

Prof. Kessler,
Thank you so much for your
guidance on my dissertation. I
know that your questions and comments
help me to improve my dissertation and
I kept them in mind as I worked
on this book. Kevin 6/2/2015

RACE AND REAL ESTATE

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CONFLICT
and
COOPERATION
in
HARLEM,
1890-1920

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KEVIN McGRUDER

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2

THE END OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN WELCOME IN HARLEM



By the spring of 1904, H. C. F. Koch's son Erduin was settled in as president of Koch & Co. on West 125th Street, living nearby in a Lenox Avenue townhouse. John G. Taylor had been living at his West 137th Street home for approximately one year, as had Philip Payton, in a West 131st Street townhouse eight blocks from Taylor. The year was pivotal for African Americans then living in Harlem. Their unremarkable co-existence with the white residents, marked by fluid, informal practices with regard to residential movement, was about to come to an end. In New York, as in other northern cities, what it meant to be black was changing. The increased presence of African Americans was accompanied in most cases by growing hostility from white residents, which often resulted in policies that attempted to restrict the residential movement of blacks. In Harlem, the range of white responses to the black presence demonstrated a diversity of views, as well as the importance of real estate ownership for African American community formation and permanence.

In the 1890s the Koch family had been attracted to Harlem as they sought business opportunities and convenient residency. A decade later, police officer John G. Taylor and real estate broker Philip Payton had also relocated to Harlem. But Harlem was just as attractive to individuals on the lower rungs

of the economic ladder, both black and white. In the 1890s families such as that of forty-five-year-old James Holden, an African American cook and porter, married, with two daughters, moved from Manhattan's "Little Africa" area of Greenwich Village to West 135th Street in Harlem. Holden and his twelve-year-old daughter were born in New York. His wife and sixteen-year-old daughter were born in Washington, D.C. Far from the increasingly crowded black district in midtown, Harlem was still viewed by black and white New Yorkers as the suburb that it had been until 1873 when it was annexed by the city. The area was sparsely developed, with open fields on some blocks. While brownstones and apartment buildings lined some streets, the broad north-south avenues and the modest building heights gave residents access to the light and air that progressive reformers were beginning to emphasize as essential for healthy urban communities.¹ In moving to Harlem, the Holden family may have been seeking a more respectable neighborhood in which to raise their children. While Harlem's white property owners sought the "respectable" class of black tenants (and charged them premium rents), black renters wishing to escape Little Africa or the Tenderloin sought this class as neighbors.²

By the late 1890s, the south side of West 135th Street, where the Holdens moved, between Lenox and Fifth Avenues, was almost fully developed with small apartment buildings (fig. 2.1). Only six vacant parcels of land were scattered along this side of the block. The north side of the same block was quite different: except for fifteen buildings on its eastern edge, the north side was totally vacant. By 1900 the buildings on the south side of 135th Street were occupied by both white and black residents, usually, but not always, in separate buildings. With regard to the racial characteristics of the occupants of the twenty-two buildings on the block (table 2.1), nine buildings were occupied exclusively by African Americans, and ten properties were occupied exclusively by white residents. The remaining three properties were occupied by tenants from both groups.³

For many New York City renters of the nineteenth century, April 30 was traditionally the day that annual leases expired, for both residential and commercial spaces. Therefore, the following day, May 1 of each year, was known as Moving Day. On this day the streets of the city were filled with vehicles

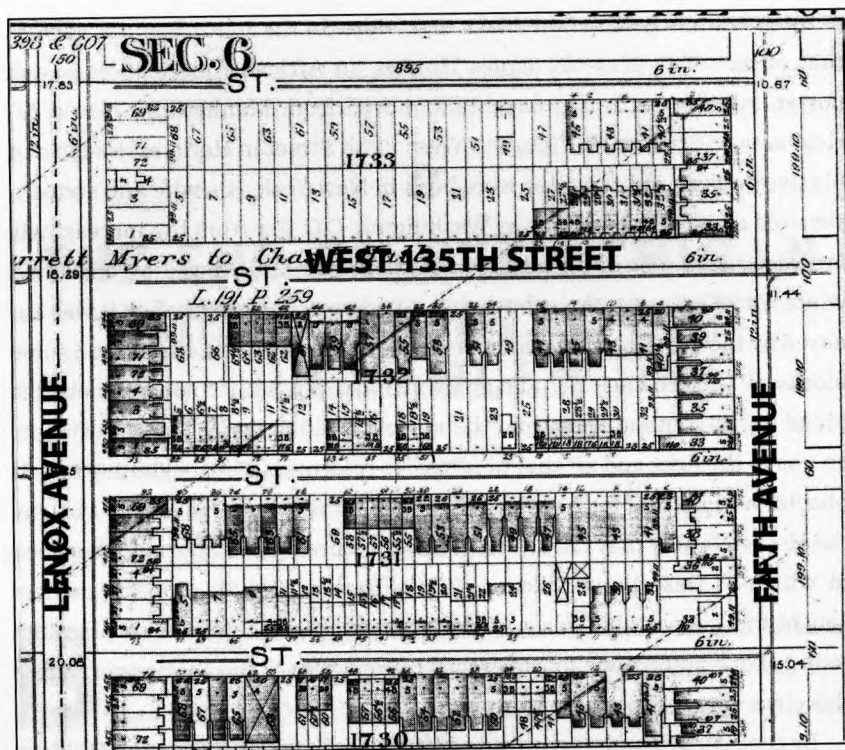


FIGURE 2.1. 1897 map of West 135th between Lenox Avenue (6th) and Fifth Avenue. G. W. Bromley & Co., Manhattan, Section 6.

loaded down with furniture and other belongings, in some cases followed by residents carrying things that would not fit on the vehicles or things that the renters preferred to carry for safekeeping. For low-income New Yorkers, moving was an annual ritual, sometimes instigated by landlords but often by tenants seeking the greener pastures of slightly lower rents or better living environments.⁴ The Holdens' housing tenure reflected this tradition. From 1895 to 1900, they moved each year, between Greenwich Village and different buildings on West 135th Street.⁵

By 1900 building number 26, to which the Holdens had moved that year, was occupied by ten black households, some of them multi-generational and some including boarders. While the bonds of family or friendship might

TABLE 2.1 Race of Residents of the South Side of 135th Street (between Fifth and Lenox Avenues), 1900

Building address	Race of	Number of households in building ^a	Purchased in 1903-1904 by
2 West 135th Street	White	10	
4	Black	9	
6	White	5	
8	White	4	
10	White	5	
12	Black	11	
14	Black	8	
16	African American and white ^b	6 (1 white)	
18	African American and white	6 (1 white)	
24	African American and white	8 (1 white)	
26	Black	10	
30	White	10	James and Ella Thomas; Philip Payton; Afro-American Realty
32	White	5	James and Ella Thomas; Philip Payton; Afro-American Realty
34	Black	9	
40	Black	10	Hudson Realty
42	Black	15	Hudson Realty
44	Black	13	Hudson Realty
46 ^c			Mercy Seat Baptist
48	Black	1	
50	White	1	
52	White	1	
54	White	4	
56	White	1	

SOURCE: TWELFTH CENSUS, SCHEDULE NO. 1, POPULATION, NEW YORK CITY, WARD 12, ENUMERATION DISTRICT NO. 617, SHEETS 7A-13B (WASHINGTON, D.C.: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, 1900).

^a Households represented by the number of people recorded as the "Head" of a household on the census schedule at a particular address.

^b Two white boarders within a household headed by an African American.

^c Not on census.

have made living in close quarters more manageable, the fact that at least one household contained seventeen people, most of whom were adults or young adults, illustrates the reality of limited housing choices and the struggle to meet premium rents that black New Yorkers faced. The residents of the other six apartments at 26 West 135th Street, all African Americans, were a mix of people born in the South, in New York, or in other northern states.⁶

Although midtown Manhattan continued to house substantial numbers of blacks, by the end of the 1890s an African American enclave, to which the Holden family had moved, had developed at 135th Street and Lenox Avenue in Harlem. The black residents of this area rented apartments owned by white investors who viewed their presence in the "Negro Colony" as a source of revenue, not unlike their presence in other black enclaves in Manhattan such as Greenwich Village or the midtown Tenderloin and San Juan Hill districts. A distinction from these earlier settlements, to which blacks gained entry as they declined, was that the Harlem district was relatively new. The buildings occupied by the black tenants were recently built.⁷

A building comparable to number 26, but separated from it by a vacant lot, was 30 West 135th Street. It was occupied by ten white families who reflected the wider occupational choices—such as mechanic, seamstress, and electrician—available to white New Yorkers. Some also included large families, for example the family of Joseph Wilbur, with six children.⁸

Like earlier black neighborhoods in Manhattan, some buildings on the block did have tenants of both races, and in one building tenants of different races shared an apartment. At 16 West 135th Street, Sallie Tagwell, a forty-year-old African American, lived with two boarders: Jamie Lee, a thirty-year-old white woman born in "Carolina" whose parents were born in Ireland, and her husband, Henry Lee, a white, twenty-nine-year-old builder, also born in Carolina. Most of the white heads of household on West 135th Street held skilled jobs, which allowed them to rise above the level of poor whites in Manhattan's midtown district. Harlem's black residents of the 1890s were also striving for middle-class status within the occupational constraints of the period. Porters, cooks, and other service workers, whose incomes were supplemented by the work of their wives, were the core of New York's nineteenth-century black middle class. On 135th Street, by living in

large groups of families and with unrelated individuals who were mainly laborers, residents could combine their incomes in crowded conditions to meet the cost of better housing in Harlem.⁹ While African Americans sought better living conditions, white property owners sought better returns on their investments, initially by charging blacks premium rents, but eventually by promoting development that would disrupt the placid relationships that had existed between blacks and whites in the area.

In 1900 the community of Harlem had vague northern and southern boundaries. The area north of 96th Street was often called Harlem, referring to the village of New Harlem whose boundaries had once extended even farther south, to 72nd Street, before it was annexed by New York City. The northern boundary of Harlem was also vague, ranging from 155th Street to streets in the 170s (fig. 2.2).¹⁰

Decade by decade, since the city's establishment at the tip of Lower Manhattan in the 1600s, development in Manhattan had moved northward and consumed land that had been either vacant or previously used for farming. An 1897 map of New York City, then consisting of only Manhattan, a year before it was joined with Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, and Staten Island into Greater New York, illustrates that the vacant land in the upper Manhattan community of Harlem was disappearing as development moved to the north.¹¹ But there were still substantial areas of vacant land. Between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, 110th and 111th Streets were almost totally vacant. Northward from that point, partial rows of brownstones began to fill blocks like 112th and 113th Streets. Most of Seventh Avenue between 110th and 116th Streets was vacant. Many of the streets east of Seventh Avenue were vacant or sparsely developed with apartment houses. Above 116th Street traveling northward to 135th Street, the blocks were more densely developed, but areas of vacant land remained in the middle of blocks or along avenues. Above 135th Street, many of the blocks were totally vacant.¹²

For many New Yorkers the development of upper Manhattan could not happen soon enough. An 1890s article expressed embarrassment at the grass that was growing in 125th Street, Harlem's main commercial thoroughfare, implying that its presence suggested a country village rather than a neighborhood in a large city. Harlem real estate investors and residents had long

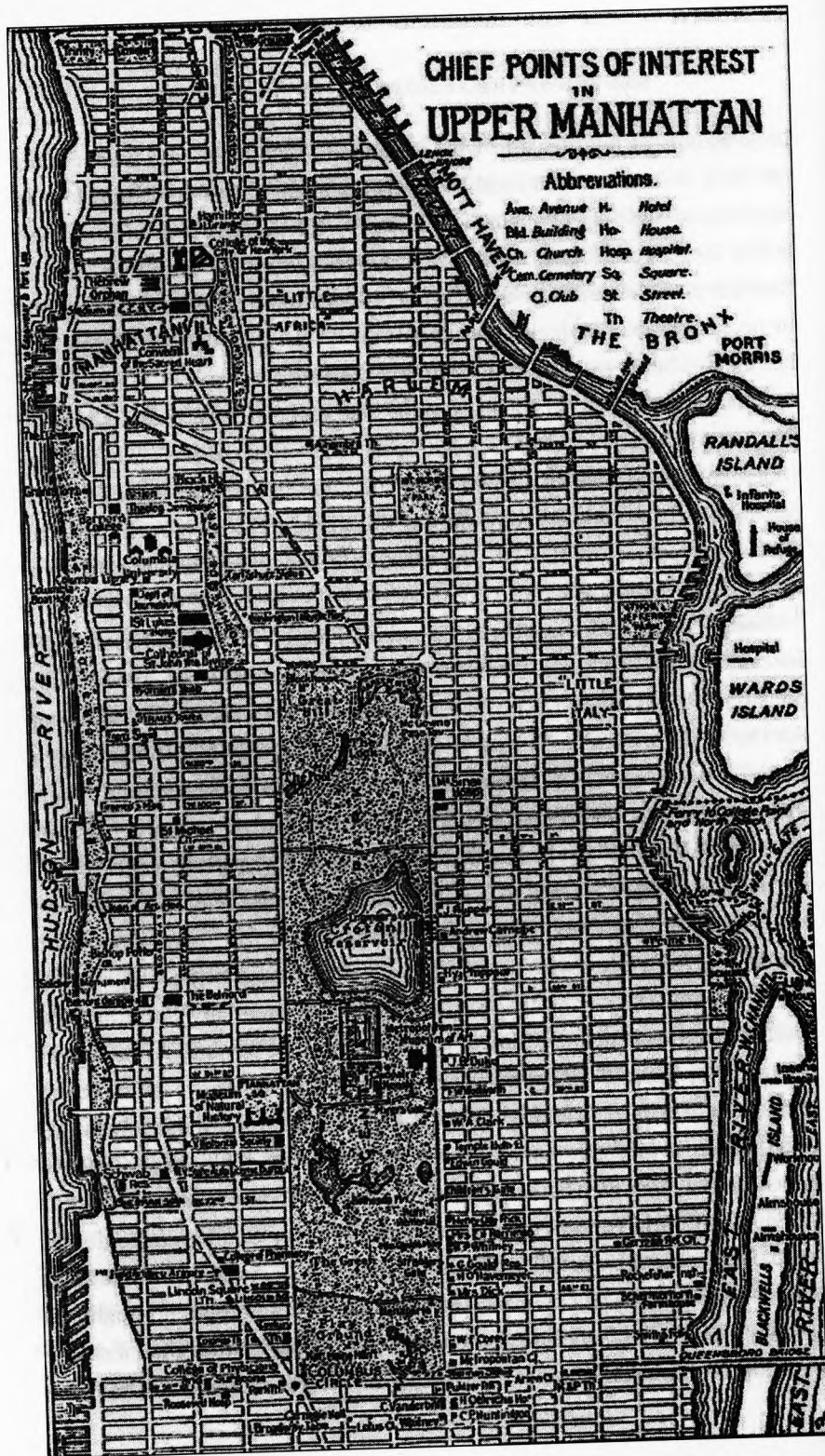


FIGURE 2.2. Map of Harlem. Automobile Club of Rochester, 1920, Florida Center for Instructional Technology.

agitated for the construction of better transportation routes, arguing that without such links their investments would not grow and neither would Harlem.¹³

The growth in developed areas of Harlem coincided with an increase in the black presence in upper Manhattan. From 1890 to 1900 the African American population in Manhattan grew by 41 percent, from 25,674 to 36,246. Behind these numbers was the exodus of blacks from southern states. Seeking to escape racial violence, declining economic opportunities, and legalized segregation, African Americans moved to northern cities like New York.¹⁴

The real estate transactions of African Americans in Harlem during the first decade of the twentieth century, as well as the reactions of white Harlem residents and property owners to the black presence in the community, provide a unique view of the hardening of the color line in a northern city. In cities such as Cleveland, Chicago, and Philadelphia, as well as in New York, when the black populations increased, racial lines that had previously been somewhat flexible hardened, sometimes resulting in conflict between black and white residents. Given this atmosphere, an examination of the access of African Americans to Harlem real estate, as renters and as owners, reveals examples of increased racial hostility, but also instances of cooperation between blacks and whites.¹⁵

Although African Americans lived throughout Manhattan, the dramatic increase in population during the 1890s resulted in greater visibility in some districts. Their largest concentration was in the midtown area. By 1900 Assembly District Nineteen (the West Side from 59th to 72nd Streets) contained the largest population of African Americans—4,982, or 14 percent of the borough's total black population (table 2.2 and fig 2.3). Four other midtown districts each contained more than 2,500 African American residents. In upper Manhattan, the Twenty-Third District, east of Fifth Avenue between 86th and 96th Streets, housed more than 3,000 African Americans. During the 1890s African Americans in upper Manhattan, previously concentrated in the area east of Third Avenue, began to move west, settling in relatively substantial numbers on 135th Street as well as on some of the blocks south of that, all east of Lenox Avenue. In 1900 the Thirty-First District in East and Central Harlem between 110th and 135th Streets was

TABLE 2.2 Distribution of the African American Population in Manhattan, 1900

Assembly district	Total	Negro	% of total district population	% of total Negro population
1	25,959	132	0.51%	0.36%
2	52,768	261	0.49%	0.72%
3	47,295	965	2.04%	2.66%
4	76,852	22	0.03%	0.06%
5	37,951	1,378	3.63%	3.80%
6	64,286	68	0.11%	0.19%
7	41,979	793	1.89%	2.19%
8	72,125	9	0.01%	0.02%
9	42,346	1,673	3.95%	4.62%
10	70,785	18	0.03%	0.05%
<i>West Side 14th-34th 11</i>	<i>41,247</i>	<i>3,756</i>	<i>9.11%</i>	<i>10.36%</i>
12	72,897	4	0.01%	0.01%
<i>West Side 34th-40th 13</i>	<i>37,572</i>	<i>2,584</i>	<i>6.88%</i>	<i>7.13%</i>
14	54,847	25	0.05%	0.07%
15	38,911	842	2.16%	2.32%
16	73,834	2	0.00%	0.01%
17	40,975	1,214	2.96%	3.35%
18	45,197	86	0.19%	0.24%
<i>West Side 59th-72nd 19</i>	<i>65,025</i>	<i>4,982</i>	<i>7.66%</i>	<i>13.74%</i>
20	42,596	113	0.27%	0.31%
<i>West Side 86th-125th 21</i>	<i>89,055</i>	<i>1,135</i>	<i>1.27%</i>	<i>3.13%</i>
22	48,796	244	0.50%	0.67%
<i>above 86th 23</i>	<i>78,536</i>	<i>3,169</i>	<i>4.04%</i>	<i>8.74%</i>
24	51,209	379	0.74%	1.05%
<i>14th-34th 25</i>	<i>36,800</i>	<i>2,950</i>	<i>8.02%</i>	<i>8.14%</i>
26	56,882	458	0.81%	1.26%
<i>34th-42nd 27</i>	<i>36,984</i>	<i>3,318</i>	<i>8.97%</i>	<i>9.15%</i>
28	46,123	192	0.42%	0.53%

Assembly district	Total	Negro	% of total district population	% of total Negro population
29	51,674	957	1.85%	2.64%
<i>East Harlem 68th-86th 30</i>	<i>58,728</i>	<i>345</i>	<i>0.59%</i>	<i>0.95%</i>
<i>East/Central Harlem</i>	<i>78,013</i>	<i>1,483</i>	<i>1.90%</i>	<i>4.09%</i>
<i>East Harlem 86th-110th 32110th-135th 31</i>	<i>80,379</i>	<i>1,680</i>	<i>2.09%</i>	<i>4.63%</i>
33	58,112	147	0.25%	0.41%
34	38,296	862	2.25%	2.38%
Manhattan	1,855,034	36,246	1.95%	100.00%

SOURCE: COMPILED FROM TWELFTH CENSUS, CENSUS BULLETIN NO. 88, "POPULATION BY SEX, GENERAL NATIVITY, AND COLOR, BY GROUPS OF STATES AND TERRITORIES," 9.

Note: *italic text* = midtown districts; **bold text** = Harlem districts.

home to approximately 1,600 African Americans. With these increased numbers, in some districts in Manhattan the African American population approached 8 percent of the total population of the district. Borough-wide, the black population remained at less than 2 percent of Manhattan's total population of 1.85 million in 1900.¹⁶

The housing patterns of blacks that existed in 1900 on West 135th Street would soon be challenged by larger forces and increasing hostility toward blacks. As African Americans became a greater presence in northern and southern cities after the end of the Civil War, policies were developed to limit their movement and access to public and private accommodations. In the South, voting restrictions and segregation laws eventually resulted. Blacks were characterized as prone to criminality and disorder, factors used to justify segregation practices, harsh treatment by the criminal justice system, anti-black violence, and restrictions on educational and employment opportunities. In the North, social and economic discrimination increased. Access to skilled occupations became even more limited. Some restaurants and other public accommodations refused service to African Americans. In employment, blacks seldom had access to the jobs that were continuing to draw unskilled European immigrants to New York City. In social interactions,

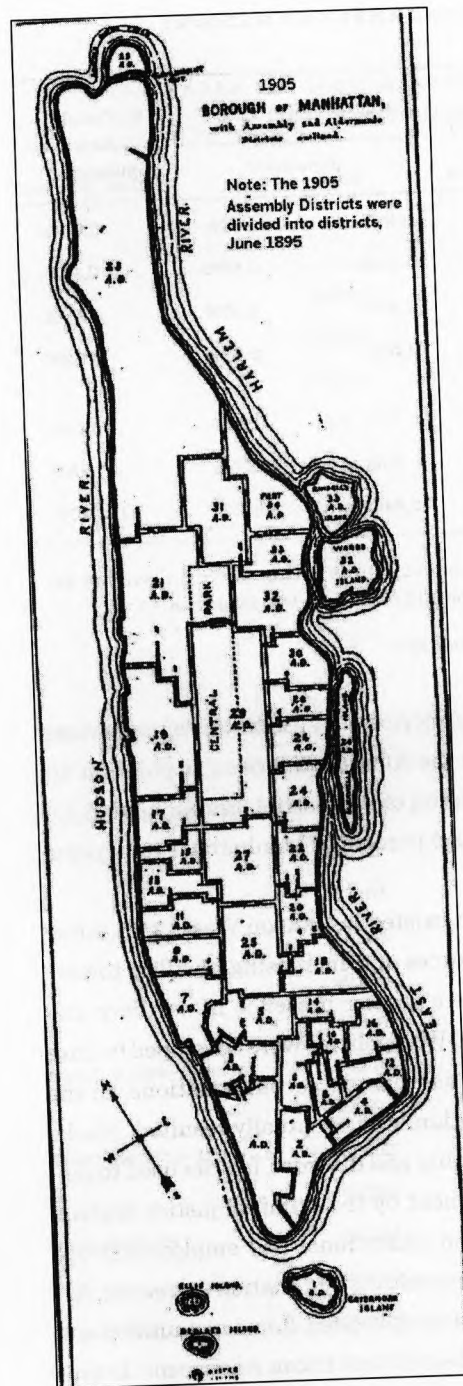


FIGURE 2.3. Manhattan assembly districts, 1905. <http://bklyn-genealogy-info.stevemorse.org/Ward/1905.NYC.AD.html>.

they experienced restrictions as well. The New York State Civil Rights Law of 1873 made it possible for blacks to sue if they were denied accommodations, and it did result in lawsuits related to service in bars and restaurants, but the onus was on blacks to challenge the discriminatory behavior. Many preferred to frequent places that sought their patronage rather than to challenge the hardening color line.¹⁷

Blacks battled against the prevailing stereotype of criminality. Journalist Ida B. Wells, in *A Red Record: Tabulated Statistics and Alleged Causes of Lynchings in the United States, 1892-1893-1894*, presented investigative reporting data on southern lynching and exposed the real reasons for the murders: they were often attempts to prevent economic competition. In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), William Edward Burghardt Du Bois prophesied that “the problem of the twentieth century is the color line,” while celebrating the richness of black culture. In 1905 he assembled a group of black men at Niagara Falls to announce the Niagara Movement to advocate for black political rights. In Alabama, Booker T. Washington used the college he had founded in 1881, Tuskegee Institute, to promote black skills acquisition and economic development.¹⁸

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, progressive reformers began to look for solutions to urban problems such as vice and crime. Consistent with the developing image of black community pathology and disarray, many reformers at the time considered African Americans more prone to vice and crime than others. Black urban neighborhoods were then coming into existence or increasing in scale as African Americans migrated from southern farms to northern cities. The fact that these communities were often the locations of crime and illegal activities was considered by many to be an unavoidable natural outgrowth of racial characteristics of blacks rather than the result of restricted opportunities, racial segregation, poverty, graft, and lax law enforcement.¹⁹

The image of black criminality was confirmed for many New Yorkers on an August evening in 1900, when Arthur Harris, a black man, interrupted a walk with his common-law wife, May Enoch, also African American, to purchase a cigar at a corner store. Harris’s wife remained on the street as he entered the store. Upon exiting the store, Harris observed that a white man

was engaged in an altercation with his wife. Harris struggled with the man, and in the course of their fight Harris stabbed the man. The man was Robert Thorpe, an undercover policeman who had been attempting to arrest Harris's wife. Seeing her standing on a corner in the Tenderloin district at night, he assumed that she was a prostitute. The undercover officer was about to become the son-in-law of a senior official at the neighborhood precinct. When Thorpe died from his wounds the next day, the midtown neighborhood was swept with the fury of its white residents directed at African Americans (Harris had escaped to Washington, D.C.). In the days following the officer's death, blacks were pulled off of streetcars and beaten, their homes were damaged, and many were chased through the streets. Retaliating for the death of a colleague, police officers looked the other way as these violent acts occurred, and in some cases officers were reported to have assisted in attacks.²⁰

In the aftermath of the attacks, the worst since the city's 1863 Draft Riots, area ministers organized the Citizens' Protective League, held meetings, and brought the grievances of the victims, several of whom claimed to have been attacked by policemen, to city leaders. The investigation, led by Bernard York, president of the Board of Police Commissioners (mayoral appointees), concluded that there was no evidence of wrongdoing and that "it may be that some innocent people, both black and white, were injured during the time of the trouble, but it should be borne in mind that a portion of the district in which the trouble occurred is thickly populated with a mixed class; that it calls for, at all times, extra vigilance on the part of the police."²¹ For many blacks, midtown was no longer a safe area. This incident contributed to the continued movement of African Americans to Harlem.

Although the racial ideology of black criminality influenced the perceptions of whites toward blacks, the profit motive was an equally powerful factor in determining how blacks would be treated by whites. A few years after the 1900 riot, as Harlem land values increased with the first subway line nearing completion in 1904, the black residents, once sought as renters in Harlem became the targets of an organized removal effort by some white Harlem property owners. The black residents of West 135th Street were discussed on the day after Moving Day in the May 2 edition of the *New York Her-*

ald: "There is nothing but trouble in a section of Harlem where a community of negroes that has grown rapidly in a few years, is being made to disintegrate and 'move on,' through the concerted action of landlords. One hundred families will be on the move to-day, and six hundred other families are perilously near eviction."²²

Some owners of properties on West 135th Street and nearby streets to the south had decided to exercise their Moving Day prerogative of not renewing leases. The *Herald* article suggested that the first black inhabitants of the area had arrived some twelve years previously, and were quiet, "wealthy parlor car attendants." The article noted that the motive behind the evictions was a reduction in rents in the area that attracted a more "objectionable" element of the race as evidenced by "the frequent presence of the police and the patrol wagon." The article also suggested that a rent increase, "which the parlor car porters could pay, but their colored inferiors could not," had previously been used as a strategy to remove the undesirable tenants. According to the *Herald*, the owners' target was the "colored inferiors," but the "wealthy railroad porters" were also caught in the net of the eviction effort.²³

The black residents of West 135th Street decided to challenge this effort to oust them. An article in the May 2 edition of the *New York Times* described an "indignation meeting" of the previous evening held at Mercy Seat Baptist Church at 46 West 135th Street by "colored residents of 134th and 135th Streets, between Lenox and Madison Avenues." Those who attended the meeting complained of a "systematic campaign" to force them out of the neighborhood, noting that landlords had indicated that the black residents were "noisy and disorderly, an accusation which was denounced at last night's meeting as without foundation." Homing in on the reason for the dispossession strategy, the article noted the observation of Mercy Seat Baptist's pastor, the Reverend Norman Epps, that "the prospective opening of the subway has enhanced the desirability of the locality, and so . . . the very landlords who had once invited the negro tenants are now trying to drive them out." The language of reform was being used to veil the owners' interest in gaining unrestrained access to property that they anticipated would dramatically increase in value. No mention was made of eviction efforts targeting white tenants in the same area.²⁴

Rev. Epps's analysis was accurate. The development of a subway system had been a matter of discussion in New York for many years. When construction started in 1900, Harlem property owners began to look forward to the benefits the community would experience after the announced 1904 subway opening. With a subway stop at the corner of 135th Street and Lenox Avenue, the western end of the 135th Street block, the adjacent properties then occupied by small walkup tenements and row houses were ideally located for more intensive use. The owners of the buildings were interested in obtaining higher rents from the existing buildings or constructing larger buildings to respond to the demand of residential and commercial tenants to be near the new subway stop.²⁵

On May 2 African American resistance moved beyond words. Mercy Seat Baptist Church, which had hosted the indignation meeting on the previous evening, signed a five-year lease for 46 West 135th Street. The monthly rent was \$100, and the lease gave the church the option to purchase the building at a price of \$16,000 "at any time during the term of this lease, with the appurtenances."²⁶ The lessor was Louis Partzschfeld, a metalworker who lived at 4 West 136th Street.²⁷

On May 12, Mercy Seat Baptist Church purchased lots at 45 and 47 West 134th Street for \$16,000 from August and Mena Ruff. August Ruff was a builder who lived at 54 West 120th Street. The source of Mercy Seat's funds for the purchase cannot be determined. The sales agreement for the Ruffs' lots included a covenant, or promise, that the first building constructed on the property would be a church for Mercy Street Baptist. On the same day, the Reverend Charles Satchell Morris, pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church, an African American congregation then located on West 40th Street, transferred to Abyssinian a building located at 61 West 134th Street that he had purchased eight months earlier, in September 1903. The church agreed to assume the payments on mortgages totaling \$25,000 on the properties. On June 29, black undertaker James C. Thomas sold a half interest in his properties at 30 and 32 West 135th Street to African American real estate broker Philip A. Payton, Jr. A month later Thomas sold the other half interest to Payton. The cost to Payton for the two buildings was \$200 and the assumption of a first mortgage of \$30,000 and a second mortgage of \$3,500.²⁸

While the May 1904 newspaper articles suggested that white Harlem property owners were united in their efforts to oust blacks from 135th Street, the sales transactions noted above tell a much more complex story. The flurry of leases and purchases by African Americans that took place before and after the May eviction notices could not have happened without the cooperation of the white owners of the properties as well as others involved in real estate investing. Financing the purchase of tenement buildings in the 1890s and the first decade of the 1900s was not done by most mainstream banks. The buildings, which routinely cost between \$20,000 and \$40,000 (\$400,000 to \$800,000 in 2012 dollars), were viewed as high-risk gambles, because of both the variations in construction quality and the transient nature of the lower-income tenants who typically occupied the buildings. Banks rarely provided financing for these buildings, particularly to borrowers with modest incomes and limited social contacts. The sellers of the properties—wealthy individuals or the estates of the wealthy individuals—would have been the likely lenders for the African American purchasers of the buildings in the 135th Street area.²⁹

When James C. Thomas and his wife purchased 30 and 32 West 135th Street from Charles and Katie Kroehle on May 5, 1904, they paid \$100 and agreed to assume mortgages totaling \$30,000 that were already on the property. The Kroehles had purchased the buildings only three weeks earlier, on April 20, from Isaac Helfer, who had purchased the property six days before that, on April 14, from George and Jennie Currier. George Currier had owned the property since the early 1890s, and in 1900 the two buildings had been occupied exclusively by white tenants. The quick series of sales suggests speculative activity connected with the increased desirability of the 135th Street area. Unfortunately there are several gaps in the record that cloud the specific terms of the transactions. In a common practice, the exact purchase price was not stated in the property records. Instead, the sale that precipitated the flurry of activity, by Currier to Helfer on April 14, was described as being for "consideration of \$100 and other valuable consideration." Likewise, Helfer's sale of the property to Kroehle on April 20 was described as for "\$1.00 and other goods and valuable consideration in Dollars, lawful money in the United States subject to two mortgages aggregating

\$30,000 and interest thereon.³⁰ The conveyance document for the sale by the Kroehles to James Thomas mentions only the payment by Thomas "of One hundred dollars, lawful money of the United States," with no reference to additional payment that would have been the profit over their purchase price, leaving open the possibility that the transaction was meant to facilitate the purchase by Thomas rather than to make money. The payment terms on the \$30,000 mortgages on the property at the time of the purchase are not included in public records (there were two mortgages for \$2,000 each placed on the property in March and April of 1890).³¹ Often such a loan might call for interest-only payments for a period, followed by the payment of the principal balance, usually made either through the sale of the property or by obtaining a loan from another source to repay the first loan. For the lenders, such real estate loans were seen as another investment vehicle equivalent to bonds (which are loans that typically pay lenders interest on their funds and return the borrowed principal at a given date). Real estate loans added a level of protection for the lender, with the borrower offering property as collateral to ensure the loan payments. Although the details of the \$30,000 mortgages on the property purchased by Thomas do not appear in the public records, the fact that the mortgages remained on the property through successive sales suggests that they contained provisions allowing the mortgage payments to be assumed by new owners rather than requiring a payoff upon the sale of the property. Such provisions would have minimized the Kroehles' risk in selling the property to Thomas. If Thomas had been unable to remain current with the mortgage payments, it would have been the responsibility of the original lender to start foreclosure proceedings, since the Kroehles would no longer have a legal interest in the property. Because James Thomas was a businessman with a well-established undertaking enterprise, the Kroehles most likely were confident that he would be successful in managing the buildings. Charles Kroehle owned a stable on East 55th Street and lived on East 71st Street.³² The transaction between the Kroehles and Thomas illustrates the complex nature of the interactions between blacks and whites at the time. While some white New Yorkers were characterizing blacks as the source of problems in order to justify evicting them from Harlem, oth-

ers were doing business with them for substantial sums of money, enabling these African Americans to gain a more permanent presence in Harlem.³³

A young African American broker, Julia Liggan, also began buying property in the 135th Street area during this time. A native of Virginia, Liggan was a resident of 14 West 134th Street, where she and her widowed mother rented an apartment. Exactly one year before the 1904 eviction effort Liggan had begun acquiring nearby properties. On May 12, 1903, she purchased a property on West 134th Street. The next week, on May 20, she purchased 100 and 102 West 136th Street and agreed to make payments on a mortgage of \$9,500 provided by George Chapman. On the same day Chapman also loaned Philip Payton \$31,500 and \$3,000. Chapman was an attorney in the office of the Astor estate. The estate at one time had extensive properties in Harlem, which may have been his link with Liggan and Payton. On June 16, 1903, Liggan sold a three-story building at 60 West 134th Street to Rev. Norman Epps, the pastor of Mercy Seat Baptist Church.³⁴

With the exception of George Chapman, the white people involved in these transactions had German ancestry in common. Cornice maker Louis Partzschefeld, who leased his property to Mercy Seat Baptist Church, and his wife, Louise, were born in Germany. They had both arrived in the United States in the early 1880s. Their son, Louis Junior, attended German American Felix Adler's Ethical Culture School, which in 1904 moved into a new building at Central Park West near 59th Street, and was noted for its innovative curriculum of hands-on education.³⁵ August and Mena Ruff, who sold property to Mercy Seat Baptist, were also both born in Germany. August Ruff, who had arrived in the United States in 1867, was an officer in a New York City German American singing society, Schwaebischer Saengerbund, and active in Democratic politics. The wedding of his daughter was later described in the *New York Times*, suggesting that he was a successful businessman.³⁶ Charles Kroehle and his wife, who purchased property that they soon re-sold to James Thomas, were born in New York, but their parents were born in Germany. Like August Ruff, Kroehle was an officer of a German American singing society, New-York Maennerchor. The debut tea for his daughter was also noted in the *New York Times*.³⁷

These middle-class German American households headed by craftsmen followed a generation that in the nineteenth century had supported "equal rights for all, regardless of color, religion, nationality or sex."³⁸ Responding to the oppressive conditions in their country, and influenced by revolutionary democratic ideology in Europe, some had supported Germany's failed 1848 revolution, and afterward fled to the United States. In America some of these Germans became vocal anti-slavery advocates. But not all Germans were of this mind. Nineteenth-century New York also had a large German American population that identified with the pro-slavery wing of the Democratic Party. The *Staats-Zeitung*, the German newspaper controlled by New York's mercantile elite and read by German mechanics and laborers, referred to its press competitors that advocated abolition as *Niggerblätter* (nigger sheets).³⁹

A generation later, the actions of Partzschefeld, the Kroehles, and the Ruffs in assisting blacks to buy properties in Harlem illustrated that a different, possibly anti-racist ideology was still alive. The belief in black inferiority held by many Americans in the early 1900s had been transmitted over generations. Some new arrivals quickly adopted these beliefs as part of their efforts to Americanize themselves, but others held different understandings of the status of African Americans. Various German ideologies had ample potential to grow in New York City. In 1900, thirty-seven percent of New York's population of 3.4 million people was foreign born. German-born New Yorkers, at 322,343 (9.5 percent of the total population), accounted for the largest part of this group. Russian-born residents were a distant second at 155,102 (4.5 percent), followed by Italian-born residents at 145,433 (4.2 percent). Many German Americans lived in the lower Manhattan neighborhood of Kleindeutschland (Little Germany), but as they prospered they moved to various other areas in the city, including Harlem. This substantial population of people of German descent had developed German-language newspapers and social groups that provided the German sellers of Harlem properties with a social group that extended beyond Harlem. They were therefore less susceptible to pressure from other Harlem property owners who may not have approved of their transactions with blacks.⁴⁰

New York newspaper accounts of the 1904 eviction efforts in Harlem illustrated that under some circumstances class distinctions among black

New Yorkers were acknowledged by whites. The reference to the welcome received by "wealthy" African American railway porters in Harlem in the 1880s and 1890s versus the twentieth-century African American "undesirables," who attracted attention from the police because of their riotous behavior, indicate that in describing the eviction the writer acknowledged such class differences. While the leaders of the eviction movement sought to portray all blacks as undesirable, other property owners, who chose to lease, sell, or lend to African Americans in 1904, were also making distinctions among African Americans. It is highly unlikely that they would have entered into what were standard sales arrangements for properties they owned if they had not believed that the African Americans with whom they were doing business were both trustworthy and financially capable of honoring their agreements. Black purchasers such as James Thomas, owner of a midtown undertaking establishment, was of a similar economic class as the stable owners Charles and Katie Kroehle from whom he purchased property.

By the time Thomas had transferred 30 and 32 West 135th Street to Philip Payton, in June and July 1904, Payton had already assembled a group of African American businessmen to undertake other Harlem real estate ventures. In 1902 Payton and his wife, Maggie, had purchased a brick townhouse at 13 West 131st Street. That same year they had also purchased an apartment building at 67 West 134th Street from the trustee of an estate. For the apartment building, the Paytons assumed the payments on an existing mortgage of \$23,000 and also agreed to make payments on an additional \$23,000 loan that the estate had provided to them toward the purchase of the property.⁴¹

Payton's building at 67 West 134th Street housed the offices of the new company that he established in 1903, the Afro-American Realty Company. The company was a partnership with several African American investors, including James C. Thomas, the undertaker who had sold Payton 30 and 32 West 135th Street.⁴² The term "Afro-American" was not popularly used to describe black people in the early 1900s. The terms "colored" and "Negro" were more common. The fact that Payton selected this term sent a strong signal of the ethnic identification of the company's founders and made clear the group whom they planned to serve.⁴³

The May 1904 attempt to evict African Americans from the 135th Street area was of both personal and professional interest to Payton, and led him to expand his company in July 1904 by incorporating it in order to raise more capital. The pamphlet used to solicit investors noted: "When the movement was started to put the colored people out of West 135th street, this co-partnership being unable to lease any houses on this street, voted to buy and did buy two 5-story flats valued at \$50,000 and thereby stemmed the tide, which had it been successful in West 135th street, would surely have extended to West 134th street, which is almost entirely given over to our people."⁴⁴

The company's shift in focus from leasing and managing buildings to owning them required more capital, and with the incorporation the company gained the ability to raise as much as \$500,000 through stock sales at \$10 per share. The company's prospectus of business activity suggested broader aims than merely stopping the eviction movement: "The idea that Negroes must be confined to certain localities can be done away with. The idea that it is not practical to put colored and white tenants together in the same house can be done away with."⁴⁵ The office of the most powerful African American in the country, Booker T. Washington, gave encouraging words as early as May 3, 1904, with a letter to Payton from New York: "I have read in yesterday's *World* how you turned the tables on those who desired to injure the race, and wish to congratulate you on this instance of business enterprise and race loyalty combined."⁴⁶

Payton had most likely met Washington through his membership in Washington's National Negro Business League, an organization created in 1900 that had local chapters of African American business leaders and held annual meetings that drew on Washington's philosophy of promoting black economic development.⁴⁷

On July 29, 1904, Payton transferred 30 and 32 West 135th Street to the Afro-American Realty Company, along with the building housing his company's Harlem office, 67 West 134th Street. Individual blacks had been moving to Harlem in increasing numbers during the previous decade, but Payton's activities represented an organized and very visible effort. They did not go unnoticed by others outside of Harlem. The Afro-American Realty Company was the subject of a *New York Times* article and an editorial in

July 1904. Under the headline "To Make Color Line Costly in New York" the article paraphrased the company's prospectus, noting that \$100,000 in capital had been paid in by investors and that most of the directors were "negro property owners and business men." In an editorial the next day the *Times* suggested that the Afro-American Realty Company, formed "to depress real estate values in order to bring desirable apartment houses into the market as homes for negroes promises to be a business mistake." The editorial predicted that white residents would leave and "that the number of unobjectionable negro tenants standing ready to take their places is not great enough to prevent neighborhood deterioration."⁴⁸

The suspicion that the Afro-American Realty Company sought to depress real estate values was linked to a conflation of the racial beliefs of the era with the poor neighborhoods to which most African Americans were consigned in cities. Many if not most, in the real estate field believed that the presence of blacks caused the deteriorating conditions in which they lived. Implicit in this belief was the notion that African Americans lived lives of disarray marked by crime and sexual abandon. It was the common belief that property values in neighborhoods occupied by African Americans would be depressed because of their presence. This theory failed to recognize that while crime, gambling, and prostitution existed in some African American neighborhoods, it flourished under the tacit approval of corrupt police and others who benefited from the revenue generated by such activities. Although the criminals were visible in the black neighborhoods, such as midtown Manhattan, the majority of the residents who worked as domestics, deliverymen, elevator operators, or in other menial positions were unseen by critics of African Americans. The *Times* article assumed that people such as James Thomas and Philip Payton, who could enter into agreements to repay substantial loans, were intent on bringing the disarray of San Juan Hill or the Tenderloin district to Harlem. In reality Thomas and Payton were jumping at an opportunity that a generation earlier had been unavailable to African Americans. The post-Civil War increase in Manhattan's black population, from fewer than 10,000 in 1865 to more than 36,000 by 1900, not only brought potential tenants to New York, but increased the pool of potential black investors, business partners, and customers of black businesses as well. James C.

Thomas had moved to New York from Texas in the 1880s, and established his business in 1897. New York's black business class grew as the black population grew, since it was better able to sustain more viable businesses. Philip Payton was able to draw from this business class to attract the eight initial investors in the Afro-American Realty Company. A generation of growth in African American economic activity following the Civil War had resulted in a coterie of individuals who could be deemed creditworthy by white owners of properties in an area of Manhattan that was in great demand. This position would have been unimaginable decades earlier.⁴⁹

The African Americans' efforts to remain in Harlem in 1904 represented a unique phenomenon for several reasons. While African Americans had been living in Harlem since its settlement in the 1600s, and moving there in increasing numbers after 1880, the efforts in 1904 represented an organized initiative to remain in, and continue moving to, a community that was not marginal but was being developed. The closest earlier examples in New York would be the movement to Seneca Village in Manhattan or to Weeksville in Brooklyn. Both were nineteenth-century villages rather than urban areas, but both also had high levels of black property ownership. Before Harlem, African Americans in New York City had been consigned primarily to areas that were on the way down. From Five Points, to Greenwich Village, to midtown, blacks had entered each neighborhood in the nineteenth century when that neighborhood was declining, seemingly confirming the theory that the black presence led to depressed real estate values. While some African American churches and a handful of individuals owned properties in each of these areas, they did not have to overcome resistance to their entrance to these neighborhoods. By the time these areas were made available to them, previous owners were glad to find renters or buyers for their declining properties. Ironically African Americans, desperate for housing, were charged a premium for these properties in comparison to rental rates charged to recent white occupants.⁵⁰

The entry of African Americans into East Harlem in the 1880s could be seen as the beginning of the exception in black settlement in Manhattan, since East Harlem was then being developed. The existing black population there was small and therefore went unnoticed. The movement of blacks into

the Central Harlem area of West 135th Street in the 1890s involved renters, not owners. Without the arrival of the subway, the African American presence in the area may not have been an issue even in 1904. The white property owners would have been satisfied to continue collecting their premium rents from black tenants. However, the arrival of the subway created the potential for the investors to extract dramatically more income from the properties, and transformed the desirable black renters into undesirable troublemakers who needed to be evicted. The fact that when their presence became an issue, blacks organized to acquire property for substantial sums was unique.

The removal effort on West 135th Street highlighted the differences between large and small white property owners. If Rev. Norman Epps's assessment was accurate—that the primary impetus for African American eviction was the increased value of the property—such value would be much more difficult for small property owners to exploit without selling outright to those with more capital, who could redevelop the properties. After the opening of the subway stop at Lenox Avenue and 135th Street, small property owners in the area could have increased their rental revenue by increasing rents on the properties, but there was a limit to what tenants, black or white, would pay for a tenement apartment, as the frequent annual moves of renters demonstrated. The greatest future value of the 135th Street properties would have been realized through the acquisition of the land on which the many small tenement apartment buildings and row houses stood, demolition of these buildings, and construction of buildings that could command higher rents because of their larger sizes, better designs, and more dense development. Such ambitious plans would have required access to substantial amounts of capital, unavailable to a stable owner such as Charles Kroehle, who in the face of the eviction movement sold the Thomases 30 and 32 West 135th Street, or metalworker Louis Partzschfeld, who leased 46 West 135th Street to Mercy Seat Baptist, or builder August Ruff and his wife, Mina, who sold land at 45–47 West 134th as a future site of Mercy Seat's church. The *Times* articles criticizing the Afro-American Realty Company's aims reflected national racial mores, but the purchase of Harlem properties by blacks indicated that there were other whites who viewed black businessmen as permanent fixtures in Harlem.⁵¹

In *Black Manhattan*, James Weldon Johnson, whose future brother-in-law John E. Nail worked for Philip Payton's Afro-American Realty Company before starting his own company, suggested that the Hudson Realty Company was the company that sought to expel African Americans from Harlem in the 1904 effort by buying the properties in which they lived. Hudson Realty was formed in 1893. Its directors included members of New York's elite such as Maximilian Morgenthau, brother of banker and diplomat Henry Morgenthau (who was an initial director), and Joseph Bloomingdale of the department store family. In comparison to small property owners, white or black, this company had access to the capital that could remake the 135th Street corridor after the removal of the black tenants. An indication of this access is the fact that in 1902 the directors of the Hudson Realty Company agreed to increase the company's capital stock from \$100,000 (in \$100 shares) to \$1,000,000. At the same meeting at which this decision was made, the directors also voted to expand the company's purpose beyond the sale and leasing of property to include the sale of stocks, bonds, and securities, the making of mortgages, and the issuing of bonds. The fact that the renovation or construction of properties was not included in the list of expanded activities could indicate that Hudson would assemble properties for clients rather than develop properties itself.⁵²

On April 5, 1904, approximately one month before the eviction effort, the Hudson Realty Company purchased seventeen vacant lots on the north side of 135th Street for \$100 and assumed mortgages totaling \$296,500 on the properties. Four of these lots had frontage on Lenox Avenue, and the remainder were on the north side of 135th Street. Hudson Realty also purchased six lots on the south side of 136th Street as part of this transaction. And on April 23 the company purchased three buildings, at 40, 42, and 44 West 135th Street, just to the east of 46 West 135th Street (which was eventually leased by Mercy Seat Baptist Church in May 1904).⁵³

In 1900, the three buildings were occupied by African American tenants.⁵⁴ It is likely that Hudson Realty's purchase of these 135th Street buildings was followed a week later by eviction notices for residents, just in time for the May 1 Moving Day. (James and Ella Thomas's purchase of 30 and 32 West 135th Street may have been accompanied by similar eviction notices for

white tenants). It is also possible that Hudson was the firm that offered to purchase Philip Payton's newly acquired buildings at 30 and 32 West 135th Street. The Afro-American Realty Company's investment pamphlet noted: "When those who had it in their minds to change the tenancy of this street found themselves circumvented by this co-partnership, known as the Afro-American Realty Company, they lost no time in putting themselves in communication with this company and made them an offer of a tempting profit, which was declined."⁵⁵

Perhaps small property owners such as Louis Partzschefeld, August and Mena Ruff, or Charles and Katie E. Kroehle did not see a benefit to joining forces with the Hudson Realty Company (or were not provided with the opportunity to do so). These property owners might not have believed that the Hudson Realty Company would reward them any better than anxious African Americans would in a sale of their properties. Harlem's large and small property owners had very different interests, which can be seen in these different responses to the presence of blacks in the 135th Street settlement following the construction of the subway.

As the congratulatory note from the office of Booker T. Washington to Philip Payton suggested, the efforts of Payton, the Thomases, and other African Americans to gain control of 135th Street properties were viewed by Washington's followers as litmus tests of the ability of black business leaders to use economic power to secure their rights, not just in New York but across the nation. The Hudson Realty Company conceded defeat in stages: in November 1904 the company sold twelve lots on 136th Street; in February 1905 it sold 40, 42, and 44 West 135th Street; a month later, in March, it sold two lots—at the northeast corner of Lenox and West 136th Street and on Lenox Avenue between 136th and 135th Streets; finally on November 1, 1906, the company sold the remaining seventeen parcels it owned on 135th Street. Each transaction was executed with a different group of white purchasers, making it less likely that Hudson's attempt to assemble the large tract of properties on West 135th Street could be revisited by these new owners. With several unrelated new owners of the properties, a future developer would have to be very determined and patient to try to reassemble the large tract of property that Hudson Realty had relinquished.⁵⁶

The success of black property owners in acquiring control of properties in the 135th Street area could not have occurred without the cooperation of white property owners and lenders. The white property owners had alternatives. They could have sold to white investors such as the Hudson Realty Company. The fact that all of the transactions to African Americans were not quick, with some involving initial modest cash payments and then multi-year payments, suggests complex relationships across the lines of race and ethnicity. By 1904, southern segregation laws and racial violence were popularizing notions of black pathology and inferiority, and some of these ideas were being adopted in northern cities in response to the growing numbers of African Americans. Hostile statements and actions against African Americans became increasingly visible. What was less visible, and perhaps often unspoken, was the fact that some white residents did not view the black community as monolithic, and indeed it was not. In the area of business, while some white businessmen were limiting African American access to Harlem properties, others chose to enter into real estate transactions with African Americans at a time when they could easily have dealt with white investors instead. Perhaps the white small business owners identified with African Americans such as undertaker James C. Thomas and real estate broker Philip Payton, whose economic status was comparable to that of the white property owners. It is also possible that ethnicity played a role: three of the property owners who were associated with pivotal real estate transactions in 1904, Charles Kroehle, Louis Partzschefeld, and August Ruff, and their spouses, were of German descent, either first- or second-generation immigrants. Ethnicity may have led these owners to be more receptive to striving African American buyers than to possible offers from the principals of the Hudson Realty Company, who were established members of New York's business elite. Ethnicity may have been intertwined with social class. Maximilian Morgenthau and Samuel Bloomingdale, two of the principals of Hudson Realty, were of German descent, but their families had been in the United States much longer and therefore had had a greater opportunity to absorb the increasingly hostile views toward African Americans. They were also much more established both financially and socially than the Kroehles, Partzschefelds, or Ruffs.⁵⁷

The 1904 debates in Harlem regarding blacks and real estate also suggest that for some white New Yorkers racial rhetoric became a convenient tool to use against African Americans to justify their evictions from increasingly valuable property. But some blacks also adopted a brand of racial rhetoric, which they used strategically to create an organized movement to increase African American access to Harlem real estate. The prospectus of the Afro-American Realty Company made clear that its goal was to provide opportunities for blacks to live wherever they could afford to live. The prospectus even suggested that racial integration in housing would also be a goal. While the Afro-American Realty Company did not state that Harlem would be its focus, the community was the location of its first purchases of property. The efforts of African Americans in Harlem to secure a place in the community through property ownership in the first decade of the twentieth century were highlighted by the rhetoric that accompanied the formation of the Afro-American Realty Company. With its formation, the black movement to acquire property in Harlem shifted from being simply a reaction to eviction attempts to being an ongoing, organized effort. The change from a community of transient renters to one of owners with a long-term financial stake in the community represented a shift in social class as well. While the "wealthy" porters may have been in the vanguard of black residency in the 135th Street area in the 1890s, the group of black business owners and professionals that sought to ensure a black presence in Harlem in 1904 was near the top of the black economic ladder as it was available to black New Yorkers at that time. Some white property owners would respond to their effort with another strategy to keep African Americans out of Harlem, or at least to contain them in the area of their 1904 victory over eviction.

3

FROM EVICTION TO CONTAINMENT



Through the early 1910s, real estate transactions in Harlem continued to reflect a range of interracial relations. As the first decade of the 1900s proceeded, some Harlem property owners decided that the black “invasion” of Harlem had to be confronted directly. They developed a legal strategy using racial restrictive covenants placed in the deeds of their properties to try to keep African Americans from moving into some areas of Harlem. Harlem’s white business class—business owners, lawyers, and other professionals—concluded that the problem was not with the blacks but with whites in Harlem who had not effectively marketed the many desirable aspects of the community to potential white buyers. They developed their own program to market Harlem to whites. And a few white residents did not take the time to analyze the problem, choosing to use violence to attempt to oust African Americans from the community. A unified response to the black invasion continued to elude white Harlem residents because the community was ethnically and religiously diverse and was a mix of old-timers and newcomers. Even the principal resistance leader was a recent arrival.

By 1904, the year of the eviction struggle on West 135th Street, the development of the area west of Lenox Avenue as an exclusive urban residential area was proceeding quickly. Newly developed properties were built to at-

tract middle- and upper-middle-class New Yorkers. A few townhouses and large, elevator apartment buildings were built in the 1880s, but during the 1890s townhouses were being constructed on many of the east-west numbered streets from the low 120s north to the 160s.¹

Larger apartment buildings, for upper-income residents, distinguished from tenements by their more gracious accoutrements such as elevators, large rooms, and architectural details, were also being built, many as a result of the 1901 Tenement House Law, which created the guidelines followed by builders of new apartments in New York City. The law allowed apartment buildings to be built at heights twice as tall as the width of the streets on which they were located, and also required designs that would provide for sufficient light and air to all rooms in multi-family buildings.² In 1904 the completion of the Interborough Rapid Transit (IRT), the first line of the New York City subway system, which in Harlem traveled along Lenox Avenue and had stops approximately every ten blocks, solidified Harlem’s position as a residential community. The subway made it possible for people who worked downtown to commute daily to homes in Harlem with a travel time of approximately thirty minutes from Harlem to City Hall in lower Manhattan.³

After its 1904 success in acquiring properties in the 135th Street area, the Afro-American Realty Company continued leasing and purchasing property. A construction boom in modest tenement buildings for lower-income people in Manhattan was brought on by surges in European immigration and the improved transportation provided by the new subway line. The result was a “sustained and healthy demand for real estate, both for use and for investment.”⁴ Real estate investment was seen as a prudent endeavor, not a speculative one. A review of the 1905 real estate market in the *Real Estate Record and Builder’s Guide*, a New York City industry weekly, stated that “anybody who considers calmly the existing situation must reach the conclusion that there is no surer way of making money in the world than to purchase improved real estate which carries itself in some central but less expensive district of Manhattan.”⁵

In July 1906 the Afro-American Realty Company came to citywide attention again when it entered into a five-year lease for a fifteen-unit apartment building at 525 West 151st Street between Amsterdam and Broadway. The

white tenants of the building were told they would need to vacate the premises by August 1 and would be replaced by "colored" tenants. Under the headline "Negro Invasion Threat Angers Flat Dwellers," the *New York Times* reported in great detail the shocked reaction of the janitress, a Mrs. P. M. Roth, who reportedly had refused to install a sign reading "Just Opened for Colored Tenants Five Room and Bath Apartments" on the building. The indignation of other tenants who would be required to move quickly was also reported, as were the comments of adjacent property owners, one of whom suggested, "It's a trick to make us buy them out." The article ended with a quote from Afro-American Realty principal Philip Payton: "What we wish to do is to stop forced colonization. We are in earnest in this proposition. We intend to have negro families in that apartment house. Of course there is a prejudice against them, but there was once similar prejudice against the Jews and the Italians. They overcame it and we should be able to do so."⁶

Payton referred to New York's residential racial segregation tradition as "colonization" because the areas where African Americans were concentrated were often called "Negro colonies." While Payton's proposed strategy challenged residential segregation by attempting to move blacks into a building on an exclusively white street, there were limits to his mission to "stop forced colonization." He did not attempt to attract African American and white residents to the same building. In evicting the white residents of the building he leased, and identifying the building as one reserved for "colored" residents, he was conceding that an apartment building with residents of both races was not his goal. Although, as noted in chapter 2, West 135th Street had a few buildings with residents of both races, this pattern was not common in New York City. Mixed-race buildings were often seen as symbols of poverty, where the limited choices of the residents, both black and white, led them to overlook the social customs of racial segregation that the broader community maintained. The fact that Payton's purchase was the subject of a newspaper article suggests that the white residents of West 151st Street had no intention of leaving without a fight. In presenting the plight of the white tenants facing eviction, whether at the instigation of the residents or the *Times*, support for the white tenants could be rallied.⁷

Philip Payton did not have an opportunity to challenge the racial divide on 151st Street. In September 1906, the lease that he had entered into two months earlier for 525 West 151st was canceled. The lease had contained a clause allowing for such an outcome if a sale occurred. Before any black tenants recruited by Payton had moved in, the building was purchased by Loton Horton, the owner of Sheffield Farms Dairy. In addition to making a payment of \$100, Horton assumed the payments on three mortgages on the property, which totaled \$50,000. Although the transaction did not allow Payton to provide housing for African Americans on West 151st Street, he did benefit from the sale. According to the terms of the lease, he received a \$1,000 payment due to the cancellation of the lease.⁸

It is quite possible that Horton's purchase was a response to the publicity that Payton's actions prompted and that Horton served both literally and figuratively as a "white knight" to retrieve the building from Payton's "clutches." This scenario would seem to corroborate the suspicion of the adjacent property owner quoted in the *Times* article. Considering the substantial fee that Payton received, the equivalent of \$19,500 in 2012 dollars, his role in the transaction was more complex than that of race champion.⁹ The owner of the property with which Payton negotiated the initial lease was Louis Meyer Realty Co. This company had purchased the property in May 1906, only two months before Payton leased the property. It is possible that Louis Meyer Realty Co. did want to facilitate the sale of 525 West 151st Street and saw the agreement with Payton as a likely means to bring about this result as neighbors scrambled to keep blacks off the block. Unlike the 135th Street building owners in 1904 who provided financing for blacks to purchase their buildings, Louis Meyer Realty did not provide Payton with financing to purchase the building. Payton's options for obtaining institutional financing would have been limited. Bank or insurance company financing of tenement buildings was not common, since the buildings were viewed as risky. In addition, there would have been great reluctance to facilitate black ownership, since even without Payton's prior publicity, it would have been assumed that his tenants would be black. Instead, Louis Meyer Realty offered Payton a lease. For Payton, the lease was a "win-win" agreement. If the building had not been

sold during the five-year lease term, but rented by him to African Americans, it would have been another victory for the Afro-American Realty Company. Although this goal was not accomplished, the \$1,000 fee he received was a significant amount of capital. But Payton's gain did have a cost in increased hostility toward blacks. The evictions of the white tenants from the building and Payton's pronouncements regarding his interest in bringing in black tenants raised sufficient concern that a *Times* reporter was assigned to the story, which could be viewed as a warning to readers. Payton's decision to ignore the mission of the Afro-American Realty Company, as stated in its 1904 prospectus, that "the idea that it is not practical to put colored and white tenants together in the same house can be done away with" was a missed opportunity to model integrated residential living in Harlem.¹⁰ In this context the cost of Payton's gain was an increased concern regarding a black "invasion" in Harlem. Since in this scenario black entrance meant white exit, Payton's actions encouraged a more vigilant defense by whites in Harlem as well as a long-term white backlash toward blacks and the view of future black entrants to Harlem as not only undesirable neighbors but as the likely cause of the ouster of some white residents.¹¹

The renting of properties to African Americans continued to be a concern in Harlem. Four months after Payton's 151st Street agreement ended, the January 26, 1907, issue of the weekly *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, a local industry magazine, included an example of increased concern about the black presence. The advice column of the magazine ran a letter asking whether a lender making a loan for a property that eventually was leased to someone who planned to rent to "colored tenants" could do anything to "make his mortgage more secure" since the property was vacant (as the lessee continued to seek these tenants), but the borrower was paying the taxes and interest on the loan when due. Implicit in the letter writer's question was a desire to prevent blacks from renting the property, since the lender viewed that as a threat to the property's value. The magazine columnist explained that "the renting of the mortgaged premises to colored tenants is no ground for interference by a mortgage holder." While the question was couched in financial terms, the concern was both financial and racial. Since black tenants typically paid higher rents than whites, the plan to lease to blacks would have

increased the possibility that the lender would be able to be paid from the higher rent revenue that the building would produce. The lender's financial concerns stemmed from a belief that black tenants lowered property values because they supposedly brought with them social problems. In spite of the higher rents that black tenants paid, real estate appraisers would consider the income of a building as well as values of nearby properties. If enough people believed a property was worth less, it would be worth less regardless of whether it generated higher rent revenue than it could with white tenants. An appraiser would consider these factors and possibly lower the valuation of the building. Therefore the lender's concern that the value of the property might decrease with black tenants did have merit.¹²

Ironically, in the same issue of the *Record and Guide*, the person who had become a symbol of the tactic mentioned by the letter writer, Philip Payton, had a half-page advertisement with his photograph under the heading "Colored Tenements Wanted." In the advertisement he claimed, "I can manage a 'Colored Tenement' better than any White agent in New York City." Clearly Payton had abandoned the call for integrated housing announced in his 1904 Afro-American Realty prospectus. His 1907 advertisement acknowledged that there were white real estate agents who specialized in managing black buildings, but stated that he could do it better. His photograph alluded to the competitive advantage that he implied, that being a black person, he would be able to out-manage the competition. He was clearly African American, just like the tenants whom he sought to rent to, but his conservative suit and tie and his wire-rimmed glasses conveyed an air of austerity and professionalism that was a fairly rare media image for African Americans in 1907.¹³

Soon afterward, the concern expressed by the *Record and Guide* letter writer and the heightened white hostility to black entry evolved into an organized movement to use the law to resist the "Negro invasion" in Harlem. The movement began in the 100 block of West 137th between Lenox and Seventh Avenues, two blocks north and one block east of the West 135th Street block that had been the site of the 1904 effort to evict African Americans (fig. 3.1). The 100 block of West 137th Street shared a characteristic with West 135th Street in that in 1907 it was only partially developed.

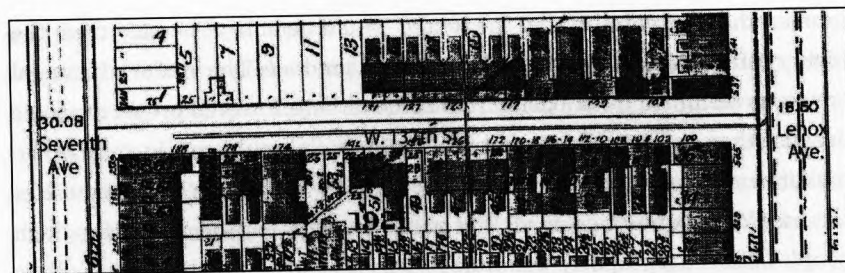


FIGURE 3.1. West 137th Street between Seventh Avenue and Lenox Avenue.
G. W. Bromley & Co., Manhattan, Section 6.

On the north side of the block, sixteen of the twenty-three lots facing the street were vacant, and on the south side fifteen of the twenty-one lots facing the street were vacant. The buildings on the south side of the street were large apartment buildings and those on the north side were smaller apartment buildings. Most of the residents of the block were native New Yorkers, but a significant number were born in Ireland and Germany. A smaller number was born in Sweden, Scotland, or other parts of the United States. Many of those born in New York had parents born in Germany, Ireland, and Scotland. A few of the households included servants.¹⁴

The occupations of the household heads on West 137th Street were much more diverse than those of the black or white residents of West 135th Street. Several residents of West 137th Street were stenographers. One resident was a civil engineer, one was a tailor, and another was a merchant, but there were others who were janitors and servants. As suggested by their occupations, the residents of this block were of a higher social class than their neighbors on 135th Street. The racial composition was different as well. Whereas the 135th Street block had African American and white residents, there were only two African Americans residing on the 100 block of West 137th, and they were servants in two households.¹⁵

On February 13, 1907, twenty-three owners of properties on the 100 block of West 137th Street entered into an agreement that they hoped would protect their block from the presence of African Americans for the foreseeable

future. The agreement stated that up to and including January 1, 1917, they would not

permit . . . the said premises to be used or occupied in whole or in part by any negro, mulatto, quadroon or octoroon of either sex whatsoever . . . this covenant or restriction may be proceeded on for an injunction and for damages against the party . . . It is expressly understood and agreed that this covenant or restriction shall attach to and run with the land belonging to the respective parties herewith.¹⁶

At the beginning of the agreement, following the list of the owners' names and addresses, was a justification for the document: "The white tenants in the property known and described as 106 and 108 West one hundred and thirty-seventh Street . . . were dispossessed and the said premises leased and rented to tenants of the negro race . . . for the purpose of compelling adjoining and neighboring owners to purchase the same property to protect their holdings."¹⁷

The inspiration for the covenant was the successful rental of two buildings on the block to black tenants following the eviction of the white tenants. The authors of the covenant assumed that the move-in of blacks was a ploy to push the remaining white residents on the block to purchase the black-occupied buildings in order to oust the black tenants and thus maintain the value of their properties (as the 151st Street residents had suspected of Philip Payton's actions). There is no record of the leases for 106 and 108 West 137th Street, but in the two years before the covenant was executed, the properties changed hands four times. They were sold by Daniel Mahoney to Wolf Bomzon in May 1905 for \$100 and an assumption of mortgages totaling \$40,000. Fifteen months later the properties changed hands twice in the same day in transactions that belied the claim that property values were endangered by the possibility of a black presence in Harlem. First on October 17, 1906, Bomzon sold the properties to Montgomery Rosenberg for \$100 and the assumption of mortgages of \$53,500, an increase of \$13,500 in less than two years. Later on the same day, Rosenberg sold both properties to Hannah Theobold for \$100 and the assumption of mortgages of \$60,000. While it was not a cash

transaction, Rosenberg was able to identify a borrower willing to pay \$6,500 more for property than what he had paid only hours earlier. It is likely that Theobold, who appears to have been a real estate investor, precipitated the February 1907 covenant by evicting the white tenants of 106 and 108 West 137th to bring in black tenants, in order to charge higher rents to better meet her loan payments. But Theobold, similar to Philip Payton on West 151st Street, did not have an opportunity to fully realize her plan. On January 31, 1907, she sold the properties, three months after purchasing them. Jacob Blauner purchased 106 and assumed mortgages of \$30,000. Rosa Newman purchased 108 and also assumed mortgages of \$30,000. Two weeks later, on February 13, the West 137th covenant was filed, signed by both Blauner and Newman, suggesting that by that time their properties no longer had black tenants. Residents of West 137th Street wanted to ensure that there would be no repeat of Theobold's actions.¹⁸

The scenario surrounding these properties as described in the restrictive covenant and reflected in the series of transactions is quite similar to the circumstances that residents of West 151st Street faced after the Afro-American Realty Company leased the apartment building at 525 West 151st: white tenants had been evicted by a person intent on renting to blacks. On West 137th Street, the abrupt eviction of white tenants by Hannah Theobold, who replaced them with black tenants, was viewed with fear by the remaining white residents on the block, particularly the owners of properties. The community pressure was sufficient that Theobold decided to sell the buildings at cost three months after purchasing them. The covenant signed by the property owners on West 137th Street indicated that the entry of African Americans to the block "caused or induced many of the white tenants to move and required a substantial reduction in rents to those who remained and prevented the reletting of vacant and unoccupied flats . . . except at rents much lower than those formerly prevailing."¹⁹

The text of the covenant may be an exaggeration, but in the environment of fear whipped up by those predicting calamity upon the arrival of black residents to a block, it is possible that the activity described in the covenant took place within a three-month period. The property-owning residents of 137th Street were not afraid of being evicted, but they were concerned about the

decline in the value of their properties. Adopting the same perspective as the property owners on West 151st Street had in 1906, the white property owners viewed black tenants on West 137th Street as being part of a larger conspiracy to induce whites to purchase the newly occupied buildings (implying that the black tenants would be removed if the buildings were purchased) to protect the values of their own properties. Although the restrictive covenant suggested that white tenants had moved from the block as a result of the African American presence, the document does not suggest that the conspiracy sought to induce the remaining property owners to sell their own properties, or that the intent of the "conspirators" was for blacks to control the block. White Harlem residents on 137th Street viewed the entry of blacks onto the block as a ploy to push whites into buying the black-occupied properties. There was no reference point in their experiences that would have led them to view the tenanting of two buildings by blacks as the vanguard of a broader settlement movement. The West 137th Street restrictive covenant was meant to maintain the stability of real estate values, and the white property owners believed that racial segregation was necessary in order to achieve that goal.

The white property owners seemed to have been certain that the aim of the parties behind the black tenants was to force a purchase of the buildings with black tenants. Although the *New York Times* had suggested in 1904 that black movement into white neighborhoods was motivated by a desire to drive down prices to facilitate more black purchases, the residents of 137th Street did not envision that such a goal that would result in their selling their homes, which were less than twenty years old. For them the logical purpose of the black presence on their block could only have been to push whites to *buy* the properties occupied by blacks in order to evict them. White residents of 137th Street were seeking a more enduring solution to the Negro problem through the restrictive covenant.²⁰

The restrictive covenant signed by the residents of West 137th Street had its roots in British law. By the eighteenth century the covenants were used in England to set aside private parks for exclusive use. In the early nineteenth century the covenants also began to be employed to prevent landowners from undertaking uses that could hurt their neighbors. Covenants typically

restricted the development of slaughterhouses, tanneries, and soap factories, industries notorious for their noxious fumes and waste. Restrictive covenants began to be used with some frequency in the United States in the nineteenth century also in connection with park development and the building of residential subdivisions. Covenants eventually dealt not only with land use, lot size, property setbacks, and building construction types, but also with race and ethnicity. The deeds of the Brookline, Massachusetts, Linden Place subdivision from 1843 stated that the residences could not be sold to "any Negro or native of Ireland." In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century the covenants were widely used in developments for the wealthy. The enforcement of long-term covenants became the province of homeowners' associations.²¹

The 137th Street covenant was not perpetual but was designed to have a ten-year term. Its signers viewed it as a measure that would remain in place until the crisis—the entry of blacks onto West 137th Street and the anticipated decline in property values—subsided. The agreement noted:

There is no desire to preclude or prevent negroes or citizens of African descent, solely because of their race and color from occupying any of the properties owned by the parties hereto . . . the sole desire purpose and object of the parties hereto being to secure a resumption and continuance of the rentals obtained prior to the introduction of negro tenants into 106 and 108 West One Hundred and thirty-seventh street.²²

The contradictory statement in the covenant suggesting that there was no desire to exclude "citizens of African descent" was included with an eye on potential legal challenges. There was also an assumption that a black owner would eventually seek black tenants, so the covenants precluded purchase of buildings by blacks as well. Concern regarding the growing African American presence in this section of Harlem continued and on May 28, 1907, seventeen residents of the 200 block of West 140th Street, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, executed a restrictive covenant for their block. The instrument differed from the 137th Street covenant. Instead of a lengthy preamble outlining the parties' names and their reasons for coming together to execute the covenant, the document quickly noted that the properties owned by the

signers would "not be used as a colored or negro tenement leased to colored or a negro tenant or tenants sold to colored or negro tenant or tenants." There was also no end date for the agreement, suggesting that the agreement would be in place in perpetuity. The agreement prohibited the occupancy, lease, or sale of properties to blacks. More densely developed than West 137th Street, West 140th Street was a block of large apartment buildings.²³

The collective nature of the covenants, involving substantial numbers of property-owning neighbors, suggests a motivated individual or organization, capable of alerting residents of the common threat and convincing them to take legal action. As other covenants were executed in the neighborhood, John G. Taylor, the white police officer who had moved to Harlem from Greenwich Village in 1903, played a pivotal role in organizing the resistance to the black presence in Harlem.²⁴ Taylor had retired from the police force in November 1906 at the age of fifty-eight, after thirty years of service, having risen to the rank of paymaster. As a leader of the Property Owners' Protective Association of Harlem for the next several years, he would be a key figure in the effort to limit the movement of blacks into Harlem.²⁵

The Property Owners' Protective Association had begun in 1900 with an initial goal to "do away with some of the evils which have made Harlem real estate less remunerative than it ought to be." Its initial focus had not been on the racial mix of Harlem's residents. At the time of the association's formation, owners of new Harlem apartment buildings, competing for tenants, had developed a practice of offering several months of free rent as an enticement to prospective tenants. The Protective Association argued that the practice had led to an expectation of free rent periods from tenants and had reduced the revenue that all property owners were receiving. Its initial activities focused on persuading property owners to forgo free-rent arrangements and set rents at competitive levels. By 1910 the focus of the organization had shifted to Harlem's Negro problem. In December 1910, John G. Taylor, then vice president of the association, announced that he had raised \$20,000 (most likely in pledges) by canvassing property owners on two blocks of West 136th Street between Eighth and Lenox Avenues. He indicated that the funds would be used for a campaign "to keep the negroes of 'Little Africa' just east of Lenox Avenue from further encroaching upon the street." Specifically the

funds would be used to buy mortgages of properties occupied by blacks and to obtain evidence against owners who the association believed were using the tenancy of blacks to induce owners of adjacent properties to buy the buildings occupied by blacks at an "enhanced price."²⁶

Taylor had previously claimed to the local police that a house at 121 West 136th Street owned by Edna C. F. Minott, "a negress," was occupied by "disorderly persons." When the police informed him that no action could be taken, the fund-raising campaign was mounted. But Taylor did not give up on his previous strategy either, advising those with complaints concerning disorder in the neighborhood to take their complaints directly to police "headquarters instead of the West 125th Street station." As a retired policeman, Taylor perhaps had more influence at headquarters than at the local precinct, since he was relatively new to the neighborhood. It is also possible that the local precinct would be more likely than headquarters to be aware that the disorderly claims could not be substantiated since they disguised the real complaint regarding the black presence on some blocks in Harlem.²⁷

As suggested by the Protective Association's shift in purpose, and growing concern, the black presence in Harlem had increased dramatically by 1910 (table 3.1). In 1900, 20 percent of Manhattan's African American population lived in the area above 86th Street on the east and west sides of Manhattan covered then by four assembly districts. By 1910 almost 50 percent of Manhattan's African American community resided in eight assembly districts covering a comparable area. The shift in the black residential concentration away from midtown also reflected this change. In 1900 more than 48 percent of Manhattan's African American population lived in five midtown assembly districts. By 1910, 32 percent lived in five midtown districts covering a comparable area.²⁸ Behind these numbers was the dramatic growth through migration in the absolute number of blacks in Manhattan from 36,000 in 1900 to 60,000 in 1910. While some of the Harlem numbers represented movement from midtown, a substantial portion were immigrants coming directly from the South or the Caribbean. The restrictive covenant movement was a response to these demographic changes, and it continued to grow as the African American presence in Harlem increased.

TABLE 3.1 Distribution of African American Population in Manhattan, 1910*

Assembly Districts	Total Assembly District population	Negro population in the Assembly District	Negro population as a % of total Assembly District population	Assembly District Negro Population as a % of total citywide Negro pop	Colored, Non-Negro population
1: clarkson, west 3rd, Broadway	75,878	529	0.70%	0.87%	59
2: Williams, Park row, Henry St.	91,509	65	0.07%	0.11%	107
3: Worth, Bway, 14th, 2nd Ave.	88,002	85	0.10%	0.14%	2,353
4: Stanton, Clinton, E. River	99,721	31	0.03%	0.05%	13
5: 8th ave, Clarkson, 18th, Hudson River	57,341	1,066	1.86%	1.76%	46
6: Ave. B, Stanton, 10th, E. River	99,223	28	0.03%	0.05%	18
7: 7th ave., 18th, 30th, Hudson River	52,483	1,850	3.52%	3.06%	63
8: Stanton, Christie, Clinton, Henry	109,107	28	0.03%	0.05%	22
9: 7th Ave, 31st, 43rd, Hudson river	54,496	5,361	9.84%	8.86%	62
10: 2nd Ave, 14th, Ave. B, Stanton	100,929	27	0.03%	0.04%	35
11: 8th Ave, 43rd, 52nd, Hudson river	52,833	1,269	2.40%	2.10%	32
12: 14th St, 3rd Ave., 23rd St.	78,010	91	0.12%	0.15%	51
13: Hudson Rvr, 52nd, 67th, Columbus Ave	52,290	9,273	17.73%	15.32%	65
14: 23rd, Lexington Ave., 42nd, E. River	63,879	86	0.13%	0.14%	100
15: Hudson Rvr, 67th, 91st, CP West	72,031	1,865	2.59%	3.08%	152
16: 42nd, Lex, 56th, E. River	61,415	693	1.13%	1.14%	62
17: Hudson Rvr, 91st, 106th, CP West	63,348	3,074	4.85%	5.08%	81

TABLE 3.1 (continued)

Assembly Districts	Total Assembly District population	Negro population In the Assembly District	Negro population as a % of total Assembly District population	Assembly District Negro Population as a % of total citywide Negro pop	Colored, Non-Negro population
18: 56th, 3rd Ave., 73rd, E. River	74,594	38	0.05%	0.06%	51
19: 101st, 7th Ave, 133rd, Hudson River	82,407	1,690	2.05%	2.79%	149
20: 74th, 3rd Ave, 82nd, E. River	65,821	723	1.10%	1.19%	31
21: Hudson Rvr, 127th, 141st, 5th Ave.	73,446	10,912	14.86%	18.03%	82
22: 82nd, Lex, 93rd, E. River	54,135	181	0.33%	0.30%	24
23: 141st, Lenox, Harlem River	119,799	2,092	1.75%	3.46%	130
24: 92nd, 3rd Ave, 106th, E. River	85,109	2,051	2.41%	3.39%	33
25: West 3rd, 7th, 30th, 3rd Ave.	54,282	1,407	2.59%	2.32%	137
26: 96th, 5th, 120th, Park Ave.	82,542	893	1.08%	1.48%	33
27: 30th, 8th, 57th, Lex	55,203	3,548	6.43%	5.86%	154
28: 106th, Park Ave., 116th, E. River & Randall's Island	89,802	283	0.32%	0.47%	46
29: 57th, CP West, 110th, Lex Ave	65,300	1,951	2.99%	3.22%	122
30: 117th, Madison, E. River	92,275	7,556	8.19%	12.48%	13
31: 110th, St. Nicholas, 127th, Fifth Ave	64,327	1,779	2.77%	2.94%	39
Totals	2,331,537	60,525			4,365

*Compiled from the Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Bulletin, Population: "Composition and Characteristics of the Population", New York, pp. 43-45; Manhattan Assembly District Map, 1914

On June 10, 1910, three years after the West 140th Street agreement was executed, another covenant was executed by ninety-one owners of property on the adjacent 100 and 200 blocks of West 136th Street (fig. 3.2). This agreement included John G. Taylor's home at 213 West 136th Street, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. This street differed from 135th, 137th, and 140th Streets, the areas of the earlier covenants, both in housing stock and in the characteristics of its residents. The blocks were almost entirely lined with brownstones, a housing form more likely to be occupied by homeowners in 1910. Seventy percent of the signers of the 136th Street covenant were owners who lived on the block. On 135th Street participation in the covenant by owners who lived on the block was 27 percent. Because the 137th and 140th Street covenants did not include the home addresses of the signers, a similar comparison cannot be made definitively, although on both streets apartment buildings were more prevalent, in which the owners were less likely to live.²⁹

The language of the June 10, 1910, covenant for West 136th Street was similar to that of the initial West 137th Street covenant. The document noted that "various parties have been purchasing different parcels of property in and about 137th Street, West" with the purpose of renting the properties to African Americans in order to compel the adjacent white property owners to purchase the properties. The same explanation and profession of no desire to restrict African Americans' housing choices was provided. The agreement was for a ten-year term. John G. Taylor's name was noted as the witness to the signatures of all of the property owners, which included his wife, Agnes, at 213 West 136th Street.³⁰

Other covenants were made in the following months and years: in December 1910, thirteen property owners in the 200 block of West 135th (between Seventh and Eighth Avenues) signed a covenant; on February 4, 1911, forty-two owners on the 200 block of West 132nd Street (between Seventh and Eighth Avenues) signed a covenant; in December 1911, sixty-six owners of properties in the 100 blocks of West 129th, West 130th, and West 131st Streets (between Seventh and Lenox Avenues) signed covenants. These three covenants all included the same language as the 136th Street covenant, and John G. Taylor served as witness of the signatures on two of the three documents.³¹

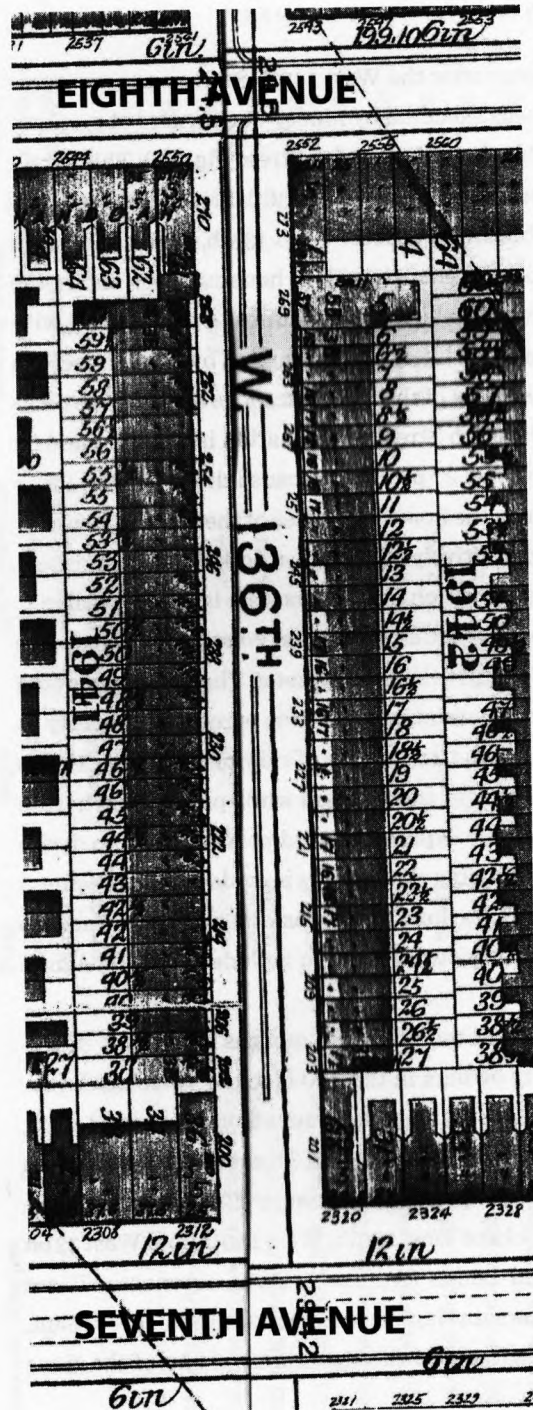


FIGURE 3.2. Map 5.200 block of West 136th Street. G. W. Bromley & Co., Section 6.

The year 1913 proved to be a pivotal year in the effort to restrict black movement into Harlem. In March the Harlem Board of Commerce held a "conciliation meeting" and invited African American broker John Nail to speak to a group of two hundred members regarding relations between white Harlem property owners and black property owners. Formed in 1896, the Board of Commerce represented the owners of large and medium-sized businesses as well as lawyers and other professionals. The meeting was led by the board's chairman, Erduin v. d. H. Koch, owner of Koch Department Store (having inherited it from his father) on 125th Street, who stated: "The negroes have a right to live and the privilege of going on Fifth Avenue or Riverside Drive if they can pay for it. Many obnoxious things have arisen from antagonisms stirred up between the two races."³²

This statement is remarkable since in 1913, in Harlem and other parts of the country, even many of those who favored fair treatment of blacks set clear limits, usually suggesting that African Americans should be satisfied with obtaining good housing in black neighborhoods. In going well beyond this position, perhaps Koch was concerned that racial antagonisms could lead to individual acts of violence or race riots such as had occurred in New York in 1900, Atlanta in 1906, or Springfield, Illinois, in 1908. In these confrontations lives were lost, property was damaged, and the business climate of the communities suffered. As the leader of the organization formally representing Harlem's business class, Koch may have reached his perspective by considering the manner in which racial tensions affected the economic life of a community. It also is possible that Koch held a more radical vision for race relations. Like Charles Kroehle, Louis Partzschfeld, and August Ruff, who assisted black buyers of Harlem properties in 1904, Koch was of German descent. His father, Henry C. F. Koch, founder of the family dry goods store, was born in Germany. While Erduin Koch did not assist blacks in purchasing property, his statement to the Board of Commerce is the most direct expression of the beliefs of this group of people of German descent regarding interracial relations. His statement supported the point made ten years earlier, that blacks should be able to live anywhere they could afford.³³

At the 1913 Board of Commerce meeting, John Nail provided a snapshot of the state of blacks in Harlem as well as the challenges they were already



FIGURE 3.3. Harlem blocks with racial restrictive covenants, 1907-1911. Automobile Club of Rochester, 1920, Florida Center for Instructional Technology.

facing in seeking housing that was of better quality than in previous enclaves. A year before the Great Migration of blacks leaving the South for the North would begin, unable to foresee this massive movement, Nail indicated that blacks had sufficient property to sustain growth in the community over the coming five years. He noted that they had vacancy rates of approximately 30 percent in their buildings. Nail added that blacks owned approximately 5 percent of the properties in the area where they resided, and asked that white absentee owners in this area maintain their properties in good con-

dition. An African American minister who was present complained about the bars that white people were establishing in the area. Nail and the minister were both concerned that the black settlement in Harlem, which had seemed so attractive because of the better quality of housing, not become a repeat of previous deteriorated black settlements in Manhattan. It is likely that the minister was Rev. Hutchens C. Bishop, pastor of St. Philip's Episcopal Church. Two years earlier Nail and his business partner, Henry C. Parker, had facilitated the purchase of a row of ten apartment buildings on West 135th Street between Lenox and Seventh Avenues by St. Philip's Church. The purchase, linked with the sale of St. Philip's downtown rental properties, was touted in the African American press as the largest real estate transaction by African Americans. As Harlem's black settlement had grown, white residents had established Lenox Avenue as the "deadline" west of which no blacks would be allowed to settle. Located west of Lenox Avenue, the St. Philip's purchase broke through that traditional western boundary for African Americans in a dramatic manner because of its scale. The white residents of the apartment buildings were evicted and the properties were rented to African Americans.³⁴

John G. Taylor, who as the principal organizer of many of the restrictive covenants in Harlem was a purveyor of some of the "antagonisms" toward blacks criticized by *Erduin v. d. H. Koch*, attempted to join the Board of Commerce meeting but was barred. He does not appear to have been a member of the group, but his message seems to have been one that Board of Commerce members had determined would not contribute to a productive meeting. When later asked about the meeting by a newspaper reporter, Taylor suggested that Nail's statement regarding the unlikely possibility of black territorial expansion was not sincere and that it was made to provide those present with a false sense of security. Since Nail had no way of predicting the Great Migration that, along with World War I, would soon bring even more blacks to New York, his projections to the Board of Commerce were realistic, given the information that was available to him. Even so, his presentation to the Board of Commerce of the movement of blacks as a benign activity did not convey his interest in expanding black ownership in Harlem. He had facilitated the St. Philip's apartment purchases that were followed by the

eviction of the white tenants. Nail's ability to move into Harlem so aggressively, perhaps not known by the Board of Commerce members, would have rankled those attending the conciliation meeting. Taylor also criticized the Board of Commerce, claiming that the board's conciliatory measures were motivated by a desire to "control the negro vote," a point denied by Board of Commerce leaders. The numbers of blacks moving to Harlem, as potential voters, were large enough for them to become a part of the political calculations of local elected officials, but there is no evidence that this influenced the Board of Commerce members.³⁵

While Harlem's white businessmen were attempting conciliation, Harlem's youth had a more direct approach. In a March 20 front page article under the headline "Gangs of White and Negro Boys Hold Stone Battles Almost Daily," the *Harlem Home News* noted that the Madison Avenue bridge at 135th Street crossing the East River to the borough of the Bronx had become such a daily battleground that police would soon have to be posted at all of the bridges leading from Harlem to the Bronx. The article claimed that the battles were started by African American youths from the "Black Belt" of Harlem defending territory against white youths from the Bronx. In addition to the youths, the report suggested, on Sundays the Madison Avenue bridge was dominated by African American loiterers who made it very uncomfortable for others to pass. This report fit the notion that black residents would bring disarray to the community, and echoed complaints at public meetings about the Negro problem. The probability that the estimates of the numbers of black youths were exaggerated is quite high because of the perception among some whites that Harlem was being invaded by blacks.³⁶

Adults were also involved in violent acts. In July 1913 *New York Age* described a "race riot" that it indicated had occurred in the area of Lenox Avenue and 142nd Street, a block on which racial tensions between white and African American residents had reportedly been festering. No explanation was provided for the source of the tension, implying that the mere presence of the two races in constant, close proximity was enough to lead to unrest. The details of the riot were also not reported, but one arrest was made. Walter Brown, an African American, was charged with assault for firing two pistols during the altercation. The focus of the *Age* article was a

request by the judge in Brown's trial that the jurors consider the facts of the case fairly, suggesting that the charged state of race relations in New York City required this admonition beyond what would have been the jurors' standard duty.³⁷

By 1913 the hardening of racial lines in New York City affected the ways that blacks did business even in parts of the city beyond Harlem. In the first decade of the 1900s, Booker T. Washington, leader of Tuskegee Institute, and his assistant, Emmett J. Scott, traveled frequently to New York from Alabama to cultivate relationships with northern philanthropists and to attend to other aspects of the institution's political ties. On these trips they stayed at downtown hotels such as the Hotel Manhattan on 42nd Street or the Fifth Avenue Hotel on Madison Square near 23rd Street.³⁸ By 1913 hotel policies in New York City had changed. In late 1913 in correspondence with Bertha Ruffner, owner of the Hotel McAlpin on Broadway and 34th Street, Emmett Scott sought to negotiate a compromise regarding the hotel's racial segregation policies and inquired about the hotel manager's "attitude . . . with reference to respectable colored people who have regard for the 'natural fitness of things.' It would not be my purpose to ostentatiously parade myself—nor would it be the attitude of any thoughtful black man—about the corridors of a hotel. In fact, as a rule I have my meals always outside of rather than in hotels where I have stopped."³⁹

A few days later Miss Ruffner replied: "We regret that we have been unable to secure the name of any hotel in this city, to which we can refer you. We have written and telephoned several, but their restrictions are such that they are unable to accommodate you. It is impossible for us to be of service to you in this connection."⁴⁰

A decade earlier, because of their social class, Scott and Washington had no problems finding lodging in white-owned hotels, but by 1913 there was no hotel in New York City for Scott even if he agreed to remain out of sight. Race had become much more important than social class. Other northern cities experienced a similar hardening of racial lines. Previously dispersed residential patterns of blacks shifted to concentrations of increasing black populations in a few neighborhoods. This is the context in which the movement of blacks to Harlem was defined by whites as an invasion.⁴¹

The heat of the summer of 1913 brought a steady drumbeat of stories regarding racial tensions in Harlem and the responses to it. By July, John G. Taylor's Property Owners' Protective Association claimed a membership of two thousand people who had signed restrictive covenants. As the summer proceeded, complaints regarding the Harlem Black Belt increased: "The immoral practices of negro men and women have made the section of Harlem one of the most notorious resorts of the demi-monde."⁴²

Newspaper reports noted incidents of "respectable women" being insulted by blacks and indicated that white women walking on streets frequented by blacks were in danger. A report in the *Harlem Home News* concluded: "The fact that real estate values are going down rapidly in this section of Harlem is fully explained by the conditions described."⁴³

During July and August a series of public meetings were held by white residents in Harlem to discuss the Negro problem. Perhaps reflecting a growing concern among Board of Commerce members, at a July meeting of the board called by its Property Owners Committee, John G. Taylor was allowed not only to attend, but to make a presentation. In a stirring speech he recounted the work of his organization through the use of restrictive covenants and suggested the formation of a company to purchase properties occupied or about to be occupied by blacks. The acquired properties would be renovated and rented to white tenants, an action that he claimed would automatically result in an increase in value. Taylor's solution met opposition. Bernard Naumberg, a lawyer, stated:

There is a well-defined colored district and we do not wish to get them out of it. I am assured by men who know that there is plenty of room for everybody. At the same time, white people can not live on the same block with negroes. To my mind, the best way to solve the problem is not by restricting the negroes but by bringing white people to live in the section. To this end we must advertise Harlem.⁴⁴

While in March 1913 Erduin v. d. H. Koch had said that blacks should be able to live anywhere they could afford, Naumberg dismissed the then radical notion that blacks and whites could live as neighbors. Even so, he did not advocate either expulsion of the black residents or tremendous restrictions. His solution for maintaining white control of Harlem was straightforward:

get more white people to move to the area. That night speakers outlined a plan for a proactive approach to the "black invasion" in Harlem by focusing on increasing the demand for Harlem property among whites. Consistent with Koch's admonition against "antagonisms," as well as with Naumberg's perspective, the speakers suggested that it was the failure of white residents of Harlem to properly inform other whites of the benefits of Harlem that had led white property owners to resort to renting or selling to African Americans. By the end of the meeting a committee was formed to carry out the advertising plan, with Erduin Koch serving as the committee's chairman (a clear signal that he believed that some type of intervention was important). They collected more than \$300 that evening to support the plan, and projected that a total of \$1,500 to \$2,000 would be needed for the first advertising initiative.⁴⁵

The black newspaper *New York Age* responded to the charges made by Taylor, noting that "one J.G. Taylor, erstwhile real estate agent and always a Negro hater, is president" of the Protective Association. The *Age* stated that Taylor's charges regarding the peril that whites faced by residing in close proximity to blacks were claims that "are absolutely untrue and which could have their conception only in a depraved and distorted consciousness." The article went on to note that "the Negro as a rule has in his home such furnishings and fittings as are out of proportion to his income, and very much superior to the furnishings to be found in the homes of average white family." A list titled "A Few Whose Homes Should be Visited" included more than a dozen black lawyers, real estate agents, ministers, and other Harlem leaders. The *Age* made clear that middle-class status was not only a matter of income but also an appreciation for and possession of some of the finer things of life. The article concluded by suggesting that "if there is the immorality and depravity among Negroes of Harlem as is charged, then the white man who owns the saloon and dives in that neighborhood is responsible."⁴⁶

At the July Board of Commerce meeting, John G. Taylor had also assured the audience of the viability of the restrictive covenant as a tool to defend their neighborhoods, noting that the strength of the covenant would soon be tested in court. He added that he expected the decision to affirm the viability of the covenant. In mid-August of 1913 a lawsuit was initiated against Caroline Morlath, the white owner of 125 West 137th Street, by her next-door

neighbor, Raphael Greenbaum. Morlath was born in New York, the daughter of German immigrants. She and her husband, Charles, also a child of German immigrants, had raised their three children, Caroline, William, and Susan, first on Second Avenue (near 29th Street) and later on Madison Avenue. By 1910 Charles, Caroline, and their daughter Carrie, had moved to West 137th Street, where the family's income was derived through investments. The owner of 127 West 137th Street, Raphael Greenbaum was a seventy-eight-year-old German immigrant who lived with his forty-four-year-old son, Isidore, his daughter-in-law, and his granddaughter. He and his son worked at a butcher shop on Eighth Avenue, a few blocks from their home. This was the block where the initial February 1907 restrictive covenant in Harlem was executed by twenty-three property owners.⁴⁷ In court papers, Greenbaum complained that Morlath had rented apartments in her ten-unit building to black tenants, violating the restrictive covenant that was part of the deed for her property. He noted that Morlath's actions had endangered the value of his property, which he indicated he had purchased because of the value that the restrictive covenant had provided. He asked for "an order . . . restraining the defendant from permitting negroes, mulattoes, quadroons or octoroons to occupy a whole or a part of the said premises 125 West 137th Street."

He also asked for \$10,000 in damages from Morlath.⁴⁸

Soon after the suit was initiated, the Property Owners' Protective Association hosted a meeting to discuss the lawsuit. John G. Taylor appealed for funds to cover Greenbaum's lawyer's fees, and more than \$175 was collected. In rallying the troops, Taylor noted:

We are now approaching a crisis. It is the question of whether the white man will rule Harlem or the negro. It is up to you to say who it shall be—the black or the white. The Equal Rights law has been pronounced unconstitutional, and the courts have upheld the restrictive agreement of a group of white people in Baltimore. I have no doubt that our agreement will be upheld too.⁴⁹

In his remarks, Taylor also criticized the Harlem Board of Commerce's advertising campaign, noting that it would not solve the race problem, since no "respectable family" would be interested in living "in this section of Harlem, next door to negroes." Taylor ended with an appeal for contributions and

signatures on a document that would extend the restrictive covenant to a larger area.⁵⁰

In 1895 New York State had enacted a Civil Rights Law that prohibited discrimination in public accommodations on the basis of race and religion. The law made violations a misdemeanor, with victims required to file a civil action to obtain damages (privately owned housing was not considered a "public accommodation"). Despite Taylor's statement, in New York State an equal rights statute had been making its way through the legislature in 1913. In March a bill sponsored by Assemblyman Aaron Levy passed, followed by a similar bill in the Senate sponsored by Robert Wagner. At the beginning of September 1913 the law went into effect. The new statute also prohibited discrimination in public accommodations but specified that violators would be subject to penalties of "not less than \$100 nor more than \$500 or shall be imprisoned not less than thirty days nor more than ninety days or both." The new law also prohibited owners from advertising that "persons belonging to a particular race, creed or color are not wanted or will not be accommodated."⁵¹ Taylor's mention of the Baltimore restrictive covenant case referred to a 1911 Baltimore ordinance to maintain racial segregation by prohibiting either whites or blacks from moving onto blocks occupied "in whole or in part" by residents of the opposite race. In 1913 the Maryland Court of Appeals ruled that the law was unconstitutional, but a week later the Baltimore City Council passed a new ordinance to meet the complaints of the court. The "Baltimore idea" of residential segregation was soon adopted in other southern and border states. Until the concept was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1917, it was one of a variety of restrictive agreements used throughout the nation to limit the movement of blacks, and also Jews, in some cases.⁵²

John G. Taylor's advocates were not the only ones watching the Harlem restrictive covenant case. The *New York Age* also reported on the case, presenting Caroline Morlath as a champion of African Americans. The *Age* indicated that

the John M. Royall firm of real estate agents has charge of the renting of this property and it is due largely to their influence that this and other properties

in what is called the "restricted section" has been opened to Negro tenants. Mr. Royall has received assurances from Mrs. Morlath that she will fight this case to the court of last resort if necessary and that she will not be dictated to by any body as to whom she shall rent her houses. She has a number of other properties rented to Negroes, and their tenancy is perfectly satisfactory to her.⁵³

John Royall was an African American real estate broker. The *Age* article also stated that Caroline Morlath had retained African American attorney Wilfred Smith (who had been an investor in the by then defunct Afro-American Realty Company) to represent her.

In September 1913, as the case proceeded through the court, various real estate brokers submitted depositions for the plaintiff and the defendant, describing the neighborhood. Although the suit had not been filed until August 14, three depositions had been given, on July 31, August 1, and August 6, suggesting that while the Harlem Board of Commerce was looking for an amicable solution to Harlem's Negro problem, the groundwork for the Morlath case was being laid.⁵⁴

Morlath purchased her building in 1908. Its previous owner, Isaac Birkenr, had signed the June 1907 covenant that was attached to the property.⁵⁵ In her September 4, 1913, deposition Caroline Morlath admitted renting apartments to blacks, but she indicated that the only reason she did so was because she was unable to rent to whites. She noted that she was a widow and that the apartment house, where she also lived, was her only source of income (if she owned other properties, as the *Age* article suggested, she did not mention these). She added that if she had waited for white tenants to rent, she would have been unable to pay her mortgage and would have lost her building. She indicated that the black presence in the neighborhood had become so large that white residents would no longer rent apartments on West 137th Street. Supporting her statement were affidavits submitted by various real estate brokers (including John Royall) identifying black residents of nearby buildings, some of which were under covenant, as well as black patrons of businesses on Lenox and Seventh Avenues, the avenues at each end of her block. Morlath also noted a falsehood in Greenbaum's initial deposi-

tion. He had stated that the existence of the restrictive covenant on the block had influenced his purchase, but Morlath pointed out that Greenbaum had signed the 1907 covenant and was the owner of his property before the covenant was executed. Morlath concluded by noting that her attorney had informed her that the restrictive covenant agreement that Greenbaum sought to have affirmed "is void because it is against public policy to create or maintain discrimination by the public against colored people, which is evidenced by the Civil Rights Law of this State and also by the recent amendment to the Civil Rights Law passed in the year 1913 which went into effect September 1, 1913."⁵⁶

This latter statement was consistent with the *New York Age's* portrayal of Morlath as a champion for the rights of African Americans. She may have been, but if she was, her deposition suggests that she also saw the need to rationalize her decision to rent to blacks as an action that was reluctantly reached because she had no other choice. Although the *Age* had stated that Morlath had retained African American attorney Wilfred Smith to represent her in the case (in keeping with its framing of Morlath's actions as those of a race champion), her attorney of record was Henry Greenberg.

Raphael Greenbaum also submitted a series of depositions from real estate brokers. John G. Taylor, leader of the restrictive covenant movement, submitted two depositions. In his first deposition, made on August 1, he explained:

I am devoting my whole time and attention to the protection of real estate interests in the section of New York known as Harlem, which has been suffering a serious depreciation by reason of what is known as the negro invasion, that is to say the occupation of various apartments and tenements by negro tenants. This I am doing without compensation and solely for the protection of the said district in New York, and for its maintenance as a locality for the residence and occupancy of white people.⁵⁷

In that same deposition Taylor highlighted the ways that the black presence in the neighborhood had harmed property values, and he offered examples of homes that in 1913 sold for substantially lower prices than their purchase prices when the street had been exclusively white. His argument might

have supported Raphael Greenbaum's claim of the harm to his property value by Morlath's rentals to blacks, but he perhaps later realized that the facts of this deposition could also be used to support Morlath's arguments that many African Americans were in the neighborhood before she began renting to them. On September 10, 1913, Taylor was deposed again. In this deposition he attempted to offer a more nuanced representation of the black presence in the neighborhood. Admitting that African Americans lived at 107 West 137th Street and 113 West 137th Street, he stated that they moved to these premises after July 25, 1913. He added that although 178 West 137th Street and Morlath's building, at 125 West 137th Street, had African American tenants, "All other houses in this block to my intimate knowledge were occupied exclusively by white tenants." Taylor seemed to be attempting to support the justification for Raphael Greenbaum's lawsuit, even though as Caroline Morlath claimed, racial conditions in the neighborhood had changed substantially.⁵⁸

In a deposition made the next day, September 11, 1913, Caroline Morlath refuted Taylor's claims, noting that 178 West 137th had more than a "few" black tenants, but was fully occupied by African Americans at least six months before Greenbaum's legal action. She recounted that the houses that Taylor claimed had exclusively white tenants had few tenants at all, and that their owners had indicated they would begin renting apartments to blacks. Morlath challenged Taylor's depiction of the racial composition on other nearby blocks as well. She also highlighted the contradictions between the two affidavits, concluding that "Mr. Taylor seems to be rather inconsistent." Taylor had begun by noting the large number of blacks in the neighborhood in his first deposition. In his second account, he attempted to support Raphael Greenbaum's justification for undertaking the lawsuit against Caroline Morlath (when Greenbaum had not challenged others renting to African Americans) by attempting to characterize Morlath's rentals as among the first to blacks on the block. The map in figure 3.4 depicting the presence of African Americans in Harlem in 1913 also illustrates the extent of Taylor's inconsistencies.⁵⁹

On October 1, 1913, Caroline Morlath submitted a final document to the court that included a photograph of Rafael Greenbaum's building at 127 West 137th Street (fig. 3.5). The document showed X's that drew attention to

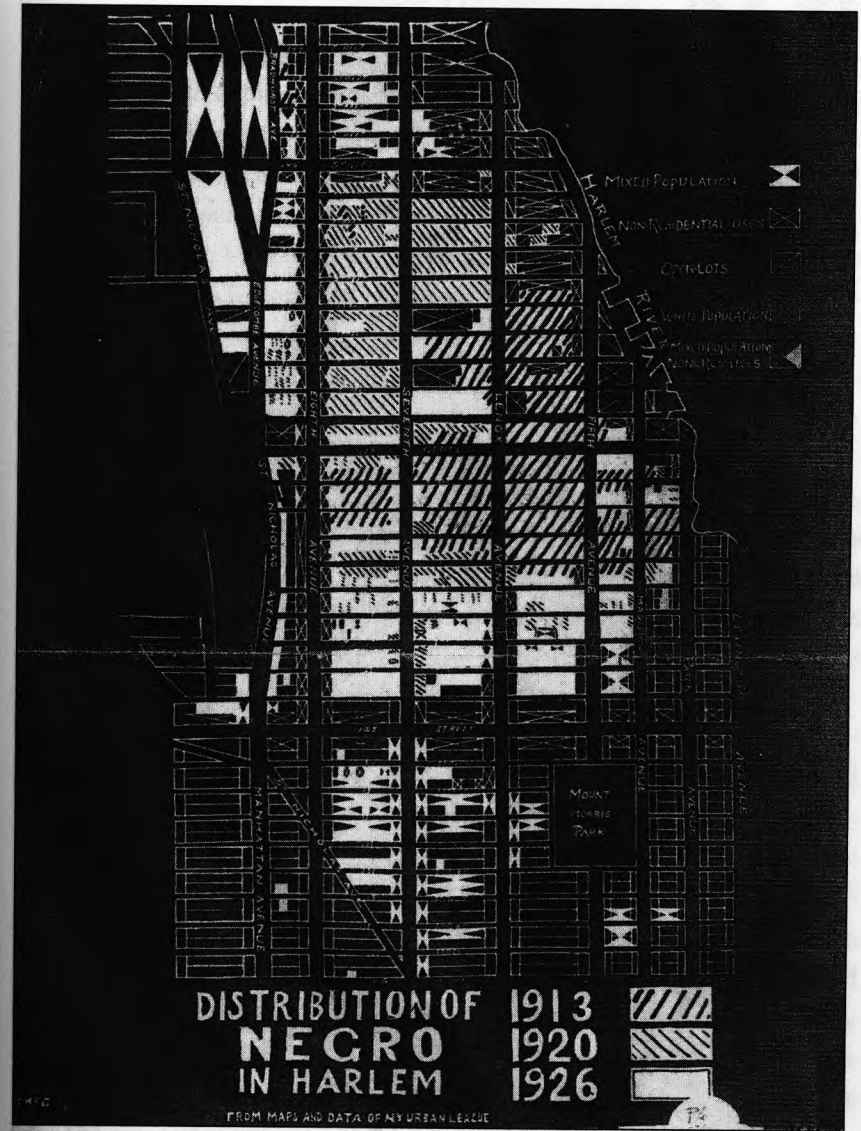


FIGURE 3.4. Distribution of black population in Harlem, 1913, 1920, 1926. New York Urban League.



FIGURE 3.5. Raphael Greenbaum's building at 127 West 137th Street. File photograph from *Raphael Greenbaum v. Caroline Morlath*, Supreme Court, New York County, Index Number 20486|1913.

Greenbaum's building and a new sign on it that read: "5 Room Apartments, All Improvements to Respectable Colored Tenants." Morlath's document requested that Greenbaum's case be dismissed "since the plaintiff is now committing a breach of the contract he seeks to enforce." It appeared that Rafael Greenbaum had succumbed to the same economic pressures that Caroline Morlath had described. On October 15, 1913, Greenbaum's motion for an injunction against Morlath's renting to African Americans was denied. The case that John G. Taylor had expected to affirm the covenant had instead further acknowledged the presence of African Americans in Central Harlem.⁶⁰

■ Apart from the ironic outcome, *Greenbaum vs. Morlath* leaves several questions unanswered. If the neighborhood had such a large black presence, as indicated by the Morlath affidavits, the Urban League map, and Greenbaum's eventual actions, why did Greenbaum bring the suit? Was it because, with Morlath's actions, the black presence was right next door to him? Was there a broader dispute between the two owners, with the suit being used as a tool of retribution? Since John G. Taylor was a dominant presence in the case, submitting two affidavits, was he the primary motivation behind Greenbaum's decision to bring the case forward?

■ While Raphael Greenbaum's request for an injunction to prevent Caroline Morlath from renting apartments to blacks was denied and the use of racial restrictive covenants in Harlem was not affirmed because of the shifting facts of the case, there was also no decision made on a broader question of the legality of the racial restrictive covenant instrument. The effectiveness of the covenant as a tool of resistance was not clarified by the Morlath case, and no new covenants were added to those enacted during the period 1907–1911. The momentum of the resistance movement was undoubtedly hampered by the death of its leader, John G. Taylor, in January 1914. The leadership mantle was passed to Meyer Jarmulowsky, a Lower East Side banker who had invested a substantial portion of his family's assets in Harlem real estate and therefore had a vested interest in preventing a decline in property values there. The outbreak of World War I in 1914 challenged many banks serving European immigrants who sought to withdraw deposits in order to send money home. In August the Jarmulowsky Bank joined the ranks of several immigrant banks that failed when it was unable to provide funds

that had been invested. Other Jarmulowsky businesses were embroiled in a series of lawsuits charging fraud, and Meyer Jarmulowsky's ability to lead the Harlem movement was hampered.⁶¹ While there were individual efforts to resist, organized, publicized efforts were few in the last half of the decade. The restrictive covenant continued to be used effectively over the next three decades as a tool to enforce residential racial segregation in other parts of the country, from Chicago to Washington, D.C. In 1948 the Supreme Court ruled the instruments unconstitutional.⁶²

Many other northern cities were experiencing similarly dramatic increases in their populations of black residents during the first decade and a half of the twentieth century. While some of the rhetoric of white Harlem residents regarding the Negro invasion was insulting to blacks, when compared to responses in other cities, it was relatively genteel. Class, relatively brief housing tenure, and white ethnic diversity influenced the responses in Harlem. There were at least three responses to the increase in black residents there: welcome based on class distinction—they should be able to live wherever they could afford; hostility manifested by the use of restrictive covenants; and hostility as evidenced by spontaneous violence. Wealthy people such as Harlem Board of Commerce chairman Erduin v. d. H. Koch may have been more liberal because of their confidence that ultimately they could control their communities. Although Koch lived at Lenox Avenue near 120th Street, some similarly minded members of the Board of Commerce may not have lived in Harlem and therefore did not feel personally threatened by the black presence in the community.⁶³

John G. Taylor's response, while more vocal, could be characterized as intermediate or moderate. He was more confrontational than the business leaders, and undoubtedly was able to recruit some from the business class who believed that the Koch approach was not strong enough. In addition Taylor relied on owner-occupants and small investors, both of whom were more susceptible to concerns about the decline in their property values and less able to weather such a loss. While Taylor was able to organize large groups to sign restrictive covenants, there were obstacles to getting signers to adhere to their agreements. The short lengths of residency in the newly developed area and the diversity of ethnic backgrounds among white residents limited

the commitment that residents had to the neighborhood. As noted in chapter 2, West 135th Street was a newly developed area in 1900. Many buildings had been built in the 1890s, and by the first decade of the 1900s many streets were still partially undeveloped. Beyond aesthetics, this fact could have affected the inclination of residents to consider a street as "theirs." In many cases, white residents, including covenant leader Taylor, were almost as new to the neighborhood as the blacks seeking to move onto their blocks. In addition to limited time of residency, white Harlem was ethnically diverse, with native-born whites living on the same blocks as first-generation immigrants from Germany, Ireland, and other countries. This diversity extended to religion as well, with prosperous German Jews building synagogues on Fifth Avenue and other avenues to the west, as well as purchasing brownstones on streets in the 130s, while Christians built churches in the same area. This diversity was an obstacle to a more vigorous defense of their neighborhoods. As chapter 2 illustrated, some white residents had provided financing to black purchasers of their buildings, indicating that they did not fear community sanction.

It is also possible that while some white Harlem residents were concerned enough about their property values to enter into restrictive covenants, the more salient concern of some may have been economics rather than race. Their antipathy to blacks may not have been as deep as John G. Taylor's. Before his move to Harlem, Taylor lived on Waverly Place in Greenwich Village. During the time he was there, Greenwich Village still contained vestiges of African American enclaves that earlier in the nineteenth century had earned it the name "Little Africa." The growing black congregation of the Abyssinian Baptist Church was located at 164 Waverly Place just a few doors from Taylor's home at 152 Waverly Place. To John G. Taylor his move to Harlem may have been as much an escape from the company of neighbors whom he considered undesirable as a sign of his increasing prosperity. He undoubtedly knew of the 135th Street enclave when he purchased his home on 136th Street in 1903, but he also had every reason to believe that it would remain within its boundaries, east of Lenox Avenue. This history, linked with Taylor's economic concerns, may have motivated him to lead the restrictive covenant movement in the last decade of his life. While his neighbors joined

the movement by signing agreements, their commitment to maintaining Harlem as a white community was different from his. The third response to the increased number of blacks in Harlem, violence, occurred in only a few instances. The limited reports of violence reflect the lukewarm commitment of white residents to defending their community. Other than schoolboy fights and a few isolated incidents involving adults, many white residents responded to the black invasion of Harlem by moving out of the community. But even as they exited they were reluctant to relinquish their church edifices to black newcomers.⁶⁴

4

THE BATTLE FOR CHURCH PROPERTIES



The restrictive covenant movement was clearly an example of racial conflict in Harlem related to residential property ownership in the first decades of the twentieth century. But as the African American purchases financed by white sellers Louis Partzschfeld, Charles Kroehle, and August Ruff demonstrated, with respect to residential properties there were also examples of cooperation across racial lines. This was not true for church properties. Where church properties were concerned, there were limits to cooperation with African Americans even for white Harlem residents who may not have been overtly hostile to the increasing black presence in Harlem. When African Americans attempted to purchase religious properties in Harlem during the first two decades of the twentieth century, white church officials did not directly sell properties being vacated by predominantly white congregations to black congregations. This aversion may have been grounded in attempts by remaining white property owners to retain control of the real estate in their communities even as many of the members of the white congregations moved elsewhere. An examination of the ways in which white congregations struggled to maintain control of these properties provides insight into their larger fears about the prospect of being "pushed" out of their community by the arrival of African Americans. From

the perspective of many white Harlem residents, possibly even some who conceded the presence of a Negro colony there, the idea that these black newcomers would also establish churches in the community and seek to acquire buildings constructed by white congregations was going too far. Attempts by blacks to acquire Harlem churches formerly occupied by white congregations were viewed by whites as concessions of defeat as well as symbols of both black permanency and black civic participation that highlighted for whites the decline of white dominance in the community.

Church real estate represented a symbol of permanency and community for white residents in Harlem, as well as a sign of responsible citizenship. For this reason church properties were very significant for white Harlem residents. They were signs of community control. The properties were significant for black Harlem residents for the same reasons. While African Americans were not necessarily seeking exclusive control of the community, as their numbers in Harlem increased during the first decade of the 1900s, blacks sought sufficient control over the areas where they resided to ensure that they could remain there without harassment. In a period when subway transportation was in its infancy, having a church within walking distance of one's home was an important asset in the formation of a community. The church properties were also significant to African Americans as symbols of good citizenship and well-regulated behavior, at variance with the common stereotypes that characterized blacks as gamblers, drunks, and prostitutes who threatened the future peace of white Harlem.

In 1890, 36 percent of New York State residents belonged to a church, synagogue, or other religious organization (the national rate was 32 percent). The church and the synagogue remained important centers of religious faith, as well as indicators of community membership and class status. As the development of Harlem as a residential community proceeded in the second half of the nineteenth century, some downtown congregations moved north to Harlem, and new congregations were also established in the area. The completion of a church building was celebrated in the newspapers. Drawings of new church buildings highlighted the architectural designs and significant investments being made by the congregations and reinforced the church edi-

fice as a symbol of middle-class stability. The opening of a new church was viewed as a sign of progress, strengthening the community.¹

For African Americans, church membership had additional appeal. While church membership was a sign of respectability, the church was even more significant as a community institution. Black mutual benefit societies and literary organizations existed in some cities and towns, but with few independent institutions controlled by blacks, churches were important for African Americans in developing social networks, enforcing community mores, and seeking redress against maltreatment. The black pastor, whether full-time or part-time, receiving an income drawn from the offerings of church members, exercised a measure of independence unavailable to other African Americans most of whom worked in menial jobs.²

In New York City, the first predominantly African American congregation was formed in 1796 when the Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church was established by former members of John Street Methodist Church in Lower Manhattan who were dissatisfied with restricted seating and other signs of their subordinate status within the church. Similar circumstances led to the 1808 founding of the Abyssinian Baptist Church by people of African descent attending First Baptist Church (on Gold Street in lower Manhattan), and in 1809 to the founding St. Philip's Episcopal Church by a group of blacks attending Trinity Church, also in lower Manhattan. In the following decades of the nineteenth century, these churches were joined by a handful of other black congregations, typically located in the areas of black settlement in Lower Manhattan, and later in the midtown area. The churches provided social centers for concerts, lectures, and rallies, as well as places of worship. They were also the targets of anti-abolition and anti-black mobs in the 1830s and during the 1863 Draft Riots. White elites often considered black pastors to be the leaders of the African American community, and black congregants often expected their pastors to voice their grievances to the broader community. During the four-day Draft Riots, whites protested the drafting of soldiers to serve in the Civil War by killing many blacks and burning or otherwise destroying property owned by African Americans and their allies. In the aftermath of the violence, Rev. Henry Highland Garnet, pastor of the black

congregation of Shiloh Presbyterian Church, and Rev. Charles Bennett Ray, pastor of Bethesda Congregational Church, a predominantly white congregation, were selected by a group of white merchants to disburse aid to African American victims. They attempted to use their positions to help those in need, but also tactfully presented to the merchants the grievances of the black community regarding past discriminatory treatment.³

While most African American churches were located near black enclaves in lower Manhattan and midtown in the mid-nineteenth century, black congregations in lower Manhattan recognized the need to serve African American settlements in Harlem. In 1843 Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church, then located at Church and Leonard Streets in lower Manhattan, established a Harlem mission to serve the black population in that area. Located at 236 East 117th Street between Second and Third Avenues, "Little Zion," as the church was called, continued to grow as the African American population in the area increased in the late 1800s. In 1882 Carmel Baptist Church, a congregation pastored by Rev. J. E. Raymond, was established on East 121st Street with a congregation of thirty people. In 1891 the growing congregation built a new church on East 123rd Street between Second and Third Avenues. As the African American settlement in Harlem shifted westward after 1900, the churches followed.⁴

Jewish congregations were also moving to northern Manhattan in the late nineteenth century. Incorporated in 1873, Congregation Hand-in-Hand, became the first synagogue established in Harlem. Until the early 1880s it held services in rented halls. Improved transportation to the area as a result of the extension of elevated railroad lines along Second and Third Avenues in 1879 and 1880 and the growth in apartment construction along the route led to the growth of Congregation Hand-in-Hand. In 1888 it reorganized as Temple Israel and moved into a new building at 125th Street and Fifth Avenue, "the crossroads of Harlem's wealthiest district." In 1907, as more prosperous Harlem residents moved to the west, Temple Israel built a Neo-Roman synagogue on Lenox Avenue at 120th Street. It was then considered "one of the most prestigious synagogues in the city."⁵

In 1892 St. Luke's Episcopal Church, a predominantly white congregation, celebrated the opening of its new church at Convent Avenue and 141st

Street. Founded in 1820 on Hudson Street in Greenwich Village, the church had witnessed growth and decline in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The move to northern Manhattan had not been totally voluntary. In 1887 Trinity Episcopal Church, the oldest and largest Episcopal congregation in New York City, and long-time patron to St. Luke's and other Episcopal congregations, had informed St. Luke's that it was planning to open a chapel and school on land it owned nearby in Greenwich Village. It offered to incorporate St. Luke's congregation into the new chapel. Members of St. Luke's recognized this offer as the death of St. Luke's as an independent congregation. They decided to move to an area where they believed they would not have to compete with other churches for members and where potential for growth existed. St. Luke's requested Trinity's assistance in financing the building of a church in Washington Heights, as the area of Convent Avenue and 141st Street was then known. (Washington Heights took its name from the fact that George Washington had led Revolutionary War battles in the area and had his headquarters at the Morris-Jumel Mansion, one mile to the north.) The "Heights" referred to the steep hill that separated the area from Harlem to the east of St. Nicholas Avenue.⁶

In 1892 the area, on the northern edge of Harlem, was sparsely populated:

South of Saint Luke's Church there are no dwelling houses except two or three wooden cabins or shanties until the Convent of the Sacred Heart is reached situated at West 130th St.— . . . west of Saint Luke's Church there are some few buildings, the majority of which are unoccupied and That in all probability there will not at a near date be a large population in that section—That east of the church on St. Nicholas Avenue between 135th Street and 145th Street there is not one dwelling house and that from a population further east but few persons can be expected to attend Saint Luke's owing to the proximity of other parishes and to the steep grade of . . . 141st [Street].⁷

Although the area seemed remote, it was actually in the path of development. St. Luke's was built on a parcel that had been part of the Hamilton Grange, the estate of Alexander Hamilton. In 1887, the year that St. Luke's was informed of changes at its Lower Manhattan location, the estate had been divided into lots that were to be sold at auction. Townhouses, much larger than

the standard Manhattan brownstone, were built on these lots over the next two decades. In the 1890s, as real estate developers began to position Harlem as an in-city bedroom suburb of lower Manhattan, townhouses were built on Convent Avenue north of St. Luke's and to the east on the L-shaped street named Hamilton Terrace. In 1907 the College of the City of New York moved to a new campus on land to the south of Saint Luke's, a portion of which had been the Convent of the Sacred Heart. All of these developments contributed to the growth of St. Luke's congregation after 1900.⁸

By 1913, as African American settlement in Harlem continued to move west of Lenox Avenue, and the restrictive covenant movement progressed through the courts with the Morlath case, the thriving congregation of St. Luke's experienced a Negro problem. African American children had begun to attend its Sunday School, to the dismay of some mothers of white children. The rector, Rev. George Oldham, responded to the mothers' complaints by offering to create a separate class for black children, but he suggested that the best solution would be for these children to attend a church with their own kind, and so he directed them to St. Philip's Episcopal Church, the black Episcopal congregation that had recently relocated to Harlem. No mention was made of the black children's parents, suggesting that their parents did not accompany them to Sunday school.⁹

Racial tension erupted in at least one other Episcopal congregation in 1913. St. Mary's Church, on 126th Street near Amsterdam Avenue, had requested that an African American Sunday School teacher cease teaching. Her father, Wilfred Smith, a lawyer and partner of Philip Payton in the Afro-American Realty Company, threatened to take the matter to the Episcopal bishop. There is no evidence that Smith followed up on his threat, but the fact that he believed that the bishop would hear this grievance also suggests that Smith believed that the bishop did not agree with the local priest's idea of the subordinate status of blacks.¹⁰

St. Philip's Episcopal Church, the church that St. Luke's pastor had suggested the black children attend, was ten years older than St. Luke's, formed in 1809 by African Americans who had been dissatisfied with the discrimination they had experienced at Trinity Church in Manhattan. After initially worshipping in a school, and then in a loft over a carpenter's shop, St. Philip's congregation secured its first permanent building on Collect (Centre) Street

between Leonard and Anthony (Worth). As the African American community moved northward, St. Philip's followed, moving to Mulberry Street in Greenwich Village in 1857 and in 1886 purchasing a church building on 161 West 25th Street, in the heart of the Tenderloin district, which by then had a large concentration of black residents.¹¹

By 1910 the area around West 25th Street was becoming problematic for St. Philip's. The 1900 race riot in midtown, although several blocks to the north, left a pall over the community. After the riot, black pastors organized a committee and filed grievances against the police department for brutality. The tepid official response to complaints left the community frustrated. The lack of security in the black settlements in midtown, and the Pennsylvania Railroad's acquisition of large swaths of property from 30th Street to 34th Street in preparation for the construction of Pennsylvania Station and its Hudson River tunnels made the area unsuitable for the community.¹²

During this period St. Philip's undertook a series of real estate transactions that resulted in the construction of the first new black church in Harlem. The church's move began with small steps. In January 1907 its rector, Rev. Hutchens Bishop, purchased a building at 212 West 134th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues for \$100 in cash and the assumption of a mortgage of \$5,000. On February 15, Bishop paid \$13,500 for two more properties on 133rd Street and one on 134th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues (217 and 219 W. 133rd, 210 W. 134th). This transaction took place two days after twenty-three white owners of properties on West 137th Street between Lenox and Seventh Avenues had signed a restrictive covenant agreeing not to sell or rent to blacks for a ten-year period. On February 18 Bishop purchased two more properties on the same block, at 214 and 216 W. 134th, making a payment of \$20,000 (fig. 4.1). The transactions were noted a month later in the *New York Times*, in its standard weekly listing of real estate matters. Because Hutchens C. Bishop was fair-skinned, the sellers of the properties and the observers of the transactions may not have realized that an African American had purchased properties west of Lenox Avenue, the previously implicit western boundary for the Negro Colony in Harlem.¹³

The real estate purchases of Rev. Bishop did not draw the attention of white property owners, even though the purchases had been made at the same time the restrictive covenant movement had been put into effect on

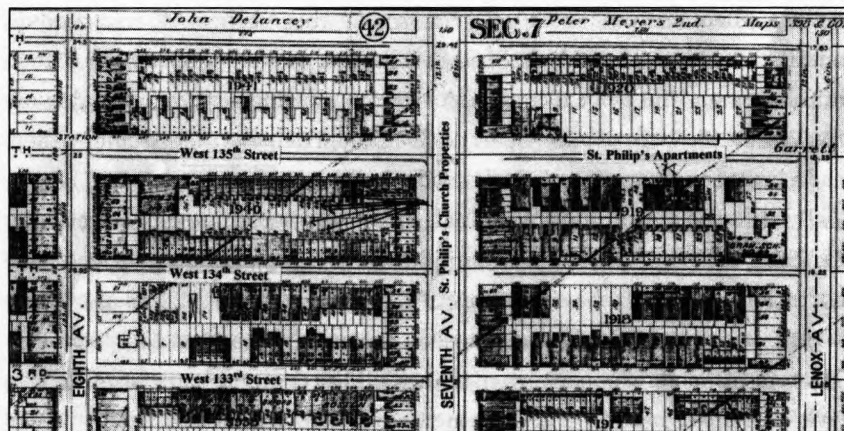


FIGURE 4.1. Rev. Hutchens Bishop/St. Philip's Harlem property purchases, 1907. G. W. Bromley & Co., Section 6.

the adjacent blocks. A letter regarding the possible plans of St. Philip's to move to Harlem, however, generated considerable discussion. In February 1907 Rev. Bishop sent a letter to Rev. Dr. George R. Van de Water, rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church at Fifth Avenue and 127th Street, a predominantly white congregation, informing Van de Water that St. Philip's was considering a move to Harlem. Although the two congregations served different populations, Episcopal protocol required that congregations in proximity be informed in advance of a contemplated move to an area by another congregation. The existing congregations then would have an opportunity to voice their opinions of the move to the Standing Committee, the regional governing body of the Episcopal Church.

Rev. Van de Water commented on Bishop's request in St. Andrew's newsletter, noting that he fully supported St. Philip's plans and "that it is not for the best interests of either the whites or the blacks that they should attend the same Sunday schools, or the same churches." Rev. Van de Water in an interview in the *New York Times* elaborated on his view on blacks and whites worshipping together, adding:

I repeat, that the sooner the colored people get out of St. Andrew's the better it will be for both whites and blacks. If President Roosevelt wants to eat with a

colored man he can do so. I won't, and I am just as much entitled to my opinion as he is. I do not want the colored people in my church, neither do my parishioners for they have been a source of much trouble. In the first place, we have gentlemen ushers, Wardens, and Vestrymen and they in a manner, object to escorting colored people up and down the aisle.¹⁴

Although his views reflected the views of many New Yorkers, Van De Water was denounced by some black and white New Yorkers for un-Christian racial hostility. Two days after the initial *Times* article, in a letter to its editor Rev. Van De Water repeated his position but added that any "colored person coming to my Sunday school or church will be received graciously, courteously. . . . All the same I hold that it is much better for all concerned that the races should worship by themselves."¹⁵

Hutchens Bishop continued to lay the groundwork for the move that would establish St. Philip's in Harlem. On January 31, 1910, he transferred the Harlem properties he had purchased in his name in 1907 to St. Philip's. In February 1910 St. Philip's requested permission from the Episcopal Diocese to sell its 25th Street church for \$140,000 and its 30th Street property for \$450,000 (an advantage of the commercialization of the area was an increase in real estate values), and also requested permission to build a church on West 134th Street in Harlem. The Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese sent a copy of the request to "the three parishes and mission districts nearest the site": St. Luke's on Convent Avenue and 141st Street, St. Mary's on 126th near Amsterdam Avenue, and Church of the Redeemer on West 136th between Lenox and Seventh Avenues. A hearing by the Standing Committee on March 3, 1910, invited comment by any opponents of the move. No one appeared in opposition, and the request was approved.¹⁶

With the Harlem properties now in the name of St. Philip's and the approval of the diocese secured, plans for the construction of the new church began. The architectural firm of Tandy and Foster was selected to prepare the design for the new building. This firm was one of the few black firms in the country. One of the partners, Vertner Tandy, a member of St. Philip's, was the first African American in New York State to be licensed as an architect. For St. Philip's, he and his partner, George Washington Foster, designed a parish house on West 133rd Street, and a "spare, northern Gothic church

in salmon-colored Roman brick" on West 134th Street. Construction was completed in 1911, the same year that St. Philip's most significant real estate purchase occurred.¹⁷

In March 1911 St. Philip's purchased a row of ten occupied, six-story walkup apartments on the north side of West 135th Street just west of Lenox Avenue for \$393,000 using the proceeds from its downtown property sales.¹⁸ The seller was the Chase Realty Group, which took back mortgages on the properties. The transaction was reported in an article in the *New York Times*, and was highlighted with banner headlines in the African American *New York Age*. The *Times* noted that the "white tenants were notified of the change yesterday, and many families are already preparing to move out." As Philip Payton had proposed to do with the leased property on West 151st Street in 1906, St. Philip's evicted the white occupants of the West 135th Street properties, and replaced them with black tenants. In one very visible move the Lenox Avenue racial "dead line" had been crossed with the construction of a significant church edifice and the acquisition of a large swath of residential properties. While St. Philip's new church building on West 134th Street was a symbol of the African American presence in Harlem, the congregation's control of substantial residential property nearby enabled it as an institution to play a significant role in the literal formation of the black community in proximity to its church. There is no record of a protest from the evicted white families, suggesting that either St. Philip's had caught them off guard or they had resigned themselves to the hard realities of New York's real estate policies in which a new owner, even a black one, could evict tenants who were white. Undoubtedly there was lingering bitterness held by those evicted as well as by white residents aware of the evictions, all of which may have contributed to the organized resistance efforts that gained visibility in 1913.¹⁹

By 1913 when Rev. Oldham, the rector of St. Luke's, repeated the 1907 suggestion made by the rector of St. Andrew's that it would be better for everyone if blacks at St. Luke's would consider attending their "own" church, St. Philip's was a congregation of more than one thousand people with financial assets that surpassed those of St. Luke's and several other white congregations in Harlem, some of which were struggling as white residents moved away in response to the "Negro invasion" (fig. 4.2).²⁰

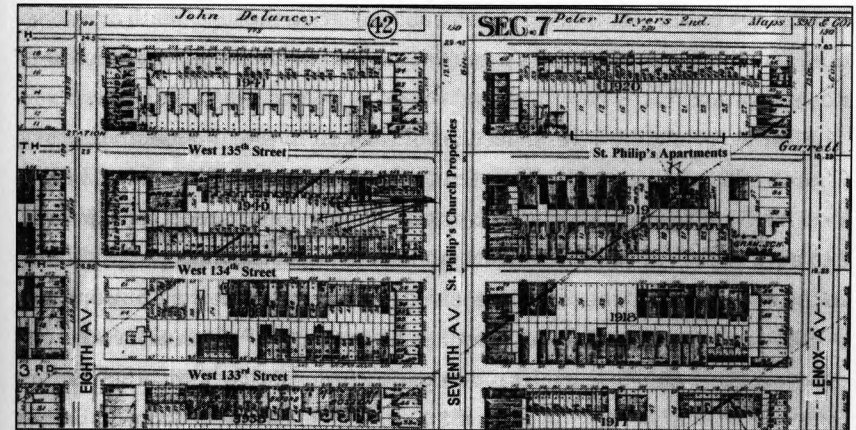


FIGURE 4.2. St. Philip's Episcopal Church Harlem properties, acquired 1907–1911. G. W. Bromley & Co., Section 6.

The struggles of the Episcopal congregation of the Church of the Redeemer illustrate the ways in which control of church real estate was linked to control of the community for most predominantly white congregations in Harlem during the first two decades of the 1900s. As the African American population increased and black congregations such as St. Philip's began moving to Harlem, white congregations made a concerted effort to prevent African American congregations from purchasing the buildings of white congregations. Founded in 1853 as part of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, the Church of the Redeemer was initially located at Park Avenue between 81st and 82nd Streets. When the church was not successful there, its building was sold in 1897 to avoid a foreclosure sale. In 1898 the Church of the Redeemer merged with the Church of the Nativity, an Episcopal congregation that had previously merged with the Church of the Holy Innocents, which had a graystone church building in Harlem at 153 West 136th Street, with a yard that extended north through to West 137th Street. The consolidated congregations, under the name Church of the Redeemer, moved to the Harlem building in 1898. These mergers reflected the challenges of maintaining small congregations not just in Harlem but across the country, even in areas where racial change was not an issue—which it was not in 1900 in Harlem. The loss

of a few key families or individuals in a congregation through death or relocation, or disenchantment with a pastor, could lead to the irreparable decline of a congregation.²¹

After experiencing several decades of turmoil in the nineteenth century, Church of the Redeemer had less than a decade of tranquillity at its Harlem location. The small congregation continued to struggle to meet its expenses, and a variety of efforts were undertaken to deal with the financial problems. In the spring of 1910 the church received permission from the Episcopal Diocese to sell its rectory at 142 West 137th for \$11,500.²² Soon afterward the congregation began to consider moving away from Harlem altogether. Before long, the church received an offer of \$50,000 for its building, from St. James Presbyterian Church, an African American congregation founded in 1893 by former members of Shiloh (First Colored) Presbyterian Church. Shiloh had been a prominent African American congregation in the mid-nineteenth century. From 1857 to 1864 it was pastored by abolitionist Henry Highland Garnet, who had coordinated aid to black residents after the Draft Riots of 1863. The church had disbanded in 1891, but former members went on to establish St. James. The new church had a growing congregation that had occupied a building on 32nd Street, but was displaced by the building of Penn Station. In 1903 St. James took over the West Fifty-first Street Presbyterian Church at 359 West 51st Street.²³

In responding to St. James's purchase offer, the Church of the Redeemer's vestry (the governing body for business matters) seemed concerned that the prospective purchaser of their building was not an Episcopal church. Even though racial tension was growing in Harlem, membership in the denomination still inspired an affinity that could cross racial lines. At a special meeting on May 23, 1910, the vestry passed a resolution to offer the church to St. Philip's Episcopal Church, the black congregation led by Hutchens Bishop, for \$50,000. The resolution also provided an explanation for the sale to a black congregation:

WHEREAS for a number of years past the population of Harlem adjacent to the Church has been changing in character, and colored people have become residents of blocks and streets immediately adjacent to the block on which the

Church is situated, and the colored population has been growing in numbers and steadily approaching nearer to the Church and the Vestry is now reliably informed that a large number of houses on 136th Street near the Church are for sale, and the Presbyterian Church above referred to has an option on three houses nearly opposite the Church, and

WHEREAS, it appears that the street on which the Church is situated between Seventh and Lenox Avenues is certain in the near future to be entirely populated by colored persons, and

WHEREAS, the Vestry recognizing their duty to conserve the property of the Church and believing that if the present offer of St. James Presbyterian Church be not accepted it will be impossible to sell the Church Building for any price whatever, and that even the land will seriously deteriorate in value.²⁴

The vestry unanimously voted for a sale to St. James to proceed if St. Philip's declined. The detailed explanation in the church's official record seemed to be in anticipation of criticism the church officers expected to receive for selling this community institution to blacks. Their concerns were well founded.

While the Redeemer vestry was struggling over selling its property to a black congregation, John G. Taylor, leader of the restrictive covenant movement, was organizing a major effort to block such transactions. Taylor lived at 213 W. 136th Street, one block west of Redeemer's church building at 153 West 136th. On June 7, 1910, the massive restrictive covenant discussed in chapter 3 was recorded with the New York City Register, covering ninety-one owners of properties on the 100 and 200 blocks of West 136th Street (between Lenox and Eighth Avenues). The agreement did not simply prohibit black residency, but broadly prohibited "use or occupancy" of the properties by people of African descent. Church of the Redeemer was not a party to this agreement, but owners to the east and west of Redeemer as well as across the street, were. The effort to get these ninety-one signatures must have been proceeding for days or weeks before the June 7 recording date. Perhaps the covenant effort was sparked by Redeemer's sales plans.²⁵

In spite of the covenant, on June 13 Redeemer petitioned the Episcopal Diocese for permission to sell its buildings, outlining its options in the same

manner as its May 23 resolution had. The Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese noted that, as required, Bishop David H. Greer had already approved the request and the committee then also approved it. Because religious institutions also needed permission from the New York County Supreme Court to mortgage or sell properties, on June 13 an application was entered to the Supreme Court requesting permission to sell the property.²⁶ Redeemer's financial challenges were covered in the press, with one article indicating that representatives of the church had explained that the proposed sale was due to the fact that "changes in the population in Harlem have depleted the congregation of the church to such an extent that it is no longer possible to keep it open." It was announced that the Church of the Redeemer planned to build a new church either in the predominantly white communities of Washington Heights in Upper Manhattan or University Heights in the Bronx, two areas to which congregants leaving Harlem were likely to move.²⁷

St. Philip's declined to purchase Redeemer's building. By June 1910 the cornerstone for St. Philip's new building, four blocks away on 134th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, had already been laid.²⁸ But the Redeemer vestry's contingency plan of proceeding with the sale to St. James did not occur either. Perhaps the restrictive covenant covering many properties on the block made the vestry wary of community disenchantment with such a sale. This concern may have gone as far as the bishop of the Episcopal Diocese. Lawson Purdy, who was chief warden of Church of the Redeemer, later suggested that the sale to St. James did not occur because of a change in Bishop Greer's position, noting that it was Bishop Greer "who was responsible for our not having sold out when we could have obtained \$60,000 for the property. He wanted us to hold the Fort; it was against my judgment. This is not said in criticism of the Bishop who was loyal and an earnest good friend, always."²⁹

By "holding the fort," or not selling to the black congregations of St. James or St. Philip's, the bishop would have been echoing rhetoric of the restrictive covenant movement, which framed the role of white residents as defending their community against the Negro invasion. In October 1910 the struggling Redeemer congregation received another destabilizing blow. Rector William Davis submitted a one-sentence note announcing his resignation, effective

November 12. It is quite likely that Redeemer's precarious financial state was a factor in the resignation. A fund-raising campaign had to be undertaken to secure a portion of the next rector's salary before a replacement was sought.³⁰

In December 1910 John G. Taylor sent a letter to Redeemer in which he expressed concern about the possible sale of the church to African Americans. Chief Warden Lawson Purdy indicated that he had replied "unofficially that it was improbable that the church would be sold to colored people." At the same December 14 meeting at which Taylor's letter was discussed, the vestry passed a motion that "the clerk be instructed to write to Mr. J.R. Glide that the church of the Redeemer does not propose to sell the property at present." In all likelihood Glide represented African Americans, for this motion was followed by a motion to instruct the clerk to determine if a \$39,000 purchase offer from a Mr. Knox would include a statement that "he would restrict the property for five years so it would not be used by colored people." There is no record of a response from Mr. Knox. Either he was no longer interested or perhaps was not willing to adhere to the restriction, given the racial changes occurring in the neighborhood.³¹

By the end of 1910 Redeemer was considering another plan. With an air of desperation, church leaders approached St. Luke's Church on Convent Avenue and 141st Street and proposed to

transfer a deed of the property [its church at 153 W. 136th Street] to Saint Luke's Church on the condition that Saint Luke's should continue services in said Church of the Redeemer for a reasonable length of time, after which if the expenses exceeded the receipts there would be no objection to Saint Luke's disposing of the property in any way or manner which they saw fit.³²

A few months after a potential \$50,000 sale of its property to St. James Presbyterian did not materialize, Church of the Redeemer was proposing to give its building to St. Luke's to operate as a mission church to St. Luke's. The vestry of St. Luke's seriously considered how it might absorb Church of the Redeemer's congregation, discussing the appointment of the senior vestryman Lawson Purdy of Church of the Redeemer to the vestry of St. Luke's, and also considered "providing a special clergyman to attend to the needs of the Parish of the Church of the Redeemer." With a large building that was not

fully utilized, debts from the 1892 construction still being paid, and operating expenses that were difficult for the modest-sized congregation of approximately four hundred to meet, the possibility of bringing additional members into St. Luke's must have been attractive. But these additional members would have been met with the challenge of operating buildings at two locations, one in an area of increasing racial change. In late 1910 St. Luke's informed the Church of the Redeemer that it would decline the offer.³³

At its December meeting, the Redeemer vestry had called for a committee to secure pledges of \$1,000 for two years, after which a rector would be called. In April 1911 a substantial portion of the pledges were secured and Rev. Henry Cornelius Dyer was asked to become rector at an annual salary of \$1,200. During 1911, fund-raising efforts for church operations continued through a plan to develop a "mission from Paradise Endowment." By the end of the year discussions were under way to consolidate with the Church of the Holy Road, a congregation at Broadway and 181st Street. This plan also did not proceed, and for the next year other plans were considered. In March 1913 the vestry suggested that the Catholic Apostolic Church be asked to make a purchase offer. When that church declined, in June the vestry suggested that efforts begin to get the appropriate approvals (from the Episcopal bishop, Standing Committee of the Diocese, and New York Supreme Court) to convey the Church of the Redeemer to the Church of the Transfiguration, which would assume Redeemer's debts. This did not occur either.³⁴

In June 1913 John G. Taylor interceded on Redeemer's behalf. Taylor proposed approaching the widow of financier Russell Sage for assistance. Taylor asked Mrs. Sage to consider purchasing the Church of the Redeemer building to establish a new congregation, "Church of the Stranger," in Redeemer's building. In 1898 a Church of the Stranger congregation had moved into a new building on 57th Street near Eighth Avenue. The church drew on the Christian ethos that all were welcome, particularly young people. Ironically John G. Taylor hoped to use this concept to prevent African Americans from controlling the Church of the Redeemer property.³⁵

It appears that Mrs. Russell Sage declined to support John G. Taylor's plans. In December 1913 the Redeemer vestry agreed to accept a \$19,000 offer from real estate agent Paul Friedland for the church. At a meeting on Janu-

ary 12, 1914, the Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese heard Lawson Purdy explain the sale "owing largely to the occupation of the neighborhood about the church by colored people, as well as other antecedent causes . . . it had become wholly impossible to maintain the church in the locality." An opponent of the sale, Mr. Ransome E. Wilcox, "representing property owners in Harlem," stated that the sale "would be injurious to the neighborhood if the property came into possession of colored people." The committee approved Redeemer's request. On January 19 the sale of the Church of the Redeemer to Paul Friedland's client Mildred Helm, a white Yonkers resident, was completed. Rather than move to a new location, the church's congregation disbanded. The rector, Rev. Henry C. Dyer, accepted an appointment with Metropolitan Life Insurance Company as chaplain of the company's Mount McGregor Sanitarium in Wilton, New York.³⁶ Area property owners speculated on the building's future: "According to one rumor, it will be turned into a moving picture theatre, though another report has it that the negroes of the neighborhood are anxious to secure it for one of their churches."³⁷

Dr. Robert Bruce Clark, pastor of the Church of the Puritans on West 130th Street expressed his concern regarding the "danger of being engulfed by the negro invasion":

The churches, more than any other organizations, are suffering from the existing conditions north of 130th St. For years we have struggled to keep our congregations and it has been an uphill fight not to allow them to scatter. . . . Under the circumstances, I wonder that [Church of the Redeemer] held out so long as they did. The site of the church is in the heart of the colored section, and it is not in the least surprising that its members did not care to remain in Harlem any longer because of the steady increase of negroes in the neighborhood.³⁸

On January 22 1914, three days after the initial sale of Church of Redeemer, Mother AME Zion Church purchased the church building from Mildred Helm, agreeing to assume a \$17,000 mortgage on the property. Perhaps aware of the reluctance of Redeemer to sell to a black congregation given the experience of St. James, Mother AME Zion was able to have Helm stand in to assuage Redeemer's concerns of an outright sale to blacks. Although as the quote above suggests, it was generally believed that Redeemer's building was

likely to come under the control of an African American congregation, by selling to Mildred Helm, a white woman, Redeemer's loyal vestry could not later be criticized for contributing to the Negro invasion. That responsibility would fall to Mildred Helm, a woman from outside of the community, for whom such a criticism would carry less weight.³⁹ Other predominantly white congregations in Harlem went through similar transactions, rarely selling to an African American congregation but instead to an individual who then sold to a black congregation.⁴⁰

The movement of African Americans into Harlem was concentrated in an area between West 130th and West 140th Streets, and therefore did not affect Harlem synagogues to the same extent as it did predominantly white churches. In the first decade of the 1900s as some synagogues moved from East Harlem to the area west of Lenox Avenue, they concentrated in an area between West 116th Street and West 125th Street. In 1900 a faction of Congregation Shaare Zedek, then located on Henry Street, built a synagogue at 23–25 West 118th Street between Fifth and Lenox Avenues. In 1914 the uptown faction reunited with the downtown faction at this location, but in 1922 they sold their building to another synagogue, Chevra Talmud Torah d Agustow. In 1908 the First Hungarian Congregation Ohab Zedek, then located on the Lower East Side (172 Norfolk Street), followed many of its members and purchased a building at 18 West 116th Street (between Lenox and Fifth Avenues). In 1926 they moved to West 95th Street. Also in 1908, Congregation Ansche Chesed moved into a new building at 1881 Seventh Avenue at 112th Street. The congregation also moved in the 1920s. Following their congregation, in 1927 they sold their building and moved to a new synagogue at 100th Street and West End Avenue in Manhattan.⁴¹ African Americans did live in the area between 110th and 125th, but their numbers were small and therefore did not generate the alarm before the 1920s that their greater numbers did in the area north of West 130th Street. Most of these synagogues moved out of Harlem in the 1920s when more blacks began living in the area.⁴²

While St. Philip's Episcopal Church pioneered in building in Harlem, during the first decade of the 1900s other, smaller black congregations were also gaining control of real estate in Harlem. Before moving to 135th Street, Mercy Seat Baptist Church, the site of the 1904 meeting to protest evictions

of African American renters in area apartments, was already in Harlem. In 1901 the church was located at 424 West 127th Street.⁴³ The terms of the purchase of its property at 45–47 West 134th Street, in the days following the 1904 meeting, specified that the first building to be built on the site by Mercy Seat should be a church, indicating the interest of the seller, August Ruff, in the establishment of a church. In 1912 Mercy Seat merged with Zion Baptist Church, then located at Fifth Avenue between 131st and 132nd Streets, to form Metropolitan Baptist Church. In 1916 the consolidated congregation purchased land at 120 West 138th Street for \$30,000 from the executor of the estate of Mary S. Dinkney and built a large church that became known as Metropolitan Tabernacle. They occupied the building for only two years. In 1918 they purchased the large corner church building of the New York Presbyterian Church at Seventh Avenue and 128th Street (again, by way of an intermediary, Emanuel David). Metropolitan Tabernacle was acquired by Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association and renamed Liberty Hall. In 1920 it was the site of that organization's first convention.⁴⁴

By 1911 "Little Zion," the mission church of Mother AME Zion, the purchaser of the Church of the Redeemer property, had become an independent congregation. In that year the congregation built a new church at 60 West 138th Street between Lenox and Fifth Avenues, purchasing land from John Glead, an African American (possibly the J. R. Glide whose offer to purchase Church of the Redeemer was declined). In the purchase, Little Zion paid \$100 and assumed a mortgage of \$15,000 on the property. The new building was designed by Tandy and Foster, the architect of St. Philip's church. With the move, Little Zion changed its name to Rush Memorial AME Zion, named after Christopher Rush, the second bishop of the AME Zion denomination.⁴⁵

Other African American congregations relocating or gaining control of Harlem real estate in the first two decades of the 1900s included:

- In 1908 Salem United Methodist Church, pastored by Rev. Frederick Cullen (the adoptive father of Harlem Renaissance poet Countee Cullen), purchased property at 102 West 133rd Street for its growing congregation, which had previously worshipped at a building on West 124th Street. The New York City Church Extension and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal

Church paid \$93,000 to Frederic Stimson and the trustees of the will of John Henry Bradford.

- In 1912 Bethel A.M.E. under the pastorate of social gospel minister Rev. Reverdy Ransom built a new church at 52 West 132nd Street on land purchased from Soloman Brooks and Joseph Bichler. The church paid \$100 and assumed two mortgages totaling \$35,000.

- Metropolitan A.M.E. Church established a congregation in a rented row house at 62 West 135th Street. In 1917 the congregation purchased a building at 132 West 134th Street from a realty company for \$200 and a mortgage of \$8,000.

- St. John A.M.E. moved to 132 W. 134th Street, taking over the church formerly occupied by Metropolitan A.M.E. Church

- Shiloh Baptist Church purchased 2226 Seventh Avenue in 1918 from Marion A. Daniels, assuming mortgages totaling \$18,800.⁴⁶

None of the real estate acquisitions involved transactions between the white congregations and the African American congregations. If the properties were formerly owned by predominantly white congregations, they were purchased by individuals or corporate entities who then sold to the black congregations, repeating the exit strategy employed by the Church of the Redeemer, and hopefully avoiding the disapproval of white residents who remained in Harlem (fig. 4.3).

Individual residential real estate transactions of white Harlem residents illustrated the range of responses that white residents had to the increasing residential presence of African Americans in Harlem. The restrictive covenant movement was rooted in the notion that blacks were a subordinate class whose presence would endanger both the security and the health of white Harlem residents, and therefore result in a reduction in real estate values. Many white Harlem residents believed that African Americans would not be able to afford to maintain the properties they were attempting to buy and that their limited capital would contribute to a decline in values as properties deteriorated.

But other white Harlem residents did sell or lease residential properties to African Americans. The fact that in some cases white sellers helped to fi-

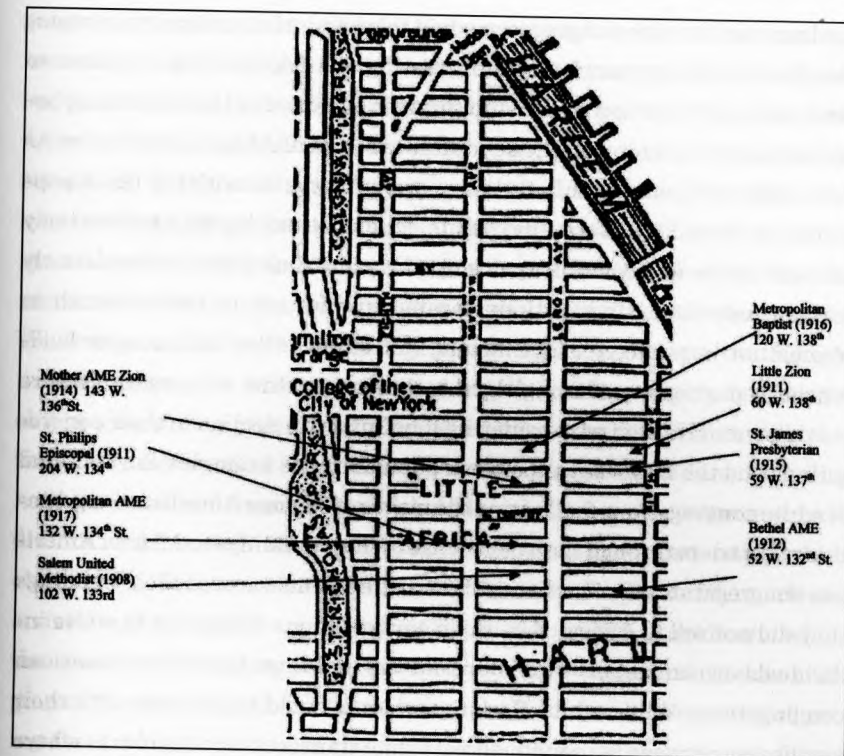


FIGURE 4.3. African American churches established in Harlem, 1908–1917. Automobile Club of Rochester, 1920, Florida International Center for Instructional Technology.

nance these sales suggests that they did not subscribe to the belief that the African American presence would result in a precipitous decline in property values. The security for the loans that they made to African Americans was the property that was being purchased. A reduction in the value of the property would have endangered the collateral of their loans. Others, such as *Erduin v. d. H. Koch*, suggested that African Americans should be able to live wherever they could afford to live.⁴⁷

In contrast to this range of responses regarding black access to residential properties in Harlem, the white response to attempts by African Americans to acquire church properties was uniformly one of great reluctance. Some

predominantly white congregations had tolerated African American members for decades by restricting their seating and taking other measures to limit their participation in worship services, illustrating the continuing belief among many whites in the subordinate status of African Americans. As the number of blacks within these congregations grew with the black population in New York after 1900, white congregations became increasingly uncomfortable with their presence. At the same time some predominantly African American congregations, located in midtown or farther south in Manhattan, began to consider moving to Harlem, either following or leading their congregants. Although by this time some white congregations were moving out of Harlem or considering it because of a decline in their congregations and the increase in the black population, no examples can be found of white congregations facilitating the moves of African American congregations to Harlem through the sale or lease of their buildings to African American congregations. Even when white congregations vacated their buildings they did not sell to African American congregations. They sold to white individuals or companies, who later sold the buildings to African American congregations. While white Harlem residents could break rank with their neighbors to engage in individual real estate transactions with blacks where residential properties were concerned (either homes or apartment buildings), Harlem churches with predominantly white congregations, did not engage as corporate bodies in such transactions, perhaps because they believed they would betray a function of the church to maintain the standards of the community, a standard that they believed was being lowered by the "invasion" of African Americans.

The movement of established congregations in Manhattan was not new. It was a function of the northern movement of the primary residential areas of the city in the nineteenth century as residential areas either fell out of favor or transitioned to commercial establishments. With limited transportation options, churches for the most part relied on the residents who lived within walking distance as their congregants. Even when improved transportation eventually made it possible to travel longer distances to church, many denominations and their congregants had grown accustomed to the church being linked with the residents nearby. The Catholic parishes with formal

geographic boundaries recognized this connection, but other denominations more informally acknowledged it as well. Given these expectations regarding the role of the church in communities, as the concentration of the residents in Manhattan shifted after several decades, some churches, although remaining in the same locations, reconstituted their congregations with new residents. Others based in areas that were becoming increasingly commercial moved to new locations, and some moved because they preferred to remain near their members who were leaving rather than the newcomers. While these moves undoubtedly engendered regret and anxiety, the changes in Harlem were the first such moves precipitated almost entirely by racial changes, occurring when many of the white church buildings were still relatively new. Before 1900 the African American population in New York City had been small and the areas in which African Americans were concentrated did not result in sufficient numbers of black churchgoers attending white churches to threaten existing white congregations. The African Americans arrived in these earlier areas, such as Greenwich Village or midtown, when the areas were declining as residential communities. Departing white congregations most likely did not feel pushed out, but felt that they were following the natural evolution of the neighborhoods, leaving for more fashionable areas such as Harlem. Having to consider leaving an area that, but for the growing racial animus would still have been considered fashionable, is what made the white congregations so reluctant to leave, and when they did, it made them so reluctant to enter into transactions directly with black congregations who represented the cause of their distress. While in leaving they were conceding defeat, selling directly to African Americans seemed to have been viewed as consorting with the enemy, and hastening the loss of white control of the community that was feared.

Conversely, black congregations moving into Harlem had both pragmatic and symbolic considerations. In some cases, such as St. Philip's Episcopal, the downtown location of their church was becoming less desirable. St. James Presbyterian was in the heart of the black midtown area when it made its offer to purchase the Church of the Redeemer in 1913, recognizing that Harlem, a more attractive community, was becoming the home to an increasing number of black residents. In establishing churches in Harlem,

these congregations were also sending a message to their members, the broader black community, and the white community that Harlem was becoming a community with a sufficient number of black people to require black institutions, such as churches, that would serve black people. In building a church, St. Philip's particularly conveyed the message of community formation but also permanence, and of community control. It had purchased land with its own resources and constructed a church of its own design, sending a signal that black people did not have to rely only on what white Harlem residents decided to let them have, but that they had the ability to shape this new community to which they were moving. The St. Philip's congregation's purchase of a block of apartment buildings at the same time that its church was built dramatically reinforced this point. As other black congregations negotiated with middlemen and -women to purchase churches abandoned by white congregations, they added to the momentum of black community formation. Whether they were following or leading their congregations, the presence of the churches attracted additional black residents to Harlem, and as these residents became settled, they began to seek out services for their children and other African American youth and young adults who were making Harlem their home.

5

AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH IN HARLEM



As the depositions in the Morlath case, and the movement to Harlem by black churches made clear, by 1913 African Americans had become a substantial presence in the area of Harlem bordering Lenox Avenue and 135th Street. Philip Payton, founder of the Afro-American Realty Company, was still a resident nearby, at 15 West 131st Street. In 1908 his company had folded following a lawsuit brought by disgruntled shareholders upset because they had not received the dividend Payton had promised to provide, but Payton landed on his feet, and soon started another company, Philip A. Payton Realty. By 1913, in addition to guiding his new company, he and his wife, Maggie, were raising their niece and nephew, Bessie and Duke Hobby. Born in North Carolina, the children, seventeen and fifteen in 1913, had been brought north following the deaths of their parents, Julia Lee (Maggie's sister) and Greene Hobby. In Harlem, the children joined a burgeoning population of young African Americans whose presence encouraged their parents, guardians, and others to make the development of services for youth a priority.¹ To meet these needs, African Americans and their allies capitalized on a web of church, professional, and personal relationships to bring resources to the black children and young adults in Harlem that approximated those available to white children and young adults who resided in that area

and other neighborhoods in New York City. But the African American youth activities in the first two decades of the 1900s in Harlem also illustrate the boundaries of New York City's racial segregation customs. Harlem's youth service organizations for African Americans were established as accommodations to racial limitations, but the founders of these organizations continued to look for opportunities to transcend these limits wherever possible.

By the end of the 1910s, African American young adults were served by the Harlem branches of the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association. Athletic clubs provided young men with competitive opportunities to participate in sports. The Music School Settlement for Colored People provided cultural activities for young African American children and adults. There were some conflicts between the African American children and white children on Harlem's streets. African American children were the majority in two Harlem schools. In some of the schools that had fewer black students, some white teachers conveyed their prejudices against black people to their black students. But other white principals and teachers were committed to incorporating the increasing numbers of young black newcomers into the lives of the schools, and consequently incorporating their parents into the life of the community. All of these efforts illustrate African Americans' desires to strengthen the community in which they were making their homes by providing guidance outside the family to African American children and young adults.

THE YWCA AND YMCA

In the first years of the 1900s African American New Yorkers began to seek ways to provide positive social and recreational activities as well as religious guidance outside of the church for young men and women by formally affiliating with the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

By the time Charles T. Walker arrived in New York City in 1899 to become pastor of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, his dynamic preaching style had earned him the nickname "The Black Spurgeon," a comparison to the British Baptist

minister Charles Spurgeon, who from 1854 to 1892 frequently preached to audiences of more than 10,000 people in Britain, and became known as the "Prince of Preachers." Walker's initial field of work was the black South. He was born in 1858 in Hephzibah, Georgia, and his parents died when he was young, but his scholastic talents and his family ties to the ministry (two of his uncles were pastors) soon placed him on the same road, a not-uncommon path for an educated young African American man in the post-Civil War years. In his teens Walker was pastor of the Baptist church in his hometown, and soon went on to build Tabernacle Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia, where the congregation spared him to go on annual speaking tours to share his message with the rest of the nation. When the National Baptist Convention, Inc., was formed in 1895, uniting the autonomous black Baptist churches that had been affiliated with the Baptist Foreign Mission Convention, the National Baptist Convention, and the National Baptist Education Convention, Walker became one of its leaders. This national visibility and an earlier preaching engagement at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church in New York City undoubtedly influenced that congregation's decision to call Walker to become its pastor in 1899. Mount Olivet was founded in 1878, and its congregation grew along with the African American population of New York City in the postwar years. By the time of Walker's arrival, the church was one of the most prominent black congregations in the city, and was located on West 53rd Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues, in the heart of African American institutional and artistic community of the late nineteenth century.²

In addition to preaching, C. T. Walker was also known in Georgia for developing important community programming. In New York, as he began to survey the neighborhood around his new West 53rd Street church, he "found no place for hundreds and hundreds of young colored men to spend their evenings and Sundays, except in dives, saloons, and brothels."³

He soon started a series of young men's Bible readings and lectures, adopting the name Colored Young Men's Christian Association. A few months later, the group decided to seek formal affiliation with the YMCA. Walker's biographer noted:

[Dr. Walker] called a public meeting at Mt. Olivet and organized a Y.M.C.A. Nearly every colored pastor in the city, regardless of denomination, became interested in the movement and gave Dr. Walker almost undivided support. Money was raised, a building at 132 West 53rd Street was leased for one year, temporary officers were elected, and on December 18, 1900, application was made to the Y.M.C.A. New York City for membership as one of the regular branches. The application was received and acted on favorably.⁴

The Young Men's Christian Association was founded in London in 1844 by George Williams, a young man who had moved to London from rural Somerset and found employment at a department store in the city. Concerned with the challenges and dangers of city life, he and a group of eleven friends began a Bible study and prayer group. With the goal of improving the spiritual and intellectual lives of men, the concept became popular in other areas of Britain as well as other countries by the 1850s. In 1851 the first YMCA in the United States was formed by Thomas Sullivan, a retired Boston sea captain whose work as a marine missionary made him aware of the needs of sailors.⁵

New York City established a YMCA in 1852, first meeting at the Mercer Street Presbyterian Church in lower Manhattan and then renting spaces at a series of Manhattan locations until 1869, when a large building was constructed at the corner of 23rd Street and Fourth Avenue, designed by noted architect James Renwick.⁶ At the ceremony to lay the cornerstone for the building, William Adams, the pastor of the nearby Madison Square Presbyterian Church suggested that the building and the organization would make an important break with what had gone before: "The edifice which was to rise upon that spot was not an eleemosynary institution; it was not a church and yet it combined almost all the ideas which were represented by such buildings. It was not to be a hotel, or a clubhouse; but it was a building that would represent before the public the social element of religion."⁷

The YMCA sought to provide a consistent Christian influence on the lives of young men beyond the walls of the church. The new building's components, "a large library and reading room, rooms for games, social parlors, a gymnasium, baths, a bowling alley, classrooms, lecture rooms and an auditorium" became a template for YMCA buildings across the country.⁸

African Americans were involved in the YMCA movement almost from the very beginning, although their activities were in branches segregated from those of white YMCA participants. In 1853 Anthony Bowen, formerly enslaved, who was working in the U.S. Patent Office in Washington, D.C., organized the first YMCA for African Americans. Motivated by the same factors as their white colleagues, to provide positive religious, social, and educational opportunities for young men, African Americans also viewed the YMCA as another tool that could be used to advance the race by helping to produce responsible, productive, educated men. In the following decades, the YMCA movement became a worldwide phenomenon. Its housing component was particularly appealing to young single men who were moving to cities in greater numbers.⁹

In 1867, a generation before C. T. Walker's arrival in New York, African Americans had established a Colored Young Men's Christian Association "auxiliary unit" at 97 Wooster Street in lower Manhattan. Rev. Henry Highland Garnet, who had guided the black community to recovery following the devastating 1863 Draft Riots, was one of the speakers at the inaugural meeting, which was also attended by Robert McBurney, the trailblazing secretary of the New York YMCA. The large audience heard a discussion of the "importance of young men cultivating the spirit of Christ as the great and grand strengthening influence of all transactions in life."¹⁰ But in spite of such an auspicious start, after four years the Colored Branch ceased operations. This past affiliation with the YMCA may account for the receptiveness of the YMCA to Rev. Walker's 1900 application to establish a Colored Branch, particularly since Robert McBurney, present at the 1867 inaugural meeting of the defunct Colored Branch, still served as secretary of the New York YMCA.¹¹

New York City's YMCA branch for African Americans officially opened its doors in 1901, two years after C. T. Walker's arrival in the city. The initial location of the Colored Men's Branch of the YMCA of New York, at 132 West 53rd Street, was in the same block as Mt. Olivet, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues. In the late 1800s, West 53rd Street had become the center of the midtown Manhattan area that was known as "Black Bohemia." On the street were the Marshall and Maceo Hotels, meeting points for black musicians

and other African American movers and shakers. Nearby were cabarets and "sporting houses," from which Rev. Walker hoped to redirect young African American men to the YMCA.¹² The West 53rd YMCA branch, two row houses, included "an office, reception room, reading room, a small gymnasium and dormitory quarters."¹³ Cleveland G. Allen, a member at the branch, noted that "the buildings being in close proximity to the Churches, schools and other institutions, renders it an ideal location for such an institution."¹⁴

The staff position of executive secretary of the Colored Men's Branch of the YMCA was a unique career opportunity, considering the limited options available to educated African American men in the early 1900s. New York's Colored Men's Branch of the YMCA attracted a series of talented men to lead it. Walter Cole, a graduate of the College and Theological Institute of Biddle University in North Carolina, began work as branch secretary in January of 1901, but unfortunately the next year he died of typhoid fever. His successor, Rev. Thomas J. Bell, a graduate of Atlanta University and Hartford Seminary, came to the Colored Men's Branch after leading the Congregational Church in Selma, Alabama. In 1903 Bell moved the branch a block west to 252-254 West 53rd Street,

which offered larger quarters in order to meet the demands that were being made to offer proper facilities for the development of young men. . . . The Old Fifty-third Street Branch has been instrumental in starting many young men on helpful careers. In 1906 over five hundred young men were placed in helpful positions in various capacities. During the year 1906 2,110 attended lectures and educational classes at the old Fifty-third Street Branch.¹⁵

The YMCA continued on West 53rd Street, through most of the first two decades of the 1900s. In the late 1910s, acknowledging that the center of Manhattan's black community had shifted northward, the branch began planning a move to Harlem. By this time the branch was under new leadership. Thomas E. Taylor became executive secretary in 1916 after Rev. Bell resigned to lead the Colored YMCA in Denver. Taylor had led the Indianapolis Branch for several years, a branch that had been founded with the assistance of community leaders such as Madam C. J. Walker. Taylor's background differed from those of his predecessors. He was a native of London, Ontario,

Canada, where he had attended the Public Collegiate Institute and Business University before working as a barber with his father for eight years, and then for the Canadian Postal Service. After his arrival in Indianapolis in 1905, he was credited with building the branch's membership to 400 by 1910. He was noted for inaugurating a "Monster Meeting" mass lecture series that continued decades after his departure from the branch. Taylor applied similar skills to his work in New York, and as a result by the end of the decade the membership outgrew the West 53rd Street site.¹⁶

Preparing for its move, the Colored YMCA began raising funds to build a building in Harlem. With Henry Parker, partner with John Nail in Nail and Parker real estate brokerage firm, serving as the chair of its property committee, funds for the new building eventually included a \$25,000 contribution from philanthropist Julius Rosenwald. In spite of some resistance from the YMCA City Association (the central decision-making body) because the location was on a predominantly white block, the Colored Men's Branch of the YMCA bought lots on West 135th Street, a main thoroughfare in Harlem, near Seventh Avenue. A six-story building was constructed at 181 West 135th Street at a total cost of \$375,000 (the City Association had recommended a two-story building). The new building, "the most modern and largest YMCA building for Negroes in the Country," opened on Armistice Day, November 11, 1919. Its facilities included a swimming pool, a lecture hall, and a gymnasium.¹⁷

Ten blocks away, at 5 West 125th Street, the Harlem Branch YMCA served Harlem's white residents. The YMCA's presence in Harlem dated to 1868, when it was founded by members of Harlem's Old Dutch Reformed and Congregational churches. In 1880 it opened the 125th Street building, where it provided reading rooms and other amenities common to YMCA branches. The two branches coexisted until the 1930s, when the Harlem Branch was folded into the Washington Heights Branch, and the 135th Street branch became known as the Harlem Branch.¹⁸

By 1919, when the 135th Street YMCA branch opened, young African American women had been served by a YWCA branch in Harlem for more than five years, but their journey to Harlem had included several unique challenges. As with the men, their entry into the Y network began at Mt. Olivet

Baptist Church. In 1905, six years after the meeting at that church led to the formation of the Colored Men's Branch of the YMCA, Carrie King, Lucy Robinson, and eighty-three other African American women, some of whom had assisted in the YMCA's formation, met to form a Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) to serve African American women in New York City. King, a member of St. James Presbyterian Church, then on West 51st Street, and Robinson, a member of Mt. Olivet, undoubtedly noticed the increasing numbers of single young African American women moving to New York City at the turn of the century. In the African American community there was a great concern that, without proper support and guidance, these women would be exploited while they looked for lodging and employment. Tales were common of naive women who arrived from the South and were sexually assaulted, lured into lives of prostitution, or otherwise exploited. Housing and guidance for women became a priority. In 1897 Victoria Earle Matthews created the White Rose and Industrial Association to provide housing for these women. But the number of women moving to New York far exceeded the capacity of the association's rooms. In addition to lodging, the women forming the Colored YWCA hoped to provide a continuing Christian influence on young African American women whether they lodged at their branch or lived elsewhere.¹⁹

The women at the 1905 meeting at Mt. Olivet represented some of the best-educated reformers that black New York had to offer. Soon after the founding meeting, the women negotiated an agreement with the 15th Street branch of the YWCA to become an affiliate of the branch. The national YWCA had recently required that all new branches establish affiliations with existing branches. During the negotiations regarding affiliation, the African American women successfully denied the request of the 15th Street branch to assist with the drafting of the new group's constitution and bylaws, which they drafted independently of the branch with which they were to be affiliated.²⁰

In its initial years, Lucy Robinson served as the president of the branch's board of management. She was born in North Carolina in 1855, and in 1859 her father was killed in John Brown's raid of the Harpers Ferry army arsenal. She studied at Hampton Institute in Virginia, and afterward taught school in

North Carolina. After her marriage in 1878, she moved to New York, where she supplemented her teacher's income by dressmaking. In New York she became a member of Mt. Olivet and was in attendance at the 1899 meeting that led to the formation of the YMCA.²¹ Under her leadership, the Colored Women's Branch of the YWCA first secured rented space at 169 West 63rd Street, within the San Juan Hill black neighborhood of Manhattan. But when the building was sold they soon moved to 143 West 53rd Street, down the street from the Colored Men's Branch of the YMCA. By the spring of 1907 they were regularly hosting Bible study groups, prayer meetings, lectures, and other social and educational activities for young women.²² In 1907, the branch hired its first paid staff person, Eva Bowles, also a teacher from the South, as the branch's general secretary. She remained in the position for less than a year, leaving in 1908 due to illness. Over the next few years, a series of educated young women held the staff position for short periods of time.

In contrast to the frequent staff changes at the Colored Women's Branch of the YWCA, the board of management of the branch had stable leadership. Following the death of branch president Lucy Robinson in 1908, Carrie King, who had been present at the initial meeting, served as president in 1908. In January 1909 Emma Ransom was elected president. She was new to New York, having arrived in 1907 when her husband, Rev. Reverdy Ransom, an innovative Progressive minister, was assigned as pastor of Bethel African Methodist Episcopalian (AME) Church on West 25th Street after serving as pastor of Charles Street AME Church in Boston. A native of Selma, Ohio, she had taught school before her marriage. As a pastor's wife she co-edited a missionary journal, *Women's Light and Love for Heathen Africa*, and was active in the African American women's club movement that was beginning to provide a national network for black women to address social and civil rights issues. At the New York Colored Women's Branch of the YWCA, Ransom initially focused on the branch's financial stability. The Central YWCA, created in a reorganization of New York City's branches, was also concerned about the finances of the Colored Women's Branch, and in 1911 announced its desire to "secure a white woman to act as General Secretary at the Colored Women's Branch for six months." Louise Goodrich was hired in April and paid \$35 per month more than the previous African American branch

secretary. When she left the position in October, she noted that she had "decided that a white secretary is not acceptable to the colored women."²³

The history of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) parallels that of the YMCA. Begun as a women's prayer group in London by Emma Roberts and Lady Mary Jane Kinnaird in 1855, more than a decade after the YMCA had formed (also in Britain), the group adopted the name Young Women's Christian Association and sought ways to offer tangible assistance to women by providing housing for single women, a library, an employment bureau, and Bible classes. The YWCA in the United States grew out of a series of Protestant revivals in New York City in 1857 and 1858 that led to the formation of the Ladies' Christian Union, which developed into a YWCA affiliate. Their target group was "young white working women who did not attend any church." In 1893 African American women in Dayton, Ohio, received permission to form the first black affiliate branch of the YWCA in the United States.²⁴

The West 53rd Street lease for the Colored Branch of the YWCA expired on May 1, 1913, and the members of the branch saw an opportunity to move to Harlem in recognition of the earlier moves of other black institutions and former residents to that neighborhood. Similar to the YMCA, a Harlem Branch of the YWCA had existed since 1891, established by Dutch women; in 1913 it was located at 72 West 124th Street. As with the men's branches, racial segregation and cultural customs dictated that African American women would need to identify their own site for a building to serve their own. By 1913, Emma Ransom's husband had become editor of *The A.M.E. Church Review*, but during his pastorate at Bethel the family had lived in a parsonage on West 129th Street in Harlem, which would have acquainted Emma Ransom with the needs and possibilities in the community. The women of the Colored YWCA identified a building at 118 West 131st Street that they planned to lease, but they were discouraged from moving forward when the Metropolitan Board of the YWCA, the governing body of all branches in the city, was approached by "a portion of the Harlem community" who opposed the move. The 100 block of West 131st was a restrictive covenant block, and undoubtedly signers of the covenant or their sympathizers had made their feelings known to the board.²⁵ Similar to YWCAs across the country, while the Metro-

politan YWCA provided some support to the Colored Branch, its leadership was drawn from the local power structure and therefore its branches were usually required to work within the confines of that structure, such as acceding on matters of racial segregation. But the women of the Colored YMCA had strong ties to Harlem's African American real estate investors. The chair of the YWCA's finance committee was Ella Thomas, wife of undertaker James C. Thomas, who had been president of Philip Payton's Afro-American Realty Company. A member of the Colored YWCA's Board of Management, Maybelle McAdoo, had been the chief stenographer for the Afro-American Realty Company. Later in the spring of 1913, the branch announced that it had leased two adjoining houses at 121 and 123 West 132nd. After renovations to join the two houses and their backyards, the new headquarters for the Colored Branch of the YWCA opened in Harlem in July 1913.²⁶

The services of the YWCA were quickly in great demand as Harlem's African American population increased dramatically during the early years of the Great Migration. Thousands of single young African American women and men moved to New York and other northern cities from southern towns, seeking better employment opportunities and an escape from racial segregation and violence. Harlem's Colored Women's Branch of the YWCA provided connections to potential employers as well as limited housing, with nineteen beds.²⁷ Soon the Colored Branch also screened and enrolled Harlem residents to provide housing for young women in area homes and apartments. World War I exacerbated the demand for the Y's services, and this demand coincided with a 1913 \$4 million capital campaign of the Metropolitan YMCA and YWCA. With an understanding that the Metropolitan YWCA would receive \$3 million of the campaign proceeds, Emma Ransom played a pivotal role in obtaining a fair share for the Harlem Y. She eventually extracted a commitment from the Metropolitan Y to increase its financial support of capital campaign funds to the Colored Women's Branch from \$10,000 to \$100,000. Using these funds as seed money, the women of the Colored Branch raised more than \$200,000 in additional funds to acquire land and build a multi-service five-story building at 179 West 137th Street. When the building opened in January 1920, a few months after the YMCA's new 135th Street building opened, it included "a cafeteria with a capacity of

one hundred, an information desk, reception rooms, offices, meeting rooms, classrooms, a gymnasium, a pool and shower and locker rooms, this YWCA became the best-equipped African American YWCA in the country."²⁸

By 1920, from their new buildings on 135th and 137th Streets, the African American branches of the YMCA and the YWCA provided clear symbols of the commitment of the members of these institutions to Harlem as a future base of black New Yorkers, while also symbolizing African Americans' determination to provide ongoing support to the young adults in their community as they entered the world of work.

ATHLETIC CLUBS

When the YMCA moved from 53rd Street to Harlem in 1919, it provided an additional recreational option for some young African American men in Harlem who had already been participating in sports through small private athletic clubs. Conrad Norman was nine years old in 1893 when he arrived in New York City from the Spanish Town section of Jamaica with his parents and his two brothers and two sisters. The family soon found an apartment on West 16th Street just north of the old Greenwich Village black enclave. Their father, who had worked as a printer for the *Daily Gleaner* newspaper in Jamaica, found work in New York. By the time Conrad reached his teens, he and his brothers, Gerald and Clifton, were swept up into the national obsession with physical culture. Across the country debates raged regarding whether the American man was becoming soft with the disappearance of the western frontier and the continuing movement from the farm to urban areas, where men spent their days indoors. A parallel debate had begun among African Americans, who, as they moved to cities in increasing numbers, were often consigned to crowded areas where they suffered disproportionately from diseases such as tuberculosis. For both groups, athletics was one proposed solution. Young African American men, however, faced considerable obstacles to participating in this effort. Later reflecting on his motivation for forming an athletic club, Conrad Norman noted that in turn-of-the-century New York, "although there were seventy thousand colored people in New York at the time, and the big city fairly teemed with athletic clubs of all kinds,

recreation centers, playgrounds, settlements, schools, Turn Verein halls, and colleges, each provided with a gymnasium, there was not a single one devoted to colored people."²⁹

Conrad Norman, along with his brothers and other West Indians, formed the Alpha Physical Culture Club in 1904 in Harlem to begin addressing this lack of athletic facilities. They initially operated out of a room in a "church house" on West 134th Street. With a commitment to education, as well as to the growing trend of physical education to counter health problems that troubled African Americans, the Norman brothers all attended City College of New York, and all became standouts in the Alpha Physical Club. By 1906 the thirty-five dues-paying members of the club were able to lease a brownstone at 79 West 134th Street, in the heart of the growing African American enclave, for their headquarters. The club soon became a pioneer in the new sport of basketball and began competing against other local athletic clubs, among them the Salem Crescent Athletic Club of Salem United Methodist Church.

The African American congregation of Salem United Methodist Church was established in Harlem in 1902, by Rev. Frederick Cullen. In 1911, Rev. Cullen started the club by persuading boys who gathered on West 133rd Street in the vicinity of the church to use the church for their meetings and eventually to work within the church through the Salem Crescent Athletic Club. The club fielded athletes in several sports, including track and field, boxing, and basketball, which was in its infancy. The club was particularly respected for its track and field athletes and sent athletes to compete in the 1915 San Francisco International Exposition as well as other international competitions.³⁰

St. Christopher's Athletic Club was another competitor among African American athletic clubs in Manhattan. It operated under the auspices of St. Christopher's Guild for young men which was organized in 1895 by St. Philip's Episcopal Church on 25th Street. In addition to boxing, track, and basketball teams, the guild sponsored a glee club and amateur dramatics. In 1911 when St. Philip's moved into its newly constructed church in Harlem, the gymnasium of the adjacent parish house on West 134th Street became the base for the athletic club. New York's athletic clubs participated in fierce

rivalries that extended across the city and included African American clubs such as the Smart Set Athletic Club in Brooklyn, and eventually clubs in other cities, such as Washington, D.C. The athletic clubs laid the foundation for black participation in professional basketball in the 1920s.³¹

The athletic clubs came into existence because the color line prohibited black men from participating in white YMCA teams (or even attending games as spectators). Although African Americans had established YMCA branches in many cities across the nation by the 1910s, most did not have gymnasiums, which were essential for learning the techniques of the new game of basketball. In 1906 the *New York Age*, speaking of New York City's Colored Branch of the YMCA, noted: "The little play room, called a 'gymnasium,' will soon be thoroughly fitted up for use of the Athletic Club." St. Philip's new parish house on West 133rd Street included a gymnasium, and the St. Christopher Club became a competitive team. The purpose of these athletic activities was more than just casual play. Salem United Methodist and St. Philip's Episcopal both became noted for their wide range of community programs, of which athletics were just a small part. The Social Gospel movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries challenged churches to improve the communities in which they were located. In the same way that African Americans sought YMCA and YWCA branches as a way to productively direct the energy of young men and women, athletic clubs offered athletic opportunities where African American YMCA branches with sufficient athletic facilities were not available. The clubs also provided African American young men with leadership and management opportunities. The Salem and St. Christopher clubs operated under the auspices of churches, but the young participants had considerable latitude in decision making. Members of the Alpha Physical Club ran the club themselves, which provided excellent training for other activities that they would pursue later in life.³²

PUBLIC SCHOOL ATHLETIC LEAGUE

Opportunities for African American women to participate in athletics were not as numerous as those available to young men, but the 1910s were a time

when women were advocating for wider access in many areas, such as the vote and educational opportunities. Participation in sports complemented their demands on other issues. The YWCA provided women with an opportunity to participate in organized recreation, and the Public School Athletic League (PSAL) included girls in its offerings of scholastic sports. In 1905, when the Girls' Branch of the PSAL was formed, its vision included the following ideas about sports for girls:

1. Athletics for all girls
2. Athletics within the school and no inter-school athletics
3. Athletic events in which teams (not individual girls) compete
4. Athletics chosen and practiced with regard to their suitability for girls and not merely in imitation of boys' athletics.³³

This list illustrates the perceptions of what was appropriate for young women. Individual competition was promoted among boys and men, but clearly not desirable for women. The desire to maintain the image of femininity within the context of athletics was also important. African American girls in Harlem schools could participate in sports that met these criteria, including walking, swimming, ice skating, and rope skipping.³⁴ By the early 1900s the color line in the New York City schools had been removed, and in contrast to New York's YMCAs, YWCAs, and local athletic clubs, black and white children participated on the same PSAL teams.

PSAL athletics for boys had a more ambitious vision compared to that for girls:

1. No boy is eligible who has ever taken part in professional athletics
2. No boy may represent his school unless he has been a member of the school for a certain length of time . . .
3. No boy is admitted into any contest who has not received a passing mark for the month previous in effort, proficiency and deportment
4. No entry is accepted unless approved by the principal of the school.³⁵

The sports offerings for boys were much greater and more rigorous than those for girls. For instance, the high school section of the league offered the

following: indoor track and field games, outdoor track and field games, soccer, cross-country, lacrosse, indoor rifle shooting, tennis, indoor swimming, hockey, outdoor rifle shooting, basketball, baseball, and football.³⁶

PSAL athletics provided one of the few venues where black and white children in New York City participated as teammates.

HARLEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The absence of the color line in the Public School Athletic League reflected the broader policy of the New York City public school system, which in the first decades of the 1900s was one of the few New York institutions in which the color line was barred by law, and in which, despite segregation in almost every other aspect of daily life, some efforts were made to provide African American children with the same opportunities as their white classmates enjoyed.

In the 1910s integrated schooling was a relatively new idea in the city. New York's public schooling for African American children began in 1787 when the New York Manumission Society established the first nonreligious free school for African American children. In 1794 it was incorporated as the African Free School.³⁷ By the early 1800s there were three schools, all with black teachers, reporting to a committee appointed by the Manumission Society. The schools were known for their rigor. In 1827, when the French general Lafayette visited New York City, he was impressed by the recitation of a ten-year-old African American student, James McCune Smith, who would later go on to attend medical school in Glasgow and become a physician and leader in the African American community of New York. Many mid-nineteenth-century African American leaders were products of the African Free School system, including pastor and activist Henry Highland Garnet and priest and missionary Alexander Crummell. By 1853 all African Free Schools were subsumed under the New York City Board of Education, with black students remaining segregated in separate "colored" schools.³⁸

In 1870 seven colored schools were operating, but when the system came to its end in Manhattan in 1884, only two remained, serving a total of 500 students. It was estimated that another 800 African American students were al-

ready attending Ward schools with white students closer to their homes than the colored schools. The impetus for ending the separate system was not community protest but cost. When the Board of Education's 1883 appropriation of city funds was reduced, the board voted as a cost-saving measure to close the colored schools and reassign the students to existing schools. The board seems to have initially planned to fire the black teachers and administrators, but after strong protests from the black community, and an extension on the school closures, at the end of 1884, the African American students, teachers, and principals were reassigned to Ward schools. Going forward, placement of African American students would be based on their place of residency rather than their race.

In 1898, when the borough of Manhattan was consolidated with the boroughs of Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, and the Bronx to form Greater New York City, the color line customs in schooling still existed in Queens. The area had not been subject to the 1880s decision of the Board of Education, which had then covered only Manhattan. In 1900 the racial restrictions in schooling in Queens and in other areas of the state were eradicated with a bill passed by the state legislature prohibiting schools based on race.³⁹

Jacob Theobald began his teaching career during this time of transition. Born in Germany in 1878, he had arrived in New York at the age of three with his father, who was a painter. During his childhood, his family, which included two brothers and a sister, lived on 11th Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues. A graduate of City College of New York, Theobald had become an elementary school teacher in 1898. He became principal of P.S. 89 at Lenox Avenue and 134th Street in 1906, just as the African American presence in the area was expanding dramatically beyond its small enclave one block away at 135th Street. Six years later, in 1913, Theobald was leading a biracial school of more than 1,800 students.⁴⁰ In *Colored School Children in New York*, settlement worker Frances Blascoer reported on schools she had studied in 1913:

Public School 89 on Lenox Avenue, running from 134th to 135th Streets, had the largest registration of colored pupils—1277 out of a total of 1841, the next largest being Public School 119, a girls' school on 133rd Street near Eighth Avenue,

which had 774 colored girls out of a total of 2080 pupils. Public School 100, at 135th Street and Fifth Avenue had a large proportion of colored pupils. . . . Public School 68, at 112 West 128th Street, with 241 colored boys and girls, is the only other Harlem school showing any large number of colored pupils.⁴¹

The locations of the schools identified in Frances Blascoer's report provide a sense of the settlement patterns of African Americans in New York City (see tables 5.1 and 5.2 for a full list of Manhattan schools), and particularly highlight the dramatic increase and concentration of the black population in Harlem. Out of approximately sixty Manhattan public schools, the three schools with more than 35 percent black students were in Harlem: P.S. 119, at 133rd Street and Eighth Avenue; P.S. 89, at 135th Street and Lenox Avenue; and P.S. 100, at 135th Street and Fifth Avenue. In addition to these schools, four other schools had student populations that were more than 10 percent African American.

P.S. 68, on West 128th Street, represented the southward expansion of Harlem's African American enclave. P.S. 69 was located within the older Black Bohemia community, while P.S. 141 was located in the San Juan Hill neighborhood and P.S. 28 was located in the heart of the Tenderloin community. The population of black students in most of the other schools ranged from one percent to 3 percent, with a few having 5 percent to 9 percent.⁴²

TABLE 5.1 Harlem Schools with More Than 35 Percent African American Student Populations, 1913

School		Colored			White			Total	% Black Students
Number	Location	Boys	Girls	Subtotal	Boys	Girls	Subtotal		
119	8th Ave. & W. 133rd St.	56	718	774	289	1,017	1,306	2,080	37
100	5th Ave. & 135th St.	55	298	353	50	157	207	560	63
89	Lenox Ave. & 135th St.	923	354	1,277	482	82	564	1,841	69

TABLE 5.2 Harlem Schools with 10-34 Percent African American Student Populations, 1913

School		Colored			White			Total	% Black Students
Number	Location	Boys	Girls	Subtotal	Boys	Girls	Subtotal		
68	116 W. 128th St.	78	163	241	366	954	1,320	1,561	15
141	464 W. 58th St.	41	125	166	383	571	954	1,120	15
69	125 W. 54th St.	77	108	185	686	509	1,195	1,380	13
28	257 W. 40th St.	38	104	142	167	861	1,028	1,170	12

A closer look at the three schools with high concentrations of black students provides a window on the fairly dramatic impact that black students had on Harlem's schools. P.S. 89, on Lenox Avenue, spanned the block from West 134th to West 135th Streets, across the avenue from the African American enclave that had been the setting for the 1904 showdown between the Afro-American Realty Company and the Hudson Realty Company. The four-story building of Gothic and Roman styles had a redbrick facade with stone trim bordering its tall windows and accenting parts of the lower and upper floors. The building was constructed in two stages, with the first section along West 134th Street and Lenox Avenue opening in September 1890. In the January 1891 issue of *School*, the weekly magazine for New York City educators, it was noted that

in the past twenty-five years the centre of public school interests of the city has moved from 13th Street to Harlem. Among the public schools of Harlem Mr. Elijah A. Howland's Grammar No. 89, Lenox Avenue and 134th Street is easily with the first. . . . [The Grammar and Primary Departments] are nearly filled to their limit and it is expected that the vacant lots to the north of the school will be purchased for 89.⁴³

By 1891, No. 89's principal, Elijah Howland, had served as a principal of Harlem schools for more than twenty-five years. In 1865 he had become principal of the No. 43 school in Manhattanville at Amsterdam Avenue and 129th Street; in 1875 he moved to become principal of Grammar School

No. 68 on 128th Street. He had become principal of No. 89 in 1889 and continued as principal at its new location. The school established a reputation both for scholarship and for athletic achievement during his tenure. As predicted by the *School* writer, to meet the growing population in the surrounding neighborhood, the second part of the school was built a few years after the initial opening of the Lenox building, extending the school along Lenox Avenue to 135th Street. The offspring of residents of the African American enclave on 133rd, 134th, and 135th Streets would have attended school in the spacious new No. 89, only blocks from their homes.⁴⁴

This was the legacy that Jacob Theobald inherited when he became principal of Grammar School No. 89 in 1906. In spite of hostile responses from some residents to the increased African American presence in Harlem after 1904, as principal, Theobald was an advocate for his students regardless of race. He was an advocate for their parents as well. In 1920 he observed:

Perhaps the most hopeful aspect of the school situation . . . is the enthusiastic desire on the part of parent, parents, or guardian to give the boy [girls also were students] all the opportunity . . . along educational lines. I can recall not a single instance in over five and a half years where a parent wished deliberately to sacrifice educational opportunities in order to have the benefit of a few dollars, the boy might be able to earn. I am convinced as the result of 22 years of service in the schools of New York that there is not another section where so much is sacrificed and even want is endured in order to keep the boy in school.⁴⁵

The parental sacrifices described by Jacob Theobald were familiar to black New Yorkers of the 1910s. For generations they had been required to be particularly diligent to ensure the adequate schooling of their children.

As Harlem's population grew, the increases in the number of schools and the student population, described in the 1891 issue of *School*, were evident as Harlem schools made their mark academically and athletically. Jacob Theobald's school reflected these gains even as its racial composition was transformed. The changes in the student body at P.S. 89 also led to changes in the teaching staff, and, by 1920 twelve of fifty-seven teachers (21 percent) at P.S. 89 were black.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., who attended P.S. 89 in the 1910s, had fond memories of the school: "In those days the old brick school on 134th Street seemed to have such huge rooms and oversized windows—windows with sunlight pouring in over potted plants into the room that had all sorts of pretty cutouts pasted on the wall. And I loved school . . . all the teachers were beautiful angels."⁴⁶

Musician Thomas "Fats" Waller, five years older than Powell, also attended P.S. 89 in the 1910s. He played music for school assemblies, and at these events he began to entertain his classmates by inserting improvisational phrases, "Wallerisms," into the marches and classical selections. As a result, "attendance at the classical sessions [was] no longer an obligation but a 'must.'"⁴⁷

While life in some Harlem classrooms seemed pleasant for white and black students, at a meeting discussing Blascoer's study she reported that some students had "complained to her that they had been called 'nigger' by both teachers and students in the public schools."⁴⁸ Outside of school, away from the gaze of strict principals and teachers, childhood animosities that led to confrontations between children who were different were also a part of Harlem life in the 1910s, at least in the 130s neighborhoods where African American children were increasing in number. After living on West 134th Street, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.'s family briefly relocated to 40th Street to live in an apartment building next door to the church his father led, the Abyssinian Baptist Church. The son did not like the downtown school experience, and he was pleased when the family soon returned to Harlem, this time living on West 136th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, where Powell Junior attended P.S. 5 on Edgecombe Avenue near 140th Street (2 percent black in 1913). Race was definitely an issue for the children in the neighborhood, as the fair-skinned boy soon discovered.⁴⁹

The first night that my father sent me out to buy the evening paper in our new neighborhood on 136th Street, a gang of Negro boys grabbed me and asked, "What are you, white or colored?" I had never thought of color. I looked at my skin and said, "White!" Whereupon I was promptly and thoroughly beaten.

The very next night I had to go to Eighth Avenue to get something from the store for Mother, and a gang of white boys grabbed me and demanded, "What are you?" Remembering my answer, and my beating of the preceding night, I answered, "Colored!" Whereupon I was again bloodied.⁵⁰

Samuel Battle, the first African American policeman to be appointed in Manhattan, had similar memories:

All of Eighth Avenue was Irish, and Seventh Avenue was a mixture of Irish and Jewish. One hundred and thirty-seventh Street to 140th Street, any place below 133rd St., was Irish, German, and Italian. One thing I shall never forget. The Irish boys on Eighth Avenue wouldn't let the other races come on Eighth Avenue at all. It was forbidden ground to them.⁵¹

Although there were childhood skirmishes in the street, some of the school buildings welcomed not only African American children but their parents also. P.S. 89 did this in the 1910s through the creation of the Lenox Community Center, whose stated purpose was to "establish in P.S. 89, Manhattan, a civic, social, and recreational center, to develop social life and the spirit of cooperation through clubs, classes, public meetings and any other activity which may broaden and enrich the lives of its members, and the community in which it is located."⁵²

In 1915 the center announced:

Henceforth Community Center 89 will be called the Lenox Community Center. The Lenox Community Center at 135th Street and Lenox Avenue invites all clubs to hold their meetings in its quarters at the nominal charge of 50 cents a meeting. Clubs chartered by the center will be charged only 25 cents. The Lenox Community Center will begin a course of lectures Friday night, November 5. This is an educational opportunity.⁵³

The lectures described in the announcement were part of an ambitious national, progressive initiative toward adult education, both formal and informal. Some of the impetus for the evening programs came from criticism that public schools, which represented substantial capital investments, were

underutilized since they were empty at the end of the school day as well as in the summer when most were closed. Across the nation, many schools developed adult lecture programs as well as summer programs for children and adults. The New York Public School System had a Bureau of Lectures, which organized weekly events at a number of public schools on evenings and weekends. The Lenox Community Center was not part of this initiative, but it was established independently in an environment in which adult educational enrichment was promoted, and this belief extended to the African American adults who were a part of the center's audience. In 1915 Afro-Caribbean activist Hubert Harrison was among the speakers who presented weekly lectures.⁵⁴

Formal education for adults was also promoted at the Lenox Community Center. By 1920, *The Crisis*, the magazine of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, regularly ran advertisements for the Lenox Community Center's classes in stenography, typing, and bookkeeping. Many community centers were self-governed by committees, with group rental fees being used to cover their operations costs. The Lenox center seemed to be in this category. The director of the Lenox Community Center was Fitz Mottley, a native of the British West Indies.⁵⁵

The school with the next largest population of African American students in 1913 was P.S. 119 (37 percent), at Eighth Avenue and West 133rd Street. By the time Frances Blascoer's study took place in 1913 (it was published in 1915), the school was on the edge of the western boundary of the black population's settlement in Harlem. Lenox Avenue, the previous implicit western boundary for black Harlem residents, had been breached in 1910 when Hutchens Bishop led St. Philip's Episcopal Church in acquiring land and then building a church and community house on 134th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues. P.S. 119, built in 1899 as the James Russell Lowell School, was at the western end of the block.

P.S. 119's five-story building had cornices and towers that led a later writer to describe it as "medieval in appearance."⁵⁶ In the 1910s P.S. 119 was a school for girls. Gertrude Ayers, an African American principal, reflected decades later that in the 1910s

the principal, Mrs. Harriet Tupper, had made her school popular. This was due to the fact that the girls were given a full program of academic work. In addition, everyone of them had a try at dressmaking, millinery, flower-making, novelty and tea-room work. The outstanding success of the last was due to the enthusiasm of Mrs. Maude B. Richardson, one of the early Negro graduates of Pratt Institute.⁵⁷

Mrs. Tupper even wore the dresses her students made for her, a practice that undoubtedly served to motivate them. P.S. 119 had an active parent-teachers association, which by the 1920s was led by Fred R. Moore. A man who had fathered eighteen children would seem well suited to be president of a parent-teacher association, but Moore had many other equally important qualifications for the position. He was publisher of the *New York Age*, as well as the New York agent for Booker T. Washington's National Negro Business League. Unfortunately only six of his eighteen children lived to adulthood, but his youngest daughter, Marian, most likely attended P.S. 119 after Moore moved the family from Brooklyn to Harlem. There he purchased adjacent brick townhouses at 228 and 230 West 135th Street. One townhouse became the office of the *New York Age*, while the other housed the twelve members of the extended Moore family, which included Moore; his wife, Ida; his youngest daughter, Marian (17); sons Gilbert (26) and Eugene (34) and their wives; a nephew (20); three grandchildren; and a domestic, who undoubtedly had her hands full in helping to maintain such a large household. Moore used his extensive national African American contacts to bring before P.S. 119 leaders such as Robert Russa Moton, head of Tuskegee Institute, and Harlem physician Dr. E. P. Roberts.⁵⁸

Five blocks away from P.S. 89, at West 138th Street, P.S. 100 was also a magnet for black students in the 1910s. Opened in 1909, the four-story brick and stone building was approximately 100 feet west of Fifth Avenue. By 1913, when Frances Blascoer's study on black children in the public schools was made, P.S. 100's principal, Dr. Charles J. Pickett, recommended that the school be renamed the Vocational School for Boys to reflect its focus. High schools were still a relatively new phenomenon in Manhattan. While several

had existed in Brooklyn when it was a separate city (before 1898), the first three high schools in Manhattan were established at later dates: Stuyvesant High School was established in 1904 on 15th Street as a "manual training school for boys." Wadleigh High School for Girls, founded in 1897, moved from 36 East 12th Street to a new \$900,000 showcase building on West 114th Street and Seventh Avenue in Harlem in 1902. DeWitt Clinton High School was also established in 1897 on 13th Street. These schools had a negligible number of black students in 1913.⁵⁹

With its location, at 135th Street near Fifth Avenue, in the heart of the growing African American neighborhood, P.S. 100 had a large number of African American students. The school had been established as an elementary school, but in 1911 its emphasis shifted to vocational training at the high school level, while continuing to maintain some elementary school classes in the building. Before the establishment of these high schools, many students ended their scholastic careers in the eighth or ninth grades. Those interested in continuing their education attended DeWitt Clinton High School at 174 West 102nd Street or Peter Cooper High School for Boys and Girls (also established in 1897) at 157th Street and Third Avenue in the Bronx. Students from more prosperous families went away to high school. City College's move to Harlem in 1907 provided less-wealthy male students with a third option, Townsend Harris High School on the City College campus, which offered classes in preparation for college work.⁶⁰

Principal Charles J. Pickett described P.S. 100's purpose in a 1911 *New York Times* article, saying: "Vocational schools aim to send out their graduates with trained skilled hands, guided by minds trained to quick, adequate thinking of the work to be accomplished. We do not want any rule-of-thumb boys in our school: we want boys to receive a training which will enable them to be thinkers."⁶¹

At a time when very few high school students continued on to college, Pickett viewed high schools such as the Vocational School for Boys as essential to providing skills that would prevent boys from being trapped in dead-end thought-numbing jobs or, even worse, ending up without employment and becoming derelicts. Pickett's views about the school were directed to a

predominantly white student body, but they echoed the educational philosophy that Booker T. Washington had been promoting to African Americans for more than two decades.

Graduates of P.S. 89 grammar school who continued their schooling in all likelihood attended the Vocational School for Boys. It is possible that Philip Payton's nephew Duke Hobby was among them. In 1913 Duke would have been fifteen years old, and while he may have attended P.S. 89 for grammar school, P.S. 100, three blocks from his home on West 131st Street, would have been an ideal choice for high school if he was not academically inclined. Frances Blascoer indicated that by 1913 more than 60 percent of the school's student population was black, and Charles Pickett despaired over the challenge of finding jobs for African American graduates in the racially discriminatory New York skilled trade market. The school was featured in several articles during the 1910s, many with accompanying photographs. Whether by chance or design, however, none of the black students were included in the images of P.S. 100 students diligently at work in various workshops.⁶²

MUSIC SCHOOL SETTLEMENT FOR COLORED PEOPLE

Athletics addressed the physical fitness and competitive spirit of Harlem's youth, and engaging schools provided thriving scholastic environments for young people, but there were also concerns regarding their cultural development. In 1911 a group of interested benefactors sought ways to provide cultural activities for New York's African American children and adults through the Music School Settlement for Colored People. They included philanthropist George Foster Peabody; Felix Adler, founder of the Ethical Culture Society; Natalie Curtis, a well-to-do white New Yorker with an interest in African American traditional music; and New York Philharmonic violinist David Mannes, who had previously helped to establish a music school in the Third Street Music Settlement on the Lower East Side. The purpose of the Music School Settlement for Colored People was "the educational appeal to the negro through music . . . ; the foundation of a social centre which shall produce

a healthy moral environment for adults and provide instructive recreation; and . . . the preservation, encouragement and development, along natural lines of the music of the negro."⁶³

Many of those in the founding group believed that music education could bring down the barriers between the races by demonstrating the skills of African American musicians while also exposing African Americans to a broader range of cultural experiences, including drawing on traditional African American music rather than minstrel songs and other popular entertainments. Violinist David Mannes described his interest in teaching young students by saying: "I promised myself that someday I would send out such a call, based on the desire to extend to poor children the means of learning music through the instrument of their choice in surroundings that were beautiful and in an environment that would be stimulating. I would discourage mediocre professionalism and teach music as a means to spiritual enlightenment."⁶⁴

As implied by the word "settlement" in its name, the school was established in the tradition of the settlement house movement that by the 1910s was serving poor urban residents in cities across the nation. Even so, like the Colored Men's Branch of the YMCA and the Colored Women's Branch of the YWCA, the Music School Settlement for Colored People reflected the racial mores of New York City in the 1910s. Although some of the founders hoped the school for African Americans would bring down the barriers between the races, the precise name of the institution was required to distinguish it from the existing Music School Settlement on East Third Street, in which African American students were not welcome as students.

The first location for the Music School Settlement for Colored People was on West 34th Street, in the heart of the old African American midtown neighborhood. African American violinist David Irwin Martin was hired as the school's director. When the Music School Settlement for Colored People was incorporated in 1912, its board of directors included white philanthropists such as Mrs. Charles Sprague-Smith and Lyman Beecher Stowe (grandson of Harriet Beecher Stowe), as well as black leaders such as W. E. B. Du Bois, musician Harry Burleigh, and Rev. Hutchens Bishop, rector of St. Philip's Episcopal Church.⁶⁵

In 1912 African American bandleader James Reese Europe organized a fund-raising concert drawing from his Clef Club musicians, who regularly provided entertainment at the parties of wealthy New Yorkers across the city. For the concert at Carnegie Hall, Europe assembled an orchestra of fifty-five musicians, performing on standard orchestral instruments in unusual quantities, such as ten pianos, as well as on instruments unique to the Carnegie Hall concert stage such as mandolins, ukuleles, guitars, and banjos. When ticket sales lagged, the Music School Settlement's board of directors published an editorial appeal in the *New York Evening Journal*. The concert was sold out, and so well received that similar concerts were presented in the following three years.⁶⁶

Acknowledging the shift of the African American population center to Harlem, in 1914 the Music School Settlement moved to Harlem, occupying twin row houses at 6 and 8 West 131st Street, across the street from real estate broker Philip Payton's home, and began offering a range of activities extending well beyond musical training:

Recreational activities included folk dancing, basketball, baseball, track, and tennis. The buildings also provided space for concerts, lectures, social gatherings, and other forms of "wholesome recreation." A weekly lecture series on various topics in music, originally intended for the African American community, began attracting white audiences as well. The lectures featured well-known musicians, writers, and scholars.⁶⁷

J. Rosamond Johnson, well known for the Broadway compositions he had written with his brother, James Weldon Johnson, was appointed the Music School Settlement's second director. "My wishes finally came true," was how Johnson described the appointment. After years of traveling and performing, with a new baby at home, he was ready to leave the road. In Harlem, the Music School Settlement provided a variety of music lessons on the piano and other instruments, as well as recitals and other performance opportunities for students in glee clubs, string quartets, and orchestras. The range of musical offerings and the goals of the school attracted well-known musicians such as composer and conductor Kurt Schindler and other public figures such as Madam C. J. Walker, who provided lectures.⁶⁸ The Music School Settlement

continued its programming until 1919 when, upon the resignation of J. Rosamond Johnson, its operations were folded into those of the Martin-Smith School, also in Harlem, founded by the Settlement's first director, David Irwin Martin, and pianist Helen Elise Smith.⁶⁹

The color line was firmly drawn for the African American YMCA and YWCA branches that eventually moved to Harlem, for the athletic clubs that served the area's young people, and for the Music School Settlement for Colored People. At a time when northerners were expressing increasing concerns regarding the "social equality" of the races, the formal and informal opportunities to socialize, even in the same-gender settings of the YMCA and YWCA, would have suggested that the races were interacting on an equal basis, which most northerners were no more ready to do than were southerners. The 1908 Springfield, Illinois, riots, in which two black people were killed and blocks of blacks' homes were burned to the ground by a white mob, exposed northern racism and eventually became the impetus for the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909. In this context of tenuous racial interactions, there was no suggestion, even by the white benefactors of the Music Settlement School for Colored People, that black children desiring music education might attend classes with white children at existing schools. While the Music School Settlement for Colored People provided a wide range of rich cultural opportunities, it existed as an accommodation to the racial limitations that black New Yorkers faced in this field as well as in most others.⁷⁰

Figure 5.1 illustrates that by 1919 there was a network of organizations in Harlem providing services to African American youth in the vicinity of Lenox Avenue and 135th Street. These organizations, ranging from public schools with programs beyond the classroom to churches and athletic clubs that provided weekday recreational activities to the YMCA and YWCA, which linked young adults in Harlem with a national network of service providers, all facilitated the development of relationships between youth and young adults, as well as between the adults who advocated for the institutions to be formed and in many cases played substantial roles in providing the services. Some of these institutions traced their beginnings to Manhattan's midtown African American community. Once in Harlem, most of the private institutions

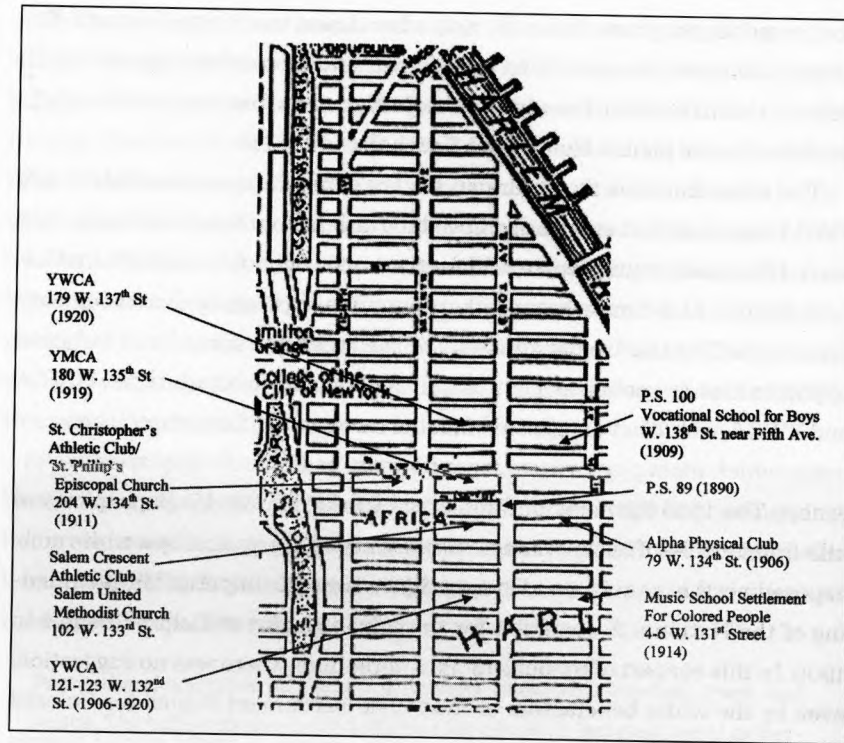


FIGURE 5.1. Some organizations serving African American youth in Harlem, 1890–1919. Automobile Club of Rochester, 1920, Florida International Center for Instructional Technology.

began as renters, but some of them eventually purchased or built properties. These properties were evidence of the ability of the African Americans to obtain sufficient funds to accomplish the goal of ownership, but even more importantly, they were signs of the advocates' confidence in their future in Harlem, a future in which they wanted to be sure that the young people in their community could fully participate.

While African American youth and young adults were finding their places in Harlem's educational and recreational institutions, their elders began to position themselves to have a direct voice in the allocation of resources to the community by seeking elective office.

6 REAL ESTATE AND POLITICS

Like thousands of other black Virginians at the turn of the twentieth century, John Mabery Royall traveled from his home state to New York City looking for better opportunities. The fourth of five children born to carpenter Pinkney Royall and his wife, Lucy, John Royall had attended the Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute, but by the time he turned thirty, in 1902, he was working in a blue-collar job, with H. J. Heinz Company in New York. When he became a Pullman porter, however, his income likely increased, and his new job gave him access to a national network of other similarly ambitious black men. Because of the exposure to a wider world through their travel, and their good incomes compared to the wages of other employment available to black men, Pullman porters were admired in the African American community. Using the resources of savings and contacts, by 1907 Royall had begun to establish himself as a real estate and insurance broker in New York City. In 1913, he mounted a campaign for alderman representing Harlem in the Twenty-First District.¹

As black voters' numbers increased in Harlem in the 1910s, they became a more important factor in the political calculations of both the Democrats and the Republicans. Initially, African Americans in Harlem traded votes for

38. Ibid., 17–42.
39. Ibid.
40. Tenth Census, Population, "Population by Race, Sex, and Nativity," 402; Rosenwaike, *Population History of New York City*, 77.
41. David Quigley, *Second Founding: New York City, Reconstruction, and the Making of American Democracy* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 39–69.
42. Ibid., 74–76; Freeman, *The Free Negro in New York City*, 107.
43. Osofsky, *Harlem*, 18.
44. Ninth Census, Population; Tenth Census, Population.
45. Rosenzweig and Blackmar, *The Park and the People*, 379–381; James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (New York: DaCapo Press, 1991), 58–145.
46. Scheiner, *Negro Mecca*, 18–19.
47. Hewitt, *Protest and Progress*, 125, 135–138.
48. Ibid., 131–133.
49. Ibid., 133.
50. Dunlap, *From Abyssinian to Zion*, 6, 91, 148, 243, 262; *Trow's New York City Directory*, 1880 (New York: Trow Directory, Printing, and Bookbinding Co., 1880–1920).
51. "Prejudices of Landlords," *New York Times*, April 14, 1889; "The Northern Color Line," *New York Times*, April 28, 1889; Daniel E. Bigham, *On Jordan's Banks: Emancipation and Its Aftermath in the Ohio River Valley* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2005), 156.
52. Nancy C. Curtis, *Black Heritage Sites: An African American Odyssey and Finder's Guide* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1996), 185; Reginald W. Brown, "Some Livingstone College History," www.rowancountync.gov/Government/Departments/RowanPublicLibrary/HistorRoom/TheoBuerbaumSalisbury/LivingstoneCollege.aspx.
53. Washington, *The Negro in Business*, 197–200; *Westfield Directory*, 1874, 35; 1875, cover; 1878–1879, 16; 1880–1881, 76; 1885, 19; 1888, 37; 1893, 45; 1894, 45; 1896, 67; 1897, 57.
54. Brown, "Some Livingstone College History."
55. Washington, *The Negro in Business*, 200–201.
56. Ibid., 200–203.
57. Ibid., 202–204.
58. Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1- Population, New York, Enumeration District 870, Sheet 15.
59. "Harlem Real Estate," *Harlem Local Reporter*, March 1, 1890.
60. Office of the City Register, Section 7, Liber 88, p. 60; Section 2, Liber 112, pp. 330–331. The description of the exterior of the home is based on the author's view of the house, which does not appear to have been altered; Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1- Population, New York County, Enumeration District 100, Sheet A2.
61. "Death of H.C.F. Koch," *New York Tribune*, September 6, 1900, 7; "Henry C.F. Koch Buried," *New York Times*, September 8, 1900.

2. THE END OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN WELCOME IN HARLEM

1. Charity Organization Society of the City of New York, Tenement House Committee, *Housing Reform in New York City: A Report of the Tenement House Committee of the Charity Organization Society of the City of New York 1911, 1912, 1913* (New York: M. B. Brown Printing & Binding Co., 1914), 4.
2. Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1- Population, Enumeration District 617, Sheets 7A–13A; *Trow's New York City Directory*, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900; Osofsky, *Harlem*, 11; Lomax, "A Social History," table 3B; Frederick M. Binder and David M. Reimers, *All Nations Under Heaven: An Ethnic and Racial History of New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 158.
3. Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1- Population, New York City Enumeration District 614, Sheets 7A–13B.
4. Blackmar, *Manhattan for Rent*.
5. Twelfth Census, New York, Ward 12, Enumeration District 617, Sheet 10B; the occupation noted for Marcellina is illegible; the occupation of "jobber" could have referred to a person who sold wholesale merchandise or a meat packer; *Trow's New York City Directory*, 1900.
6. Twelfth Census, Enumeration District 617, Sheets 10A, 10B.
7. Vital Statistics, Twelfth Census, Census Bulletin No. 88, "Population by Sex, General Nativity, and Color, by Groups of States and Territories, 1900" (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 1901), 9.
8. Twelfth Census, Enumeration District 617, Sheets 10B, 11A, 7A, 7B.
9. Twelfth Census, Enumeration District 617, Sheets 9A, 9B.
10. Osofsky, *Harlem*, 75; *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide, Harlem Local Reporter, New York Times*, 1890s.
11. Sections 6, 7, and 8, Map of New York City, G. W. Bromley & Co., 1897, New York Public Library.
12. Ibid.
13. Hood, *722 Miles*, 24–28, 60.
14. John S. Billings, MD, "Population of New York, June 1, 1890, By Wards and Sanitary Districts," in *Vital Statistics of New York City and Brooklyn Covering Six Years Ending May 31, 1890* (Washington, DC: Department of the Interior, Census Office), 230–233; "Population by Sex, General Nativity, and Color by Groups of States and Territories: 1900," Twelfth Census, 1900- Population, Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, No. 88, 9; W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Black North* (1901; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1969), 1–18.
15. Allan H. Spear, *Black Chicago*, 11–27; Kusmer, *A Ghetto Takes Shape*, 53–65; Roger Lane, *Roots of Violence in Black Philadelphia, 1860–1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 6–44.
16. Vital Statistics, Twelfth Census, Census Bulletin No. 88, "Population by Sex, General Nativity, and Color, by Groups of States and Territories, 1900," 9; Marcy Sacks, *Before*

- Harlem: The Black Experience in New York City Before World War I* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 22–23.
17. Ida Wells-Barnett, *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells*, ed. Alfreda Duster (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 18–20; Osofsky, *Harlem*, 15, 36.
 18. Ida B. Wells, *A Red Record: Tabulated Statistics and Alleged Causes of Lynchings in the United States, 1892–1893–1894* (Chicago: Donohue and Henneberry, 1895); W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1903), 13; Louis R. Harlan, *Booker T. Washington*, vol. 1, *The Making of a Black Leader, 1856–1901* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 134–287.
 19. Cranston, “The Housing of the Negro in New York City,” 327–332; Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1890), 98–101.
 20. Osofsky, *Harlem*, 46–52; Johnson, *Black Manhattan*, 58–73, 126–130; Citizens Protective League, *Story of the Riot* (New York: Arno Press, 1969).
 21. “Looking Into Race Riots,” *New York Times*, September 8, 1900; “Police Are Exonerated,” *New York Times*, December 9, 1900.
 22. “Negro Families Must ‘Move On,’” *New York Herald*, May 2, 1904; “Harlem Negro Colony to Fight Evictions,” *New York Times*, May 2, 1904; the *New York Times* article incorrectly names the pastor as “N. S. Betts” rather than N. S. Epps; the *Herald* article names the pastor as N. F. Epps rather than N. S. Epps.
 23. “Negro Families Must ‘Move On,’” *New York Herald*, May 2, 1904.
 24. “Harlem Negro Colony to Fight Evictions,” *New York Times*, May 2, 1904.
 25. Hood, *722 Miles*, 91–112.
 26. In 1904, \$100 was the equivalent of \$2,700 in 2013 dollars, as calculated by using the Consumer Price Index, <http://www.measuringworth.com/uscompare/relativevalue.php>.
 27. Manhattan Conveyances, Section 6, Liber 88, p. 183, New York City Register; *Trow’s General Directory of the Boroughs of Manhattan and Bronx, City of New York*, 1907; Thirteenth Census, Population, New York City, Enumeration District 536, Sheet 4A.
 28. Twelfth Census, Enumeration District 851, Sheet 15B; Conveyances, Section 6, Liber 86, pp. 346–347, 382–383; Liber 84, pp. 379–380; Liber 87, pp. 342–343; Liber 90, pp. 388–389, New York City Register; Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1- Population, New York City, Enumeration District 851, Sheet 15, 1900.
 29. Jared N. Day, *Urban Castles: Tenement Housing and Landlord Activism in New York City, 1890–1943* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 32–50.
 30. Conveyances, Section 6, Liber 87, p. 95, New York City Register; James Matlock Ogden, *The Law of Negotiable Instruments*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Callaghan and Company, 1922), 72–73; Conveyances, Section 6, Liber 84, p. 261; Liber 2530, p. 113; Liber 2535, p. 448, New York City Register.
 31. Conveyances, Section 6, Liber 86, p. 346, New York City Register.
 32. The loan made by the Kroehles to Thomas was a mortgage loan in which the buyers received the deed for the property; if Thomas defaulted on payments, the Kroehles would

- have needed to go through a foreclosure procedure to regain the property; this loan agreement is distinct from the land contract or installment loan, a lending tool that was later used in many cities with large African American populations moving into formerly white neighborhoods and unable to obtain traditional mortgage loans; in land contract purchases, the seller retained the deed of the property until all payments were made, and if one payment was missed, typically the seller had the right to reclaim the property quickly since the seller retained the deed; Fillmore W. Galaty, Wellington J. Allaway, and Robert C. Kyle, *Modern Real Estate Practice in Illinois* (Dearborn, MI: Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2001), 196. Beryl Satter, in *Family Properties: Race, Real Estate, and Exploitation of Black Urban America* (New York: Macmillan, 2009), described how the land contract became an essential tool of exploitation of black buyers in the Woodlawn neighborhood of Chicago in the 1940s and 1950s.
33. Day, *Urban Castles*, 32–56; Conveyances, Section 6, Liber 86, pp. 346–347; Liber 87, p. 95; Mortgages, Section 6, Liber 137, pp. 499–500; Liber 139; Liber 207, pp. 305–306; Liber 225, pp. 116–118, New York City Register; *Trow’s General Directory of the Borough of Manhattan and Bronx City of New York, 1904–05* (New York: Trow Directory, Printing, and Bookbinding Company, 1904).
 34. *New York Times*, 1904; Conveyances, Liber 119, p. 414, New York City Register; John W. Leonard, ed., *Who’s Who in New York City and State* (New York: L. R. Hamersly and Company, 1907), 270; “Real Estate Transfers: Recorded Mortgages,” *New York Times*, June 16, 1903; “Astor Wants Reduction,” *Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, January 14, 1911.
 35. Thirteenth Census, 1910- Population, New York City, Enumeration District 536, Sheet 4A. Information on the year that the Kroehles arrived in the United States was not included in the Census report; “Ethical Culture Fieldston School,” <http://www.ecfs.org>; *Ethical Culture School Record* (New York: Society for Ethical Culture, 1918), 78.
 36. Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1- Population, New York City, Enumeration District 851, Sheet 15; “Society,” *New York Times*, January 16, 1910; “Tammany Hall Delegates,” *New York Times*, September 27, 1897.
 37. Thirteenth Census, 1910- Population, New York City Enumeration District 1146, Sheet 4B; “A Feast of German Song,” *New York Times*, April 21, 1895.
 38. Bruce Levine, “The Migration of Ideology and the Contested Meaning of Freedom: German Americans in the Mid-Nineteenth Century” (Occasional Paper no. 7, 1992, German Historical Institute), 13.
 39. Leroy Hopkins, “Black Prussians: Germany and African American Education from James W. C. Pennington to Angela Davis,” in D. McBride, L. Hopkins, and C. Berkshire-Belay, eds., *Crosscurrents: African Americans, Africa, and Germany in the Modern World* (Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer, 1998), 68–70; Bruce Levine, “Against All Slavery Whether White or Black,” in *Crosscurrents*, 56–60.
 40. “Ethical Culture Fieldston School,” <http://www.ecfs.org>; Twelfth Census, New York, Statistics of Population, table 35, “Foreign Born Population, Distributed According to Country of Birth” (Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census, 1900), 800–803; Nadel, *Little Germany*, 9–35.

41. Conveyances, Section 6, Liber 68, pp. 181-182; Liber 86, pp. 414-415; Liber 87, pp. 342-343, New York City Register.
42. Conveyances, Section 6, Liber 68; Liber 86, p. 414; Liber 87, pp. 241-242, 342, New York City Register; Osofsky, *Harlem*, 94; "The Father of Harlem Called it Home," *New York Times*, June 16, 1991.
43. Lerone Bennett, Jr., "What's in a Name? Negro vs. Afro-American vs. Black," *Ebony* 23, (November 1967), 46-54.
44. Afro-American Realty Company prospectus (undated), 2.
45. Ibid.
46. Unsigned letter to Philip Payton, May 3, 1904, Booker T. Washington Papers, reel 248, box 245; the letter could have been written by Booker T. Washington or his assistant, Emmett J. Scott; Scott often wrote letters on Washington's behalf, and was also a friend of Payton's; in correspondence to Payton he addressed him as "Mr. Payton."
47. Maceo Crenshaw Dailey, Jr., "Booker T. Washington and the Afro-American Realty Company," *Review of Black Political Economy* 8, no. 2 (Winter 1978): 184-188.
48. "To Make Color Line Costly in New York," *New York Times*, July 26, 1904; "Afro-American Realty," *New York Times*, July 27, 1904.
49. James McCague, *The Second Rebellion: The Story of the New York City Draft Riots of 1863* (New York: Dial Press, 1968), 107, 178-179; Ernest A. McKay, *The Civil War and New York City* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 308; "New York Loses Pioneer Undertaker, James Thomas," *Chicago Defender* (National Edition), June 3, 1922.
50. In 1855 fewer than 100 men met the voting requirement for African American men that they own real estate valued at \$250. McKay, *The Civil War and New York City*, 11; Junius Henri Browne, *The Great Metropolis: A Mirror of New York* (New York: Arno Press, 1869, 1975), 25; Cranston, "The Housing of the Negro in New York City."
51. "To Make Color Line Costly in New York," *New York Times*, July 26, 1904; "Afro-American Realty," *New York Times*, July 27, 1904.
52. Johnson, *Black Manhattan*, 148-149; Hudson Realty Company Certificate of Incorporation, February 9, 1893, Hudson Realty Company Annual Meeting Minutes, January 13, 1902.
53. Conveyances, Section 6, Liber 85, p. 198; Liber 84, p. 307, New York City Register.
54. Twelfth Census, Enumeration District 617, Sheets 12A, 12B, 13A.
55. Afro American Realty Company pamphlet, 3.
56. Conveyances, Liber 96, pp. 4-5; Liber 96, pp. 9-10, New York City Register.
57. Thirteenth Census, Population, New York City, Department of Commerce, Enumeration District 1146, Sheet 4B; Enumeration District 536, Sheet 4A; Enumeration District 493, Sheet 7B; "A Feast of German Song," *New York Times*, April 21, 1895; "Society," *New York Times*, December 26, 1909; "The Swabian Saengerbund," *New York Times*, June 17, 1894; Hudson Realty Company Certificate of Incorporation, February 9, 1893.

3. FROM EVICTION TO CONTAINMENT

1. Charles Lockwood, *Bricks and Brownstones: The New York Row House, 1783-1929. An Architectural and Social History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), 242.
2. Elizabeth Hawes, *New York, New York: How the Apartment House Transformed the Life of the City (1869-1930)* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 153-154.
3. Hood, *722 Miles*, 13-26.
4. *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, January 7, 1906, 1.
5. Ibid. It is not clear whether Harlem was considered a less expensive district of Manhattan; it was when compared to areas such as Fifth Avenue, a portion of which was still lined with mansions of millionaires, or the Upper West Side, where apartment buildings for wealthier people were being built.
6. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 125, pp. 4-9, New York City Register. "Negro Invasion Threat Angers Flat Dwellers," *New York Times*, July 27, 1906.
7. Anbinder, *Five Points*, 95-102.
8. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 125, p. 7, New York City Register; if the building was sold after August 1907, the lease would have been canceled and Payton would have received a payment of \$750; Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 118, pp. 81-82, New York City Register.
9. <http://www.measuringworth.com/uscompare/relativevalue.php>.
10. Afro-American Realty Company pamphlet, 2.
11. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 125, p. 7, New York City Register; Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 118, pp. 81-82, New York City Register; [http://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/compare/- calculation based on the Consumer Price Index calculation method](http://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/compare/-calculation%20based%20on%20the%20Consumer%20Price%20Index%20calculation%20method).
12. Willford Isbell King, *The Valuation of Urban Realty for Purposes of Taxation. With Certain Sections Especially Applicable to Wisconsin* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1914), 54-59.
13. "Correspondence: Colored Tenants," *Real Estate Record and Builders' Guide*, January 26, 1907, 198, 230.
14. Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1 Population, Enumeration District 619, Sheets 17A-19B; Thirteenth Census, Population, Enumeration District 528, Sheets 1A-6B.
15. Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1 Population, New York, Manhattan Borough, Enumeration District 619, Sheets 17A-19B.
16. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 128, p. 147, New York City Register; "mulatto"—one white parent, one African American parent; "quadroon"—one-quarter African American; "octoroon"—one-eighth African American; these terms were commonly used in the South, particularly during the period when slavery was legal; use of the terms in the North was much less common.
17. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 128, p. 146, New York City Register.
18. Manhattan Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 108, pp. 204-205; Liber 120, p. 425; Liber 120, p. 427; Liber 121, p. 473; Liber 121, p. 474; Liber 128, pp. 145-150, New York City Register.
19. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 128, p. 146, New York City Register.
20. Ibid.; "Afro-American Realty," *New York Times*, July 27, 1904.

21. Evan McKenzie, *Privatopia: Homeowner Associations and the Rise of Residential Private Government* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 31–36.
22. Section 7, Liber 128, pp. 145–150, New York City Register; in 1895 New York State passed a civil rights bill that prohibited race discrimination in places of public accommodations; private homeowners were typically considered exempt since they could declare that their homes were not places of public accommodation but were available to people whom the homeowner desired to accommodate, as guests, renters, or purchasers.
23. Section 7, Liber 127, pp. 365–367, New York City Register.
24. John G. Taylor Identification Card, New York City Police Museum; Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1 Population, Enumeration District 100, Sheet 1; Manhattan Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 88, pp. 60–61, New York City Register; Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1 Population, Enumeration District 620, Sheets 9–10.
25. John G. Taylor Identification Card.
26. “Free Renting: Organizations Formed to Kill This Practice,” *Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide*, August 25, 1900, 235; “\$20,000 to Keep Negroes Out,” *New York Times*, December 8, 1910.
27. “\$20,000 to Keep Negroes Out,” *New York Times*, December 8, 1910.
28. The Assembly District boundaries were redrawn after every decennial federal census; Twelfth Census, Census Bulletin No. 88, “Population by Sex, General Nativity, and Color, By Groups of States and Territories, 9; Thirteenth Census, 1910, Bulletin, Population: “Composition and Characteristics of the Population,” New York, 43–45.
29. Thirteenth Census, Enumeration District 533, Sheets 8A–10B; Enumeration District 504, Sheets 1A–8B; Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 128, pp. 145–150.
30. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 151, pp. 134–146, New York City Register.
31. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 152, pp. 297–300; Liber 156, pp. 365–372; Liber 159, pp. 7–15, New York City Register.
32. “Status of Harlem Negroes,” *New York Times*, March 26, 1913.
33. Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Race, Space, and Riots in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 134–135; Gregory Mixon, *The Atlanta Riot: Race, Class, and Violence in a New South City* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004); Lois A. Carrier, *Illinois: Crossroads of a Continent* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 184–185; Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1- Population, Enumeration District 864, Sheet No. 19A.
34. “Bronx Cars to Come to Harlem, Colored Question Taken Up by Board,” *Harlem Magazine*, April 1913, 21–22; Osofsky, *Harlem*, 117–118.
35. “Status of Harlem Negroes,” *New York Times*, March 26, 1913. The majority of African Americans of this time were aligned with the Republican Party, then just over fifty years old. They considered that party more receptive than the Democratic Party to the needs of African Americans, as they had since its founding. Harlem did have an African American Republican Club, but a political connection to the Board of Commerce or its members is not clear.
36. “Many Injured When Young Rioters Battle on Bridge,” *Harlem Home News*, March 20, 1913.

37. “Court Pleads to Jurors to Be Fair to Negro,” *New York Age*, October 9, 1913; New York County District Attorney, Record of Cases, 1913.
38. Charles W. Anderson to Booker T. Washington, January 26, 1904, General Correspondence, Reel 248, Booker T. Washington Papers, Library of Congress; Booker T. Washington to Hubert Astley Paris, May 7, 1904, General Correspondence, Reel 248, Washington Papers.
39. Emmett J. Scott to Bertha Ruffner, November 29, 1913, General Correspondence, Reel 358, Washington Papers.
40. Ruffner to Scott, General Correspondence, Reel 358, Washington Papers.
41. James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: New Press, 2005), 80.
42. “Ask Sage Company to Buy Church to Keep Away Negroes,” *Harlem Home News*, June 19, 1913; “More Property Owners Agree to Exclude Negroes,” *Harlem Home News*, July 10, 1913; “Harlem’s Black Belt Is a Growing Menace,” *Harlem Home News*, July 24, 1913; “Harlem Property Owners Discuss Negro Problem,” *Harlem Home News*, July 31, 1913.
43. “Harlem’s Black Belt Is a Growing Menace.” The panicked environment undoubtedly hurt real estate prices, but this instability also occurred amid a general downturn in the real estate market; in looking at the year 1913, the *Real Estate Record and Builders’ Guide* of January 3, 1914, described it as “a year of uninterrupted and almost unprecedented stagnation.”
44. “Harlem Property Owners Discuss Negro Problem.”
45. “To Create a Demand for Harlem Property,” *Harlem Magazine*, August 1913, 17.
46. “Give Lie to White Realty Men’s Charges,” *New York Age*, August 7, 1913.
47. *Trow’s New York City Directory*, 1913; Census of 1910, New York, Manhattan Borough, Enumeration District 528, Sheet 5B.
48. *Raphael Greenbaum against Caroline Morlath*, Supreme Court of the State of New York, County of New York, 2; “Property Owners Contribute Funds to Fight Invasion,” *Harlem Home News*, August 28, 1913.
49. “Property Owners Contribute Funds to Fight Invasion,” *Harlem Home News*, August 28, 1913.
50. *Ibid.*
51. “‘Equal Rights’ Law in Effect Monday,” *New York Times*, August 30, 1913; the fines of \$100 and \$500 are comparable to \$2,400 and \$12,000 in 2012 dollars (www.measuringworth.com/uscompare/relativevalue.php).
52. Garrett Power, “Apartheid Baltimore Style: The Residential Segregation Orders of 1910–1913,” *Maryland Law Review* 42 (1983): 304–313. The Court ruled the ordinance unconstitutional because it could have prevented an owner of property from occupying it if the surrounding neighborhood was occupied by people of the opposite race. The revised law applied to owners who purchased property after the date of the law’s enactment. In 1917 in the *Buchanan v. Warley* case from Louisville, Kentucky, the Supreme Court found that such residential segregation laws were unconstitutional and that “the difficult problem arising from a feeling of race hostility’ [was] an insufficient basis for depriving citizens of their constitutional rights to acquire and to use property without

state legislation discriminating against them on the sole basis of color." The Harlem restrictive covenants were considered private agreements and therefore were not affected by this decision.

53. "White Property Owners Quarrel," *New York Age*, August 14, 1913.
54. *Raphael Greenbaum against Caroline Morlath*.
55. Section 7, Liber 135, p. 136; Liber 128, pp. 145-150.
56. *Raphael Greenbaum against Caroline Morlath*, Caroline Morlath deposition, September 4, 1913.
57. *Raphael Greenbaum against Caroline Morlath*, John G. Taylor deposition, August 1, 1913, 1.
58. Taylor deposition, August 1, 1913, 1-2; Taylor deposition, September 10, 1913, 1-5.
59. Morlath deposition, September 11, 1913, 1-5.
60. *Raphael Greenbaum against Caroline Morlath*, October 1, 1913; J. Delany Memorandum, October 14, 1913, Supreme Court, New York County.
61. Rebecca Kobrin, "Destructive Creators: Sender Jarmulowsky and Financial Failure in the Annals of American Jewish History," *American Jewish History* 97 (April 2013): 105-137.
62. African Americans and others periodically mounted challenges, and in 1948 in the restrictive covenant cases, the Supreme Court ruled that racial restrictive covenants were unconstitutional and violated the equal protection rights ensured by the Fourteenth Amendment. Clement Vose, *Caucasians Only: The Supreme Court, the NAACP, and the Restrictive Covenant Cases* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959; reprint, 1967).
63. *Trow's New York City Directory*, 1913; "Status of Harlem Negroes," *New York Times*, March 26, 1913.
64. *Trow's General Directory of the Boroughs of Manhattan and Bronx, City of New York, 1901*; Twelfth Census, Schedule No. 1- Population, Enumeration District No. 100, Sheet 2A; "The Migration of Abyssinian Baptist Church," diagram by Christopher Moore in "A Brief History of the Abyssinian Baptist Church" pamphlet, 1, Abyssinian Baptist Church Archives.

4. THE BATTLE FOR CHURCH PROPERTIES

1. Carroll, *Report on Statistics of Churches in the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890*, 38, 91. Gibson and Jung, *Origin*, Table 1, "United States—Race and Hispanic Origin: 1790 to 1990"; the total U.S. population in 1890 was 62,622,250; total 1890 population in New York State was 556,954. Kenneth A. Scherzer, *The Unbounded Community* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 185-189; "Dedicating the New Church," *New York Times*, December 1, 1890.
2. C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), 56; Adam Clayton Powell, Sr.,

Upon This Rock (New York: Abyssinian Baptist Church, 1949); Hewitt, *Protest and Progress*, 13-21.

3. Ray, *Life of Rev. Charles B. Ray*, 50, 51; Vincent Colyer, *Report of the Committee of Merchants for the Relief of Colored People, Suffering From the Late Riots in the City of New York* (New York: G. A. Whitehorn, 1863), 11.
4. Osofsky, *Harlem*, 83; Dunlap, *From Abyssinian to Zion*, 91.
5. Gurock, *When Harlem Was Jewish*, 7-21; Oscar Israelowitz, *Synagogues of New York City: A Pictorial Survey in 123 Photographs* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2007), 12.
6. Penelope Tuttle, *History of St. Luke's Church* (New York: Appeal Printing Co., 1926), 208-255.
7. *Ibid.*, 282. St. Luke's Hudson Street building was operated as a chapel by Trinity until 1976 when it again became an independent congregation called St. Luke in the Fields, the original name of St. Luke's when it was founded. www.stlukeinthefields.org.
8. "The Real Estate Sellers," *New York Times*, October 30, 1887; "Real Estate in Demand," *New York Times*, January 15, 1888; "Some Sales Reported by Brokers," *New York Times*, February 22, 1895; "The Real Estate Field," *New York Times*, March 1, 1896; Willensky and White, *ALA Guide to New York City*, 431-433.
9. "Race Row Started in St. Luke's Church," *Harlem Home News*, April 17, 1913.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Hewitt, *Protest and Progress*, 125, 135-138.
12. Jill Jonnes, *Conquering Gotham: A Gilded Age Epic—The Construction of Penn Station and Its Tunnels* (New York: Viking), 67, 84-86, 127-129, 154-155.
13. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 124, p. 449; Liber 127, p. 15; Liber 125, p. 470; Liber 127, p. 44; Liber 124, p. 500, New York City Register; "In the Real Estate Field," *New York Times*, March 15, 1907; Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 128, p. 146, New York City Register.
14. "Wants No Negroes in St. Andrews," *New York Times*, March 3, 1907; President Roosevelt had been criticized for inviting Washington to dinner at the White House in 1901.
15. "Criticize Dr. Van De Water," *New York Times*, March 4, 1907; "Says Stand Is Un-Christian," *New York Times*, March 4, 1907; "Supports by Dr. Van De Water," *New York Times*, March 5, 1907; "Whites and Blacks in Church," *New York Times*, March 5, 1907.
16. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 143, pp. 410-411, New York City Register; Notes of the Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of New York 1907, 71-77; "Church Sale Is Confirmed," *New York Age*, November 9, 1909.
17. "A Memorable Easter at St. Philip's," *New York Age*, April 7, 1910; Hewitt, *Protest and Progress*, 138-143; Willensky and White, *ALA Guide to New York City*, 448.
18. Hewitt, *Protest and Progress*, 138-139; Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 150, pp. 281-282, New York City Register; newspaper accounts note different sales figures.
19. "More Harlem Homes for Colored People," *New York Times*, March 26, 1911; Hewitt, *Protest and Progress*, 138-139.
20. Hewitt, *Protest and Progress*, 144.

21. Lawson Purdy (Warden of Church of the Redeemer) to Rev. E. C. Chorley, October 27, 1914, Church of the Redeemer Collection, Episcopal Diocese of New York Archives; "Church of the Redeemer," *New York Times*, October, 11, 1897; "A Rectorship in Dispute," *New York Times*, November 30, 1897.
22. Notes—Standing Committee of the Diocese of New York, March 3, 1910, 75, and April 7, 1910, 87, Episcopal Diocese of New York Archives.
23. Theodore Fiske Savage, *The Presbyterian Church in New York City* (New York: Presbytery of New York, 1949), 154–155, 194–195; Dunlap, *From Abyssinian to Zion*, 212.
24. *In the Matter of the Application of the Church of the Redeemer in the City of New York for leave to sell its Real Estate*, June 13, 1910, Supreme Court of the State of New York, New York County.
25. Conveyances, Section 7, Liber 151, pp. 134–146, New York City Register, June 7, 1910.
26. *Application of the Church of the Redeemer*; Notes—Standing Committee of the Diocese of New York, June 13, 1910, 99.
27. "Redeemer Church to Move," *New York Times*, June 26, 1910.
28. "Cornerstone Laid Despite the Rain," *New York Age*, June 23, 1910.
29. Lawson Purdy to Rev. E. C. Chorley, October 27, 1914.
30. Vestry Minutes, Church of the Redeemer, October 13, 1910, Episcopal Diocese of New York Archives.
31. Vestry Minutes, Church of the Redeemer, December 14, 1910.
32. Tuttle, *History of St. Luke's Church*, 357.
33. Ibid.
34. Vestry Minutes, Church of the Redeemer, March 27, 1913, April 14, 1913, June 5, 1913.
35. "Ask Sage Company to Buy Church to Keep Away Negroes," *Harlem Home News*, June 19, 1913; "Church of the Stranger," *New York Times*, November 21, 1898.
36. Vestry Minutes, Church of the Redeemer, December 17, 1913; Notes of the Standing Committee, January 12, 1914, 262; "High Church Sells Out," *New York Times*, January 21, 1914.
37. "Fate of Redeemer Church Arouses Property Owners," *Harlem Home News*, January 25, 1914; "High Church Sells Out," *New York Times*, January 21, 1914.
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