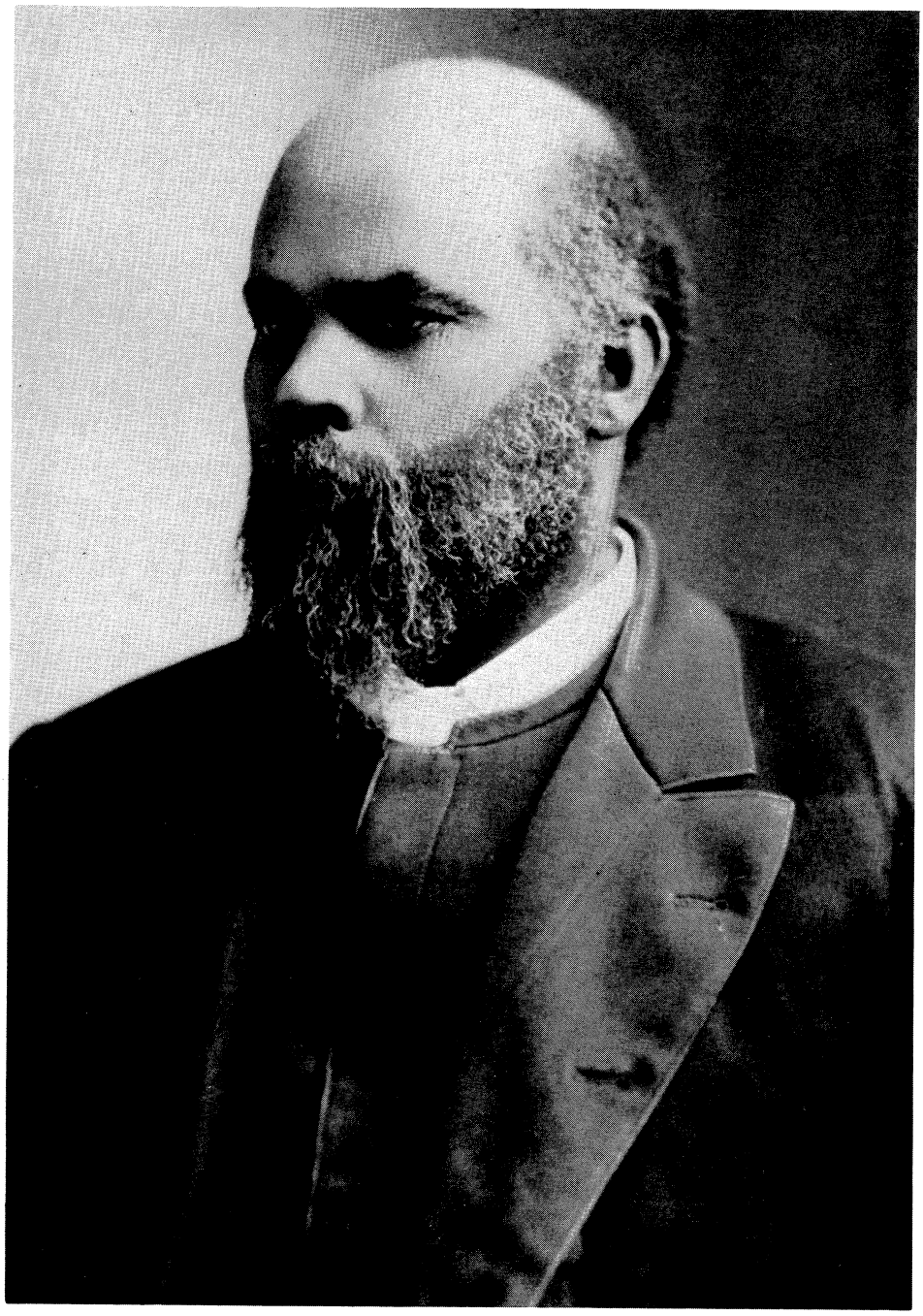
In 1910, an avowed segregationist named J. E. "Cap" Porter was elected mayor. One of his first acts upon assuming office was to fire all ten of the Afro-American policemen on the force (except for one who was a notorious bully). Porter also dismissed a number of Afro-American firemen, leaving No. 5 station at 6th and Quindaro seriously undermanned. Given the circumstances, it must have seemed like a particularly appropriate time to remind local citizens of their historical role in the struggle to eliminate slavery and secure for Afro-Americans the rights that were being so gratuitously denied them. To that end, a statue of John Brown was erected on the campus of Western University. The John Brown statue was the first monument in the United States to be raised to the controversial figure, and in view of the existing political climate, it was a project that was both courageous and defiant.

The effort to build the monument was begun in 1909. The major sponsor of the drive was Bishop Abraham Grant of the AME Church, who was assisted by Dr. S. H. Thompson and I. F. Bradley. A sum of $2,000 was raised in what was labeled "the washerwoman's contribution." The money also came from packinghouse workers, teachers, and businessmen. People of all races, and from many different parts of the country donated money toward the establishment of this memorial. When the funding goal had been reached, an Italian sculptor was commissioned to carve the life-sized marble replica. The artist rendered the bearded figure of John Brown erect on a tall base, clothed in a great coat with a facsimile of the Emancipation Proclamation rolled up in his right hand. The inscription on the base of the statue reads, "Erected to the memory of John Brown by a grateful people."

The statue was placed in front of Ward Hall and unveiled at commencement exercises for the Class of 1911. Bishop Grant was not present to view the completion of this project. Sadly, he had died the previous winter. The master of ceremonies was J. P. King, a teacher at Sumner (later to be principal of Northeast Junior High School and president of Western University). Three thousand people gathered on the grounds in front of the statue. A significant proportion of those in the crowd were white, and the dedication ceremony was in that regard a strong gesture of unity. Among the dignitaries present was the aging John P. St. John, who had been governor of Kansas at the time of the Exodus. He became nationally known for his efforts to find practical and just solutions for the problems of the Exodusers and, in his time, was nearly as controversial as John Brown had been. During the height of the Exodus, he had beseeched his fellow Kansans to be true to their history, and on this day, he again invoked the "spirit of John Brown" and the importance of equality and justice.

Throughout the afternoon the air rang with old-fashioned abolitionist oratory, but the speakers did not confine themselves to topics of historical interest. They also raised more contemporary issues like temperance and the right to vote for women, while among those present were members of the newly formed NAACP. The memorial had been created at a significant juncture in the nation's history. The First World War and the Jazz Age were only a few years away. Yet, in the audience were former travelers on the Underground Railroad, for whom the memory of John Brown had a direct and personal significance. To some, it may have seemed like the spirits of such people as John Stewart, Lucy Armstrong, and Eben Blachly were also lingering somewhere nearby—still interested in the outcome of things they had started here.

For Dr. S. H. Thompson, the occasion was particularly meaningful. His father had been a slave on a plantation not far from the place of Brown's execution. As a child, he listened many times to the vivid stories his aunt told about actually seeing the old man and his sons being led to the gallows. These stories became part of the reason that Dr. Thompson came to Kansas, and they afforded him a strong sense of vision and purpose in the work that he undertook here. He was not alone in this regard. There was a shared belief among many members of the Afro-American community at that time that their efforts, large and small, were directly part of an historical tradition that began with the struggle to end slavery. The raising of the monument was both a reaffirmation of that belief and an effort to rally in the face of adversity. The statue was designed to fulfill a need that was no less real than that served by the hospital, and to this day it stands as a reminder of how far we have come and of the sacrifices that were made by those who went before.



BISHOP ABRAHAM GRANT
1848 - 1911

Dr. Thompson, I. F. Bradley, Bishop Grant, Rev. McNeal, Nat Singletary, Mr. Buster, Corrvine Patterson, J. W. Jones, and the others whose lives were mentioned in this text have all passed away. Also gone are the countless men and women who gave their hard-earned dimes and quarters to build the hospital and raise the statue. At the time they were made, these contributions were regarded as long-term investments—efforts to build equity in dreams of progress and dignity. Although the donors may have known that they would not live to see their own hopes fully realized, perhaps their children would. Of the children who were there when the statue was unveiled, only a handful are now still living. One of them is Orrin McKinley Murray, who remembers that day and the many other things he saw and heard about as a child. He listened to accounts that the old settlers gave about Wyandot Indians and abolitionist crusaders, and he sat on the steps of the court house while Civil War veterans described what they had seen and done. His maternal grandparents came with the Exodus on the boat *Fannie Lewis*, and his paternal grandparents escaped from Parkville into Quindaro. Phillip Murray, who freed his family from slavery and lived to see one hundred years, often admonished his grandson to learn and remember the lessons of the past, and to pass this knowledge along so that the children of the next generation might also benefit. This is what we have attempted to do here.

5 Contemporary Reflections: An Epilogue

Over seventy years separate the present from the events that were described in the foregoing text. This was a period that included the two World Wars, the depression of the 1930s, and the dramatic occurrences of the 1960s. Given such a broad backdrop, it is not possible to do more than provide a brief summary of the changes that have taken place within the Afro-American community during this time.

Perhaps the most striking difference is that Douglass Hospital and Western University have both ceased operations—Western in 1943[1] and Douglass Hospital in 1978. Although a number of factors contributed to the closing of these two institutions, de-segregation was the major underlying cause. Both originated to serve functions for which there was far less need once segregation in hospitals and institutions of higher learning had been eliminated. Although it may seem paradoxical that social progress would result in the loss of valued community institutions, the grounds of Western University are now the setting for the Primrose Villa Retirement Center and the Bryant-Butler-Kitchen Nursing Home. These two facilities were established in connection with Douglass Hospital prior to its closing, and they are still operated under the sponsorship of the AME Church. Thus, the institutional complex that now occupies the area where Eben Blachly began his school could be most accurately regarded as an adaptation to changed circumstances within the modern Afro-American community.

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[1]For an account of the later growth and eventual closing of Western University, see references in the bibliography by Orrin Murray and Thaddeus Smith.

DEMOLITION OF GRANT HALL/DOUGLASS HOSPITAL, 3700 North 27th STREET, 1980

The eventual elimination of laws permitting segregation in Kansas City, Kansas came at least partly as the result of continued electoral successes by Afro-Americans. The election of Dr. William Blount[1] to the state legislature in 1928 was a major turning point in this effort. Following the First World War, labor shortages in the packinghouses and renewed Klu Klux Klan terrorism in the South precipitated a large movement of Afro-Americans into Kansas City, Kansas. In their search for a place to live, the new arrivals were largely restricted to the older sections of the Northeast Area. Eventually, what was then the Eighth District came to have a majority of Afro-American constituents. At that point, it was possible to gain a state-wide elective office—something no Afro-American in Kansas had done since 1890. I. F. Bradley and C. H. J. Taylor had both tried unsuccessfully to win a seat in the Kansas House of Representatives. Dr. Blount's victory was in a sense theirs also, because the political organization that they had originally helped create rallied behind Blount's campaign.

A 1908 graduate of Meharry Medical School, Dr. Blount came to this area from Texas in 1920. He established a private practice and served as deputy coroner and assistant Wyandotte County physician. He was also on the staff of Douglass Hospital. During Dr. Blount's term in the state legislature (which lasted until 1936), he endorsed and initiated much progressive legislation. This included a successful bill, known as Resolution #17, which was designed to prevent the state university system from discriminating on the basis of race in admissions to professional training.

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[1]Dr. Blount's daughter, Mrs. Will Florence Robbins Hudgins, is currently the director of the Kansas City, Kansas Department of Human Relations.

Dr. Blount was followed in the state legislature by another Afro-American, William Towers, who represented the Eighth District from 1937 until 1948. Rep. Towers was a native of Kansas City, Kansas and an attorney who had previously served as deputy city attorney. He was succeeded by Myles Stevens, who had also earlier been deputy city attorney. Mr. Stevens, who came to this area from Tennessee in 1927, served in the Kansas House of Representatives until 1954, when he was succeeded by Dr. Eldred Browne. Dr. Browne, a chiropractor, was originally from the British West Indies.

In 1959, James Davis, a local attorney, won election to the seat formerly held by Dr. Browne. Rep. Davis, a cousin of Myles Stevens, moved from Tennessee to Kansas City, Kansas in 1946. He served in the state legislature until 1973, when he stepped down to accept an appointment as county commissioner representing the Second District of Wyandotte County. He subsequently won election to that office, and served as chairman of the Board of County Commissioners until the time of his death in 1979. (Myles Stevens also passed away in 1979.)

The present county commissioner from the Second District (appointed to the position following Mr. Davis' death), is Clyde Townsend, who grew up in Desoto, Missouri and came to Kansas City, Kansas in 1953. Commissioner Townsend is the fourth Afro-American to hold the office of Wyandotte County Commissioner. The first to do so was Fred White, a veteran of the city fire department, who was elected county commissioner in 1942. He served until January, 1951 when he was followed in office by Cordell Meeks Sr., an attorney who grew up in Kansas City, Kansas. Cordell Meeks Sr. remained in the office of county commissioner for more than twenty-two years—until 1973, when he was appointed District Court Judge of Division 6.[1] Upon Judge Meeks' elevation to the bench, James Davis was then appointed to serve his unexpired term.

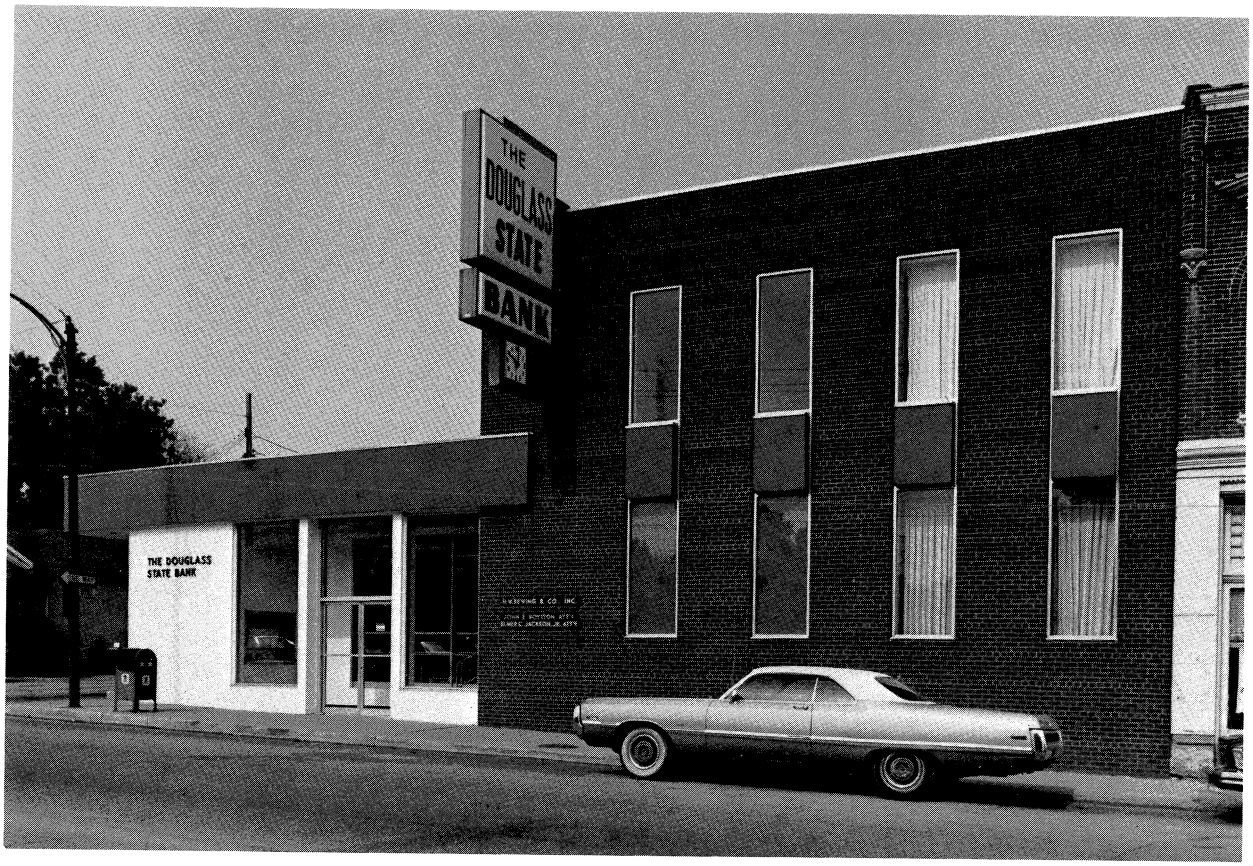
The congressional seat that Commissioner Davis relinquished at that time (the 34th District) was filled by Norman Justice, a former sergeant with the city police department. Rep. Justice, who has been very active in the labor movement, is currently serving his third term in office. Two other Afro-Americans have also been elected to state-level offices from Wyandotte County. In 1964, George Haley (whose brother Alex is the author of *Roots*) was elected to the state senate from what was then the Eleventh State Senatorial District. Senator Haley only served one term, but in 1969 a second Wyandotte County congressional seat was won by an Afro-American—Clarence Love, a businessman whose district includes the Quindaro area. Rep. Love still holds that office.

Mrs. Rebecca Vincson is another well-known Afro-American political figure, who came to Kansas City, Kansas in 1932 from Chicago where she had been an aide to Congressman Oscar DePriest. Although she was never elected to an office, she has served as a political advisor for many successful candidates.

The political advancement of the post-World War I generation of Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas was matched by a growth in the number and variety of business enterprises. Many of these were located on North 5th Street, between Quindaro Boulevard and State Avenue. Most of the store-fronts along that section of 5th Street were originally occupied by European immigrant shop-keepers who had begun their businesses before the turn of the century. In the years after World War I, a growing number moved their establishments to Minnesota Avenue or other parts of the city that were being developed during that period. Several of the proprietors grew old and retired without heirs, and with no one to assume their businesses, the shops were closed. As they were vacated, the offices and shops on North 5th Street were increasingly occupied by Afro-American proprietors.

The Home Drug Company and the Kansas City, Kansas Casket and Embalming Company were both established on North 5th Street prior to 1900. In 1912, they were joined in that location by the

[1]Judge Meeks' son, Cordell Meeks Jr., was appointed District Court Judge in 1980.



DOUGLASS STATE BANK, 1314 North 5th STREET

Thatcher Mortuary, which was established in a building that had earlier been the Young Men's Hebrew Association. Shortly thereafter, a dry cleaning shop, a printing company, and a dry goods store were begun by Afro-Americans in the same area.

More businesses on North 5th Street were opened by Afro-Americans during the 20s and early 30s. There were several shoe repair shops, another funeral home, and a service station and garage. Additional grocery stores and confectionaries were begun in Juniper, Rattlebone Hollow and the Third Ward. An ice cream parlor was opened in the vicinity of Sumner High School and there was a barbecue restaurant at 12th and Washington Boulevard. Rev. Thomas Knapper, one of the Spanish-American War veterans who later served on the city police force, opened a book store at 1716 North 8th. His wife operated the Tillie Moss Knapper Cottage Tea Room at 3rd and Stewart, just to the west of Juniper.

The proliferation of business enterprises highlighted the need for improved access to capital and investment opportunities for Afro-American business people in Kansas City, Kansas. The Douglass State Bank, which is located at 1314 North 5th Street, began in part as a response to that need. This institution also provided greatly enlarged opportunities for Afro-Americans to purchase homes. The current rate of home-ownership among Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas is very high in comparison with other metropolitan areas in the United States,[1] a fact that reflects well on the bank's contribution to the community.

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[1]Approximately 66% of Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas are home-owners, compared with 38% of Afro-Americans nation-wide.

Founded in 1947, Douglass State Bank was the first bank west of the Mississippi River to be established by Afro-Americans. Although the individuals responsible for starting the bank were for the most part members of the next generation, the development of this institution was similar in many ways to the approach that had been taken earlier by the founders of Douglass Hospital and the American Commercial League. The autobiography of Henry W. Sewing, who founded the bank, contains a fascinating account of how it began and of the roles taken by the many different people who were involved.[1]

Mr. Sewing, who came to Kansas City, Kansas from Texas after having served in the Army during World War I, was initially a mathematics instructor at Western University and later worked for an insurance company. In 1932, Mr. Sewing joined together with three other men to form the Sentinel Loan Club. His partners included Dr. Sherman Scruggs, a veteran who had been awarded the Croix de Guerre in 1919 and was Supervisor of Negro Elementary Schools in Kansas City, Kansas from 1924 until 1938; Joseph Collins, who was principal of Northeast Junior High School; and C. S. Mathews, who was employed as a clerk with the federal government. The club began with $200.00 in capital and a maximum loan limit of $25.00. From this modest beginning developed the Douglass State Bank, a comprehensive lending institution that currently has assets of more than 25 million dollars.[2]

The first vice-president of Douglass State Bank was James Browne, a graduate of Sumner High School who had previously worked with H. W. Sewing in the insurance business and in the Sentinel Loan Company. He was the first president of the Northeast Business Association, which was begun in 1946 and is still in existence. Until his death in 1979, Mr. Browne was president of the Crusader Life Insurance Company which he founded in 1957.

Among the other early directors of the Douglass State Bank were Dr. Wm. A. Love, Isadore Gross Sr., G. B. Buster of Sumner High School, Rev. I. H. Henderson of the 8th Street Baptist Church, and Bishop John A. Gregg of the Fourth AME District. Bishop Gregg, who was a 1902 graduate of the University of Kansas, achieved considerable renown as an educator, missionary, and theologian. He was the first Afro-American ever to be selected president of Howard University (a post that he declined to assume) and during World War II he served as President Roosevelt's emissary to the Afro-American troops overseas.

Many of the original directors and stockholders of the Douglass State Bank belonged to the Monrovian Club, an organization that Mr. Sewing helped to establish in the early 1920s. The Monrovian Club was in some respects similar to the earlier Twin Cities Business Association, in that it was designed to facilitate cooperation and information exchange among Afro-American business people and professionals. Street lighting was installed on North 5th Street through the efforts of the Monrovian Club, and this organization also provided the basis for reactivating the Kansas City, Kansas branch of the NAACP. Located in a large converted house at 2074 North 5th Street, the club provided recreational facilities including a billiards table. The structure also provided space for meetings, parties, and receptions. In addition, there was a "junior" Monrovian Club for the older boys of the community. The club lasted until the early 1930s.

The Prince Hall Masonic lodges and the affiliated Eastern Star lodges are still very viable within the community, but the other early lodges have faded away. The insurance benefits that the United Brothers of Friendship and the Knights of Tabor provided, lost their attraction after the

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[1]See reference in bibliography. This book is available in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Library.

[2]The H. W. Sewing Company, Inc., which is a separate concern, was established in 1946, one year prior to the bank.

establishment of commercial insurance companies operated by Afro-Americans and with a decrease in the discriminatory practices of most major insurance companies.

Most of the early cultural and social organizations went out of existence with the passing of their charter members. In the 1920s, a number of new clubs were formed and nearly all are still active today. These include the L'Amour Club, the Geace Club, the Kansas Citians, and the Wyandotte Association of Colored Women and Girls Clubs. Local chapters of national Afro-American fraternities and sororities were also established in Kansas City, Kansas during the 1920s. Currently, there are four sororities and four fraternities. There is also a local chapter of the social organization known as Links.

The Yates Branch YWCA is still in operation. It is now located in two adjacent buildings at 640 and 644 Quindaro Boulevard. The structure at 644 was once the home of the segrationist mayor, "Cap" Porter. Much of the credit for the durability and success of Yates Branch belongs to Mrs. V. Hardee Middlebrooks, who served as director from 1929 to 1960. Mrs. Middlebrooks, a native of Texas and a graduate of Fisk University, had been a high school English teacher prior to her YWCA work. Under her direction, the Yates Branch YWCA played a central role within the Afro-American community, and proved highly adaptable to changing circumstances. During the depression, WPA classes and activities were coordinated by the Yates Branch, and during the 1940s the facility served as a USO for servicemen in the still segregated armed forces. In the 1960s, the Yates Branch was the site of meetings called to discuss ways to effectively challenge persisting segregation in theaters and restaurants in Kansas City, Kansas. From these meetings came organized protests which directly contributed to the end of segregated public accommodations here.

The traditionally close relationship between the Yates Branch and the faculty of Afro-American schools has continued over the years. Like their predecesors, contemporary Afro-American teachers, principals, and school administrators have continued to play a crucial role within the community. In the period after the First World War, their ranks increased sharply and the system of segregated public schools became much more complex due to the large growth in the number of Afro-American students.

Two previously all-white schools in the Northeast Area were reassigned as Negro schools during the early 1920s. The Everett School, located in the 400 block of Everett Avenue, was renamed Grant in honor of Bishop Grant. The Eugene Field School at Springfield and Troup was converted into the H. T. Kealing School, named after the former president of Western University. Directly across the street from the Kealing School was Northeast Junior High School which was built in 1923 on the grounds where George Fowler's mansion once stood. The first principal was J. P. King, who officiated at the unveiling of the John Brown statue in 1911.

In 1945, immediately after the Second World War, the old Longfellow School at 6th and Waverly was converted to accommodate the increasing numbers of Afro-American pupils who lived in Rattlebone Hollow. First labelled "Dunbar Annex," the name formally became Dunbar South. Dunbar South was the last such school conversion, as the Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education decision was then less than a decade away. Handed down in 1954, the landmark Supreme Court ruling against the constitutionality of segregated schools brought Kansas once again into the spotlight of Afro-American history. At the time it occurred, Dr. S. H. Thompson's son, S. H. Thompson Jr., was the principal of Sumner High School.

The desegregation order initially had only a minor impact on the schools in the Northeast Area. By this time residential segregation had proceeded to the point that the neighborhoods and the schools were inextricably bound together. The resulting impasse has been a factor in the closing of many of the original schools in that general area. Of the earliest schools, only Douglass Elementary and Sumner High School are still in existence, the latter of which has been converted to Sumner

SUMNER HIGH SCHOOL, 8th and OAKLAND, 1939
Joseph W. Radotinsky, architect

Academy. Stowe and both of the Dunbar schools have been torn down. Vernon School in Quindaro was closed, but the building now serves as a community center for residents in that neighborhood. Northeast Junior High School was also closed. The Kealing School was torn down, but was replaced by the Benjamin Banneker School, which was built on the same site. The Grant School, which was demolished by Urban Renewal, was also replaced by a new facility at the same location.

There are, in addition, two church-sponsored schools in the Northeast Area. In 1977, Pleasant Green Baptist Church began a school which included pre-school through the fourth grade. The curriculum was expanded through the ninth grade in the following year, and in 1979 was again increased to extend all the way through high school. There are presently about 200 students enrolled in the Pleasant Green Community School. Our Lady & St. Rose School, at 7th and Waverly, was initially begun in 1926 as part of the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Mission. The school which includes kindergarten through the sixth grade, had an enrollment of approximately 150 students during the most recent academic year.

The churches provide an illustration of both continuity and change within the modern Afro-American community in Kansas City, Kansas. All fourteen of the churches that were formed prior to the turn of the century are still in existence, but they are all larger now, with more substantial facilities and expanded organizations. Many still occupy their early locations, and their continued presence has had a stabilizing influence on the older neighborhoods that surround them. The Pleasant Green and First Baptist Churches were both situated in the midst of Urban Renewal clearance areas, but the two congregations elected to remain where their roots were, despite the disruption around them. Several of the churches have taken a direct role in housing and

neighborhood revitalization programs, and many individual pastors have served on boards of directors and advisory boards. As one example Rev. E. A. Freeman of the First Baptist Church has been the chairman of the Kansas City, Kansas Planning Commission since 1966.

There have been many new churches added since the turn of the century. Currently, there are nearly ninety Afro-American churches in Kansas City, Kansas, creating an even greater diversity among denominations than there was at the turn of the century. The largest number still are Baptist, but the Methodist congregations have also increased accordingly. A Roman Catholic church, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, was established in 1927 at 5th and Parallel, merging in 1968 with St. Rose of Lima parish at 7th and Quindaro Boulevard. One of the more recent denominations, *Church of God in Christ*, has experienced a particularly rapid rate of growth. As one example, the Miracle Temple at 22nd and Quindaro is housed in a converted supermarket building which provides meeting space for more than twenty separate God in Christ congregations. Their joint tenure in this building illustrates both the proliferation of this denomination and the persisting tendency for small Afro-American congregations to retain their separate identities.

The changes that have affected the Afro-American community in the last sixty years are perhaps nowhere more evident than in the neighborhoods of the Northeast Area. Beginning in the early part of the century, residential integration in Kansas City, Kansas became increasingly less common. The white families who had been living in Rattlebone Hollow and the integrated portion of the Third Ward did not abruptly move out, but white families were no longer moving into those area. Those who moved away or died were gradually replaced by Afro-Americans until there were only Afro-Americans living in these neighborhoods.

The process of racial transition accelerated in the aftermath of World War I, but the greatest neighborhood changes occurred after World War II. It was during this period that residential development in the western part of Wyandotte County resulted in the departure of a large number of families who had previously lived in city neighborhoods. The Northeast Area was particularly affected by this movement to the suburbs (a process from which Afro-Americans were largely excluded), and it was during this general period that there emerged a broadly defined pattern of residential concentration among Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas. In the past decade, however, there has been a noticeable reversal of these trends, with growing numbers of Afro-Americans taking up residence in the suburbs and a slackening of "white flight" away from the central city.

Other changes that have affected the original Afro-American neighborhoods in Kansas City, Kansas reflect the twin ravages of time and Urban Renewal. Many of the houses in these areas were already getting old when the century turned, and a large number of these old structures have been demolished. In the 1960s, Urban Renewal obliterated the original Juniper settlement and all of the residences in the area east of 5th Street between State Avenue and Walker Avenue. A large, and largely abandoned, portion of Rattlebone Hollow was converted to a land-fill during this same period—its valleys and ravines slowly built up with layers of trash and earth until the "hollow" became a terraced green space occupied by John A. Garland Memorial Park.

It is difficult to weigh the sadness and frustrated anger of those who lost their homes and saw their neighbors scattered, against the progress that may have been achieved. Jersey Creek, which was once an open sewer running through the heart of the Northeast Area, was cleared, paved and landscaped. Although Urban Renewal policy required scores of good houses to be taken along with the bad, many of the structures that were demolished were unsafe and unhealthful. There was, nonetheless, a callous indifference that seemed to attach itself to the concept of Urban Renewal—a conviction that destruction must precede renovation and that old things should be routinely discarded.

In more recent years, there has been a recognition that the costs of block clearance, in economic as well as human terms, are too heavy to be borne. The current emphasis is on conserving and rehabilitating inner-city housing and preserving the neighborhood communities that make our city a vibrant and interesting place to live. The boundaries of several of the Kansas City, Kansas Community Development neighborhoods correspond with the early Afro-American settlements. There is a CD group known as the Juniper Gardens Tenants Association. The group named the Quindaro Urban Improvement Club takes in the residential section that was long ago settled by former slaves from Parkville and Weston. The Douglass-Sumner Neighborhood Association covers the old Third Ward area. Rattlebone Hollow is divided between two CD groups (Cobb Heights Neighborhood Club and the Oak Grove Concerned Citizens) at 7th Street Trafficway, which cut the neighborhood in half when it was first constructed in the 1930s.

In spite of the changes that have affected all these areas, they also manifest considerable stability. Most of the residents own their homes, and a sizable number have lived in the same houses for decades. Included among the participants in the CD groups are descendants of people who started the churches in these neighborhoods, joined the Yates Branch when it first opened, and took part in the parent groups that were established in the schools. Present efforts to revitalize the Northeast Area are an extension of what is now a long tradition within the Afro-American community. The progress to date, and the plans for the future, reflect an appreciation of the cumulative investment in the neighborhoods and institutions of that area by the past five generations of Afro-Americans in Kansas City, Kansas.

Appendices

APPENDIX I
A Note on Names

The names of both individuals and organizations have often become distorted with the passage of time. In part this is because, in times when literacy was not as widespread as it is today, spelling was often a matter of guesswork even among the educated. Moreover, errors have a way of becoming self-perpetuating when researchers rely on secondary sources. The following list gives those names about which there may be some disagreement, as well as an explanation for the chosen spellings.

EBEN BLACHLY — The written sources give a number of variants on the spelling of Rev. Blachly's name. The first name is sometimes given as *Eban*, and the last name is often spelled *Blachley*, or even *Blatchley*. The spelling used here is taken from Rev. Blachly's tombstone in Quindaro Cemetery, a source that if not definitive is certainly final.

NANCY BROWN/QUINDARO — Nancy Brown Guthrie's maiden name is often given as either *Nancy Quindaro Brown* or *Quindaro Nancy Brown*. Most Wyandots had two names, an English name and a Wyandot name, but they were normally used at different times for different purposes, and almost never together. For example, William Walker Jr's. Wyandot name was *Sehs-Tah-Roh*, but he would never have been referred to as William Sehs-Tah-Roh Walker. In this instance, Nancy Brown Guthrie's Wyandot name was *Seh Quindaro*.

EXODUSERS — The term *Exoduser* is used in this text instead of *Exoduster*, which is the name historians have normally employed when referring to those who participated in the Kansas Fever Exodus of 1879-1880. Locally, at least, the participants referred to themselves as Exodusers, and we therefore chose to follow local usage.

FREEDMAN'S UNIVERSITY — The name of Rev. Blachly's school at Quindaro is sometimes given as *Freedmen's University* or *Freedman University*. The spelling used here conforms to state records and to accounts published by Western University. It should also be noted that the school was never called *Quindaro University* or *Brown University*, as popular belief would sometimes have it.

NEW ENGLAND EMIGRANT AID COMPANY — The name of this organization is often given incorrectly, even in scholarly publications, as the *New England Emigrant Aid Society*. The Company was only one of a number of northern organizations which promoted settlement in Kansas. The misnomer originated among pro-slavery advocates, who referred to these organizations as emigrant aid societies. At the time, the word *society* implied a secret or clandestine organization, and the use of the term by southerners reflected their belief in a monstrous northern conspiracy to prevent the rightful spread of slavery.

WYANDOTTE — Three different spellings are used for this name, depending on what is being referred to. Historians generally spell the name of the Indian tribe *Wyandot*. Early in the 19th century, the spelling *Wyandott* was used, and this was the name of the town that had its beginnings in 1843. At some point in the early 1860s the spelling was changed to *Wyandotte* for both the town and the county, and this is the spelling that continues in use today. The spellings of *Quendot* and *Wiandot* have also been used at various times. The name *Huron* was given to the Wyandot tribe by the French, and is not an Indian word. It dervies from a French word for the bristles of the wild boar, and refers to the roach or scalp-lock worn by Wyandot warriors.

APPENDIX 2
The Exodus: a personal account
by I. F. Bradley[1]

I was a bare headed, bare footed, sparsely clad youngster at Cambridge, a small but important shipping point on the Missouri river, on April 9th, 1879 when the *Fannie Lewis,* a majestic side wheel steamer, docked at that place. She was towing a couple of great barges upon which was the largest number of refugees that came at any one time. I begged mother to let me go down in the woods, to where she was landed, and went aboard of her, and heard those mothers and fathers sing and pray, and tell some of the story of that from which they had fled. Some of the songs I had heard before, perhaps not sung with the pathos and depth of feeling that I heard that day, and the prayers I heard I can never forget. They sang "Rock Daniel," and rocked some as they sang it. They also sang "Ride On, Jesus, Ride On" and "I've Done Got Over," and "Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb." Who would have dreamed that in ten years I could have picked up an education, and reap the good fortune of being elected a Justice of the Peace in this city in which capacity, certain of these same people came before me for judgment in April 1889.

All of the refugees did not come on the *Fannie Lewis* but the larger portion did. Two other steamers, the *Grand Tower* and the *Durfee,* brought cargoes, and others later brought small numbers. They were landed on the low lands south of Jersey Creek and the location was afterwards called Juniper Bottoms. They brought with them the idea of a colony, and had their spiritual adviser in the person of Curtis Pollard, a man of some ability of leadership who unfortunately did not live long after his arrival. They were close communion Baptist and devout church folks but dissensions arose and church splits followed so that out of the mother church, which formerly stood at Third and Freeman, there has come King Solomon, Mount Zion, Mount Olive, Pleasant Green and Strangers Rest.

They even brought their own doctor and lawyer, both of whom were full fledged jokes. Doctor Childs would rig up his little ill fed nag, with a ghost of a saddle, martin gills, collar and crupper, and ride around and up the Avenue, looking as important as he could. Manuel Powell, the lawyer, looked wise, but he was unkempt, wholly ignorant and ugly. Neither of them had any other quality whatever.

The Refugees squatted on the river bank and built their shacks in irregular form, out of whatever could be pieced together. Industry absorbed them and they gradually bought or built homes in other parts of the city. The guiding hand of the Exodus was Isaiah Montgomery, a full blooded member of our group, and an ex-slave of Jefferson Davis. The number that squatted here was in the neighborhood of five hundred. Montgomery carried a like number to Topeka where they were established in what is still called Tennessee Town. He was also active in planting a colony at Nicodemus in Graham county. Montgomery returned to Mississippi where he later became the owner of the plantation of his former master.

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[1]From Harrington, *Historic Spots,* pp. 208-209.

APPENDIX 3
Establishment of Sumner High School by the State Legislature

In the legislative debate on the proposal to establish separate high schools, the following resolutions were adopted:

"Whereas, an unfortunate incident, having no bearing on the school system of Kansas City, Kansas aroused the ire of a number of white patrons and white friends of the Kansas City, Kansas High School and caused them to use such incident as a pretext to eject abruptly all colored students from said high school, to bar the doors against them, and to deny them the privilege of attending said school, and whereas, said act is a gross violation of the school laws of the state of Kansas, and an infringement of the constitutional rights of the colored citizens of Kansas:

Be it resolved that

(1) We condemn such act as unconstitutional.

(2) We recommend that the colored students be restored their rights or that in the name of justice the school be closed to both races until such laws are enacted by the state legislature, repealing the law providing for mixed high schools in Kansas City, Kansas, and enacting a law for separate high schools in Kansas City, Kansas."

The suggestions embodied in these resolutions were approved and plans were evolved whereby the colored students resumed their place in the Kansas City, Kansas High School until the next meeting of the State Legislature which convened in January, 1905.

At this session of the legislature a bill known as the "Segregation Bill" and bearing the title, "House Bill No. 80, an act relating to the government of schools in Kansas City, Kansas, and to amend Section 6290 of the General Statutes of 1901," was introduced. The bill read as follows:

"Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

Section I. That Section 6290 of the General Statutes of 1901 entitled "An act for the regulation and support of common school," be and the same is hereby amended so that the same shall read and be as follows: The Board of Education shall have power to elect their own officers, make all necessary rules for the government of the schools of such cities under its charge and under the control of the board, subject to the provisions of this act and the law of this state, to organize and maintain separate schools for the education of white and colored children, including the high schools of Kansas City, Kansas; no discrimination on account of color shall be made in high schools except as provided therein; to exercise the sole control over the public schools and school property of such city; and shall have the power to establish a high school or high schools in connection with manual training and instruction or otherwise, and to maintain the same as a part of the public school system of said city.

Section II. That original Section 6290 of the General Statutes of 1901, of which section hereof is amendatory, and all acts and parts of acts in conflict with the provisions of this act, be and the same are hereby repealed.

Section III. This act shall take effect and be enforced from and after its publication in the official state paper."

The bill was approved February 22, 1905, and published in the official state paper February 28, 1905.

APPENDIX 4
A Vanished Legacy

Each city has its list of buildings and sites of historic, architectural, or cultural significance that have been damaged or destroyed, and Kansas City, Kansas is no exception to this. It is only in recent years that Americans have become increasingly concerned about these losses. Thanks to various local, state, and national historic preservation programs, our physical heritage is no longer quite so likely to be regarded as disposable. But for much of this legacy, including those buildings associated with the history of the Afro-American community, this concern may come too late.

The causes for these losses are varied. As with most cities, Kansas City, Kansas has gone through periods of boom and decline. Each boom period - 1886 to 1893, 1905 to 1927, the early 1950s - has resulted in demolition and rebuilding, particularly in those older portions of the city in or near the downtown area. Conversely, periods of stagnation such as the twenty years of the McCombs' administration have ironically resulted in inadvertent preservation. Also to be considered are the results of the massive clearances and dislocations undertaken as part of the Center City and Gateway Urban Renewal projects, for the most part with the best of intentions. And there are the simple effects of time and change, growth and decay, the seemingly natural processes that affect the city and its inhabitants.

The result has been the severe erosion of the historic building fabric in much of our community, for the area most affected has tended to be the area of greatest historical significance. Thus, many of the buildings illustrated in this history are no longer standing, the principal exceptions to this being the churches built in the prosperous years centered about World War I. The following is a list of those buildings illustrated which have been either altered or destroyed in the process of urban change:

HOME OF JOHN AND LUCY ARMSTRONG, 5th and Freeman. This, the oldest house in Kansas City, Kansas, was demolished circa 1903, shortly after this photograph was taken.

CITY OF QUINDARO. Even the ruins, still visible in the 1950s, have for the most part disappeared. The remains of one or two small houses may date from the post-Civil War years. The townsite has also been threatened with burial beneath a sanitary landfill.

FOWLER AND BARTLES RESIDENCES. The Fowler mansion became the first home of the Central Baptist Theological Seminary, and then was demolished in 1923 to make way for Northeast Jr. High School. The Bartles residence is also gone.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 6th and Nebraska.

FIRST A.M.E. CHURCH, 7th and Ann. Destroyed by the fire recorded in this photograph. The Scottish Rite Temple was built in 1908 on this site.

WIDOWS AND ORPHANS HOME, 1058 Oakland. This is now a private residence.

LONGFELLOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 6th and Waverly. All of the elementary schools which originally served the Afro-American community have been demolished as a result of declining enrollments and the desire for more modern facilities. Architecturally, the greatest loss was Stowe Elementary School at 2nd and Richmond.

SUMNER HIGH SCHOOL, 9th and Washington Blvd. This building became a part of Douglass Elementary School when the new Sumner was built in 1939. It was demolished when the present Douglass was built on the same site in the 1960s.

WESTERN UNIVERSITY, 27th and Sewell. Not a single building of Western remains. Grant Hall, the girls dormitory that became Douglass Hospital in 1945, was the last to be demolished. The John Brown statue was placed at the corner of 27th and Sewell in 1978, as the centerpiece of a memorial to both Western University and the town of Quindaro. This memorial was a project of the historic preservation program of the Department of Community Development, and was designed by Buchanan Architects and Associates.

JUNIUS GROVES RESIDENCE, Edwardsville, Kansas. The house was destroyed by fire in the 1960s.

WYANDOTTE DRUG COMPANY, 1512 North 5th Street. This building was so drastically remodeled as part of the Gateway Urban Renewal Project that is has the appearance of a totally new structure.

DOUGLASS HOSPITAL, 312 Washington Blvd. This was in the Gateway clearance area.

SUMNER HIGH SCHOOL, 8th and Oakland. Now Sumner Academy, the original building is one of the city's finest architectural designs from the 1930s. The words *High School,* an integral part of the main entry design, were recently jackhammered out of existence, leaving a rather lop-sided *Sumner.* The Art Deco interiors have also reportedly been threatened with "modernization."

In addition, for many of the sites mentioned in the text not even a photograph remains. Hopefully, this process may be arrested, but this can happen only through the actions of concerned and aware citizens. The Afro-American community has contributed much of value to Kansas City, Kansas, and part of this contribution has been in the form of buildings. It is a legacy to the future which should not be allowed to disappear.

Maps

KANSAS CITY
K A N S A S

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS
SAINT LOUIS MISSOURI

GRAPHIC SCALE
0 400 800 1600 2400 3200 4000

MISSOURI RIVER

KANSAS RIVER

CITY LIMITS

STATE LINE

MISSOURI RIVER

CITY LIMITS

DISTRIBUTION OF NEGRO POPULATION 1910

LEGEND

ONE DOT EQUAL THREE FAMILIES

NOTE: DATA OBTAINED FROM RECORDS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.
(INADEQUATE DATA AVAILABLE FOR ROSEDALE AREA)

DATA FOR THIS BASE MAP OBTAINED FROM PUBLIC RECORDS.

DRAFTING & COMPILATION OF DATA ASSISTED BY WORKS PROGRESS AD MINISTRATION OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. 6-165-82-6002 WYANDOTTE COUNTY, KANSAS.

WYANDOTTE COUNTY
JOHNSON COUNTY

JULY 1937

KANSAS CITY
K A N S A S

CITY PLANNING
COMMISSION

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS
SAINT LOUIS MISSOURI

GRAPHIC SCALE
0 400 800 1600 2400 3200 4000

MISSOURI RIVER

MISSOURI PACIFIC RAILROAD

KANSAS RIVER

CITY LIMITS

STATE LINE

QUINDARO PARK
MEMORIAL PARK CEMETERY
KLAMM PARK
PARKWOOD PARK
OAK GROVE CEM.
WOODLAWN CEM.
MOUNT HOPE CEM.
QUINDARO CEM.
WASHINGTON PARK
ST. CALVARY CEM.
ST. JOHNS CEM.
HIGHLAND PARK CEMETERY
WESTLAWN COLORED CEM.
HIGH SCHOOL AND LITTLE FIELD
CLIFTON PARK
CITY PARK
MAPLE HILL CEMETERY
JUCT. CEM.
ARLINGTON CEMETERY

CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC RAILROAD
KANSAS CITY TERMINAL RAILROAD

DISTRIBUTION OF NEGRO POPULATION 1920

L E G E N D

ONE DOT EQUALS THREE FAMILIES

NOTE: DATA OBTAINED FROM RECORDS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

DATA FOR THIS BASE MAP OBTAINED FROM PUBLIC RECORDS.

DRAFTING & COMPILATION OF DATA ASSISTED BY WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. O.P. 165-82-6002 WYANDOTTE COUNTY, KANSAS

WYANDOTTE COUNTY
JOHNSON COUNTY

JULY 1937

KANSAS CITY
K A N S A S

CITY PLANNING
COMMISSION

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS
SAINT LOUIS MISSOURI

GRAPHIC SCALE
0 400 800 1600 2400 3200 4000

MISSOURI RIVER

KANSAS RIVER

STATE LINE

CITY LIMITS

CITY PARK

MEMORIAL PARK CEMETERY

QUINDARO PARK

KLAMM PARK

PARKWOOD PARK

OAK GROVE CEM.

WOODLAWN CEM.

MOUNT HOPE CEM.

QUINDARO CEM.

MT. CALVARY CEM.

ST. JOHN'S CEM.

HIGHLAND PARK CEMETERY

WESTLAWN CATHOLIC CEM.

MAPLE HILL CEMETERY

JUCT CEM.

ARLINGTON CEMETERY

WYANDOTTE COUNTY

JOHNSON COUNTY

DISTRIBUTION OF NEGRO POPULATION 1936

L E G E N D

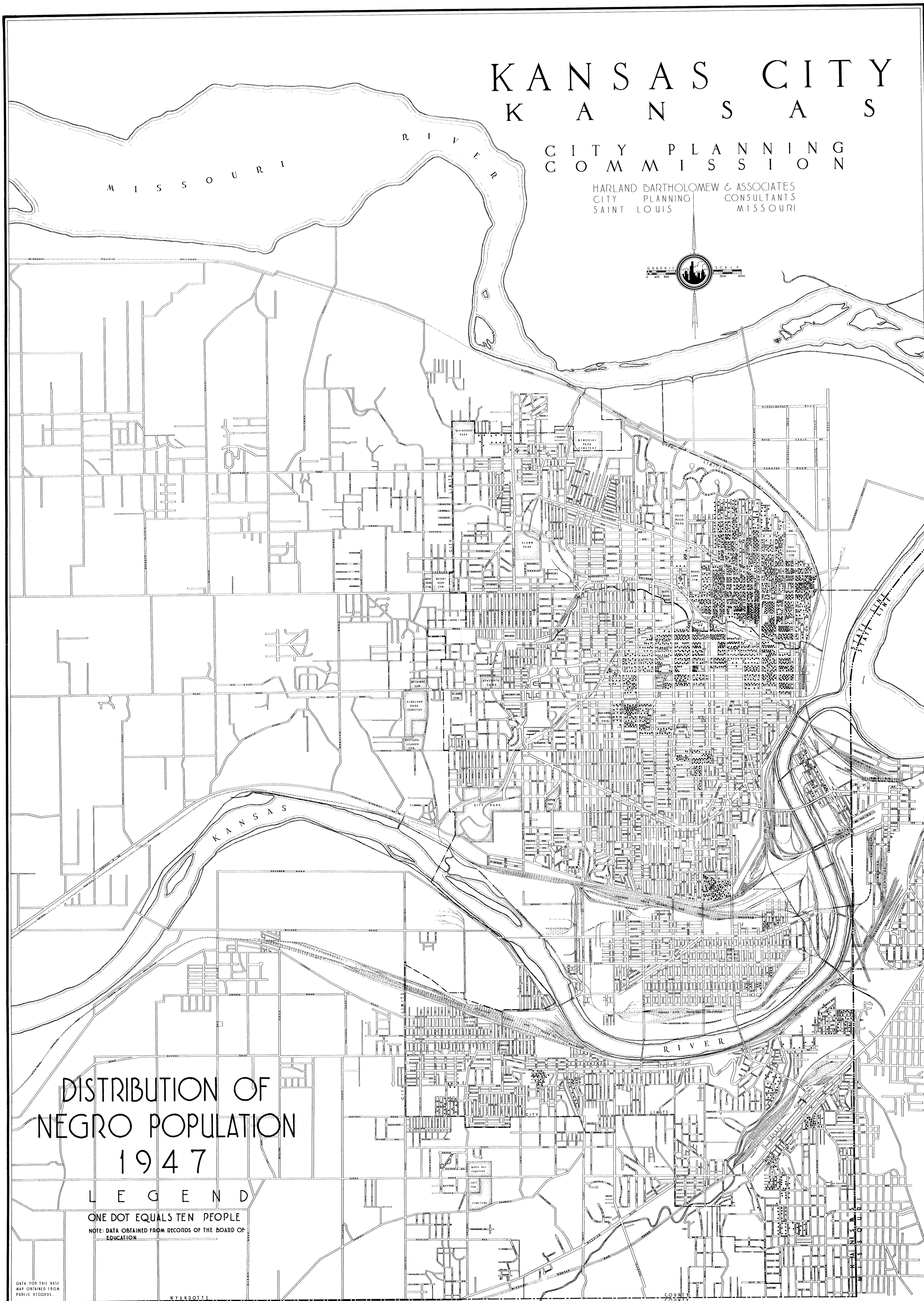
ONE DOT EQUALS THREE FAMILIES

NOTE: DATA OBTAINED FROM RECORDS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

'A' FOR THIS BASE OBTAINED FROM LIC RECORDS

DRAFTING & COMPILATION OF DATA ASSISTED BY WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. O.P. 665-83-6002 WYANDOTTE COUNTY, KANSAS

JULY 1937


KANSAS CITY
KANSAS
CITY PLANNING
COMMISSION
HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS
SAINT LOUIS MISSOURI
GRAPHIC SCALE
0 400 800 3200 4000
MISSOURI RIVER
KANSAS RIVER
STATE LINE
KANSAS
MISSOURI
DISTRIBUTION OF
NEGRO POPULATION
1947
LEGEND
ONE DOT EQUALS TEN PEOPLE
NOTE: DATA OBTAINED FROM RECORDS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DATA FOR THIS BASE MAP OBTAINED FROM PUBLIC RECORDS.
REVISED SEPT 20,1937
REVISED JULY 1947
WYANDOTTE
JOHNSON
COUNTY
COUNTY

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CITY OF
KANSAS CITY KANSAS
1886