United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

___X___ New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

African-American Heritage Places in Helena, MT

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Helena's Early African-American Community, ca. 1862-1877
The Heyday of Helena's African-American Community, ca. 1877-1910
Decline and Endurance of Helena's African-American Community, ca. 1910-1970

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

_____ _____ _____

Signature of certifying official Title Date

_____

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

_____ _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 250 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Section E: Statement of Historic Contexts

African-Americans in the Montana Region before 1865

Helena, Montana is located in the Prickly Pear Valley in what is now southwest Montana. The history of African-Americans in Helena began before the city itself. In the 1850s, the Helena area and the surrounding region remained an integrated indigenous society tied to an international economy through the fur trade. At that time, the vast majority of African-Americans were enslaved, living and toiling as human property, primarily in the southeastern United States. Disparate events in the early 1860s would transform both the Helena area and the lives of African-Americans, and these events together produced Helena's initial African-American community.

Beginning in the seventeenth century, contests between European powers for resources and souls in North America created extensive interaction among groups participating in the fur trade. In their quest for currency in the form of glossy beaver pelts and other furs, Indians and Europeans first plied waterways easily accessed from either coast. As they moved inland up innumerable drainages, they relied on and created intercultural relationships spanning great distances. Indian and European trappers, traders and freighters traveled extensively and often intermarried with the Indian groups they encountered. By the late 18th century, fur trade activity combined with long-standing intertribal interactions to create a mixed milieu in the Great Plains and Rocky Mountain areas that would become Montana. In 1783, fur trade businessmen organized the North West Company to compete with the long-dominant Hudson's Bay Company. Competition between these two British Canada-based companies accelerated fur trade activity in the West: a mere ten years later officers of the North West Company, traveling on an Indian trail, had penetrated overland as far as the Pacific Ocean.[1]

Lewis and Clark's 1805-1806 journeys through the region, during which they traveled with an African-American man, York, who was Clark's slave, fired American imaginations about the prospect of profit in the Rockies (Figure 1). Fur companies based in St. Louis and elsewhere looked to extend their operations into Montana watersheds. British interests beat them to it: In 1808-1809, David Thompson and Finan McDonald established North West Company trading posts on the eastern shore of Lake Pend d'Oreille, along the Kootenai River near present-day Libby, and on the Clark Fork River near present-day Thompson Falls. The Hudson's Bay Company moved to claim its share of the western Montana market in 1810, when Joseph Howse established Howse House on the northern shore of Flathead Lake. By the time trappers employed by the American-owned Rocky Mountain Fur Company worked the region in 1828 "they found the Hudson's Bay Company entrenched in the area."[2] Entrenched it was. An 1821 merger with the North West Company had given Hudson's Bay control of the many

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[1] James McClellan Hamilton, *From Wilderness to Statehood a History of Montana* (Portland, Oreg.: Binford & Mort, 1957), 60; Michael P. Malone, Richard B. Roeder, and William L. Lang, *Montana: A History of Two Centuries*, Revised (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 42; Salish-Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee, Elders Cultural Advisory Council, and Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, *The Salish People and the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 82.

[2] Jeanne O'Neill and Riga Winthrop, *Fort Connah: A Page in Montana's History* (Stevensville, Mont.: Stoneydale Press Pub. Co., 2002), 26–27; Stevensville Historical Society, *The Bitterroot Valley, A Traveler's Guide* (Missoula, Mont.: Montana Press Publishing Company, 1976), sec. introduction; Glenn Chaffin, *The Last Horizon: The Rambling Chaffin Clan Settles in the Bitter Root Valley of Western Montana in 1864 and Helps Develop This Lovely Land* (Somerset, Calf.: Pine Hill Press, 1971), 76.

posts its former competitor had by then erected across the North. These the HBC ran in addition to its own chain of posts, which stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific.[3]

The mixed and mobile fur trade society fostered cultural, as well as economic and social, amalgamation. Although fur trade society was primarily composed of people of indigenous and/or European ancestry, it also included a variety of others. Fur trade posts in the Chicago area, for instance, dated to 1779, and Indians there reported that "the first white man who settled here was a negro."[4] Among the trappers who moved through the Montana fur trade region in the first decades of the 19th century were numerous men of African-American ancestry, including members of the Pierre Bonga or Bonza family; Baptiste Pointsable; Edward or Edouard Rose; Francois Duchouquette (whose black mother, Mary Ann Menard, bore 13 children and lived at Prairie du Chien); a man named Thillis or Willis who worked with Ashley's expedition in the Rockies in the 1820s; a partner or servant of Francois Chardon named Reese; John Brazeau or Brazo; Andrew and Dick Green of Bent's Fort (along with Dick's wife Charlotte); Auguste [Janisse?] of Fort Berthold; Joseph and Jasper of Fort Union; Jim Hawkins (who cooked at both Fort Union and Fort Laramie); Manuel Lisa's assistant George; and Polette Labrosse, among others.[5] These men, some free and some enslaved, worked on Missouri River steamboats, manned trading posts like Fort Benton—where in 1860 the American Fur Company employed "at least four black men"—and trapped and traded among mixed indigenous bands across the region.[6] They included many people whose names have been lost to history and a few well-documented men like James Pierson Beckwourth, a free man who arrived in what became Montana in 1825 with William Ashley's expedition. Beckwourth became a prominent figure in regional society, and in 1856 published a memoir, *The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth: Mountaineer, Scout, Pioneer and Chief of the Crow Nation of Indians.*[7]

The Gold Rush and the Advent of Montana Territory

When Beckwourth's memoir came out, the regional fur trade society it reflected was in the midst of a rapid, traumatic decline in the face of settler colonial invasion. Montana's first substantial gold strike at Bannack in 1862 created a headlong rush into the area, and early that year a single boat arriving in Fort Benton carried some 400 miners. By 1864, some 16,000 non-Indians lived in Montana Territory alone.[8] These newcomers, and others who followed in their wake, transformed the region into a bona fide colony of the United States. This early 1860s

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[3] O'Neill and Winthrop, *Fort Connah*, 137–39.
[4] Kenneth W. Porter, "Negroes and the Fur Trade," *Minnesota History* 15 (December 1934): 423.
[5] Ibid., 421–33; William Gwaltney Superintendent, Fort Laramie National Historic Site, "Black Fur Traders and Frontiersmen," 1994, http://www.lwfaam.net/wf/front_pio/furtrade.htm. Many of these men worked in the region that became Montana.
[6] Ken Robison, "On Being a Black American in Territorial Fort Benton," *Historical Black Americans in Northern Montana*, May 4, 2009. http://blackamericansmt.blogspot.com/2009/05/on-being-black-american-in-territorial.html.
[7] James Pierson Beckwourth and T. D Bonner, *The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth, Mountaineer, Scout, and Pioneer, and Chief of the Crow Nation of Indians.* (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1965); Nolie Mumey, *James Pierson Beckwourth, 1856-1866, an Enigmatic Figure of the West: A History of the Latter Years of His Life* (Denver, Colo.: Fred A. Rosenstock, 1957); Elinor Wilson, *Jim Beckwourth: Black Mountain Man and War Chief of the Crows.* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972).
[8] The territorial census of 1864 listed 15,812 residents in the territory of Montana. Elliott West, *The Last Indian War: The Nez Perce Story*, 1 edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 96.

influx included people from all over the world—Chinese immigrants, mainly male, accounted for about 10% of it—among them African-Americans.[9]

As they had in previous decades, during the early gold rush black people came to the region in a variety of capacities, some enslaved and traveling with their owners, some free and traveling of their own accord. A partial list of non-Indian people in what became Montana during the winter of 1862-63 included three men living at Fort Benton who were identified as "negro," ie. Phil. Barnes, Henry Mills, and Jas. Vanlitburg.[10] Other African-American people in the region could be found plying the many mountain streams in search of mineral riches: in August 1862, "an old man named Hurlburt, and two other [unidentified] men . . . and a negro" found gold on the Prickly Pear.[11] Two years later, in July of 1864, four prospectors encountered rich deposits in nearby Last Chance Gulch, inaugurating a rush to the valley and surrounding drainages.[12]

The new Last Chance discovery was among the most significant of many in the area at the time, and by 1865 gave rise to a bustling camp called Helena, rapidly on its way to being the largest of the region's mining settlements.[13] Preceding discoveries in locales across the Rockies produced similar localized influxes, and these nascent settlements and their occupants became numerous enough to justify creation of Montana Territory, established in May of 1864.

Created by a northern white Congress while Civil War raged in the East and "Indian" wars raged in the West, Montana Territory came into being at a momentous time for American race relations. Questions about race and racialized people, and their place in Montana law, dominated discussion when Congress considered the Organic Act that would create the territory. Foremost among the subjects debated was African-American suffrage. According to historian Jim Smurr, Congressmen argued "over striking the word 'white' out of the section on voter requirements," as "the pro-Negro people (and there were many of them) insisted that the Organic Act specify in plain English that Negroes could vote from the first election," while their opponents argued "that the question was academic because there were no Negroes in Montana to worry about." Senator Wilkinson of Minnesota testified in turn that "a friend of his who had moved from St. Paul to Montana . . . told him that there were indeed Negroes in Montana, and that 'one of the more respectable men in the Territory was a negro worth

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[9] Robert R Swartout Jr., "From the Kwangtung to the Big Sky: The Chinese Experience in Frontier Montana," in *The Montana Heritage: An Anthology of Historical Essays*, ed. Robert R Swartout Jr. and Harry W. Fritz (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 1992), 65.
[10] Peggy Thompson, "Inhabitants of Montana During Winter 1862-1863," accessed September 7, 2016, http://www.genealogytrails.com/mon/inhab1862.html.
[11] Henry N. Maguire, *Historical Sketch and Essay on the Resources of Montana: Including a Business Directory of the Metropolis* (Helena, Mont.: Herald Book and Job Printing Office, 1868), 47.
[12] William L Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (1979): 50; William L. Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," *Scratchgravel Hills 3*, no. Summer (1980): 9; Barbara Carol Behan, "Forgotten Heritage: African Americans in the Montana Territory, 1864-1889," *The Journal of African American History* 91, no. 1 (2006): 24, citing Lang, 50.
[13] Ellen Baumler, Kate Hampton, and John Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" (Helena, Mont.: MT Historical Society, 2014).

over fifty thousand dollars.'"[14] Ultimately, Congress "restricted the vote to U.S. citizens" living in Montana Territory. When the first territorial legislature met in Bannack later that year, legislators "wrote a law prohibiting black suffrage."[15]

Civil War and Southern Reconstruction

While legislators in the mining camp-cum-territorial-capital of Bannack labored to limit the legal rights of black people within the fledgling Montana Territory, hundreds of thousands of people in the East killed each other over related questions. If the Civil War started in 1861 over a complex tangle of issues, and white people on both sides fought for a host of different reasons, by 1864 the war had nonetheless become a war of liberation. Although the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 freed no one—it applied only to slaves in states still in rebellion, ie. states where the Union couldn't enforce it—it nonetheless helped make the end of slavery the explicit goal of the war. Black people across the South increasingly seized the opportunity to "steal themselves," converting the rhetorical promise of emancipation into reality. The final defeat of the Confederacy brought freedom to those who remained enslaved, and by late 1865 four million people were liberated.[16]

Critically, the end of war and the end of slavery did not mean the end of white supremacy. Indeed, the war ultimately may have emboldened it: the Cult of the Lost Cause would be used to advance white supremacy thereafter. Like President Lincoln, many white Americans were simultaneously anti-slavery and anti-black, committed to black freedom but not racial equality, a position distilled in a popular saying of the post-war period, "slavery is dead, the negro is not, there is the misfortune."[17] White supremacy transcended regional boundaries, and as war gave way to Reconstruction, many whites across the country fought the extension of rights and opportunities to African-American freedpeople. The North professed a rhetorical commitment to help blacks help themselves, but freedpeople were unwelcome there. In the South, federal policy encouraged freedpeople to work for their former masters, and never pursued wholesale redistribution of land. The South soon settled into an enduring arrangement in which most black people worked as subservient agricultural labor (share/tenant farmers) controlled through credit, vagrancy laws, blacklists, and the courts. This oppressive arrangement ensured widespread black landlessness, poverty and insecurity. As blues lyrics put it, at harvest time when annual accounts were settled, it was invariably "figure to figure, all for the white man, none for the nigger."[18]

Widespread oppression, economic and otherwise, was often accompanied by violence. Reconstruction and its explicit extension of rights to black people depended on the presence of armed federal troops to enforce the law, and in many places even this proved insufficient. White southern Democrats formed the Ku Klux Klan in December 1865, and proceeded to terrorize African-Americans under its auspices until the Civil Rights Act of 1871, a.k.a. the KKK Act, led to the Klan's disappearance. Violent repression of black people was perhaps most

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[14] Smurr, J. W., "Jim Crow Out West," in *Historical Essays on Montana and the Northwest*, (Helena, Mont.: The Western Press, Historical Society of Montana, 1957), 157–158. Senator Wilkinson's "informant was Mr. [Nathaniel P.] Langford," who later wrote *Vigilante Days and Ways.*
[15] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 26.
[16] Leon Litwack (History 7B: The United States from Civil War to Present, University of California Berkeley, January 23, 2004).
[17] The original source for this saying is said to be the *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, May 12, 1865.

pronounced in border states like Missouri and Kentucky. In studying white terrorism against blacks during Reconstruction, Christian McMillen concluded that "no other state gave up the institution of slavery so grudgingly" as Kentucky. Enslaved black people in the state were not liberated until December 7, 1865, "six months after the end of the Civil War and almost two years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation," giving Kentucky the distinction of being the last state in nation to free its slaves. After being compelled to do so, Kentucky avoided Radical Reconstruction and white residents inflicted "exceptionally savage" violence on its black population.[19] Kentucky Unionists and Confederates joined in common cause against African-American people, terrorizing them with "lynchings executed by roving gangs," and "excruciatingly brutal accounts of rape." Freedmen's Bureau officials and black residents reported "'the cruel spirit of robbery, arson, and murder in Kentucky,'" and asked for protection from "the fiendish outrages of white people, who are in many cases banded together under the cognomen of 'Regulators' 'Nigger Killers' & c ."[20]

Despite the violence that accompanied the end of slavery, African-Americans struggled to exercise their freedom and make emancipation meaningful. They prioritized the basic rights denied them under slavery, pursuing control over their own bodies and lives. They sought the ability to reap the fruit of their own labor, to legally marry and form and maintain their own families, to move. In an agricultural society, land underpinned this independence, and freedpeople embraced the generalized American desire for land. But they also fought for more than mobility and family and farms, insisting that the proper boundaries of freedom included full citizenship, and recognition of equal humanity, as well as more prosaic things like the right to attend schools, pray in their own churches, negotiate wages, and work at their own pace. They sought to put into practice the promise of Reconstruction-era rights legislated by the 1866 Civil Rights Act and subsequent legislation. Before the Civil War only five northern states allowed black people to vote, and African-American office-holding was virtually unheard of. By 1877, some 2,000 black people had held federal, state, or local offices, including positions as Congressman, Sheriff, and Justice of the Peace.[21]

African-American Migration to Montana After the Civil War

These successes, however, did not change the fundamental context of life in the Reconstruction South, and many freedpeople sought to escape repressive regimes by moving. Localized mobility, however, often led to similar situations in a different town, and for some, it began to seem that truer freedom lay further afield.[22] Pushed by

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[18] Litwack, January 23, 2004; Leon Litwack (History 7B: The United States from Civil War to Present, University of California Berkeley, January 26, 2004).

[19] Christian McMillen, "Border State Terror and The Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge and Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890," *The Journal of Negro History* 79, no. 2 (1994): 214-215. Kentucky did not ratify the 13th Amendment, which in 1865 abolished slavery, until 1976. Only Mississippi took longer: it voted to ratify it in 1995, and actually ratified it in 2013.

[20] Ibid., 215–16. Quoting a July, 1867 "Petition of Kentucky black Soldiers to the U.S. Congress," and a April, 9, 1866 (Louisville) "Letter from Freemen's Bureau Chief Superintendent for the District of Kentucky to the Headquarters of the Kentucky and Tennessee Freemen's Bureau."

[21] Leon Litwack (History 7B: The United States from Civil War to Present, University of California Berkeley, January 28, 2004).

[22] Robin D. G Kelley and Earl Lewis, eds., *A History of African Americans Since 1880. Volume Two* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=364420.

local conditions and pulled by perceived possibilities elsewhere, significant numbers of African-Americans—especially those with "the economic means to do so"— began to migrate out of the south in the wake of the Civil War.[23] Many of them went to the North, long considered the land of freedom. A significant, if smaller, number headed west, and by 1880 about 10,000 African-American people had moved to the northwest states of Washington, Idaho, and Montana. [24]

Like others who migrated to the West in this period, black people arrived in Montana from varied places and by varied means. Into the 1870s, most Montana newcomers traveled by steamboat on the Missouri River—some 75% of the prospectors who panned for gold in Montana during the placer boom passed through Fort Benton as they came and went—and "many African Americans were working on the boats out of Fort Benton as employees." [25] (Figure 2) On the upper Missouri River boats, "black roustabouts were common," and the 1870 census of Montana Territory listed a number of African-Americans working in the steam-boat sector. Charles and Lucy Chapman, a married couple, worked together on the *Nellie Peck*, "the same boat that carried the Adams sisters to Fort Benton," were he was a cook and she a domestic. Horace Gray, a barber, worked aboard the *Key West.* That year in Fort Benton, "several single black 'river men'," were among the residents enumerated a single address, probably a boarding house.[26] An enslaved 11-year-old girl named Clarissa Jane Powell was brought to Montana from Pettis County, Missouri, by her owners, Philip E. and Mary (Powell) Evans in April of 1865. Clarissa was en route up the Missouri when she learned of Emancipation, and when she disembarked at Fort Benton she was free. Clarissa's future husband, James Crump, arrived in the territory shortly thereafter. Crump had enlisted in the Union Army at the age of 14 and served in the Civil War before striking out for Montana. By the late 1860s, in the employ of the Diamond R Overland Freighting Company, Crump was making a living hauling freight between nascent Montana settlements and Corinne, Utah, the terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad, where he and Clarissa married in 1869.[27]

Clarissa was born in Virginia and her husband James hailed from Missouri. Other early African-American immigrants boasted an assortment of origins.[28] William Bairpaugh, reportedly the "son of a Cherokee chief and an African American woman, was born in Indian Territory in 1859." He came to Montana "as a youth . . . and eventually acquired enough ranch land around Black Eagle and Great Falls to earn a reputation as one of the wealthiest African Americans in the northwestern U.S." [29] Samuel Lewis, a barber who settled in Bozeman in

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[23] McMillen, "Border State Terror and The Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge and Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890," 215.
[24] Quintard Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest: 1865-1910," *The Journal of Negro History* 64, no. 4 (1979): 342.
[25] John G. Lepley, *Birthplace of Montana: A History of Fort Benton* (Missoula, Mont.: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., 1999), 37; Behan, "Forgotten Heritage."
[26] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 29.
[27] Delia Hagen, "Crump-Howard House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form," September 2016.
[28] Bureau of the Census, "9th Census of the United States, 1870: Population Schedules: Montana, Lewis and Clark County" (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1870).
[29] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 30. "Bairpaugh reportedly gave away much of his wealth to the black poor in Great Falls, and he died there in 1928."

1866, hailed from Haiti. After arriving in Bozeman, he erected "several business buildings and his own home."[30] Traveling with the Louis Howell (or Houles) family, "Smoky" Wilson arrived that same year as a 10-year-old from Missouri. Wilson settled in Helena and then moved to Bozeman where he worked as "a stable boy for a livery man," before learning to break horses and riding the range for the Nelson Story "outfit." The Story "range was close to Crow territory," and "eventually Wilson went to live with the Crow Indians . . . when the Crows came to Fort Ellis, army officers called upon Wilson to act as interpreter."[31] In the 1870s, H. Porter Grove, born a slave in 1851, and William 'Wild Bill' Haywood arrived in Montana. Grove developed mining claims at Radersburg, and then "went East to sell mining stocks to others of his races," an endeavor so successful that he became a millionaire.[32] Haywood was a cowboy who came to the territory on a cattle drive and settled in Great Falls.[33]

In 1876, 44-year-old Annie (Agnes) Morgan traveled to the territory as a cook for General Custer. Morgan left Custer's service sometime before the battle of the Little Bighorn and made her way to Philipsburg. While there, she was hired by Granite County Attorney Durfee to "take a liquor-loving uncle who drank too much to a cabin on Rock Creek and care for him." After Durfee's uncle moved on, Morgan remained in the Rock Creek valley, developing a homestead that is now listed on the NRHP [NR Reference #05000011].[34] The following year, Sarah Gammon, born a slave in North Carolina, came to Montana with "a Confederate veteran's family." She settled in Virginia City, and went on to own the Virginia City water company.[35] Others who arrived from distant places in this period included teamster William Taylor, chef John Gordon, sisters Parthenia Sneed and Minerva Cogswell, who ran a restaurant in Virginia City, , Mary Gordon, who ran a restaurant in White Sulphur Springs, and Mary Fields, who drove stage and did the mail route between Cascade and St. Peter's Mission.[36]

As these anecdotes suggest, African-American migrants to Montana in the post-Civil War period were, like western migrants writ large, a diverse group of travelers. But unlike most migrants, black people who moved west

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[30] B. Derek Strahn, "Samuel Lewis House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" (Bozeman City Historic Preservation Office, March 18, 1999), http://npgallery.nps.gov/nrhp/GetAsset?assetID=36655e35-5444-440a-b695-c66cd500db74.

[31] Lucille W. Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung," *Montana Business Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (Summer 1972): 40.

[32] Ibid., 41. "His wealth faded when the mines failed to produce and he had blown his stockholders' money." When he died in 1911 the Helena IR headline read "H. Porter Grove Dies A Pauper One Time Millionaire, Negro Frozen to Death Near Radersburg"

[33] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 29–30.

[34] Delia Hagen and Janene M. Caywood, "Morgan-Case Homestead National Register of Historic Places Registration Form," July 2004.

[35] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 32.

[36] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form." Montana State Historic Site Records for the Cogswell cabins and Sarah Bickford's Hangman's Building in Virginia City were completed in 2016. Neither Rose Gordon's Café nor her house are still standing in White Sulphur Springs. Perhaps link to Mary Fields' essay on Montana's Women's History Matters webpage features essays on Mary Fields, Sarah Bickford, and Annie Morgan and Bertie Brown WHM, "Mary Fields," *Women's History Matters*, 2014, http://montanawomenshistory.org/tag/mary-fields/; WHM, "Celebrating Sarah Gammon Bickford," *Women's History Matters*, August 14, 2014, http://montanawomenshistory.org/celebrating-sarah-gammon-bickford/; WHM, "Two Legendary African American Homesteaders," *Women's History Matters*, October 7, 2014, http://montanawomenshistory.org/two-legendary-african-american-homesteaders/.

shared specific experiences that set them apart and shaped their migration and settlement. The most obvious of those group experiences were slavery and emancipation, which gave African-American migration a particular meaning. As historian Leon Litwack emphasizes, "freedom permitted them to take their labor elsewhere. For many . . . in fact, this right constituted the very essence of their new status."[37] If the freedom to move was particularly meaningful for African-Americans due to shared experiences of slavery, moving West was especially alluring due to shared experiences during Reconstruction. As noted earlier, for black people living in the South, Reconstruction was a violent period. Christian McMillen suggests that we can understand the "attempts of some freedpeople to escape this violence as a crucial link between Reconstruction and westward migration. The particularly hostile and stifling environment for blacks in the border states of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri may well have been what motivated many to go west during this period." In Kentucky, as elsewhere, "most blacks continued to be denied protection from physical violence as well as opportunities for economic or social advancement."[38]

African-Americans shared certain pull as well as push factors that shaped their westward migration. The so-called frontier, "being a supposed 'hotbed of economic opportunity,' may have been especially attractive to blacks of the poverty-stricken South." The West seemed to offer other opportunities as well. We earlier noted "the importance of re-forming kinship ties and strengthening familial relationships among freedpeople during Reconstruction," and doing so may have seemed most possible in the West. There, "along with the *freedom from* violence would come a *freedom to* create families and communities in which they could thrive." In Montana, black settlement thus connected African-American history with the history of the frontier, reflecting "both an escape from the violence of Kentucky as well as an effort to build a democratic community in which not only their survival was guaranteed but in which they could," ideally, "flourish."[39]

The Southern repression and poverty that motivated black westward migration also molded its character. In part because of geography—ie. adjacence to the Missouri River travel corridor—and in part because of history—including the centrality of St. Louis in the fur trade—the state of Missouri accounted for an enormous share of Montana migrants during the territorial period. Indeed, its dominance in the origins of early Montana immigrants was so profound that one historian called the territory and its Fort Benton port "practically an appendage of the state of Missouri." The overrepresentation of Missouri in Montana Territory's population was even more pronounced among African-Americans, 41% of whom were born in Missouri and Kentucky. Virginia and West Virginia also produced large portions of Montana's black populace. As Christian McMillen persuasively argues, that may have been due to the intense post-war violence against freedpeople in border states.[40] But if repression drove migration from the South to the West, it also limited it. Deeply impoverished, many black people could ill-afford the expense of relocating to the West. Doing so, was in fact an option mainly for the more fortunate. By and large, "African Americans who migrated west were relatively well educated and skilled." This was definitely

[37] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage." 24 Quoting Litwack, Been in the Storm So Long, 1979, 291.
[38] McMillen, "Border State Terror and The Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge and Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890," 212.
[39] Ibid., 213.
[40] McMillen, "Border State Terror and The Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge and Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890." Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 24; Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 160.

the case in Montana: in 1870, a time when the literacy rate for the nation's black people was about 20 percent, "at least half and possibly as many as 75 percent of African Americans . . . in Montana were literate."[41]

Montana and Early African-American Communities in the Reconstruction-Era West

As with migration, the specificities of African-Americans' situation produced distinctive patterns of western settlement. Intent on living their lives on their own terms to the extent possible, black people, unlike most immigrants to the West, settled primarily in cities and towns. There, where numbers provided relative security, they created "the core of Afro-American community life in the region." Seattle and Portland soon boasted identifiable black communities, as did smaller inland urban areas like Butte and Helena in Montana. Once in the cities, when their population was sufficient, they organized community institutions to establish social roots in a new and unfamiliar setting. Black residents "established churches and fraternal orders. Newspapers and other business enterprises were founded to serve a black clientele, and Afro-Americans began to respond in an organized manner to infringement of their civil rights."[42] Crucially, "black churches, clubs, and fraternal organizations mirrored those in the dominant society *in form* but served distinct purposes for a black population whose 'core value' was self-determination within white society."[43]

Organized around shared institutions, these early African-American communities were further bound together by the common impediment of structural racism, especially in the realm of employment. Cities provided job opportunities, but most black people found themselves relegated to a limited number of low wage positions. Common occupations included "domestic service, unskilled labor, and some skilled trades." [44] Many of these African-American wage workers were women, who, "out of economic necessity, have [historically] been two to three times more likely than white women to work outside the home." Like black men, "black women held proportionately more unskilled jobs that white women, mostly as servants, cooks, and laundresses . . . in the eyes of many employers, there activities were logical extensions of the roles of enslaved women."[45]

Shared values and commitments reinforced the internal institutional and economic ties in African-American communities. They included a "commitment to education, respectability, and social justice," as well as an emphasis on "kinship ties." [46] This last was a particularly potent element of African-American experience across the country. There was "a general but deep-seated desire among African American families after emancipation for the woman to stay home to raise the children and care for the elderly."[47] The community cohesiveness promoted by shared values was itself also a priority of black people in this period. In western places like Montana, this was demonstrated by "a strong tendency among individuals who acquired any level of wealth—whether through entrepreneurship, strict saving, or even illegal enterprises—to share it with those less advantaged in their communities."[48]

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[41] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 32.
[42] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 342.
[43] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 35–36.
[44] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 342.
[45] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 31.
[46] Ibid., 35-36.
[47] Ibid., 31.
[48] Ibid., 35-36.

Nascent black communities in Montana developed much like their counterparts across the region. The territorial census of 1870 listed 187 categorized as "black" or "mulatto," and most of them lived in the territory's larger settlements, clustering in Bozeman (12), Fort Benton (14), Virginia City (20), and, especially, Helena (66). Although the majority of the territory's African-American residents were male (128, 20 of whom were under 18), women and children made up significant portions of the population (there was a total of 45 black people under 18). Many people lived in family units: 37 households in the state contained two or more black occupants. About one in six men worked as barbers (22 of 128): "As one of the few professions open to African American men after the Civil War, barbering was a popular field, well respected in the black community, highly mobile, and much needed in western mining, military, and ranching towns."[49] Other common occupations included laborers (25 men used this term, some specifying "farm laborer" or "day laborer," while another five used some version of worker, ie. ranch or farm worker); domestics, servants or domestic servants (14); and cooks (17). Some men worked in "gulch mining" (6 men listed this occupation, and another 2 listed "mining"), while three were waiters and three were teamsters. One man was a bell ringer, one a messenger, one a launderer, and one a wood chopper. A few in the skilled trades or in professional positions (there was one sluice box maker and one clerk), and one man, a saloon keeper, owned his own business.[50] Of the 59 black females in the territory, 34 were 18 or older. Most of these women (19) were at home "keeping house" but women and girls also frequently (14) worked "as servants of white families, some in remote places miles away from towns."[51] Two other women did washing and one—Lizzie Williams—was a "restaurant keeper" in Bozeman.

Helena's Early African-American Community, ca. 1862-1877

Nearly one-third of the African-American people in Montana in this period lived in Helena, with others nearby in the Prickly Pear Valley and elsewhere, while over 55% (104 of 187) listed Helena as their postal address.[52] Helena was, by far, the most significant black community in the Territory. It was also one of the most significant in a much larger region. According to historian Quintard Taylor, Helena boasted the second oldest black community in the Pacific Northwest. As noted earlier, a black man was among the three prospectors who discovered gold in the area in 1862, making African-Americans an integral part of what has become Helena's origin story. Just three years after the 1864 gold discovery, black people in burgeoning Helena were numerous enough to establish and support community institutions. In 1867, "a clergyman named McLaughlin and several black families organized a church society that prospered through the 1870s."[53] At the same time, Helena's African-Americans also started the Pioneer Social Club.[54] This early community core attracted black newcomers, and Helena's African-American population continued to grow. In subsequent years "many black cowboys and

[49] Ibid., 29.
[50] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form"; Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 29–30.
[51] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 31. Fourteen women and girls worked in this capacity.
[52] Bureau of the Census, "9th Census of the United States, 1870: Population Schedules: Montana, Lewis and Clark County."
[53] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51.
[54] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 344. Taylor identifies the Pioneer Social Club as a Helena organization. According to Barbara Behan, Virginia City had a "Pioneer Social Club" that was one of state's first African-American organizations. Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 34. It is unclear whether there were two Pioneer Social Clubs or whether one of these authors places the organization incorrectly.

soldiers," among others, "chose to settle in Helena, if even briefly, because already a vibrant black community had developed."[55]

Helena had by then grown from a raw mining camp into a surging "Silver City." The lucrative Last Chance Gulch deposit produced about 19 million dollars in its first four years, and frenzied mining activity drove Helena's growth. Residents filled the original 1860s Helena Townsite, which straddled Last Chance Gulch, and speculators soon claimed the surrounding lands. The town boasted hundreds of businesses serving a mixed milieu and many needs of miners, freighters, merchants, etc. Residents represented an array of backgrounds—the town soon had cemeteries for the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths—and could choose from Democratic and Republican newspapers. Helena's public school soon counted some hundred students. Frequent stages connected the city to Fort Benton and other important settlements like Salt Lake City and Corinne, Utah (about 5 days and 550 miles away). After 1866, a new telegraph line linked the Silver City to the United States.[56] The following year, A. K. McClure visited in the course of writing *Three Thousand Miles Through the Rocky Mountains*. Helena, he wrote,

> "has all the vim, recklessness, extravagance, and jolly progress of a new camp. It is but little over two years old, but it boasts of a population of seven thousand five hundred, and of more solid men, more capital, more handsome and well-filled stores, more fast boys and frail women, more substance and pretense, more virtue and vice, more preachers and groggeries, and more go-aheadative-ness generally than any other city in the mountain mining regions."[57]

Just after McClure's visit, placer mining played out and Helena's population dropped. But it remained the largest settlement in Montana Territory, with 3,106 of the territory's 20,600 residents listed in the 1870 census. Like most young cities that started from mining, its population was heavily male, with males outnumbering females three to one, and remarkably diverse. Indigenous people continued to form a significant, if under reported, portion of the population, and non-Indian immigrants came from points around the world, representing every American state and many foreign nations. Among the town's numerous ethnic enclaves were significant groups of Irish, Jewish, Chinese, and African-American people.[58]

In 1870, Helena's African American community, according to the census, contained 66 residents, of whom 35 were men and 13 were women, with 18 children (ie. under the age of 18, 6 boys and 12 girls). These people lived in 33 separate households. Thirteen of these households included two or more black people in them, and there were at least six African-American families with children, ie. surnames Starley, Brown, Robinson, Cooper, William, and Howard (this last a lone mother and her 3 year-old). Although census records provide no addresses

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[55] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51.
[56] Delia Hagen and Ann Emmons, "Results of a Cultural Resources Inventory of the Montana Department of Transportation's North Montana Avenue Safety Improvement Project, Lewis and Clark County, Montana" (Missoula, MT: Historical Research Associates, February 2002), 5; Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[57] Alexander K McClure, *Three Thousand Miles Through the Rocky Mountains* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1869), 285.
[58] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form"; Vivian Paladin and Jean Baucus, *Helena: An Illustrated History*, 1st edition (Helena, Mont.: Falcon Press Publishing Co., 1983), 28.

for Helena in 1870, no additions to the original townsite had been platted at that point. Black residents likely lived mostly within the confines of the townsite, a crowded, chaotic cluster of buildings—mainly built of wood and log at first but increasingly of brick after a foundry opened by 1867—set amidst active mining claims.[59]

Among the black men who lived in Helena in 1870 were eight barbers. Many, perhaps most, of these men likely ran their own establishments. Two of them possessed substantial assets in "personal [vs. real] estate," with Peter Lee reporting $300 and Edward E. "Dude" Johnson (possibly Helena's first mayor mentioned below) reporting $1,000. Most other black men (12) in Helena in this period worked as laborers, one of whom was a man of some means: William Robinson had $200 in real estate and $250 in other assets. Other men made a living as domestic servants (2) or as waiters (3), one man was a messenger and one a "bell ringer." Two Helena black men were cooks (incl. Square Colont or Squire Calvert, who reported real estate and personal assets totaling $300), while Benjamin Franklin was a clerk with a thousand-dollar "personal estate." Sluice-box maker Joseph Starley owned real estate and other assets worth $600, and saloon-keeper James Beel had $1,000 worth of real estate and another $400 in personal assets, making him the wealthiest of Helena's African-American residents. Most (9) of the 13 black women in Helena stayed home "keeping house." Two women worked as domestic servants (as did two teenaged girls), while the two other women who reported occupations worked as washerwomen. Only one Helena woman, reported assets of her own. Forty-year-old Lousia Brown, originally of Virginia, lived alone and possessed real estate worth $200.[60]

Black people made up just over 2% of Helena's 1870 population, and the community's cohesiveness and activism ensured a visibility that exceeded its numbers. When the 15th Amendment to the Constitution—securing African-American men the right to vote—was ratified that year, black Helenans planned a public celebration and published a letter of notification in the *Daily Herald* on April 15th, writing "We, the colored citizens of Helena, feeling desirous of showing our high appreciation of those God-like gifts granted to us by and through the passage of the 15th amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and knowing, as we do, that those rights which have been withheld from us, are now submerged and numbered with the things of the past, now thank God, is written and heralded to the wide world that we are free men and citizens of the United States—shorn of all those stigmatizing qualifications which have made us beasts . . . declare out intentions of celebrating the ratification of the 15th Amendment, on this 15th day of April, by the firing of thirty-two guns, from the hill and to the south of the city. Signed: Benjamin Stone, President; J.R. Johnson, Secretary."[61] A "jubilant mass demonstration on Main Street" accompanied the 32-gun salute.[62] The following year, Helena's black community organized a political club to continue promoting its agenda. The club campaigned for candidates like Republican William H. Claggett, who was running for territorial delegate.[63] In 1874, a black barber originally from Washington D.C. named Edward W. Johnson became (unincorporated) Helena's first mayor.[64]

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[59] Ellen Baumler, *Helena, the Town That Gold Built: The First 150 Years* (HPNbooks, 2014), 13–17.
[60] Bureau of the Census, "9th Census of the United States, 1870: Population Schedules: Montana, Lewis and Clark County."
[61] Transcribed in Jean I. Castles, "The West: Crucible of the Negro," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 19, no. 1 (1969): 84.
[62] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 52.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Gordon Morris Bakken et al., *Encyclopedia of Immigration and Migration in the American West* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2006), 300, http://www.credoreference.com/book/sageimaw; Baumler, *Helena, the Town That Gold Built :*

Race Relations in Montana Territory and early Helena

The successful establishment of Helena's early black community suggests that the West may indeed have offered relative freedom and security, as many black migrants had surely hoped. But the key word is relative. In Reconstruction-era America, white supremacy knew no regional bounds. As they did elsewhere, African-Americans in Helena and the surrounding region faced a spectrum of obstacles and attacks, ranging from daily interpersonal discrimination of all sorts to legal limitations and deadly violence. Montana was "a far less hospitable place for African-American than for white migrants," and "was not regarded by colored people as heaven on earth."[65]

Anti-black racism was the stock-and-trade of territorial public life. Montana newspapers and other media contained "all the stereotypes" of African-Americans during that period, "including that old favorite, the genial but dumb domestic."[66] Those same papers "excluded discussion of black citizens' activities," while "territorial business and city directories omitted black people, organizations, churches, fraternal orders, [and] clubs." Although some Republican newspapers editorialized in favor of civil rights, they nonetheless frequently printed racist, derogatory depictions of black people.[67] In other instances, the media was more aggressively anti-black. In the late 1860s, the *Helena Gazette* "editorialized vitriolically against black suffrage," while the editor of another Montana paper declaimed the supposed threat of interracial marriage. After recounting a story about a black man (a "lecherous old African") in California who wanted to marry a white woman, he asked "if they have no rope in San Francisco strong enough to support the weight of a negro." In subsequent editions of the paper he weighed in on proposed legislation that would forbid "whites to cohabit with Indians, Chinese, or persons of African descent." Such interracial relations, he wrote, were "an evil and disgusting violation of natural law," and the legislation should be adopted, perhaps with an amendment that added "Chinese persons of African descent."[68]

Anti-black sentiment not only pervaded public discourse but infected territorial government as well. Recall that many early Montanans emigrated from the South, and while the South had no monopoly on white supremacy, its white residents could be vociferous on the subject of black subordination, especially in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War. Historian J.W. Smurr noted that "Montanans were very much like their fellow countrymen on the question of Negro equality," but their expression of white supremacy had a particular cast.[69] Smurr likened Montana "to an antebellum border state in which southern sympathy was strong, but not so powerful as to 'reproduce a bit of the Old South in the New West.'" In its approach, "Montana Territory passed over the Radical Republican theory of Negro rights and adopted instead the attitude popular in the New South." In his study of "Reconstruction on the frontier," Eugene Berwanger described the first territorial legislature as "overwhelmingly

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The First 150 Years, 26. The 1870 census indicates that year, 32-year-old boarder Edward Johnson lived with several other members of the African American community and reported a personal estate worth $1000.

[65] McMillen, "Border State Terror and The Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge and Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890," 218; Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West."

[66] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 162.

[67] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 27.

[68] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 52. See *Gazette*, June 15, July 13; for allegations of blacks as pawns of Repubs see *Rocky Mountain Gazette,* Aug. 6 1873—"Unscrupulous white demagogues" send black men "to the polls well liquored up to bully and insult white men."; Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 161.

[69] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 155.

pro-southern and Democratic, so much so that the editor of the *Montana Post*, characterized it as 'a body of secessionists, openly proclaiming to be citizens of Dixie.'"[70]

Whether it was due to "embittered Southerners" who wrote "their prejudices into the public law" or the result of broadly shared white supremacist convictions, the legislative debates in Montana Territory were rife with anti-black elements.[71] Across the West, whites "disagreed about black suffrage, education, and the need for legal segregation; and the conflict was especially polarized and virulent in Montana and Idaho. Confederate sympathizers in those territories, including many from Missouri, contributed to a significant pro-Confederate element in the late 1860s. In Montana, southern supporters clashed fiercely with Republican territorial officials." In the territory's legislature, "the first point of the Reconstruction debate was African American suffrage."[72]

The debate over suffrage gave way to discussions about segregation, and here Montana legislators were more unified, for "almost universally, whites in the Far West and elsewhere drew the line at what they termed 'social equality.'"[73] Indeed, what became known as "the segregation bill," was initially introduced in 1872 in the House by a representative originally from New York, Daniel Searles, and "the leading Republican newspaper, the *Herald* of Helena, supported his bill from the first."[74] When the bill, which provided for segregation of black schoolchildren, was considered in the Council, Granville Stuart, who had an indigenous wife and children, spearheaded the review. Stuart and "his committee thoroughly amended the House bill but did not alter the section on segregation."[75] For the most part, debates over the bill reflected the legislators shared anti-black racism, and seemed to center on practical or legal issues rather than moral ones. When it came to legal authority, it was argued that the 14th Amendment (1868) didn't apply to territories so "a Territory could legislate stringently against non-whites."[76] But legislating segregation and putting it into consistent practice were two different things. Almost nowhere in the territory was it "financially practical to have two public schools, and there was considerable controversy over whether and how to educate the few African American children in several towns."[77]

After discussing these details, in Montana's territorial legislators enacted the 1872 school segregation bill. The bill stipulated that "the education of children of African descent shall be provided for in separate schools."[78] Modeled on a California bill passed two years earlier, the bill allowed Montana "school districts to build separate schools wherever there were more than ten African American children."[79] Notably, California's law codified

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[70] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 25; Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 156.
[71] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 149.
[72] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 25.
[73] Ibid., 27.
[74] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 167.
[75] Ibid., 168.
[76] Ibid., 151.
[77] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 26.
[78] Glenda Rose Spearman Eruteya, "Racial Legislation in Montana: 1864 – 1955," (Master's Thesis, Political Science Department, University of Montana, Missoula, 1981), 30; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline," accessed July 20, 2016, http://svcalt.mt.gov/research/AfricanAmerican/AAinMTTimelineMain.asp.. See also Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West."
[79] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 26.

segregation practices that had existed in that state "at least since 1866" while "Montana was depriving Negroes of rights they had formerly enjoyed."[80]

The passage of the school segregation law may have dissuaded African-American children from attending school even before school districts actively excluded them. In 1873, across the territory, only 17 "colored" children attended school, and of the six counties with "Negro children in residence," only three "reported any colored boys and girls enrolled."[81] School officials nonetheless wasted no time trying to purge the few black children from the classrooms in their jurisdiction. In Deer Lodge, where the previous census "showed only fifteen colored residents" in the entire county, America Turner soon "receive[d] notice from Granville Stuart & fellow school district directors that her son 'is not entitled to a place in the public school . . . he will not be admitted.'" Excluding Turner's son initially ran aground on the teacher's refusal to eject him: described as "copper color," the Turner boy attended a school that contained many mixed indigenous children (like Granville Stuart's), and was "indistinguishable from his classmates." Ultimately, Stuart and his ilk prevailed, but the resistant teacher "had to be coerced."[82]

Other towns, too, purged black children from their primary schools. Virginia City had a "short-lived separate schooling arrangement," as did Fort Benton. In Fort Benton, "a black school was reportedly opened in 1878," but it apparently closed by 1882. Thereafter, "a conflict arose over the enrollment of a handful of black children in the public school for whites. Four white families withdrew their children when two girls of partial African American descent were admitted to the school."[83] The effort to segregate schools under the 1872 legislation, however, reached its fullest expression in Helena, the territorial capital and home of its largest African-American community. Helena became ground zero for the early fight over school segregation in Montana Territory.

In 1875, Helena's African-American community contained about 19 school-aged children. That year, some of these children's parents attempted to enroll them in the Hill Street School: an education for their children was "something they were anxious to get because of the prejudice against their race." In response to this attempted enrollment, the Helena School Board reorganized the city's public schools, creating the segregated South Side School for children deemed "colored." Creating an entire separate school for so few students, it did this at great expense: the South Side School "operated for three months during 1875 . . . [at] an average cost of $50" per student versus an average of "$10 for the whites."[84] The black community immediately began protesting the exclusion of its children. In 1876, 106 Helena black and white residents submitted "one of many petitions to the Montana legislature to repeal" the school segregation law. School segregation, petitioners argued, was

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[80] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 153.
[81] Ibid., 169.
[82] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 169.
[83] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 26.
[84] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51; Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 351; Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 172. The segregated black school on the south side may have become the Lissner School, constructed in that neighborhood in 1879."Helena Historic District (Addendum II, Central School Clarification): National Register of Historic Places Registration Form," 2013. Lissner was located on the corner of Pine and South Warren – near the black neighborhood there. It can be seen here on Vivian A Paladin and Jean Baucus, *Helena: An Illustrated History* (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 1996), 51. or here:"Helena As She Was -

"unnecessary and . . . effectively barred black children from an education." The House Education Committee rejected the petition, but community members continued their fight for equal education access, joined by some Republican and other allies, including the editor of the Helena *Daily Herald*, the Territory's Superintendent of Public Instruction Cornelius Hedges and eventually the Governor, Benjamin F. Potts.[85] Nonetheless, protests of the black community and it allies fell on deaf ears. The school segregation law, and Helena's segregated South Side School, remained in place.[86]

As much as they may have hoped otherwise, black people did not escape the danger of violent attack by moving West. Albeit reduced, violence remained a factor of black life in Montana. Some of this violence was state-sanctioned: public executions of African-Americans proliferated in this period. These public state killings made "a visual statement of great social impact," and "one the principal effects . . . was to promote racial terror."[87] Such may have been the result when, in 1875, Lewis and Clark County executed 38 year-old William Stears (a.k.a. "Red" Sterres), a barber who, with a white partner, ran a "barber shop on Main Street, at the foot of Broadway." The County hung Stears for alleged murder-robbery in the Helena jailyard.[88] Stears' sentence was "the first execution for murder, upon the verdict of a jury, that ever occurred in the territory." He successfully appealed his original guilty verdict, maintaining that he delivered only a non-lethal blow during the three-man robbery attempt that accidentally killed the victim, after which a mob threatened to pull him from his cell and lynch him, but "wiser counsels prevailed." In a quick second trial—it lasted just 2.5 hours—Stears was again found guilty and sentenced to death. "Forty or fifty" invited guests of the Sherriff, as well as "an immense number of spectators," watched him die: the drop failed to break his neck and for nine minutes he convulsed in agony.[89]

African-Americans in Montana in this period found themselves the victim of assault by the general public as well. For some, violence against black people was a veritable boyhood pastime: the "millionaire stock plunger of later years, William Boyce Thompson," fondly recalled "the colored boy in Virginia City whom the gang took delight in trouncing at intervals."[90] If simply being a "colored" boy could get you repeatedly beaten by mobs of white boys, attempting to exercise your legal right to vote as black man could get you killed by mobs of white men. In 1867, after Congress passed the Territorial Suffrage Act giving black men in territories the right to vote, Helena planned city elections in which some of its African-American residents intended to cast ballots. At least one Republican candidate courted black support, but "gangs of Democratic roughs circulated through town warning Negroes from the polls and threatening violence should they attempt to vote." One of the men in these

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An Open History Resource for Montana's Capital City," *Helena As She Was*, accessed July 22, 2015, http://www.helenahistory.org/index.htm.. Research failed to identify which school was meant by the "Hill Street School."

[85] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 351; Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51; Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 26.

[86] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 170–71; Calen Anacker, "Buffalo Soldiers in Montana (1888-1898) | The Black Past: Remembered and Reclaimed," *The Black Past: Remembered & Reclaimed*, accessed August 13, 2016, http://www.blackpast.org/aaw/buffalo-soldiers-montana-1888-1898.

[87] Steven A. Blum, "Public Executions: Understanding the 'Cruel and Unusual Punishments' Clause," *Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly* 19 (Winter 1992): 418-421.

[88] "DeathPenaltyUSA, the Database of Executions in the United States," *DeathPenaltyUSA.org*, http://deathpenaltyusa.org/.

[89] Robert Oakley Raffety, "The History and Theory of Capital Punishment in Montana." 1968, 86–108.

[90] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 162.

roving white mobs, "an Irish Democrat" named, appropriately, "Lynch," came upon "'Nigger' Sammy Hays, a well-known local colored man," and killed him. When the "Marshal … tried to jail the assassin [he] had to fight his way through a hostile crowd." Similar violence "was attempted in the same city in 1875 [and] the Negroes were forced to defend themselves, and this they did."[91]

African-American Settlement in Montana after 1877

Despite the possibility of violence that, even in relatively safe places like Montana Territory, pervaded the Reconstruction era, the twelve or so years after the Civil War were a time of great promise for African-American people. But in Montana and the nation at large, in the 1870s race relations shifted radically. As groups, both American Indians and African-Americans entered dark periods. In 1876, an huge intertribal coalition of Northern Plains Indians defeated the U.S. Army at the Battle of the Greasy Grass/Little Big Horn.[92] Despite their victory, the battle marked the end of indigenous people's mass armed resistance against the United States, and ensuing years brought settler colonial invasion and immeasurable misery to Montana's native groups.[93] The following year, the U.S. formally abandoned Reconstruction with the Hayes-Tilden Compromise, which gave the presidency to Republican Rutherford B. Hayes in return for a commitment to remove federal troops from the South. Sectional reconciliation became the order of the day, and federal troops, stationed in the South to protect black rights and black bodies, were withdrawn.[94] The ensuing period brought "'the nadir' . . . of African-American history."[95]

Reconciliation demanded not just the repudiation of Reconstruction—from which the South now needed to be "redeemed"—but the explicit embrace of ideas of innate black inferiority and of slavery as an unfortunate but benign institution. "Redemption" brought the emergence of a robust new nationalism based on Anglo-Saxon solidarity. Across the South, vicious attacks on black people became frequent. White supremacy issues—focused on variously nonwhite people—manifested in every U.S. region. By 1900, at least 3,011 African Americans had been lynched. In grotesque public spectacles, white people summarily—and with social sanction—hung, burned, and dismembered black people for "crimes" like "'insulting whites' and 'having bad manners.'" While most of these killings occurred in the South, some happened in other regions.[96] Less violent forms of repression also pervaded, becoming so thoroughgoing that one author described it as "'cradle to grave' segregation . . . In many parts of both the North and South, playgrounds and even cemeteries were segregated."[97]

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[91] Ibid.
[92] "The Black Past: Remembered and Reclaimed," *BlackPast.org*, n.d., http://www.blackpast.org/. Among those killed at the battle was US Army interpreter Isaiah Dorman, a black man who had long served with Sully, was married to Indian woman, and was fluent in Lakota. Dorman had lived with Sioux groups in late 1860s. In the wake of the battle, Charles "Smoky" Wilson, an African-American, was hired as a Crow language interpreter at Fort Custer. Wilson subsequently served in various capacities at Crow Agency for the rest of his life. Among his later positions was policeman at Crow Agency. See Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung," 40.
[93] The region's indigenes would fight another major battle against Canadian armed forces in 1885.
[94] Federal troops wouldn't return to protecting black bodies/rights until 1957.
[95] Kelley and Lewis, *A History of African Americans Since 1880. Volume Two*. Quoting black historian Rayford Logan.
[96] Gayle K Berardi and Thomas W Segady, "The Development of African-American Newspapers in the American West: A Sociohistorical Perspective," *The Journal of Negro History* 75, no. 3/4 (1990): 99.
[97] Ibid., 100.

When the dark days of "Redemption" began, fully 90% of the nation's 6.5 million African-Americans remained in the South. The vast majority of these (80%) lived in rural areas and worked in agriculture. As federal troops withdrew and whites reasserted racial subjugation with renewed fervor, and impunity, black people began emigrating in droves. Longing to escape, and encouraged by outspoken "African-American activists who advocated mass black emigration from the South" and urged black people to migrate to Africa or move westward, thousands of Southern black people embarked on the difficult and dangerous journey to the West. Their migration inspired Sojourner Truth to verse: "the word it has been spoken; the message has been sent. The prison doors have opened, and out the prisoners went."[98]

As before, migrants were simultaneously pushed from the South and pulled toward other places. The Redemption-era migrations constituted the first "large-scale movement of African-Americans to the West," a region of refuge that many "imagined a promised land free of white terrorism."[99] Indeed, historians who have studied relatively undocumented subcultures have argued that "migration West by African-Americans during this period was even more prevalent than demographic reports were capable of indicating."[100] Montana's black population roughly doubled during the 1870s, and then increased more than four-fold in the 1880s, its period of greatest growth. By the turn of the century, over 1,500 black people made their homes in the state, and by 1910 the census listed 1,834 black Montanans.[101] That year, sixteen cities in the Pacific Northwest (ie. Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon) had black populations numbering over 100 people. Of these, six were in Montana. [102]

As with previous migrations, the movement reflected patterns particular to the period. Amidst the decline of steamboats—the last of which docked at Fort Benton in 1890—and the related spread of railroads, river-travel was less salient. In the early 1880s people like "Anna Gordon, mother of the noted Harlem Renaissance musician Taylor Gordon," and Vindia Smith, who with her husband George established a ranch near Flood, traveled by boat, but, increasingly, others arrived in different ways.[103] In the 1880s, during the last years of the cattle drive era, "between 8,000 and 9,000 African-Americans were employed as cattle drivers," and many of these men remained at the end of the trail.[104] Others, like Maria Adams, who was a cook for General Custer, and Samuel Bridgwater, who enlisted in a "colored" Army unit in 1879 at the age of 18, moved overland with the U.S.

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[98] Kelley and Lewis, *A History of African Americans Since 1880. Volume Two,* 3-5.
[99] Berardi and Segady, "The Development of African-American Newspapers in the American West," 98–99; Kelley and Lewis, *A History of African Americans Since 1880. Volume Two,* ix.
[100] Berardi and Segady, "The Development of African-American Newspapers in the American West," 101.
[101] Bureau of the Census, "9th Census of the United States, 1870: Population Schedules: Montana, Lewis and Clark County"; Bureau of the Census, "13th Census of the United States, 1910: Population Schedules: Montana, Lewis and Clark County" (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1910); Bureau of the Census, "15th Census of the United States, 1930: Population Schedules: Montana, Lewis and Clark County" (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1930). Census information is based on transcribed spreadsheets of African-Americans in Montana's censuses produced by the MT SHPO.
[102] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 352. ID two, Oregon 1, WA 7
[103] Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung," 41; Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 29; Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[104] Berardi and Segady, "The Development of African-American Newspapers in the American West," 101.

military.[105] Those who came from railroad points to the east, like members of the extended Maxwell-Johnson-Palmer family, who lived in Bismarck before coming to Helena, likely traveled by train.[106]

Siblings Marion Johnson and Alice Johnson Palmer, both born in Kentucky, followed their mother Julie Smith Maxwell to Helena from North Dakota, and they were in many ways representative of African-Americans who migrated to Montana in the decades after the end of Reconstruction. Like migrants throughout American history, black people moved to Montana in patterns of chain migration, with later immigrants following friends and family members who'd gone, and settled, before.[107] In conjunction with the persistence of particularly vicious conditions in their birthplaces, this perpetuated the established demographic character of Montana's black community. As before, Missouri and Kentucky continued to account for a large portion of the population—people from Kentucky constituted "the bulk of Montana's 1880 black populous," and in subsequent decades former "Missouri residents practically formed small colonies within the black community."[108] So, too, did former Kansas residents, a fact that suggests another way the Maxwell-Johnson-Palmer family was representative, ie. in migrating west in a series of moves to successive frontiers, a trait black migrants shared with their white counterparts. Through the 1880s, "nearly three-fourths of new [black] arrivals came from western states and territories."[109] Migrants from Missouri, Kansas, and Colorado would predominate into the 20th century. Increasingly, they were joined by people from the lower South.[110]

Upon their arrival in Montana, African-Americans who migrated in this period settled largely in cities, heading to places with established black communities or to urban centers that arose with shifts in economic or military activity. From these bases, black people sometimes moved to smaller towns in the region, so that the African-American community spread in an interconnected web around Montana. Fort Benton's black population expanded significantly, and by 1900 "Great Falls, Anaconda, and Butte boasted numerous African-American residents."[111] Places with military bases like forts Assiniboine, Missoula, and Keogh (near Miles City, Figure 3) might have quite large black populations for a more limited period while "colored" companies were stationed there.

Other towns developed smaller but visible and enduring black population clusters, while rural areas oft contained a few black residents who composed a prominent part of the community. By 1880, the White Sulphur Springs area counted 18 black residents, including the Gordon family, whose daughter Rose reportedly "was the first "white" child born in White Sulphur Springs."[112] Seventy-five miles to the north, the town of Belt also boasted black residents from the beginning. After marrying a white freighter, John Castner, in Helena in 1879, Mattie

[105] Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung," 40.
[106] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[107] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 33.
[108] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51; McMillen, "Border State Terror and The Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge and Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890," 213.
[109] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 160.
[110] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51.
[111] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 343-44.
[112] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 36.

Bost went on to establish Belt, own the local hotel, and run a nearby cattle ranch.[113] She'd later be joined there by Maria Adams and Duke Dutriuielle, who married in Helena in 1881 and lived in Fort Benton, Butte, Marysville, and Helena—with Duke operating a barber shop called "Duke's Place" in each town—before settling in Belt during the coal boom of the 1890s.[114] By 1910, clusters of African-American residents could also be found in Bozeman, Dillon, Lewistown, Livingston, and Red Lodge, among other places.[115]

African-American communities developed as well in Billings and Havre, both of which boasted African Methodist Episcopalian (AME) churches by the beginning of the 20th century. In this period African-American individuals were also prominent in Virginia City (where Sally Gammon Bickford owned and operated the water company from 1881 until her death in 1931), Hamilton (where a "negroe" farmer supplied local restaurants with vegetables, Mammy Smith "operated a house of questionable reputation, and Missouri-born Tish Nevins ran a famed boarding house), and Libby (where "Montana's first black attorney John D. Posten" lived in 1893 when US District Judge Hiram Knowles appointed him U.S. Commissioner to the District Court). [116] Prominent Montana residents in other areas at this time included numerous African-American women, like "Stagecoach" Mary Fields, who in 1896 was evicted "from St. Peter's Mission, her home of 11 years," by Catholic Bishop Brondel and thereafter drove the "U.S. Mail stagecoach between the mission and Cascade"; Annie Morgan, whose aforementioned homestead on Rock Creek outside of Philipsburg is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places; and Kentucky-born Alice Palmer, who homesteaded in the Lincoln area, where she built tourist cabins—eventually completing 22 of them—that formed the nucleus of what later became the Palmer Subdivision.

The Heyday of Helena's African-American Community, ca. 1877-1910

As black people became integral parts of local places across the state, Helena continued to house Montana's most significant African-American community. By 1890, that community was some 279 strong and accounted for almost 20% of the state's black population. Twenty years later, the census listed 415 "black" or "mulatto" people in Helena. The Helena community was the state's largest—accounting for about one-quarter of Montana's total black population—and also its most important, serving as the heart of an interconnected web of African-American people that stretched across Montana and the surrounding region. In a testament to its regional importance, African-American newspapers in major cities to the east, like Kansas City and Minneapolis, regularly reported on affairs in Helena. In the Pacific Northwest, of the 16 cities that boasted 100 or more black

[113] Peggy Riley, "Women of the Great Falls African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1870-1910," in *African American Women Confront the West: 1600-2000*, ed. Quintard Taylor and Moore (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 129; Jon Axline, "Belt Commercial Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form," (Helena, MT: Montana State Historic Preservation Office, 2003).
[114] Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung," 40.
[115] Bureau of the Census, "13th Census, 1910."
[116] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 32; Glenn Chaffin, "Aunt Tish: Beloved Gourmet of the Bitter Root," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 21, no. 4 (1971): 67–69; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."

residents in 1910, Helena ranked second in black population. African-Americans constituted 3.4% of its 12,515 residents.[117]

Overall, Helena had, by 1910, grown to four times its 1870 size of 3,100. Its growth was driven by a series of developments. In 1874, the federal government selected Helena as the site of a federal assay office, furthering Helena's early prominence and eventual permanence. The assay office was one of only six in the nation, the other five in Deadwood, Boise, St. Louis, Charlotte (NC) and New York City. The following year, after a protracted battle, the territorial capital moved from Virginia City to Helena, bringing with it a host of government-associated activity, jobs, and people. Another surge of growth accompanied the 1883 arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad, which cemented the city's status as transportation center. Two other rail lines reached the valley by 1890, and animal-drawn stagecoaches and freight wagons gave way to the locomotives, boxcars, and Pullman coaches of the "iron horse." Although readily accessible placer deposits played out, employment opportunities expanded with the growing industrial sector, which by 1888 included a large smelter facility in East Helena. In 1889, Montana became a state, with Helena its busy center.[118]

Profits from mining and associated activity made Helena the richest city, per capita, in the nation during this early period. The capital's 50-plus millionaires embarked on an "orgy ornate residential building" in the late 1880s that gained Helena renown for its many mansions and transformed the face of the mining town. By 1890, Helena "claimed six national banks, four daily newspapers, and a population of just under 14,000," over 10,000 more people than it had in 1880. Two years later, in 1892, Congress authorized a U.S. Army base in Helena, and the Montana Club, in what seemed a promising investment, purchased property at the corner of 6th and Fuller and built a lavish headquarters. Growth screeched to a halt in 1893, with a sharp drop in silver prices and a nationwide depression, but the following year military officials arrived to establish Fort Harrison. At the same time, Helena beat Anaconda in the contest for state capital, securing the city's status as Montana's political and government center. Within a few years, the military had a significant presence in the Silver City: in 1898 "the First Montana Regiment, billeted in tents on Peosta Avenue, trained in the shadow of Mount Helena" before it sailed to the Philippines to fight the Spanish-American war. Workers laid the cornerstone of the state Capitol, on a rise just beyond the residential neighborhoods east of downtown, in 1899, and at a rain-soaked ceremony on July 4, 1902, leaders dedicated the impressive building "to good state government."[119]

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[117] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 352. Rosalyn, Washington, was 3.5% black in 1910. Baumler, *Helena, the Town That Gold Built : The First 150 Years*, 27; "Helena," *Minneapolis Observer*, November 20, 1890; "The Kansas City Sun. (Kansas City, Mo.) 1908-1924, May 18, 1918.".

[118] Paladin and Baucus, *Helena*, 1983, 28, 80-81 ; Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form"; Hagen and Emmons, "Results of a Cultural Resources Inventory of the Montana Department of Transportation's North Montana Avenue Safety Improvement Project, Lewis and Clark County, Montana," 5.

[119] Vivian A Paladin, *Valleys of the Prickly Pear: A History of the Valleys of the Prickly Pear* . (Helena, MT (1635 Sierra Rd., Helena 59601): Little Red Schoolhouse, 1988), 51; Hagen and Emmons, "Results of a Cultural Resources Inventory of the Montana Department of Transportation's North Montana Avenue Safety Improvement Project, Lewis and Clark County, Montana"; Paladin and Baucus, *Helena*, 1983, 80–81, 118–19. After Helena stopped growing and began shrinking in 1893, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company stopped mapping it. The company mapped the city in 1892, and then not again until 1930.

Although about 250 young African-American men moved to the city that same year, when four "colored" companies of the 24th Infantry were assigned to Fort Harrison, Helena's substantial African-American community was no unattached, transient, male enclave.[120] It was, rather, a flourishing group of interconnected families and individuals that built and cohered around a stable foundation of community businesses and institutions. By 1910, women accounted for some 43% of the city's black population, and about 1 in 5 residents was under the age of 18 while some 10% was 60 years old or older. Black Helena lived in about 103 households, some eighty of which contained two or more African-American residents. About 28 households contained families with children under the age of 18.[121]

These black households could be found in all areas of the city. The black community in Helena boomed with the city itself as, from 1879 until 1893, real estate developers rushed to plat additions to the original townsite. In both 1883 and 1886 eight additions were completed, and 1887 and 1889 each brought another six additions.[122] Some of these additions failed to attract residents, but those that did usually counted black people among them. Unlike numerous other towns in this period, including nearby Great Falls, Helena did not have strict residential segregation. Black people lived throughout the city, even on the edges of its famed mansion district (where some of them worked for wealthy whites). But at the same time, African-Americans clustered in certain areas, particularly the residential sections around the two black churches. The Baptist Church, built on the corner of Wilder and Harrison, marked a cluster of black homes in the Broadwater Addition (on streets like Peosta, Hollins, and Ralph), many of which included veterans of the "colored" Army units stationed at nearby Fort Harrison. Black families concentrated even more in the neighborhood around the St. James AME church, located east of downtown on the corner of 5th Avenue and N. Hoback Street. Another noticeably black neighborhood could be found in the vicinity of where South Main, West Main, State, Warren, Cutler, Clancy, Water, and Wood Streets came together, around the southeast section of downtown. Just west of there one could also find the center of black nightlife. Helena's residential neighborhoods were integrated but "in the case of public amusement and entertainment . . . the situation was decidedly different. Black society and white society in Helena did not mix."[123] African-Americans socialized at activities sponsored by the black community or at establishments in the Clore Street area, Helena's redlight district at the southern tip of downtown.[124]

At work, the occupational profile of African-American residents reflected a system of racial subordination that relegated most black people across the country to a limited number of difficult and low waged jobs. In 1880, "over half of black male Montanans (57 percent) worked as laborers, cooks, servants, or porters in the territory's population centers. The remainder included boat workers in Fort Benton, innkeepers and saloonkeepers, farm

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[120] Anthony Wood, "The Black Sergeants of Hollings Avenue," *Montana : The Magazine of Western History.* 2016, no. Winter (forthcoming), 9n21.
[121] A total of 98 households in the 1910 census accounted for 337 of the city's 415 African-Americans. Household data for the remainder is unclear.
[122] Hagen and Emmons, "Results of a Cultural Resources Inventory of the Montana Department of Transportation's North Montana Avenue Safety Improvement Project, Lewis and Clark County, Montana," 5; Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[123] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51.

and ranch hands or teamsters, skilled tradesmen such as a blacksmith, a baker, barbers, and a few paper hangers and whitewashers."[125] Most of the black people in Montana cities "were employed by the hotels and private clubs as waiters, maids, or doormen in the 1880s."[126] At the same time, about 60% of African-American women in the territory "held outside jobs, mostly as laundresses, servants, or cooks; and two women ran boarding houses. The remaining 40% were keeping house."[127]

In subsequent decades, similar employment profiles predominated among Helena's black population. As Norman Crump Howard, the grandson of James and Clarissa Crump, recalled, African-American people in Helena were limited to "low paying jobs."[128] Census data from 1910 corroborate Crump's recollections: that year the census listed 236 males in Helena, of whom 196 were 18 or older. Occupations were listed for 186 of these males (including six jobs listed for males under the age of 18). Over half (55%) of those reporting jobs listed just three positions, ie. "laborer" (51), "porter" (38), and "janitor" (14).[129] Another significant portion worked as coachmen or chauffeurs (eight men, including Nathan Ford, who worked for Senator Powers), stewards (six), barbers or hairdressers (six), and cooks or chefs (six).[130] Five men listed mining as their profession (four of them specified mining quartz), while others were working as bartenders, caterers, elevator attendants and valets, chimney sweeps, engineers (ie. operating and maintain building mechanical plants), servants and "housemen," house painters and contractors and kalsominers (ie. whitewashers).[131]

The significant number of Helena's black men who served as soldiers was not fully reflected in the 1910 census. "Colored" Company A was re-assigned in 1905 (though "colored" units of the 24th paraded that year at the Capitol dedication of the Thomas Meagher statue) and other reassignments further reduced the local black military ranks.[132] Those veterans who remained in Helena had retired or gone on to other occupations. A select few black men practiced specialized professions. One man was a master brickmaker and one an electrician. One made a living doing "vocal entertainments," another as a vaudeville actor, and another (Edward Glenn) as a stage manager at the Family Theater. There was a farmer and a federal building "fireman," a bath house masseuse and a "magnetic healer," two ministers, and a physician.[133] The black dentist who'd practiced in town in previous years, Dr. J. Brister, formerly "associated with one of the oldest and best dentists in the city" was no longer listed.[134] Nor was the black policeman: after becoming Helena's first African-American cop in 1888, and working

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[124] Ibid.; Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form"; Bureau of the Census, "13th Census, 1910 "; Sanborn Map Company, "Fire Insurance Maps of Montana: Helena, Lewis and Clark County- 1892" (Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America, 1892).
[125] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 29.
[126] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 343-44.
[127] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 31.
[128] Sally Hilander, "Helena Native Has 'Roots' Galore," *Independent Record*, December 9, 1979; Baumler, *Helena, the Town That Gold Built : The First 150 Years*, 26–27.
[129] A certain amount of occupational diversity existed within these categories.
[130] Bureau of the Census, "13th Census, 1910 ."
[131] Ibid.
[132] *Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana, Vol. VI* (Helena Mont.: Independent Publishing Company, 1907), 120; Wood, "The Black Sergeants of Hollings Avenue."
[133] Bureau of the Census, "13th Census, 1910."
[134] "Local and Personal," *The Colored Citizen*, September 3, 1894.

in that capacity whilst moonlighting at the Montana Club, William C. Irvin had gone on to other pursuits ca. 1906, when he opened the firm of Gordon & Irvin.[135] (Figure 4)

For black females, the range of occupations was similarly narrow, and at the lower end of the pay scale. In 1910, 90 black females in Helena listed occupations. Forty-two of these made a living as maids or servants of one form or another (doing "housework," or "housekeeping"), 21 were cooks (mainly for private families), ten labored as laundresses, and six worked as seamstresses. There was also a vaudeville performer, a music teacher, a milliner (Rosana Glenn), an Army hospital matron (Mamie Bridgwater), a hairdresser and two caterers.[136]

Helena's Black Business Sector and Economy

In addition to these occupations, African-Americans in Helena also ran their own businesses. These businesses not only supported numerous households in the city and served the black population, but served as a focal point of the community. Helena's African-American populace was a dynamic entity. As noted above, entrepreneurial activity had been an integral part of the community since the beginning. As the black population rose in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, business activity grew apace.

Predictably, as the community expanded, barbershops continued to be well represented among black-owned businesses. For some 17 years beginning in the early 1880s, Duke Dutriuielle ran a barbershop called "Duke's Place," and numerous other black people owned and operated barbershops in the city. [137]

In addition to Duke, in 1894 the *Colored Citizen* noted "Messrs. Phil. Simmons and Jos. E. W. Clark [who had] one of the neatest and best appointed tonsorial parlors in the city" (Figure 5); "J. E. Carpenter … proprietor of the barber shop at the International Hotel"; Lafayette L. Grisson, "formerly proprietor of the Merchants Hotel barber shop," who was "temporarily located in the upper end of the city . . . on the lookout for an eligible location in the business center and rumor has it that before long he will open the largest and finest tonsorial parlors in the city"; and Mrs. Mollie Millen, "A female barber . . . one of the boasts of Helena," and "proprietor of one of the nicest and snuggest tonsorial parlors in this city… her haircuts are tasty and fashionable." [138] The paper also remarked on the hair dressing parlor run by Mrs. Mattie Simmons, which "by care and attention her business has grown from small proportions to a credible volume."[139] Other black barbershops included one Grisson ran in partnership with George Irving (at 9 Ball Street), and David H. Harris and Jasper Campbell's establishment (Harris & Campbell at 132 S. Main, opened ca. 1910).[140]

Black-owned businesses over the years provided a range of services and goods to the African-American community and to Helena more generally. In 1887, abolitionist and pioneer photographer James Presley Ball, Sr., along with his son, opened a photography studio in Helena at that functioned for about 13 years,

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[135] "Local and Personal," September 3, 1894; Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 52;
[136] Bureau of the Census, "13th Census, 1910."
[137] "Local and Personal," September 3, 1894; Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung," 40. In 1894, the *Colored Citizen* attested to Duke's endurance: "'Duke' as he is familiarly known all over the state is one of our most popular pioneer citizens… Mr. Dutriueille still conducts-on the side-one of the best patronized and neatest tonsorial parlors in the city. Such a favorite is 'Duke' in his line that lots of old timers think no one except him is 'in it.'"
[138] "Local and Personal," September 3, 1894.
[139] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 39n50.
[140] Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung," 40.

documenting many of the city's citizens and significant events.[141] Indeed, Ball likely took the photo that shows another late-19th century African-American business, that of P. Henry Maxwell, at 108 E. Cutler Street (no longer extant), whose establishment advertised "Old Furniture Made New, Painting, Carpets Cleaned, All Kinds of Job Work." (Figure 6)[142]

In 1894, the *Colored Citizen* noted a variety of business owners in the African-American community. One of the "most enterprising business men," was Walter Scott, who ran "a good looking express wagon [and] own[ed] a very pretty homestead with ample yard on one of our handsomest streets."[143] Another man, William Woodcock, owned and operated a "steam carpet cleaning establishment," with which he provided "employment to a number of hands." [144] By 1896, black-owned businesses included a grocery store, opened by Walter and Almira Dorsey at 114 N. Rodney Street. Walter had previously run a restaurant at 104 Broadway (in 1892) and then worked several years at the Montana Club. The Dorsey family would remain in the grocery business for almost 40 years, moving their business from Rodney to 843 8th Ave. ca. 1898, and then to the northeast corner of 8th and Hoback (900 8th/401 N. Hoback, 24LC2433) in 1905. (Figure 7)

The Waltons (Andrew J. and Mahala Ann) also ran a series of businesses. By 1907, they operated a restaurant at 15 E. State Street (no longer extant), apparently converting it in 1909 to a thrift store called Capital City Second Hand, which became an enduring enterprise. At the same, Lewis Meade Walker dealt in "Coal, Wood, Junk, and Hides" nearby, operating out of 206 S. Ewing (no longer extant) from at least 1908 onward. Sarah Morris, meanwhile, ran a bakery at 114 W. Lawrence (no longer extant). Black-owned businesses in this period also included newspapers—J.P. Ball, Jr. published the *Colored Citizen* in the fall of 1894, and Joseph Bass started the more enduring *Plaindealer* in 1906 (17-21 S. Main, 24LC2458) – and at least one saloon, likely owned by "Lloyd V. Graye, who at one point held a majority interest in a cleaning establishment, a shoe shop, and two saloons."[145] One of Graye's saloons was the Zanzibar, opened in 1903 at 127 Clore Street (no longer extant), which he owned in partnership with David Gordon.[146]

As Graye's biography suggests, people also invested, sometimes, in businesses that they didn't necessarily operate and sometimes in real estate. Black business activity therefore exceeded the readily visible. African-American people in Helena seized and created opportunities where they could: as the *Plaindealer* noted, a successful black businessman "must be a hustler, and most any fair man must admire his pluck and

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[141] James Presley Ball, Sr. was a well-known abolitionist and a photographer in Cincinnati, Ohio, who lived in several places, including Minneapolis, before moving to Helena. In December 1887 he was nominated as a delegate to a civil rights convention and later ran for several offices on the Republican ticket. He was nominated for Coroner of Lewis and Clark County in 1894, but declined the nomination. He later co-founded the St. James AME Church and became president of Montana's Afro-American Club. The business block where his studio was no longer stands. He and his son JP Jr left Helena around 1900 for points west, ie. Seattle and/or Portland, then to Honolulu. There are a variety of photos of him available online, including here: unknown, *James Presley Ball*, Photograph, accessed September 14, 2016, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=James_Presley_Ball&oldid=723416637.
[142] "Helena As She Was - An Open History Resource for Montana's Capital City."
[143] "Local and Personal," *The Colored Citizen*, September 10, 1894.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 52; Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 344.
[146] Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," 9.

perseverance."[147] Julia Maxwell, for example, had initial success investing in real estate with her husband Henry in Bismarck, but their North Dakota property was sold to pay back-taxes in 1885. They then moved to Helena, where in the 1890s Julia again started investing in property. Her daughter Alice Palmer followed her resilient mother's model. After being widowed, she raised her six young children in Helena (first at a home she owned at 199 Ralph Street (no longer extant), while homesteading near Lincoln, acquiring property where she eventually built the Palmer Cabins that she rented seasonally to hunters and tourists.[148]

Other local African-American real estate investors in this period included, B. F. Hooper, whom the *Colored Citizen* described as "a calciminer by trade" who was "one of our oldest and best known citizens," and "among our largest real estate owners of color"; "R. J. Lucas, reputed for his business conservationism and foresight and owner of the 'Lucas Block'"; Miles York, who "always had a strong inclination to accumulate, hence his name has frequently figured in our real estate transfers"; John Hooper, who "made some judicious investments"; John E. Carpenter, proprietor of the International Hotel barbershop, who "invested quite heavily in Helena real estate"; James Mack, "owner of valuable improved real estate" (as well as "head mixologist at the Hotel Helena"); and E.G. Coles, who was "engaged in the furniture business" and "invested in real estate and other ventures." [149] They also included Miss Leila P. Bruce, a seamstress who "made some judicious investments in Helena real estate."[150] Ms. Bruce was one of a number of African American women who owned property in Helena during the heyday of the community.

Businesspeople in the African-American community tried to help one another by working together. In 1907, residents started the Helena chapter of the National Negro Business League (NNBL). Founded by Booker T. Washington in 1900 "on the self-help principle," the NNBL "promoted the establishment of black-owned businesses." The Helena NNBL was organized by Joseph Bass, a newspaper publisher, J. L. Ellis, a professional printer, M.O. Arnett and Harry Saulsburg, both tailors, and Harry C. Simmons, president of the Manhattan Club, Helena's private black social club. It met regularly "to discuss business problems . . . provided some financial support for new businesses; and it sent delegates to national conventions."[151] Around the same time, local businesspeople incorporated the Afro-American Building Association "for the purpose of buying real estate and erecting buildings." The Association's eight-member Board of Directors included "three women, two of whom operated businesses of their own—a beauty salon and a 'physical culture club' for women." Among the businesses that received support from the Association were "Frank Mitchell's Atlantic Restaurant and Jessie Waggener's Crown Cleaners."[152]

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[147] *Montana Plaindealer*, September 14, 1906.
[148] Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung," 40.
[149] "Local and Personal," September 3, 1894. Lucas was "an attaché of the U. S. Surveyor General's office."; "Mr. York is connected with one of the tony tonsorial parlors of the city and reaps a steady and handsome income."; "Local and Personal: September 10, 1894."; "Local and Personal" September 3, 1894.
[150] "Local and Personal," September 3, 1894. Bruce was said to be "one of the most successful, skilful and best patronized modistes of this city … She is up to date in all the styles and fashions and numbers among her customers many of the very best families of this city."
[151] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 54; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."
[152] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 54.

By 1910, Helena's black business sector seemed to be thriving. Even the incomplete picture painted by census data indicates that a significant portion of the population was self-employed, working for themselves running their own small businesses out of their homes—like Polly D. Lee's sewing at 912 8th Avenue (24LC2447) or Rosana Glenn's millinery at 1020 5th (24LC2451) or other spaces: that year, 42 of 276 people whose occupations were discussed above were, in census terminology, listed as working of their "own accord." [153] Some people were running more substantial operations: the 1910 census listed six African-American individuals as owning businesses that employed other people. These included barbers or hairdressers (Joseph E.W. Clarke and Mattie E. Simmons), a caterer (Lucius C. Foreman), physician Fred Shelby and *Plaindealer* publisher Joseph Bass. They also included Miles York, whom the census identified as a "contractor" who did "odd jobs" but other sources indicate ran a "dry-cleaning and tailoring shop" and shoeshine parlor.[154] (Figure 8)

As Miles York's story suggests, census data failed to capture the full extent of black business activity. Some employers the census identified, others it did not. For example, enumerators listed the occupation of Harry E. Salsburg as cleaner (clothing). Harry, along with his wife Ada (for whom no occupation was listed), in fact owned and operated a prominent downtown business, located in the Parchen Block at 108 E. Broadway, called The Broadway Suitatorium. The Salsburgs advertised their business as offering "Cleaning Dyeing and Pressing of Ladies' and Gentlemen's Clothing."[155]

Boarding houses constituted another common black business, the extent of which census data fails to capture.[156] In the 1910 census, Mamie Myers was listed as the "landlady" of a Wood Street "rooming house" and Elizabeth Mundy was listed as running a "lodging house" on Warren Street South. But boarding houses were also likely run by at least 11 other women (including Mary A. Cole, Sarah Elias, Lizzie Ewing, Grace Emerson, Nettie Marshall, Corine "Kitty" McEvoy, Estelle Reade, Alice Smith, Annie and Thelma Wade, and Nettie Woods), all of whom listed themselves as self-employed, working as "housekeepers" at boarding or rooming houses.[157] When one looks closely at the history of particular residential properties, it becomes apparent that taking in boarders was also a widespread practice among Helena's African-American households. Of 24 historically-black Helena homes surveyed in 2016, at least 11 included people who appear to have been renting a room from the primary occupant(s).

Other Helena businesses weren't owned by African-Americans but nonetheless played a significant role in the local black community, and as such warrant discussion. If black people commonly occupied a limited number of positions, certain industries hired a disproportionate number of African-Americans, ie. were visibly associated with the local black community. Prominent among them was the hospitality industry. The Lambs Club, a social club, employed numerous black men in a variety of capacities, as did the Helena and Grandon hotels. The

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[153] This was especially true of women's work. Women who made a living doing laundry, sewing, millinery etc. worked out of their own homes. In 1894, the Colored Citizen noted several seamstress businesses, including those of Miss Edith Millen, and Miss Leila P. Bruce,

[154] "Helena As She Was - An Open History Resource for Montana's Capital City."

[155] R.L. Polk & Co, *Polk's Helena City Directory* (Helena, Mont.: R.L. Polk & Co., 1910), 114; Delia Hagen, "Montana Historic Property Record: 106 E. Broadway, Helena" (Helena, Mont.: MT Historical Society, September 2016).

[156] "Local and Personal: September 10, 1894." The *Colored Citizen* noted one prominent early boarding house in 1894: "Mrs. V. Taylor is the proprietor of… boarding house No. 116 Jackson street."

[157] Bureau of the Census, "13th Census, 1910"

Broadwater was also a major employer of African-Americans.[158] At one point it hired an entire black wait staff at once— in 1907, Charles Mason and his "crew of first class waiters" from Hot Springs Arkansas arrived to staff the establishment."[159] The year before the Helena Hotel, too, "put on a crew of colored waiters."[160] Foremost among employers of Helena black people was the Montana Club. The elite private white social club—which counted among its guests President Theodore Roosevelt and author Mark Twain—for years "employed only blacks" and seems to have hired a good portion of the community at one point or another. Of 24 historically-black Helena households surveyed in 2016, at least 11 included people who worked for the club. While many of these people worked there only a short time, some were fixtures.[161] Indeed, perhaps no single person is more associated with the history of the Montana Club than Julian Anderson, a black man who began bartending there in 1893. Anderson retired from the Montana Club at the age of in 1953, having served its patrons for 60 years.[162] (Figure 9) Norman Howard was there almost as long. He started "in 1915 and worked there part-time for 50 years. As Howard recalled, "a woman was never allowed on the premises except on New Year's Eve . . . and never was the help permitted to speak to the members, 'the money people.'"[163]

African-American Community Institutions

As the above description suggests, black-owned businesses served as the focal point for black community in several ways. Places like boarding houses facilitated intermingling and residential clustering, building a black community by bringing black people together physically. Workplaces like the Montana Club served as an economic link, a conduit for connecting community members with employment opportunities and connecting them with one another through shared employment. Black-owned businesses offered not only services and sometimes jobs, but also shared black spaces that supported a variety of community activities, from casual socializing to hosting meetings of political clubs and other organizations, as when the First Ward Colored Club

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[158] The list of people employed was derived from newspaper notes, censuses, and site histories. Af-Am businesses list The Lambs Club employed Charles Reed, Arthur Palmer, George Williams, Patrick Keys (504 Peosta), Lucius Foreman, etc among others. The Hotel Helena employed George M. Lee, James Mack, Alonzo Leatherberry in 1894, M.O.J. Arnett in 1895, Ed Johnson and his "colored" crew in 1906; the Broadwater employed William C. "Tex" Rose, W.J. Robinson, Sam Henry and Mrs. Henry in 1894.

[159] "Broadwater is Now Manned by a Colored Crew of Real Waiters," *Montana Plaindealer*, April 12, 1907, 1. This crew included "Isaac Early Captain, with T.S. Thomas, C.A. Hughey, H. Napor, G. Berry & N.W. Marlow as waiters & Mr. & Mrs. J.H. Lee as Masseurs."; Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."

[160] *Montana Plaindealer*, November 2, 1906.

[161] Hilander, "Helena Native Has 'Roots' Galore." Known MT Club employees include James Collins, Charles Mason (who later was at the Broadwater), C.D. Martin, Mr. Cassway, and many people associated with properties surveyed in 2016 (24LC2429-24LC2453) like Walter Dorsey (NRHP-listed Dorsey Grocery and Residence at 900 8th/401 N Hoback); James Howard, Mark Lowery, Norman Howard, and Maxine Elliot Ladd Howard (NRHP-listed Crump Howard House at 1003 9th Ave.); Julian Anderson and family members (617 Broadway); George M. Lee Jr (912 8th); Jefferson Harrison (534 Hollins); Harry Simmons (514 Hollins); David H. Harris (504 Peosta); William Irvin (212 S Beattie); Arthur S. Harrell (1068 N Ewing); and William Blanks (843 8th).

[162] Black people were also prominent in the hospitality industry of other Montana towns. For example, in 1882, Fort Benton's Grand Union hotel opened with an eleven-person staff, nine of whom were Black (incl. barkeeper, cooks, waiters, chambermaid). Ken Robison, "The Jewel in Fort Benton's Crown: The Grand Union," *Fort Benton River Press Grand Union Edition*, November 2, 2007.

[163] Hilander, "Helena Native Has 'Roots' Galore."

met in P.H. Maxwell's store (108 E. Cutler) in 1894. In many ways, black-owned businesses were themselves important community institutions. This was especially the case with black owned newspapers, like Helena's *Colored Citizen* and *Plaindealer*.

Across the country, in the decades before and after the turn of the century, African-American newspapers flourished. Historians of the subject note that "the reasons for the upsurge in the publication of African-American newspapers at this time are manifold," and included fundamental developments in black history, including freedom and the right to vote (and associated involvement in the political system and parties) as well as related phenomena, like the spread of organizations (such as religious groups) that were able to publish freely, increased spending money, and expanded black education and literacy. In the 40 years "between 1870 and 1910, the overall literacy rate for African-Americans rose from 20% to 70 percent. This sharp rise in literacy in turn resulted in the proliferation of African-American newspapers." Historians have identified almost 2,000 different black papers that were published in the 1880-1910 period alone. The rise of the black press was also part of a broader increase in newspaper publication and circulation more generally at this time. [164]

Concurrently, as African-American communities developed in the West, many produced newspapers. In their study of the subject, Gayle Berardi and Thomas Segady identified "forty-three African-American newspapers" published in the West "between 1880 and 1914."[165] As noted above, black people who moved west tended to be educated—"the literacy rate for African-Americans approached 90% in the West by 1910, twice the literacy rate for African-Americans living in the South during the same period"— and black papers were an integral part of their lives. [166] Western black communities and their papers "were unique in several respects." The numerical "growth of the African-American population in this region either paralleled or outpaced the growth in the West generally," and the surging population of black westerners contributed to "the rapid development of an African-American owned and operated press. This press described African-Americans involved in the creation of thriving, culturally distinct communities with social and political concerns that have long been ignored." For African-Americans living in the West during this period, newspapers were the only mass medium of information exchange."[167]

Helena's *Colored Citizen* was Montana's first black newspaper, as well as the second black newspaper to be published in the entire Pacific Northwest.[168] Started by J.P. Ball, Jr., in 1894, the paper's immediate *raison d'etre* was "to rally support during the election that won Helena's permanent designation as Montana's capital city."[169] But despite this specific political goal, shared by many regardless of race, the *Colored Citizen* was an exemplary black newspaper. Ball made this clear from the paper's beginning, writing from his office at 137 N. Main that "there are no strings on us. We are running a paper devoted to the interests and welfare of our people," and specifically "the social, moral, and industrial interests" of Montana's African-American residents.[170] The paper's

[164] Berardi and Segady, "The Development of African-American Newspapers in the American West," 97–98, 104.
[165] Ibid., 104.
[166] Ibid., 105.
[167] Ibid., 103.
[168] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 344. The entire run of the Colored Citizen is available on the website Chronicling America.
[169] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[170] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 34.

masthead unequivocally proclaimed it "devoted to the interests of colored Americans." At the time, Ball estimated that Montana contained 2,500 "colored people," of whom 500 lived in Helena.[171] Although published in Helena, his newspaper was read by people throughout the state, and likely elsewhere in the region.

In Ball's estimation, the contest between Anaconda and Helena for designation as the state capital was a race-related issue. He argued that the Anaconda Company was deeply racist, denouncing its "iron claw of corporate infernalism which has always crushed out the black man from every factory and workshop."[172] In contrast to the company's eponymous town, Anaconda, Ball promoted Helena as a city that recognized "No Color Line." He nonetheless adamantly exposed and denounced prejudice wherever he saw it, including in Helena, where he "vigorously criticized local white racists for their attacks on the black community": such people, he suggested, should "be declared un-American."[173] Ball also sought to work toward specific changes in the city's racial landscape. "We do not ask for access to your social circles," he wrote. "We have our own, and it, too, is banded against those who are not acceptable from our standpoint. Our plea is for fair and impartial treatment in places of public accommodation."[174] The *Colored Citizen* stopped publication after the election that November—Helena won the capital contest—but despite its short duration and specific purpose, it served as a critical institution that reflected, and facilitated, the coalescence of Helena's African-American community while leading its shared struggle for racial justice.

The *Montana Plaindealer* proved more enduring, serving a similar function as that of the *Colored Citizen,* and other black newspapers across the nation, for about five years. Started in the spring of 1906 (its first issue was printed 3/16/1906) out of an office at 17 S. Main Street (24LC2458) by veteran publisher Joseph Bass and his assistant, printer and long-time Helena resident Joseph H. Tucker, the *Plaindealer* was Montana's third African-American paper. It followed in the footsteps of the *Colored Citizen* as well as the *New Age*, published in Butte in 1902-1903 as "medium to bring the colored people of the state closer together."[175] Joseph Blackburn Bass was a native of Missouri who'd been a schoolteacher for seven years before joining the staff of the *Topeka Call*, in Kansas, in 1894. He became publisher and editor of the *Call* shortly thereafter, and the paper later changed its name to the *Topeka Plaindealer*. In 1905 Bass moved to Helena to start the *Montana Plaindealer*, and thereby continue in a new state the community struggle to which he'd long been committed.[176]

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[171] Rex C. Myers, "Montana's Negro Newspapers, 1894-1911," *Montana Journalism Review* 16 (Fall 1973): 17; Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[172] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 52.
[173] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 346; Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 53..
[174] "We Ask for Justice," *Colored Citizen,* October 1, 1894, 2; Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 36.
[175] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 347. "jointly edited by J.W. Duncan, Charles F. Smith and Chris Dorsey."; Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[176] "Joseph B. Bass Was Born to Be a Journalist," *African American Registry*, n.d., http://www.aaregistry.org/historic_events/view/joseph-b-bass-was-born-be-journalist. Bass moved to Los Angeles, via San Francisco after living in Helena. There, in 1912, he became editor of the *California Eagle*, the largest African-American newspaper on the West Coast, with a circulation of 60,000. Bass married Charlotta Amanda Spears, who owned and ran the *Eagle*--she later became the first African-American woman vice-presidential candidate (for the Progressive Party). There are many pictures of Joseph and Charlotta Bass available online and in archives.

From the beginning, Bass was clear and outspoken about the paper's purpose. The weekly paper would cover local, state, and national "race news": "our only aim," wrote Bass, "shall be for the progress and uplifting of a race with which our destiny is forever linked." The *Plaindealer* would "stand up for right and denounce the wrong," its mission not "to stir up strife, but rather to pour oil on troubled waters." To this end above all others would the paper be devoted: although Bass and the *Plaindealer* "unhesitatingly subscribe[d] to the principles of Republicanism," the paper "did not miss on opportunity to criticize either Republicans or Democrats who attempted to restrict the rights of Montana blacks." [177] Fearless, tireless, and forceful, Bass advocated civil rights at local, regional and national levels, and preached a gospel of racial uplift along the lines of Booker T. Washington, maintaining that black people should "go to work or engage in some legitimate business," and thereby not only "command greater respect for themselves but . . . redound to the credit of the race and community as well." [178]

Like other African-American papers, the *Plaindealer* championed the rights of the area black community while at the same time building and revealing a community network. "Bass claimed that 75% of African Americans in Helena read the *Plaindealer*, and white subscribers outnumbered black subscribers three-to-one."[179] The first page of the paper featured editorials and "national news items of interest," while subsequent pages were devoted to local matters like "church activities, vital statistics, unusual experiences, awards and honors, gossip."[180] It simultaneously provided a forum for members of the community to publicly voice their concerns and positions, featuring guest columns by local residents like Fred Spearman, local "waiter and later civil service employee," who in 1908 wrote an editorial in the paper titled "The Negro a World Force."[181]

With Bass at its helm, the *Plaindealer* enjoyed pride of place among the institutions of Helena's black community during its heyday. But, as its pages attested, that community also built an impressive range of organizations over the years. All of these institutions reflected and promoted the vitality of the region's African-American population. Foremost among them were the town's black churches, which not only constituted the social center of the community but also fostered numerous other local institutions. Helena's two enduring black churches both dated to the late 1880s, when African-American population growth in the city was at its height. In 1887, Christian residents founded the Second Baptist Church, which served the black Baptist faithful from a variety of temporary locations for over 25 years before constructing a permanent church building in 1913 on the west corner of the intersection of Wilder and Harrison avenues (601 Wilder/1260 Harrison).[182]

One year after the Baptist group organized, in 1888, the Reverend James Hubbard of the Kansas Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church formally founded Helena's St. James AME congregation.[183] St. James AME members soon completed a church building (1889) that was described a few years later as "a well

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[177] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 347.
[178] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 55- 54.
[179] William Lang, "The Montana Plaindealer, Helena (1906-1911)," *BlackPast.org*, n.d., http://www.blackpast.org/aaw/helena-montana-plaindealer-1906-1911#sthash.mPQm0VD7.dpuf].
[180] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 53.
[181] Ibid., 54.
[182] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form." See 1909/1910 comments on this church building effort in Plaindealer.
[183] "African M.E. Church," *Helena Weekly Herald*, September 27, 1888, 7.

sustained, largely attended, substantially built, eligibly located and pretentious edifice of worship," as well as an outbuilding (on the south property line), on the southwest corner of 5th Avenue and Hoback Street (849 5th Avenue/24LC2430). [184] Helena's St. James was—along with Portland's Bethel AME (founded in 1889)—one of the earliest AME churches in the Pacific Northwest. In a testament to its early strength and vibrancy, in 1894, just five years after its establishment, St. James hosted the annual convention of the Colorado AME conference. That same year, the church paid off its debt and began "accumulating a fund . . . to build a parsonage."[185] The congregation completed the parsonage, which stood south of the church building along the alley, in 1896. This parsonage soon acquired its own address, 112 N. Hoback (no longer extant).[186]

In subsequent years, St. James served as the heart of black Helena. Its prominence in the city's African-American community stemmed not only from the central role the church itself played in people's lives but also from the fact that it fostered a host of other organizations. As one historian put it, "nearly every important social, cultural, political, and self-help organization created by African Americans in Helena had its origin at St. James."[187] The church itself boasted "a Sabbath School conducted by trained and earnest Christian teachers," as well as "a choir of trained voices, presided over by an exceptionally fine professor of music and vocal culture."[188]

Early on, the church members formed the St. James Literary Society: in 1894 the Polk's City Directory listed Literary Society leaders as Jas. Clark, president, A M Drew, Secretary, and Mrs. Louisa Banks as treasurer.[189] In 1906, under the leadership of Reverend W. T. Osborne, Walter Dorsey, Mrs. Eugene Baker, and Joseph Clark, the Society "boast[ed] over 100 participants at its weekly meetings. The society provided black Helenans with a forum for discussion of community issues, an audience for performing artists, and an opportunity for local poets, playwrights, and essayists to present their work." Prominent among Society activities were formal debates (followed by "furious discussions") on such topics as "Resolved, that the Negroes of the South enjoy more prosperity than in any other section of the U.S." or "Resolved, that slavery was a benefit to the Negro race"; or "Resolved, that woman suffrage is detrimental to the welfare of the nation."[190] "The St. James Literary Society reached well beyond the congregation and attracted whites to some public meetings, including one in 1906 that focused on the Brownsville Affair," at which J.B. Bass led the affirmative side and J.W. Clark the negative on the subject 'Resolved, that the action of Pres. Roosevelt in dishonorably discharging a battalion of the 25th Infantry is not only a grievous wrong against the parties affected, but the race as well."[191]

The busy church also hosted less serious social events. In September of 1894, St. James held "an ice cream festival and candy pulling" and then "a campaign dinner and bazaar." The St. James choir sang at the Sept. 24th Emancipation Celebration in Anaconda, and then Miss Annie R. Heyward married Mr. Alonzo Leatherberry at the church on the 27th of that month (followed by a reception at the home of the bride, 20 and 21 Ewing St.). The

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[184] "Local and Personal" September 3, 1894.; Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 52.
[185] "Local and Personal" *The Colored Citizen*, October 8, 1894; "Local and Personal" *The Colored Citizen*, October 22, 1894.
[186] Delia Hagen, "Montana Historic Property Record Form: 114 N. Hoback," 2016.
[187] "Saint James AME Church, Helena, Montana (1888-)," *BlackPast.org*, n.d., http://www.blackpast.org/aaw/saint-james-ame-church-helena-montana-1888.
[188] "Local and Personal," September 3, 1894.
[189] R.L. Polk & Co, *Polk's Helena City Directory* (Helena, Mont.: R.L. Polk & Co., 1894), 78.
[190] Lang, "The Nearly Forgot Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 55.
[191] "Saint James AME Church, Helena, Montana (1888-) | The Black Past."; *Montana Plaindealer*, November 6, 1906.

next week, "Misses Crump, Donnell, and [?]arkin gave a very enjoyable entertainment . . . for the benefit of the A.M.E. church," which proceeded to host the annual gathering of the Colorado A.M.E. conference, "composed of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico" the week thereafter. The AME Conference featured "an interesting programme for each day" from October 11-15th, and was "photographed by J.P. Ball, the main street photographer."[192] Other church events included holiday events (like a "big thanksgiving dinner" in 1906 for which the church planned to sell 300 tickets," or the 1907 holiday "exhibition by the Busy Bees "of the most beautiful assortments of hand made Christmas presents you ever witnessed" and the Christmastime spectacle of costumed locals performing "the Japanese Parasol drill"); educational activities (like the statewide Ministers Institute & Young Peoples Meeting of the AME or visiting lectures like that by Rabbi Klein at a literary meeting in June 1908); plays (like the 1907 drama "The Slave's Return," which played to "a packed house," or the children's production of "Jack & the Beanstalk that July); and assorted other entertainments, like a "fair with articles made by the Sewing Circle (with "all kinds of needlework, from the simplest to the most difficult drawnwork & Battenburg."), or the Bright Star Club social.[193]

The Literary Society led by Walter Dorsey and others in 1894 joined a host of other African-American institutions in the city. That same year, the *Colored Citizen* documented many of them in its pages, revealing a vibrant and diverse black cultural life. With the capital-city contest raging, political clubs were active. In September 1894, the Afro-American Republican Club held its "large and enthusiastic" first meeting, where "Prof. Cole's excellent band enlivened the proceedings with patriotic airs. President J.P. Ball, Sr., delivered his inaugural address . . . [and] interesting addresses were also made by Jas. Crump, B. F. Hooper, W. P. Hough, Mr. Wheaton of Livingston, and others."[194] It joined existing clubs organized by voting districts, like the First Ward Colored Club that met in October of that year in P.H. Maxwell's 108 E. Cutler place of business ("George Mitchell presided, with J. Brooks acting as secretary. Speeches were made by Geo. Mitchell, Geo. Warfield, J. Carpenter, W. Hulbert, A.G. Green and A. Frazier.").[195] At the time, J.P. Ball and G. W. Alexander head[ed] their respective delegations from the Fourth and Seventh wards. These wards contain many of our best, most influential and respected citizens."[196] The African-American "ladies of [the] city," meanwhile, "organized into Helena-for-the-capital clubs."[197]

Fraternal organizations, and associated women's auxiliaries, functioned alongside overtly political ones, as did a spectrum of social clubs, women's clubs, and various organizations devoted to enrichment, entertainment, and recreation. In 1894, black Helena supported a Masonic Lodge (H.L. Warfield, Worshipful Master) with a "flourishing Ladies' Court," [ie. Order of the Eastern Star] which met at the "Colored" Masonic Temple at 14 ½

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[192] "Local and Personal: September 3, 1894," September 3, 1894.
[193] *Montana Plaindealer*, November 16,1906; *Montana Plaindealer*, December 13, 1907; *Montana Plaindealer*, April 26, 1907; *Montana Plaindealer*, June 26, 1908; *Montana Plaindealer*, May 10, 1907; *Montana Plaindealer*, July 26, 1907; *Montana Plaindealer*, August 10, 1906; *Montana Plaindealer*, March 27, 1908.
[194] "Local and Personal, *The Colored Citizen*, September 3, 1894. Elected as "colored delegates . . . by the recent ward primaries to attend the Republican county convention in 1894 were "Messrs. P.T. Simmons, Geo. Mitchell, G.W. Alexander, and J.P. Ball," and as "colored alternate delegates" were "W.J. Robinson, Ed. Richardson, M.O.J. Arnett, W.J. Burnett and B.F. Hooper."
[195] "Helena As She Was - An Open History Resource for Montana's Capital City."
[196] "Local and Personal," September 3, 1894.
[197] "Local and Personal" *The Colored Citizen*, October 15, 1894.

S. Main.[198] Helena's African-American community also sustained a strong Grand United Order of Odd Fellows (the Golden City Lodge, which, with visiting lodges from other cities in the state, on occasion "paraded [Helena's] principal streets" with a uniformed band) and the connected women's group the Household of Ruth, as well as "two flourishing councils of the American Order of Home Protection, about 300 strong. . . this order is similar to the A. O.U.W." [Ancient Order of United Workmen]. One of these was the Washington Lodge No. 1 A.O.H.P., George M. Lee, Chief Councilor.[199] (Figure 10)

Two social clubs served the men of the African-American community that year, both reportedly with "well-regulated and eminently respectable club rooms, provided with simple and harmless amusements and with periodicals from all sections of the country."[200] The more prominent of the two men's clubs was the Manhattan Club (the other was the Silver Leaf Club run by Richardson and Wilson), managed that year by "the urbane W. J. Burnett."[201] At its Main Street quarters, the Manhattan Social Club—"easily the most sophisticated club in town"— offered not only its well-stocked reading room, but also a "billiard parlor and ping pong room, private dining facilities, and a bar." [202] Additional socializing centered around community institutions like baseball clubs (a Helena team traveled to Anaconda on Sept. 24th, 1894 to play one of Butte's black ball teams) and Cole's Colored Band, "one of the leading musical organizations of the city." Cole's band played frequently—its gigs in a two-month period in the fall of 1894 included several meetings of the Afro-American Republican Club, the Sept. 24th Emancipation Celebration in Anaconda (where the band was "sixteen strong"), a marching performance down Main Street ("with their becoming uniforms and headed by their gandy drum major"), and an Odd Fellows parade on Helena's "principal streets," as well as "a concert and street parade."[203] Other musical events supplemented the local band scene: in March 1894, in an event that made it into the pages of one of Indianapolis' black newspapers, "after a lecture 'at the auditorium . . . R. Lucas, Al Marshall and Phil T. Simmons rendered 'Sebastopool' [sic] on three guitars and were encored."[204]

These 1894 institutions were but a few of those that functioned in Helena during the heyday of the city's African-American community. Others spanned a similar spectrum. At one point fraternal organizations included two black Masonic Lodges (including the R.J. Fletcher Lodge, AF & AM and the Unity Lodge No. 101) as well as a chapter of the "International Benevolent and Protective Order of Elk of the World, the Afro-American Elks organization" (organized in late 1906 with "more than 35 charter members" and boasting a "hall on Main Street"

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[198] This was the temple address in 1898. As revealed by a search of Helena Polk's for the term "col'd."
[199] "Local and Personal" September 3, 1894. Lee also a Mason. List the secret societies that the colored citizen reported on for benefit of local community?
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 52; Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 345. Manhattan Club records at MHS, in existence in at least 1894-1895, 1903-1912. TELL MHS re: 1894 In 1906 the club was located at16 ½ Main Street and was managed by G.F. and F.R. Anderson. Montana *Plaindealer*, September 21, 1906. In 1909 it moved into "new quarters" at 17 S. Main St.
[203] "Local and Personal" September 3, 1894. In 1907 Helena appears to have had at least two black baseball teams: that May the Luzon Bees played "the Fort Harrison team." *Montana Plaindealer*, May 10, 1907. In the same period (1908) Anaconda's black ball team was the "Brownies."
[204] Lynn Abbott and Doug Seroff, *Out of Sight: The Rise of African American Popular Music, 1889-1895* (Jackson1: University Press of Mississippi, 2002), 339., appears in Chapter 6: 1894. Orig. source is March 24 *Indianapolis Freeman.*

with a "spacious auditorium" by 1910).[205] Numerous women's benevolent societies served the community at different times (including the Busy Bees and the Willen Workers, as well as what was referred to in 1906 as simply the "Women's Club," which took as the subject of one of its meetings that year "The Proper Training of Children."), as did several social clubs (including the Summer Outing Club and the Autumn Leaf Social Club, est. 1906, which organized events like "Buck and Wing" dance contests, as well as mandolin concerts).[206] Other groups active in the community included the "Afro-American Benevolent Association, a Masonic group devoted to building a hall . . . and the Afro-American Council . . . focused on defending local people from discrimination and protesting lynchings in the American South."[207]

Establishing the duration of different clubs is difficult, but evidence indicates that community organizations were varied and abundant throughout the period. In 1879, 20 Helena residents formed "the Afro-American lodge" of the Independent Order of Good Templars.[208] Associated black temperance lodges remained strong in the state for years: in 1894, Corporal J.P. Dundee visited Helena from Fort Custer in Miles City, where he was "one of the leading lights of the Soldiers' Home Lodge of that place, which boasts an active membership of 150."[209]

After the turn of the century, African-American organizations continued to reflect the preoccupations of the period. In 1906, the Civic League hosted a lecture by Professor Booker T. Washington, the nation's most prominent black leader, and the Lincoln Day Club held "a smoker at 19 South Main."[210] The following year, people like the Rev. J.D. Pettigrew tried to organize a Helena chapter of the Colored Co-operative League.[211] In 1908, "the new Helena Colored Band . . . formed a permanent organization & elected the following officers; D.H. Harris conductor, J.B. Bass business mgr, Eugene Clark secretary, Harry Saulsburg Treas."[212] At the same time, "the colored republicans of Helena [had] the honor of forming the first Taft club in the entire west," and L.V. Graye was reportedly planning on organizing a Bryan club.[213] In 1909, Henry J. Baker, J.E.W. Clark, Arnett, Bass "and others created the Afro-American Protective League to bring political pressure in defense of black rights."

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[205] *Montana Plaindealer*, November 23, 1906; *Montana Plaindealer*, December 9, 1910. In 1907, "the colored fraternal orders" incl. odd fellows, Naomi Lodge/household of ruth, Fletcher lodge masons/eastern star) "Made the preliminary steps toward building a joint home for their own lodge purposes. The lot on Breckenridge St. front in the A.P. Curtin Co. has been purchased." *Montana Plaindealer*, November 29, 1907. organized "The Afro American Benevolent Association for the purpose of building a home of their own." *Montana Plaindealer*, December 13, 1907.

[206] *The Montana Plaindealer*, November 23, 1906; Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 52. "The club is making arrangements to give their first entertainment on next Thurs evening at Electric Hall & all look forward to a delightful time." "A. Palmer, Pres; James Howard, Sec; Gus Mason, Treas." *Montana Plaindealer*; September 28, 1906. The club held a "ball on Nov 16th at Germania Hall." *Montana Plaindealer*, October 26, 1906. Germania Hall appears numerous times, located at 12-14 N. Park. *Montana Plaindealer*, January 27, 1911.

[207] "Saint James AME Church, Helena, Montana (1888-)"

[208] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51.

[209] "Local and Personal: October 15, 1894."

[210] *Montana Plaindealer*, August 3, 1906; *Montana Plaindealer*, October 12, 1906.

[211] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 54.

[212] *Montana Plaindealer*, March27, 1908; *Montana Plaindealer*, September 11, 1908. (band roster in 6/17/1908)

[213] *Montana Plaindealer*, September 11, 1908. Lists folks who founded Taft Club.

With "Bass spearhead[ing] [it] the Afro-American Protective League [became] an ambitious statewide organization that meant to defend African Americans in Montana from racism."[214]

In 1910, Helena's Last Chance Club "organized for the social improvement of its members, literary & dramatic entertainments & benevolent work among those in need of assistance." It joined the existing "Jake Goodman club for colored people," leading the local black paper to proclaim that the "race will be well-supplied with resorts."[215] Upon its founding in September, 1911, the Colored Progressive League "had over 60 active members," "pledged itself to expel black pimps, prostitutes, and hustlers from the city and to defend Afro-Americans unjustly harassed by racist authorities." [216] That year there was "a new [social] club in vogue named the Capital Club located at the upper end of Main Street," and "the colored citizens of Helena . . . elected officers and also a committee of 5" in a meeting to organize a Good Citizens Movement to "condemn immorality . . . to the end that the community should be ridded of" what it called "vagrant pimps macques & secretaries." The organizational "meeting met at the Masonic hall at the foot of Broadway and was called to order by B.F. Hooper," as 1st vice president. Additional officers included A.J. Walton (2nd vice president), H.J. Baker (pres.) and J.F. Clark (sec.), and "over 50 names were enrolled as members." The group conducted "work all along the line of racial progress" in the moral and financial realms, avowing that "the most important after the moral issue is the business outlook."[217]

"Come down and give us some Jim Crow": Race Relations in Helena and the West

The brief 1894 run of the *Colored Citizen* reflected and documented a strong black community in Helena and the surrounding region. The paper engendered much support, as well as significant backlash. As one letter to the editor put it, "a lot of us Democrats have ordered your paper stopped. Why don't you come down and give us some Jim Crow?" Signed "Bourbon Democrat," the letter reflected the enduring white supremacy that is a critical context for appreciating the history of Helena's African-American community in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Indeed, the organized and activist nature of the region's black community—where so much energy focused on fighting prejudice and oppression in its infinite forms—in many ways directly reflected the deep and consequential structural racism and interpersonal discrimination that characterized life in the country and the region.

The violence and repression that marked the period drove many black people from the South, but the ideologies that undergirded the South's racial system were not limited to that region. Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan illustrated this during his 1908 campaign, explaining that "the white man in the South has disfranchised the negro in self-protection and there is not a Republican in the north who would not have done the same thing under the circumstances."[218] As it had during the Reconstruction era, the West continued to offer only relative relief from the racial system of the South. In an early article on Helena's African-American community, William Lang wrote that "Race wars, lynchings, violent abuse, and other atrocities were unknown in

[214] "Bass, Joseph Blackburn (1863-1934)," *BlackPast.org*, n.d., http://www.blackpast.org/aaw/bass-joseph-blackburn-1863-1934.
[215] *Montana Plaindealer*, December 9, 1910.
[216] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 57.
[217] *Montana Plaindealer*, September 8, 1911; *Montana Plaindealer*, April 28, 1911.
[218] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 187.

Helena . . . Helena's racism … consisted of what W.E.B. Du Bois called 'those petty little meannesses."[219] Other historians have suggested that "friendly contempt was the prevalent attitude toward Negroes [in Helena], and doubtless elsewhere."[220] While these statements contain elements of truth, they beg qualification. For one, most of Helena's black population spent part of their lives elsewhere, and stayed abreast of national "race news" even when confined to Helena proper: the community's experience with racial oppression was not limited to what they encountered in and around Helena. Moreover, outright violence against black people was not unknown in the Helena region, as we've seen. Most importantly, those acts that might be called "petty meannesses" were part of a system of racial oppression that was profoundly consequential, and itself a form a violence, damaging black psyches and bodies by making life difficult at every turn.

As gleaned from the vitriol of the "Bourbon Democrat," America's legal system of racial subordination in the post-Reconstruction era, which endured through 1965, hinged on thoroughgoing racial segregation, known as Jim Crow, designed to keep blacks separate and unequal. In its 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court sanctioned segregation, and its ruling "marked the capstone of the 'Let Alone' policy. It is in light of these factors that the beginnings of the exodus to the West can be best understood." In the West, Jim Crow laws and practices tended to be more piecemeal than in the South, but they were common and consequential, as historians Gayle Berardi and Thomas Segady explain:

> there is little evidence, on the part of African-Americans, that a change in geographic location brought the promise of increased political freedom and economic opportunity. There is also little evidence that they perceived Horace Greeley's famous shibboleth "Go West Young Man," to be intended for them. The response on the part of white settlers for the most part took one of two forms: either to deny African-Americans their rights . . . or to deny African-Americans entrance into the newly-developing communities in the West entirely.[221]

As in earlier years, Montana segregationist efforts tended to focus on the realm of the social, with its potential for intimacy: as the *Helena Independent* opined in 1882:

> were all race distinctions abolished, amalgamation would inevitably result in the end. It would begin first among the poorer whites, who would intermarry with the wealthier Negroes, and would afterwards extend among all classes. We believe that the Caucasian race is superior to the African, and that such amalgamation would have a tendency to degrade our nation to a level with the Mexican and South American races. In fact, the Mongrel-Mulatto breed, which results from amalgamation, is inferior to both the black and white races.[222]

The specter of "social integration" haunted the minds of many Montana whites, but evidence of Jim Crow could be found in multiple other realms as well.

In the post-Reconstruction period, segregation of schools continued to be one of the primary Jim Crow issues in Montana. Over some white parents' protests, in 1881, the Ft. Benton school board "granted permission for a

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[219] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51.
[220] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 163.
[221] Berardi and Segady, "The Development of African-American Newspapers in the American West," 100.
[222] "Colored Children in Public Schools," *Helena Independent*, February 4, 1882, 2; Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 182.

colored boy to attend the public school." Subsequently, "the whites began to withdraw their children from school," and petitioned the board to reverse itself, asking that "a separate school be started for colored children." The Territorial superintendent and the attorney-general advised that "under the statute Negroes could not be admitted into the public school," but they were apparently "ignored, for the progress of the Negro children in school was being described some weeks later."[223] In 1880, 18 African American people resided in Meagher County, including four children registered in the county school system. In December 1881 in White Sulphur Springs, a black child sought to enroll in the public school. In response, "nearly one-third of the good Aryans of that city threatened to withdraw their children," after which the school board persuaded the African-American boy to withdraw while "the other three 'Africans' in town were held at arm's length."[224] In Helena, meanwhile, black children continued to be confined to the segregated South Side School. Opened in 1875, Helena's separate "colored" school still functioned in 1878-79, when it was maintained "for only nine pupils."[225] African-American residents kept fighting the segregation of their children, and in 1882, succeeded in securing a local referendum on the issue. Voters rejected school segregation 195 to 115, an outcome "attributed to a lower voter turnout, reluctance to continue the high taxes caused by the system, and a heavy turnout of black voters."[226] The following year, Montana's legislature "passed a bill prohibiting racial segregation in schools."[227]

Although segregation of Montana schools ended, segregation and other racist structures and practices continued to characterize life in the territory. It defined varied aspects of society in places around the region. The 1879 founding of a chapter of the Good Templars in Helena reflected segregation in the city's community organizations (the temperance-focused fraternal order was originally integrated, but began having segregated locals in 1875).[228] Two years later, William Woodcock, who had been with the U.S. military at the Battle of the Big Hole in 1877, was in Butte in his capacity as servant to U.S. Marshall Colonel Alexander Botkin. On September 9, 1881, he sat down at the Virginia Chop House, where the proprietor "compelled [him] to leave." Woodcock sued the restaurant under the 1875 Civil Rights Act. From this

> emerged a legal contest that came close to making constitutional history in Montana and perhaps in the nation . . . Woodcock won his case, and with it an award of $500 (the minimum sum under the Civil Rights Act),. . . [but] the press failed to drive home the significance of the decision. . . the only paper to point out the importance of the decision was the Republican *New North-West*, whose editor showed that the Singleton case (recently decided) had failed to determine whether the Civil Rights Act was in force in

[223] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 176–77.
[224] Ibid., 179.
[225] Ibid., 173; Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 26.
[226] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 351. Quoting Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 181-83; Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51.
[227] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 351; Dale Tash indicates this event occurred in 1883 ("The Development of the Montana Common School System: 1864-1884," Dissertation, Montana State University, March 1968, 138) while Smurr proffers a date of 1895, "Jim Crow Out West," 155.
[228] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 51.

> the Territories or not. . . . The judge who rendered the Woodcock opinion apparently held that it was in force.[229] (Figure 11)

Woodcock's 1883 victory notwithstanding, discrimination in Montana continued to take both legal and illegal forms. Racism in the workplace relegated black people to low-waged, demanding jobs, and kept them from, and in, certain industries. One of the largest employers in Montana was the Anaconda Company, which began in the mid-1880s and "came to dominate Montana's mining industry until well into the 20th century." From its beginnings, the company "did not hire black workers," and the mining industry as a whole sometimes followed suit: "in Butte, where Irish miners, controlled unions, miners of color were kept out."[230] During the 1894 capital fight, the *Colored Citizen* claimed that while the Anaconda Co. gave "employment to thousands of men, not a single colored citizen can be found among them. Yea, even more, we learn that 'No niggers allowed in our works,' is the unanimous sentiment of those who control the company as well as those who are employed by the company."[231]

Newspapers that wanted the town of Anaconda to be the capital, meanwhile, "flayed Helena as a sink of racial prejudice," and not without cause.[232] Although the town's black boosters during the capital fight emphasized racism in other places, Helena had its share of Jim Crowism. Several black people wrote into the *Colored Citizen* in 1894 complaining of, and exposing, Helena restaurants' refusal to serve them.[233] Three years later, when famed black musician W.C. Handy, the "Father of the Blues," passed through Helena, where he recorded "an Edison cylinder of 'Cotton Blossoms'" with his band, the Mahara Minstrels, he was subjected to "an incident in a music hall in Helena" that was significant enough that it stuck with him, a telling feat for a black man familiar with towns—and their racist practices—all over the country.[234] As Helena-native Norman Crump Howard recalled, "racism thrived" in this period. "Blacks faced tougher discrimination problems than Indians. They were excluded from nearly every restaurant in town and held low-paying jobs. 'And you better not go in a bar to drink."[235]

Such racism was no secret. In July 1908, the *Plaindealer* reported that "Up at the head of Wall St. on Main is a little old cheap dirty restaurant which has the nerve to put up a sign 'NO COLORED TRADE SOLICITED." The *Plaindealer* identified the restaurant as "a cheap dirty joint" in which the clientele was "not fit to associate

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[229] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 173–175; "The Two Colors of the Chop House Affair," *The Weekly Miner*, December 20, 1881, 5; Douglas D. Scott, "Archaeological Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Bighorn: A Retrospective," in *Legacy: New Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Proceedings of the Little Bighorn*, ed. Charles E. Rankin (Helena: Montana Historical Society Press, 1996), 15; Aubrey L. Haines, *Battle of the Big Hole: The Story of the Landmark Battle of the 1877 Nez Perce War* (Lanham, Md.: TwoDot, 2007). *Helena Independent*, December 8, 1883, 5; "Montana News," *The Daily Enterprise*, December 10, 1883, 4.
[230] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 30.
[231] *The Colored Citizen*, September 24, 1894, 1; Quoted in Myers, "Montana's Negro Newspapers, 1894-1911," 18.
[232] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 183.
[233] Cf. The report of W.N. Easton, of Butte, regarding Helena's Capital restaurant in "Local and Personal" *The Colored Citizen*, October 1, 1894.
[234] Tim Brooks and Richard Keith Spottswood, *Lost Sounds: Blacks and the Birth of the Recording Industry, 1890-1919* (University of Illinois Press, 2004); Nick Tosches, *Where Dead Voices Gather* (Little, Brown, 2009); Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West," 163.
[235] Hilander, "Helena Native Has 'Roots' Galore."

with hogs . . . the den as it looks in passing reminds one of a refuge for vultures who feast on carrion & it is a stench in the nostrils of any man who essay to be anything at all in the natural event of things a place to be shunned."[236] But its practices proliferated. By autumn, the newspaper reported that "the cheap places on upper Main St. where the colored man who happened to be hungry could buy & eat are one by one being closed against him & the sign posted 'No Colored Trade Solicited." It seemed that "unless a change [was] made," all "these public eating houses" would ban black people.[237] Such discrimination extended to other public places as well: in Billings, for instance, residents recalled that "well into the 1940s, black residents weren't allowed to try on clothing in downtown stores, sit anywhere in movie theaters or swim in city pools unless the water would be cleaned the next day," and there was a "practice of discouraging minorities from buying property beyond certain areas of town."[238]

The Racial Landscape in Montana and its Capital, ca. 1906

Authorities and local white leaders responded harshly when people violated prohibitions on social integration, and in doing so attested to the multiple ways racial discrimination operated on the ground. In the Spring of 1906, two criminal trials in Helena revealed much about the racial landscape of the city. Both involved black women charged with murder. First tried was Nora Mentzel, who "killed William F. Cyrus, a black soldier from Fort Harrison." Mentzel was allegedly "a Clore Street prostitute who frequented the Zanzibar," a saloon owned by black businessmen Graye and Gordon. She claimed she shot Cyrus with a revolver in self-defense "in the course of an argument," but authorities charged her with premeditated murder. [239] A second trial began shortly thereafter whereby Julia King, "the daughter of a respected Helena black family," was accused of murdering her husband following an argument in December 1905. "It was the second marriage for Julia, then eighteen years old, and her husband, William King, was generally considered a 'dandy,' a man who had many paramours including white women." [240]

Both trials provided a platform for Lewis and Clark County Attorney and prosecutor Leon Lacroix to propound about race in Helena and black people generally. Lacroix attacked the city's interracial red light district, and linked events there to supposed larger problems with African-Americans. According to Lacroix, "Mentzel had lured Cyrus into her Clore Street house after hustling him at the Zanzibar . . . he emphasized her profession and the immorality that," in his telling, "seemed to breed on Clore Street." Subsequently, Lacroix charged, "black barber L.L. Grisson had conspired to bribe witnesses and . . . Nora herself had committed perjury." He concluded by reporting that he'd been personally harassed by local African-American residents, several of whom, "had jeered him in public."[241] Just a few weeks later, in early April, the trial of Julia King "was a near repeat of

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[236] *Montana Plaindealer*, July 17, 1908.
[237] *Montana Plaindealer*, December 18, 1908; Myers, "Montana's Negro Newspapers, 1894-1911," 21. Quoting Dec. Plaindealer. Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 347.
[238] Mary Pickett, "Black Women's Group Alters Treatment of Minorities in Billings," *The Billings Gazette.com*, accessed August 13, 2016, http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/black-women-s-group-alters-treatment-of-minorities-in-billings/article_bd8a5cb0-1d89-11df-b9d9-001cc4c03286.html.
[239] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 55; Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," 10–11.
[240] Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," 11.
[241] Ibid., 10–11.

the previous month's courtroom drama. Lacroix prosecuted and Spaulding defended," with the prosecutor dwelling on "Clore Street's degenerate influences spawned such crimes as hers."[242] As Lacroix instructed jurors and the people of Helena, the problem was one of race: "it is time that the respectable white people of this community rise in their might and assert their rights."[243]

Helena's white government officials and local leaders concurred. In June, "the new city council, believing it was following a public mandate, went after . . . Graye and Gordon's Zanzibar Saloon."[244] Throughout, the town's daily newspapers like the *Helena Independent* and the *Montana Daily Record* "dwelt on lurid details and the antics and opinions of Leon Lacroix, the prosecutor and county attorney."[245] The daily papers shared the county attorney's antipathy for black people as well as for interracial socializing and the spaces that permitted it. The editor of the *Independent Record,* "long a critic of the Zanzibar," proclaimed the club, "'the vilest, the most insolent, the most degenerate and the most anomalous warren of salacity and sin that Montana ever knew."[246] The Zanzibar was "an atrocious, … illegal, destructive, and insulting thing . . . It was the dirtiest and most repulsive scar on the body politic. The negroes who conducted it were hated for the management of a villainous dive. The white outcasts who patronized it were anathematized for their association with black and degenerate criminals . . . It was an Ethiopian saturnalia devised for Caucasian libertines."[247] Moreover, according to the *Helena Independent Record,* the black community writ large was to be condemned. "The average Negro likes pork chops better than work," the paper proclaimed, adding that "repose is the natural attitude of the Negro," a people who "have a genius for self-maintenance without working."[248]

In a pattern repeated in innumerable places across the country in this period, Helena whites especially targeted noticeably successful black individuals: "as much as anything, it was the behavior of one of the Zanzibar's proprietors that angered them." Lloyd V. Graye came to town in 1903 from Denver, and "he invested his money in two small businesses in the black community and then purchased the saloon on Clore Street in partnership with David Gordon, former co-owner of the Manhattan Club on Main Street. The Zanzibar flourished under Graye's management." Alderman James Lissner—who "owned a saloon a short distance from the Zanzibar on Main Street"— condemned Graye to the city council. "This man," he testified, "disgusts everybody in the city with his pompous actions. He calls himself 'King of the Blackbirds,' and he struts about the city as though he owned every colored person in town."[249]

Helena's black weekly paper spoke out against the racist words and deeds of Helena's local media and government officials. *Plaindealer* editor Bass "charged that the issue boiled down to racism and greed. It was racist because the saloon owners were black, and it was avaricious because Alderman Lissner wanted to limit competition. For Bass it was just one more example of what happened when blacks competed successfully with

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[242] Ibid., 11.
[243] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 55; Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," 10–11.
[244] Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," 11–12.
[245] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 55.
[246] Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," 13.
[247] Ibid., 12.
[248] *Independent Record,* June 1, 1906; Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 56.
[249] Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," 12.

whites. . . . 'the Independent has certainly gone daffy on Zanzibar,' Bass wrote; 'their objections are not from a standpoint of public good, but from antipathy, personal feelings, and caste."[250] The *Independent*'s statements, Bass continued, were "dull, stupid, and disingenuous": go to the South "and any 12 years old school child can tell you who furnishes the labor that puts on the market the great productions of the South." In his estimation, the editor of the *Independent Record* was worse than "the notorious southern racist 'Pitchfork' Ben Tillman," a South Carolina politician known for his passionate efforts to create a white supremacist society.[251] Bass called out Lewis and Clark County attorney Lacroix in similar terms for his "racism in a closing address during the trial . . . such sentiments 'would only be expected from Ben Tillman . . . in the jungles of the Southland."[252]

As the 1906 trials and their aftermath suggest, everyday racist practices had their parallels in Montana's legal realm. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as has broadly been the case since, the state legal system disproportionally punished nonwhite people.[253] In the years between 1877 and 1910, Montana executed 43 men. At least nine of these men were nonwhite, including at least two black men. In April of 1896, Lewis and Clark County hung John Biggerstaff for the murder of Dick Johnson, pugilist and native of nearby Unionville (Figure 12). Three years later, Yellowstone County hung William Brooks, a handyman, also for murder. In the context of the racial landscape of the period, these executions underscored the subjugation of African-Americans.[254]

In Montana, Jim Crow laws attended enforcement in the service of inequality. In 1897, legislators passed a voting rights residency statute that kept many black soldiers stationed in Montana from voting. According to the law's provisions, "any person living on an Indian or military reservation"—unless that person had acquired a residence in the state—was excluded from voting. Montana officials also enacted other laws that targeted African-American people. In 1906, "the Butte Elks, the only black lodge in Montana, proposed expansion." The (white) Elks Lodge in Helena recoiled, "warn[ing] other white fraternal orders that a black invasion was in the offing," [255] and the following year the legislature unanimously passed S.B. 7, a bill "to prevent colored men in this state from wearing the insignia of their fraternal order, the Elks."[256] At the behest of "local white Elks members," the Helena police subsequently arrested William R. Holland, "who played ragtime piano in a Clore Street brothel" and was a member of the newly established local African-American Elks lodge, for wearing "a diamond-studded Elks pin inscribed with the legend 'B.P.O.E.'" Holland fought the charges but was convicted by a jury and fined $100 by the judge, who cited Holland's "impudence." With his attorney Charles Spaulding, Holland appealed to

[250] Ibid., 13–14.
[251] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 56; Bruce Palmer, "The Design of White Supremacy: Review of Kantrowitz, Stephen, Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy," October 2000, http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=4566. Tillman worked toward "white male authority in every sphere from the individual household to national politics" (2).
[252] Myers, "Montana's Negro Newspapers, 1894-1911," 19.
[253] Blum, "Public Executions: Understanding the 'Cruel and Unusual Punishments' Clause."
[254] Ibid.
[255] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 56.
[256] *The Montana Plaindealer*, February 1, 1907, 1.

the state supreme court on the grounds that "the legislation violated the 14th amendment and constituted a poorly disguised effort to discriminate against blacks." The court agreed, and threw out the statute.[257] (Figure 13)

Montana towns had their own Jim Crow laws, and these could be especially dangerous for African-Americans. According to sociologist James Loewen, "several Montana towns passed 'Green River Ordinances.'" Named for the Wyoming area that pioneered them, Green River Ordinances created so-called Sundown Towns, in which black people or other targeted groups were prohibited after dark.[258] In 1915 Glendive's *Independent* newspaper boasted of its long-time "sundown town" status: "for many years there has been a saying that 'the sun is never allowed to set on any nigger in Glendive.'"[259] That "saying" was a legitimate threat of attack. Glendive was known to take violent action against black people and interracial intimacy: "on their wedding night in Glendive, Emma Wall and her white groom, John Orr, were forcibly 'alabastined' and ebonized, respectively, by a mob of 200 men and given 24 hour notice 'to pack up and leave town.'"[260] In the context of public murders of black people by lynch mobs across the country, as well as recent lynch mob murders in the state—activist and journalist Ida Wells reported four lynchings in Montana in 1892—the potential for mob violence was a serious threat to black people in Montana.[261]

As the story of Glendive's violent attack on a newlywed couple reminds us, white supremacists focused their greatest ardor on interracial intimacy or, as it was oft coded, "miscegenation." Jim Crow legislation in Montana climaxed in 1910 with a bill that prohibited interracial marriage. Marriage "between White Persons, Negroes, Persons of Negro Blood, and between White Persons, Chinese and Japanese," remained illegal in the state for more than the next 40 years. First introduced in 1907 by State Senator Charles S. Muffly, Democrat of Winston, the bill initially failed. Undeterred, Muffly reintroduced it in 1909, after which it narrowly passed.[262] Newspapers around the state followed the vote, and "editorial reaction from the state's daily press indicated

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[257] Ibid. *The Montana Plaindealer*, May 15, 1908, 1; "No Jim Crow Laws for Montana," *The Montana Plaindealer*, July 31, 1908, 1; *The Montana Plaindealer*, December 18, 1908, 4.

[258] James Loewen, *Sundown Towns : A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: New Press;Distributed in the United States by Norton, 2005); James Loewen, "Possible Sundown Towns in MT," *Something Has Gone Very Wrong... The Homepage of James W. Loewen*, accessed August 8, 2016, http://sundown.afro.illinois.edu/sundowntownsshow.php?state=MT. Loewen's list of possible Montana sundown towns or jurisdictions includes Choteau, Miles City, Round-up, and Lincoln County.

[259] "Color Line Is Drawn In Glendive," *Glendive Independent*, February 9, 1915.

[260] This was reported in the *Glendive Independent* and later, on May 2, 1895, in the *Kansas City Gazette*. It is also noted in Alexander Russell Webb's contemporary writings (see Umar F. Abd-Allah, *A Muslim in Victorian America: The Life of Alexander Russell Webb* (Oxford University Press, 2006) and in secondary sources (eg. Dee Garceau-Hagen, "Finding Mary Fields," in *Portraits of Women in the American West* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

[261] Ida Wells, "Lynch Law," *History Was a Weapon*, accessed August 9, 2016, http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/wellslynchlaw.html. Surrounding states also lynched people during this period, with 1892 lynchings in North Dakota (1), Wyoming (9), and Idaho (8). Wyoming and Idaho had more lynchings than any other states outside of the South.

[262] Senate Bill 71, 1907 S. J. 140.; 1909 Laws C. 49.; Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 56, 57. For an excellent recounting of the Legislative debates regarding the bill, see Eruteya, "Racial Legislation in Montana: 1864 – 1955," 40-58.

general support." [263] Helena's *Plaindealer*, meanwhile, decried the measure. "Montana has joined the Jim Crow Colony alongside of Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, and Arkansas." "God help us!"[264]

Decline and Endurance in Helena's African-American Community, ca. 1910-1970

Despite the determination to dig in and fight for racial justice and equality evinced by Helena's black community, subsequent years brought rapid demographic decline. In 1909, Lloyd Graye "went on to better opportunities in Seattle."[265] And many black Montanans did likewise thereafter. Until 1910, "a number of communities [in the region] were roughly equal in both size and influence over the entire area."[266] In subsequent years "some cities—notably Seattle and Portland—became much more significant as centers of Afro-American life in the Pacific Northwest while others, such as Roslyn, Butte, and Helena, became secondary or declined to only nominal importance."[267]

Other African-American Montana residents moved in various directions for a variety of reasons. In 1912 "the last black troops left Fort Harrison . . . and with them went many patrons of Helena's black businesses."[268] While Helena and Butte African American populations dwindled, "in places like Spokane, Yakima, Pocatello they were just starting."[269] Some people moved east. In 1916, Arthur C. Ford, son of Nathaniel Ford, graduated from Montana State College with a mechanical engineering degree. Ford went on to become president of New York City's Department of Water Supply, Gas & Electricity. "When he was named to that post in January 1954 by Mayor Robert F. Wagner, Mr. Ford became the first black to be appointed commissioner of a city agency."[270] (Figure 14) Taylor Gordon of White Sulphur Springs joined him in New York. In 1927, Gordon, by then an accomplished tenor, forged a singing partnership with J. Rosamond Johnson, often performing spirituals, including a well-received concert at Carnegie Hall. He "later wr[ote] a best-selling memoir, *Born to Be*, about his MT boyhood, the Harlem Renaissance, and advancing critical appreciation of the spiritual as an art form."[271] James Dorsey ultimately moved east as well, though not as far. Dorsey, son of a 25th Infantry veteran, in 1922 became the "first African-American to graduate from the University of Montana." Five years later he became the first to graduate from law school there as well, whereupon he moved to Milwaukee and practiced law there for 40 years.[272]

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[263] Myers, "Montana's Negro Newspapers, 1894-1911," 21.
[264] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 57.
[265] Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," 14.
[266] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 351.
[267] Ibid.
[268] Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906," 14.
[269] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 342. Roslyn's "disappeared."
[270] Montana State College, *Bulletin of the Montana State College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts, Twenty-Second Annual Catalog, 1914-1915*, (Bozeman: Montana State College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts, Vol. 12, No. 4, May 1915), 125, 168; "Arthur Ford, 93, Dies; Led City Water Board," *New York Times*, April 17, 1985.
[271] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 36; Gordon's sister, Rose Taylor, "wrote in an autobiographical sketch that she was the first "white" child born in White Sulphur Springs." See also Taylor Gordon, *Born to Be*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).
[272] "Legal Pioneer: the Legacy of UM Law's First African American Graduate," *Barrister* (Fall 2015), 26-27; Robert Bruce Slater, "The First Black Graduates of the Nation's 50 Flagship State Universities," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 13 (Autumn 1996): 80-81.

By 1920, the state's African-American population had fallen some 10% since 1910, to 1658, and over the next ten years it would drop to 1256. Helena still boasted one of Montana's largest populations, but it fell faster than in the state as a whole, plummeting from 415 in 1910 to 220 in 1920.[273] When one considers that the black population may have in fact peaked ca. 1912, the demographic decline becomes even more drastic. By 1930, the census listed only 133 black people—just over 10% of Montana's total—in Helena. Helena's African-American community had by then been eclipsed by both Billings' (141) and Great Falls' (208).

As black Helena shrank, it remained a group of interconnected families but one in which working-age adults were less common as they sought opportunities elsewhere, and average household size dropped noticeably (to about 2.7 people per household). Most people in the community still lived in family groups, with 50 households accounting for all of the town's African-American residents. By 1930, 66 women constituted 50% of the city's black population, a quarter of which was under the age of 18 and almost one in five 60 years old or older.[274] With an aging population, death further reduced the ranks, taking foundations of the local and regional community, like Anna Gordon, who died in 1924 after she "lived her entire life in Montana," or Alice Pleasant, a.k.a. "Ma Plaz," who died ten years later in Havre, where she long owned the Home Café and "was one of the most talked about early residents." [275]

As it long had, the occupational profile of these families reflected a system of structural racism that relegated most black people to a limited number of low-waged jobs. It also reflected the deep decline in the Helena African-American community, which now worked in such positions almost exclusively and was no longer sufficient to support a spectrum of independent black businesses. According to the 1930 census, 67 African-American males lived in Helena that year, of whom 52 were 18 or older. The census listed occupations for 43 of them (none for males under the age of 18). Over 60% of those reporting jobs listed just three positions, ie. "laborer" (five, one of whom specified "mining" labor)[plus one "workman, smelter"], "porter" (seven—five of whom worked at hotels), and "janitor" (14).[276] One man worked as a chauffeur, one as a barber, and two as cooks at hotels. There was one concrete worker, and one hod carrier, one waiter (dining car) and one elevator attendant, one engineer (at a life insurance company building), and one farm laborer, as well as a "fireman, bakery." Two men listed their occupation as "gardener," (and one of the laborers specified "gardening" labor) and one as "painter, paint shop." The sole professional position listed was "minister, Negro church," and the sole businessman listed was a "proprietor, second hand store." Besides this proprietor, Andrew J. Walton, only the enduring barber, Joseph W. Clarke, and mining laborer, George Howard, worked for themselves.

The limited range of occupations for females had also narrowed. By 1930, 21 of the black females still living in Helena listed occupations (none of them was over 18). Eight of these women made a living doing "cleaning" or "housekeeping" (of the three doing "housework" one had her own business while the other two worked for private families), five were cooks (two at hotels, two at restaurants, and one for a private family), three labored as

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In 1963 Dorsey received a Distinguished Service Award from his Alma Mater.

[273] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."

[274] A total of ninety-eight households in the 1910 census accounted for 337 of the city's 415 African-Americans. Household data for the remainder is unclear.

[275] Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," 32; Gary Wilson, *Honky-Tonk Town: Havre, Montana's Lawless Era*, 1st edition (Guilford, Conn: TwoDot, 2006), 4.

laundresses (one of whom had her own business and one of whom worked for a private family), and one worked for herself as a seamstress (Lela Ward of 20 Wood Street, no longer extant). There was also a "missionary, Negro church," an "operator, beauty parlor," a "stock girl, department store," and a "proprietress, groceries," ie. Almira Dorsey.

By that time, Almira ran the Dorsey grocery herself, Walter having died in 1907. She continued to operate it through 1932, when she sold it.[277] By that time, it had for years been one of the last vestiges of the African-American business sector, and the significant African-American community that undergirded it, that had been so vigorous around the turn of the century. Like the Dorsey family, many of those who remained during black Helena's decline were longtime pillars of the community. Some families endured into the 1920s. The family of Miles York, for instance, ran a laundry business in Helena in the 1910s and then moved to Big Sandy before returning to Helena, where Miles died in 1925.[278] In the same neighborhood, Edward and Rosana Glenn (1020 Fifth Avenue/24LC2451) stayed until ca. 1921, when they moved to Butte. Not far away, Annie Marshall lived at 918 Breckenridge (24LC2449) until her 1925 death (at which point one of her three sons remained in Helena, with the other two in Butte and Spokane). The Blanks family could also be found nearby into the 1920s (first at 843 8th then at 506 Leslie), as could Andrew and Sarah Green and Annie Gordon (413 N. Raleigh/24LC2434). Other black families clustered on the west side of town into the 1920s. Retired Sgt. Henry Robinson (25th U.S. Infantry) retained 504 Peosta (24LC2435) until 1919, when he left but his black Bridgwater neighbors, an Army veteran's family who lived at 502 Peosta (24LC2272), remained. One block away, on Hollins Avenue, one could find the families of neighbors, and veterans, Jefferson Harrison (at 534) until 1922, Nathan Walker (at 520) until 1924, and Charles Mathews (at 522) until 1927.[279]

Others stayed longer, remaining in Helena during the Great Depression and beyond. (Figure 15) [280] The George and Polly D. Lee family owned and occupied 912 8th Avenue (24LC2447) into 1930, while members of the Ingram and Dutriuielle families kept 835 5th (24LC2445) into 1940. The house at 663 N. Ewing (24LC2441) stayed in the Hooper-Harrison family—and was occupied by family members—until 1945. Descendents of William Irvin and his wife Georgia Donnell Irvin (nee Lewis) lived at 212 S. Beattie (24LC2431) into the 1950s and Logan Smith remained at 1459 Wilder (24LC2453) until he died in 1957. Julian Anderson's family owned and occupied 617 Broadway (24LC2440) until 1974. The Harrell family members kept their houses at 1068 and 1072 N. Ewing even later. Mary Emma Bridgwater Harrell owned those houses until 1976, when she conveyed them to the Sannes, who may have been relatives: widowed daughter-in-law Mary Alice Harrell lived at 1072 N. Ewing until at least 1993. Other Harrell family members also were among the town's most enduring black residents. Mary Alice Harrell's brother-in-law Cornelius "Connie" Harrell, and his wife Mildred, acquired 913 Cannon (24LC2448) from the heirs of family friends Nathan and Sarah Ford in 1955, and owned it until 1978. Cornelius' Aunt Octavia Bridgwater, meanwhile, continued to live at the Bridgwater family home at 502 Peosta

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[276] A certain amount of occupational diversity existed within these categories.
[277] The grocery would continue to operate under new owners—the Gloege family—for about 30 more years.
[278] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form." The Yorks always lived in the same neighborhood ie. 5th, 6th and 8th Aves. and 712 & 515 Idaho.
[279] Histories of some enduring African-American households are contained in Montana Historic Property Record Nos. 24LC2429 through 24LC2453. Robinson is identified as a veteran in "March 16, 1906, *Montana Plaindealer*, March 1906.
[280] "Helena As She Was - An Open History Resource for Montana's Capital City."

(24LC2272). A few months before she died in 1985, Octavia deeded the property to Mary Alice Harrell, the widow of her late nephew, Charles Harrell, Jr.[281] Mary Alice owned 502 Peosta until 1987. Five years later, members of the extended James and Clarissa Crump family sold the family home at 1003 9th Avenue (24LC2450), ending 107 years of Crump history at the property.

The African-American people who remained in the Helena region during the community's decline continued to excel were they could despite the contraction of black businesses and professions and associated opportunities. In 1921, Missouri native Henry J. Baker was appointed to the position of postmaster at the State Capitol, reportedly becoming the first black Montana state official.[282] Octavia Bridgwater left Montana to get a nurses degree and returned to Helena as an RN in 1930, but hospitals in the state wouldn't hire black nurses so she turned to private nursing and did housework and laundry.[283] Other black Montanans with noteworthy achievements during this period included Edward B. Reynolds, an Anaconda newspaper reporter, who in 1941 wrote essays on smelter work for the unpublished WPA anthology Men at Work. Journalism was something of a Reynolds family tradition: Edward's older brother Rex was a well-known humor essayist for newspaper in Seattle and San Francisco.

Although these individuals managed to find professional success, opportunities for doing so were few and far between. After 1910, the black community in Helena and the surrounding region became too small to support a spectrum of diverse, autonomous institutions and spaces. In 1910, the *Plaindealer* "switched from a weekly to a monthly," and in the fall of 1911 Joseph Blackburn Bass published his last Helena issue in September 1911. Bass decamped for San Francisco and then Los Angeles, where he married Carlotta Spear and with her ran the *California Eagle*.[284] Helena's black churches, the heart of the "respectable" black community still functioned, but even they withered with each passing year. St. James endured longest. It continued to function through the 1930s, but after World War II it ceased to exist as a regular church organization.[285]

Although the Helena AME congregation dwindled, the regional AME network, of which it was a core component, grew into the 1920s. Around 1910, AME ministers Cate and Abbot visited Lewistown, Livingston, and Miles City to start churches and Missoula, too, boasted an AME church, St. Paul's at 1411/1427 Phillips.[286] In 1916, African-American residents of Havre constructed an AME church there. In her memoir *Life As it Was* (c. 1975), Lillie Hall Hollingshead recalled how important the church was "as [a] place of identity and sanctuary for African Americans in Jim Crow America." Hollingshead noted that "the Havre church served the spiritual needs of not only Great Northern railways employees, but the Negroes who had to lay over in Havre between trains. How happy our Negro neighbors from the South must have been to have a place where they could sing,

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[281] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[282] *Anaconda Standard*, July 3, 1921.
[283] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[284] Myers, "Montana's Negro Newspapers, 1894-1911," 22; Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912," 57. Carlotta Spear Bass became a major figure in African-American history . . . details
[285] Hagen, "Montana Historic Property Record Form: 114 N. Hoback."
[286] *Montana Plaindealer*, May 28, 1909, 1; R.L. Polk & Co., *Polk's Missoula City Directory*, (Missoula, Mont.: R.L. Polk & Co., 1911), 16.

pray, and praise the Lord as they wished."[287] The following year, Union Bethel AME in Great Falls completed a new church building (now listed on the NRHP).[288] Four years later, the newly-built Wayman AME Chapel in Billings (402 S. 25th St.) held its first services.[289] These Montana churches, along with others started earlier that endured (like Shaffer Chapel, the remaining one of Butte's two AME churches, Allen Chapel having closed by 1915) worked together to continue serving the state's African-American community. They also connected to a broader regional network: in this period, both the black Baptist and AME churches had "regional gatherings that included the four Pacific Northwest states."[290]

Like the state's black churches, as the centers of African-American community growth shifted to different Montana cities, Helena's black institutions and individuals relied increasingly on the regional black community. As before, these centers—linked by kinship, friendship and shared histories and activities—formed a regional African-American network, one that Booker T. Washington partially traced in 1913 when he lectured in Billings, Bozeman, Butte and Helena.[291] Black Montanans in this way kept up on developments across the state, and these events became shared experiences of the African-American community, including Helena's. When Butte's Socialist mayor, and Unitarian minister, Lewis J. Duncan appointed African-American Frank Cassels to the police force in 1911, with a Main St. from Park to Granite patrol beat, Helena residents read about it in the *Plaindealer*.[292] It likewise would have been news in the Helena when, in 1914, five Great Falls residents formed Afro-American Investment Co. to invest in real estate, or when, in 1935, Butte's black baseball team, the Colored Giants, won the championship of the first half of the Montana State Baseball League season.[293] Residents of those cities would in turn have been aware of community activities in Helena, like the rally held in 1930 by the "Colored Walsh-for-Senator Club," which promoted the re-election of (white Democrat) U.S. Senator Thomas Walsh.[294] In addition to the many informal links between black communities in different cities, residents of the region connected to one another formally through regional organizations. In 1920, for instance, the African-American Grand Masonic Lodge of Washington included 35 lodges, among them lodges in Montana and Idaho.[295]

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[287] Lillie Hall Hollingshead, *Life as It Was* (Place of publication not identified: publisher not identified, 1975). First trustees of the Havre AME were Thomas Allsup, William Jackson, C. A. Abernathy, and Charles Lawson, with Jackson as president and Abernathy as secretary. Its pastor was the Rev. W.B. Williams, who also pastored Union Bethel AME Church in Great Falls. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints purchased the property in 1947 and in 1969 it passed to the United Pentecostal Church." "June 2013," *Revisiting Montana's Historic Landscape*, n.d., https://montanahistoriclandscape.com/2013/06/.
[288] Barbara Behan, "Union Bethel AME Church National Register of Historic Places Registration Form," 2003.
[289] Susan Olp, "'Ups and Downs and Struggles' Wayman Chapel Still Going Strong after 120 Years on Billings' South Side," *Billings Gazette*, June 6, 2015, Section D, 1.
[290] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 345.
[291] *Billings Daily Gazette*, March 4-5, 1913; *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*, March 4, 6-7, 1913; *Anaconda Standard*, March 6-7, 1913; *Butte Miner*, March 6-7, 1913; *Helena Daily Independent*, March 8,1913.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid; John Mihelich, "'Baseball Was Our Life' Amateur Baseball in Butte Montana 1920-1960," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 59, no. 2 (2009): 62–96.
[294] "Colored Voters Hold Rally for Walsh and Pledge Him Support," *Helena Independent*, November 2 1930, 6.
[295] Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in The Pacific Northwest," 345.

African-American women had long stood at the center of community activities in Montana, as in the nation as a whole, and the most important of the state's black community institutions in this period were women's clubs. In Helena, women like Mamie Bridgwater founded the Pleasant Hour Club in 1916, and in 1921 created a second organization called the Mary B. Talbert Art Club. By then Montana counted at least seven other black women's clubs (including Kalispell's Mutual Improvement Club, est. 1913, Butte's Pearl Club, est. 1918, Billings' Phyllis Wheatley Club and Great Falls' Dunbar Art and Study Club, both est. 1920, and three clubs established in 1921, ie. Bozeman's Sweet Pear Study Club, Butte's Clover Leaf Club, and Anaconda's Good Word Literary Club). In 1921, at a joint meeting in Butte, these clubs formed the Montana Federation of Negro Women's Clubs, an affiliate of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs.[296]

These clubs immediately began a sustained, creative, and powerful effort to improve the lives of black people. Clubwomen worked on a local, individual level, doing varied volunteer work like providing niceties to "bringing flowers to hospital patients . . . adding works by African American authors to local libraries," and sponsoring a "scholarship fund for black students." And they worked in the realm of formal politics as well—Governor Joseph M. Dixon delivered the welcome address at their second annual convention in Helena in 1922—"advancing the cause of civil rights in Montana" and beyond. Club "members also concentrated on racial politics, raising funds for the NAACP and taking positions on abolishing the poll tax and upholding anti-lynch laws." They consistently "lobbied for civil rights legislation in state leg," supporting bills like that proposed in 1937 "relating to discrimination between citizens in regard to certain services & employment."[297]

As with earlier efforts by Montana's African-American institutions, the ongoing work by Helena's, and Montana's, "Colored Women's Clubs" reflected enduring and consequential racism in the region. Indeed, rather than improve, racism seemed to escalate nationwide in this period, and was likely a factor in encouraging black people to move to areas outside of Montana, where they weren't so outnumbered.

In 1915, the second Ku Klux Klan was founded, after a 40-plus year period in which the organization was essentially nonexistent. In the wake of voluminous immigration from southern Europe that began ca. 1880, this new Klan added anti-Catholic and anti-Jewish components to its anti-black foundation. That same year, as the new medium of moving pictures spread across the country, the white supremacist film *Birth of a Nation* was released to critical acclaim. Wildly popular among both the masses and elites—the White House hosted the premier—the film became the first big box office smash in the history of movies. As such, it both reflected and propelled the nation's growing antipathy toward black people. It popularized a new image of blacks, replacing earlier minstrel-stage images of grinning and obsequious Jim Crows with one of the "negro" as dangerous oppressor. Based on Thomas Dixon's novel *The Klansman, Birth of a Nation* assailed integration, and black rights more generally, raising the specter of miscegenation and suggesting that blacks were unworthy of the

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[296] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[297] Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, "Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Records, 1921-1978," MC 281, Box 2, Folder 4, Montana Historical Society; MT SHPO; "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."; Ibid. The bill was killed in committee. Women's History Matters, "'Lifting as We Climb': The Activism of the Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs," *Women's History Matters*, July 1, 2014, http://montanawomenshistory.org/lifting-as-we-climb-the-activism-of-the-montana-federation-of-colored-womens-clubs/. Ms. Joan Duncan's interview, located at MHS, has some excellent material regarding the civic values espoused by the Women's Clubs.

franchise and that only the KKK could save the Anglo-Saxon nation. In 1916, *Birth of a Nation* played in Montana movie theatres. Although residents of Helena and Butte protested the screenings in their cities, they could not stem the rising tide of racism with which the film was associated.[298] Soon thereafter, the end of the Great War invigorated racial hysteria.

The rise of white supremacy in this period manifested at local and national levels in various ways. Federal legislation, like the 1924 National Origins Act, sought to protect American whiteness writ large while state legislation, like the 1921 Montana miscegenation code, targeted individual interracial interaction, nullifying the marriages of interracial Montana couples who wed in jurisdictions that permitted such unions.[299] White Montanans also took matters into their own hands. In 1913, a lynch mob in Mondak, on the North Dakota border, killed J.C. Collins, a worker in a railway bridge construction camp. Collins was accused of having killed the county sheriff and his deputy while they were trying to arrest him for allegedly assaulting the wife of a fellow (black) worker.[300] Collins' killers went unpunished. Shortly after the Mondak lynching, black men were executed in public spectacles elsewhere in the state. In February, 1917, Meagher County hung three black "hobos" in White Sulphur Springs. Henry Hall, Harrison Gibson, and Leslie Fahley (a.k.a. Foley), all railroad workers, were charged with robbing and killing a white transient laborer.[301] Four other men also implicated in the crime were sentenced to prison for terms ranging from 10 years to life. The following January, Silver Bow County also hung a black man, Sherman Powell. [302]

With rising racism and a re-established Ku Klux Klan, mass public displays of anti-black sentiment became common around the nation. White Montanans organized a state chapter of the Klan in 1921, within a few years it comprised over 40 local affiliates. Locals formed large Klaverns in Butte, Livingston, Whitehall, Roundup, and other towns. [303] By the mid-20s over 5,000 men paid membership dues to the Montana Klan, which also had an active women's auxiliary. Among these men and women were many of the state's leading lights. State-level leadership "included five lawyers, three doctors, an assistant high school principal, a pharmacist, a state superintendent of the Montana Children's Home Society, and at least ten ministers," as well as many Masons. Grand Dragon Lewis Terwilliger was mayor of Livingston from 1919 to 1923, and "among the leading educators of Montana."[304] Numerous other notable Montanans could be found in the rank-and-file, including candidates for

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[298] *Anaconda Standard*, January 26, 1916; *Helena Independent*, February 22 and 25, 1916; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."
[299] Phil Cousineau, "Crimes of Love," Website, Jameson Law Library Blog (Missoula, Mont.: University of Montana Law Library), February 21, 2012. Accessed November 4, 2016, https://jamesonlawlibrary.wordpress.com/2012/02/21/crimes-of-love/.
[300] *Poplar Standard*, April 10, 1913; *Culbertson Searchlight*, April 11, 1913.
[301] "DeathPenaltyUSA, the Database of Executions in the United States."
[302] Ibid. Powell, a Pullman porter, was accused of murder. At least one other black man was executed in Montana in this period: 38 year-old laborer George Griner, hung by Custer County in Miles City in January 1935 for murder.
[303] WHM, "Montana Women of the Ku Klux Klan," *Women's History Matters*, August 7, 2014, http://montanawomenshistory.org/montana-women-of-the-ku-klux-klan/.
[304] Christine K. Erickson, "'Kluxer Blues': The Klan Confronts Catholics in Butte, Montana, 1923-1929," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 53, no. 1 (2003): 49; Anne Marie Sturdevant, "White Hoods Under the Big Sky: Montanans Embrace the Ku Klux Klan, 1920s," in *Speaking Ill of the Dead: Jerks in Montana History*, second (Globe Pequot Press, 2011), 316. Through its entire existence, the Grand Dragon of the MT KKK was Lewis Terwilliger, a teacher who arrived from Michigan in 1895 and was a principal in Butte, Townsend and then Livingston (from 1903-1913) and who also had a

the U.S. Congress: in the 1924 Senate race, the Klan funded and promoted the campaign of Frank Linderman, whom Terwilliger identified as "a present or former Klansman."[305]

The Montana Klan held huge public events—parades 400-strong down the streets of Livingston, lectures in Billings that drew 1,300 people—and choreographed flamboyant displays of strength. The *Billings Gazette* described one impressive Klan event held during the 1923 Midland Empire Fair, where "thousands of visitors were treated . . . to a spectacle not advertised on the Governor's Day program. At 10:00 sharp, the city was aroused by a continuous bursting of air bombs over the high rimrocks that surround the northern part of the city. This was followed a little later by the bursting into flames of a cross nearly 50 feet in height, the 'fiery cross if the K.K. K.' As the cross blazed, lighting the entire top of the hills for miles around, hundreds of red flares were touched off. And on the edge of the hills 300 yards above the city, marched hundreds of white-robed members of the organization, carrying red and greed flaming torches." Some 2,000 members were said to have participated.[306] The participation of these multitudes reflected a commitment to Klan principles—foremost among them "white supremacy"—that fostered violence toward Montana's black residents. Violent threats—like those received in 1923 by Anaconda residents like Mrs. Clements, the wife of Anaconda's AME pastor—accompanied violent attacks.[307] Montana Klan violence climaxed with the 1926 killing in Hardin of James Belden, a Crow Agency resident (recently of Butte) who "repaired shoes and did off jobs around the community."[308] Belden "was riddled with bullets from upwards of a hundred guns" after he shot—possibly in self-defense—Big Horn County Sheriff, and Klan member, Robert P. Gilmore.[309]

The mob killing of James Belden marked the nadir, but not the end, of anti-black activity in Montana in this period. The Klan itself existed until 1928, and, as elsewhere in the country in the years before the Second World War, black people in the state faced an overtly hostile society, one bent, in large part, on systematically repressing them. In a simple statement, railroad worker Philip "Slim" Coleman, Jr., distilled this fundamental fact before he was hung in the last public execution in Missoula County. Missoula authorities killed Coleman, 24, "in record time for Montana," hanging him September 10, 1943, just 47 days after the alleged murder-robbery of which he was convicted. As his execution approached, Coleman spoke to a reporter for the Missoulian newspaper: "If I was white and had some money, I could beat this case."[310]

Continuing Demographic Decline Amidst the Promise of the Post-WWII Period

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ranch and real estate/abstract business. Terwilliger was a strong Methodist, Republican, and Mason. He served as mayor of Livingston from 1919-1923. A Klan member since its mid-teens revival, Terwilliger earned a salary of $1150 as Grand Dragon (vs. ave. American annual wage $680).

[305] Sturdevant, "White Hoods Under the Big Sky: Montanans Embrace the Ku Klux Klan, 1920s," 320.

[306] Ibid., 312.

[307] Sturdevant, "White Hoods Under the Big Sky: Montanans Embrace the Ku Klux Klan, 1920s"; Dave Walter, Jon Axline, and Jodie Foley, *Speaking Ill of the Dead: Jerks in Montana History* (Guilford, Conn.: Globe Pequot Press, 2011), 317. The KKK's Feb. 6 letter to the AME pastor's wife read "Mrs. Clements: Your tongue has trapped you with your race and the white race. You had better leave town or we will tar and feather you. Beware."

[308] Sturdevant, "White Hoods Under the Big Sky: Montanans Embrace the Ku Klux Klan, 1920s," 317–18.

[309] Ibid., 318–19.

[310] "DeathPenaltyUSA, the Database of Executions in the United States."

Coleman's simple statement and subsequent death occurred at a turning point in global, national, and state racial history. The Second World War transformed society in countless ways, not least in the realm of racism and race relations. Change touched all levels of society, and manifested in the life stories of the multitudes. In Helena, trained Registered Nurse Octavia Bridgwater, who had been reduced to working as a housekeeper and laundress since her 1930 hometown return, enlisted in the Army Nursing Corps. Octavia's service was a noteworthy achievement, as was oft the case with individuals from well-educated Western black communities: in the course of the war, only 160 black nurses served in United States' Army Nurse Corps.[311] Octavia, now a veteran, returned to Helena in 1945. This time, in contrast to her earlier return, Montana hospitals would hire a black nurse, and she took a position in St. Peter's maternity ward.[312]

Bridgwater was one among many African-Americans who capitalized on new opportunities in the WWII period. But most people found these opportunities elsewhere, as "lucrative industry and armed services jobs [drew] many African Americans away from Montana."[313] In 1940, Montana's population stood at 559,456, of which only 1,120 were identified in the census as black (136 fewer than in 1930). Three years of further population decline followed, and although sheer numbers of black people grew some thereafter, their overall proportion of Montana's population continued to be tiny: just two-tenths of a percent in 1940, it has not climbed even a tenth of a percent since.[314] In Helena, when Octavia Bridgwater returned from the war, the once thriving African-American community that was her birthplace was but a shadow of what it had been. By 1970, the city—much larger than it had been in 1910—counted only 45 black residents.[315]

Those that remained in the post-war period were, for the most part, integral longtime members of the community. They were people like Mamie Bridgwater, who died in 1950 at the age of 77, or like Julian Anderson, who retired in 1953 after 60 years as bartender at the Montana Club.[316] But despite the endurance of small, stable community core, demographic decline among Montana's African-Americans had passed a tipping point. During World War II, "the declining population left many of the local clubs struggling to maintain membership," and the resultant struggle to sustain community infrastructure likely drove further emigration while discouraging immigration.[317] In the post-war period, most black people seemed to prefer locales with viable communities and community institutions, institutions that continued to play a central role in their daily lives and their ongoing struggle for racial equality.

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[311] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[312] Ibid. Ms. Bridgwater worked at St. Peter's maternity ward until her retirement in 1960s.
[313] Women's History Matters, "'Lifting as We Climb.'"
[314] Bureau of the Census, "16th Census of the United States, 1940: Population Schedules: Montana, Lewis and Clark County" (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census, 1940); Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, "Historical Census Statistics On Population Totals by Race, 1790 to 1990, and by Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, for Large Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States," Population Division, Working Paper No. 76, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, February 2005), Table 27.
[315] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[316] "Mamie Bridgewater [sic], Respected Helena Matron, Dies Today," *Helena Independent Record*, April 28, 1950, 3; "Julian Anderson to be Honored by Montana Club," *Helena Independent Record*, June 18, 1953, 12; Ibid.; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."
[317] Women's History Matters, "'Lifting as We Climb.'"

That struggle gained steam in the wake of the Second World War. In Montana it was carried on by what remained of the state's African-American community and that community's last major institution, the Montana Federation of Women's Clubs. Like the community itself, the state women's federation was much diminished numerically: before WWII as many as 15 locals were active in Montana, but by 1949 only five remained. Among them was Helena's Pleasant Hour Club, which met in the homes of members like Octavia Bridgwater into the 1970s (Figure 16).[318] But although they toiled in smaller groups and greater isolation, the state's black women's clubs became, if anything, more active than ever in their quest for racial equality. Sometimes they did this by hosting events that showcased accomplished African-Americans, as in 1953, when Butte's Pearl Club brought contralto Marian Anderson to the mining city, where she drew over 2,000 people to the mining city's Civic Center.[319] But the bulk of their work focused on the legal arena, and "the MFCWC's legislative committee became especially active after WWII."[320]

By 1950, Great Falls had replaced Butte as Montana's largest city and, with the influx of black servicemen in the newly-integrated armed forces, had also become one of the state's most significant African-American population clusters.[321] Activity in the MFCWC shifted accordingly, and the legislative "committee's main support came from the MFCWC delegates of Cascade County, who saw the discrimination faced by African American airmen stationed at the Great Falls base." Led by women in Great Falls, Helena and elsewhere, through the 1950s the women's clubs "campaign[ed] to pass civil rights legislation in Montana."[322] For much of this time they fought for passage of a bill to "guarantee the full & equal enjoyment of all places of public accommodation & amusement" "to all people, regardless of race, creed, or color." Initially introduced in 1951, the bill was opposed by some legislators on the grounds that it would apply to "Indians" or "Mexicans" and by others who claimed it would pull black people to Montana and drive down property values. The MFCWC ultimately prevailed: a version of the bill—stripped of any penalties for violation—passed in 1955.[323]

Other victories accompanied passage of the civil rights bill. In Great Falls, the African-American community persuaded the 1952 Cascade County Community Council to create the Inter-racial Committee "to study the matter of racial discrimination . . . with particular concern for the colored airmen at the Base & the question of their admittance to establishments in the city."[324] The following year, the state legislature repealed the

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[318] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form." Robison, 4)
[319] Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, "Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs Records, 1921-1978," MC 281, Montana Historical Society; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."
[320] Women's History Matters, "'Lifting as We Climb.'" In 1948 the- MT Federation of Negro Women's Clubs changed it name to MT State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs.
[321] Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, "Historical Census Statistics On Population Totals by Race, 1790 to 1990, and by Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, for Large Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States," Population Division, Working Paper No. 76, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, February 2005), Table 27; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."
[322] Women's History Matters, "'Lifting as We Climb.'"
[323] Ibid.; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."
[324] Carla W. Garner, "Jacobs, Alma s., 1916-1997," Website, Blackpast.org, Accessed November 4, 2016, http://www.blackpast.org/aaw/jacobs-alma-s-1916-1997; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."

miscegenation law of 1910: "marriage between a white person & a negro" was again legal in Montana.[325] Meanwhile, the U.S. Supreme Court considered arguments about racial segregation in the United States. In 1954, it issued the landmark Brown v. Topeka Board of Education decision, which ruled that "separate facilities are inherently unequal," overturning Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) and outlawing school segregation. Ten years later, the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act. The 1964 Act, expedited by Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana, was, for all intents and purposes, identical to the Civil Rights Act passed at the end of the Civil War, about 100 years earlier.[326]

Clearly, progress toward racial equality was slow, and these important victories were accompanied by continuing, even revived, racism in the United States and the West. A third iteration of the Ku Klux Klan appeared with the spread of the Civil Rights Movement, and African-American and other activists met violent reprisal. In 1965—after brutal attacks on civil rights marchers in Selma—black and white Montana residents marched in Billings and Missoula and held ecumenical prayer services lamenting a "nationwide failure to love one another," but many Montanans scorned their anti-racist sentiments.[327] Around the same time, future country music star Charlie Pride and his wife lived in Helena (at 638 Peosta), where Charlie worked at the East Helena smelter, playing baseball for the Smelterites and singing for fans over the ballfield's PA system before home games. Despite Charlie's local popularity, Mrs. Pride recalled that "she and her husband were refused service in a Helena restaurant and a real estate agent refused to show them a house."[328]

Conclusion

The Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs lasted until 1972, when it disbanded.[329] With it went the last institutional vestiges of the black community that once thrived in the state.[330] Individual African-American residents continued to make their mark on Montana history—Lewistown native Alma Jacobs was appointed State Librarian in 1973, a year after she co-founded the Montana Committee for the Humanities—but one could no longer speak of a Montana black community in a collective sense.[331] It had become an artifact of history.

This moment in Montana coincided with a broader burgeoning interest in social history, and several people began documenting the state's historic African-American community, among them community members. In 1970, Lucille Smith Thompson, longtime librarian at Montana State University and member of a prominent black family from Great Falls, compiled a select bibliography of resources associated with the African American

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[325] "Relating to Miscegenous Marriages within the State of Montana," Ch. 4 1953 Mont. Laws 4; Ibid.
[326] Don Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield: The Extraordinary Life of a Great American Statesman and Diplomat*, in Chapter 9: "Johnson 1: Years of Escalation," (Smithsonian Books, 2003).
[327] MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline."
[328] "Helena As She Was - An Open History Resource for Montana's Capital City."
[329] Baumler, Hampton, and Boughton, "Haight-Bridgwater House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form." The MFCWC gave its remaining scholarship funds to UM to provide a scholarship commemorating MFCWC.
[330] In 1968, Ulysses Doss and several students founded a Black Studies Department at the University of Montana. This was just the third Black Studies Department in the nation—the other two were in California—but its emergence does not seem to be associated with the historic African-American community in the state.
[331] Garner, "Jacobs, Alma s., 1916-1997"; MT SHPO, "African-Americans in Montana Timeline." In 1957, Jacobs became the first black elected president of the Pacific Northwest Library Assn. In 1974, Great Falls' Geraldine Travis became the first black MT legislator when she was elected to the MT House.

experience in Montana titled *The Negro in Montana 1800-1945*. Two years later, Mrs. Thompson also published an article based on her research, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung."[332] Around the same time, historian Quintard Taylor, along with colleagues Charles Ramsay and John Dawkins from the Black Studies Department at Washington State University, conducted a series of interviews with African American pioneers and their descendants in the Northwest, nine Montana couples among them. This work became the basis for Taylor's 1979 doctoral dissertation, "A History of Blacks in the Pacific Northwest, 1788-1970."[333] Montana-based scholars, too, turned to the subject. In 1973, Rex C. Meyers wrote a history of "Montana's Negro Newspapers" from 1894 to 1911.[334] Historian William Lang, meanwhile, researched and wrote a pair of articles on Helena's black community, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks of Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912" and "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT, 1906."[335]

Other articles and books relating to the African American experience in Montana followed. They included Christian McMillen's "Border State Terror & the Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge & Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890," and Peggy Riley's "Women of the Great Falls African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1870-1910."[336] These scholarly works documented an historic black Montana community that no longer existed. By the 21st century, Montana was not the whitest state in the nation, but it had become the least black.[337]

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[332] Lucille Smith Thompson, Alma Smith Jacobs, and Montana State Library, *The Negro in Montana, 1800-1945; a Selective Bibliography*, (Helena: Montana State Library, 1970); Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung."
[333] "Black Oral History Interviews, 1972-1974," *Washington State University Libraries*, accessed July 22, 2015, http://ntserver1.wsulibs.wsu.edu/masc/finders/cass2.htm; Quintard Taylor, "A History of Blacks in the Pacific Northwest, 1788-1970" (Ph.D., University of Minnesota, 1979). See bibliography for a full list of these interviews.
[334] Myers, "Montana's Negro Newspapers, 1894-1911."
[335] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912"; Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906."
[336] McMillen, "Border State Terror and The Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge and Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890"; Peggy Riley, "Women of the Great Falls African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1870-1910.".
[337] Rob Chaney, "Martin Luther King Jr. Day: Being Black in Montana Can Be a Lonely Experience," *Missoulian.com*, accessed August 13, 2016, http://missoulian.com/news/local/martin-luther-king-jr-day-being-black-in-montana-can/article_19b2db8c-66be-5d69-977c-e1d81c9a1cae.html.

Section F: Associated Property Types and Registration Requirements

There are three primary property types associated with Helena's African-American history. Together, they encompass much of that community's activities, its life, labors, passions and priorities in the period between ca. 1862 to 1970, the period of significance. That era encompassed three distinct periods of development that frame the contexts historic contexts identified in this MPD, ie. Helena's Early African-American Community, ca. 1862-1877; The Heyday of Helena's African-American Community, ca. 1877-1910; and Decline and Endurance of Helena's African-American Community, ca. 1910-1970. The living and working conditions, and the group activities and associations, of the local black community discussed in these contexts are the basis of the property types outlined below, ie. properties associated with African-American organizations or institutions; properties associated with the commercial or economic lives of the black community, and residential properties that housed community members. Criterion A is the primary relevant criterion for most of the properties in these three categories.

Together, these three property types provide a physical foundation for understanding the evolution of black Helena. But although these broad categories encompass most resources historically associated with the community, extant resources do not tell the full story of Helena's African-American community and its architectural development. Many individual buildings have been lost, and entire neighborhoods associated with the local black people have been razed, including large sections of the south end of the downtown commercial district, combined commercial-residential districts like Clore Street (also the center of black nightlife), and nearby residential neighborhoods around State Street. These lost areas were where much of black Helena life happened, and where significant events took place that sometimes crystallized themes in local black history.

Integrity Considerations:

Under Criteria A, resources related to Helena's African-American history may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to their association with historic contexts. The applicable area of significance for these resources is Black Ethnic Heritage. In addition to the area of significance, properties must retain sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register.

Extant African American historical properties in Helena are rare. This fact is important to keep in mind when evaluating a property's eligibility for registration in the NRHP. It is especially important to take it into account when evaluating integrity. For rare resources like the property types associated with Helena's African-American history, physical characteristics must be sufficiently intact to convey the property's historic associations, but the seven specific aspects of integrity—location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association—should be assessed in the context of other surviving resources related to the history Helena's black community. Few of these rare historic resources are unmodified.

Integrity of location is usually essential, and that is true in the case of historic black properties in Helena. One of the resources nominated for listing in the NRHP as part of this MPS, the Dorsey Grocery and Residence (24LC2433), may have been moved onto the site, but if it was in fact moved, that move occurred at the behest of the Dorsey family when they purchased the vacant property and assembled buildings thereon to serve as their grocery and residence. Its installation at the site marks the beginning of the property's association with the African-American community and the beginning of its historic significance. Integrity of location is thus not in

every case a necessary prerequisite for eligibility among these resources, especially when viewed under Criteria Consideration B.

Design, or consciously created elements like form, plan, style, and proportion which, in combination, determine a property's basic appearance, is also an important aspect of integrity of these rare properties. Design is present in buildings both modest and grand, and in eligible properties design should be sufficiently intact so as to convey essential historic appearance, ie. ideally, properties should retain basic form, roof, patterns of fenestration, and major features such as porches. Many of these resources, however, were associated with the African-American community for generations, and were modified in the course of time and changing use. Modifications to design that occurred during the period of significance reflect those evolving uses and associations, and do not necessarily irredeemably compromise the integrity of the resource.

Setting is an aspect of integrity that is often intact for African American historic resources in Helena. This is especially true for dwellings, many of which are located in historic residential neighborhoods that retain many of their historic-period resources. Some extant resources, due to their locations near the southern end of Helena's downtown where much, demolition has occurred, like 314 Miller Street (24LC2432, NRHP-listed as a contributing property in the Helena Historic District 7/28/1986, and re-inventoried in conjunction with this MPS), no longer retain integrity of setting. Their surroundings have been substantially altered. Integrity of setting remains relevant in evaluating these resources, but should render a property ineligible only when setting is altered to such an extent that the resource in question can longer convey its own historic character.

Materials must be given less weight in evaluating African-American historical resources in Helena than other aspects of integrity, especially in relation to residential structures. A substantial portion of the most significant surviving historic dwellings associated with African-Americans in Helena have been re-sided with a variety of materials—indeed, many buildings across Helena were re-sided in the wake of a major 1935 earthquake. Changes in cladding alone are insufficient to render these resources ineligible. Likewise, the installation of new sashes or doors in original fenestration patterns does not, on its own, necessarily render a resource ineligible. Modifications may cover original materials that are still extant, and/or may themselves date to the period of significance. Even where materials have been substantially modified, properties may be able to convey their essential historic character and significance. The rarity of this entire class of resources and the altered condition of most extant properties are critical considerations for assessing integrity of materials and the implications thereof for eligibility.

Workmanship, the physical evidence of the craftwork of a culture or group, is generally not a critical aspect of integrity for this group of resources. A few resources, like the AME church, may have been built to community specifications, none is known to have been built by community members. Helena's black population included a few people who worked in the building trades, but no surviving resources are known to reflect or embody the workmanship of African-American people. It would, of course, contribute to a property's significance if it contained buildings constructed in part by black carpenters, masons, or other tradespeople.

Feeling relates to the ability of a property, as a whole, to convey a sense of its historic self. Feeling is a significant aspect of integrity for Helena's African-American resources, and should be carefully considered when evaluating them for NRHP eligibility. One way of assessing integrity of feeling is by asking whether the historic

resident of a house, or member of a church congregation, or a business person or employee, would readily recognize the property if they saw it in its current condition. If a property is eligible, the answer to this question should be yes. If the answer is no, the property is probably ineligible. A property's historic function, such as a single family residence, and the continuity of that function into the modern period also factor into and contribute to a property's integrity of feeling, ie. the property's "expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time."[338]

Integrity of association refers to the link between a property and significant historic events or people. As with feeling, integrity of association requires that a property be sufficiently intact to convey its historic character. The close-knit nature of Helena's African American community, and the multitude of functions a particular property may have served, provides a strong associative meaning to these places. Here, physical changes, unless rendering the property unrecognizable, do not necessarily diminish its associative meaning. If a property is eligible, it should be able to convey its historic associations. If it cannot, the property is probably ineligible.

When assessing each of these seven aspects of integrity, it is important to keep in mind that changes over time often reflect the evolution of the African American community in Helena. As the associated contexts make clear, Helena's African American residents often worked in low-waged occupations, and lived on limited incomes. Thus, modest modifications to existing dwellings were often needed to accommodate changing situations. These included removal and reconstruction of outbuildings, construction of additions, enclosure of porches, replacement of siding materials, etc. Historical practice produced alterations of building design and materials over time.

Social, Cultural, and Religious Institutions Property Type

Description:

Community institution properties in Helena are those whose buildings provided space for group activities of African American community. They were generally relatively large buildings, often churches or social halls, with ample meeting space for various group events. These buildings offered important independent group spaces for African Americans living in an oft-hostile environment.

Some communal buildings were built according to the needs of the Helena's African-American population. As in other places, black residents of Helena first occupied residential properties and then, as the population grew, they constructed buildings like churches and social halls to provide space for group meetings and activities. Such was the case in Helena with both the black Baptist Church at 601 Wilder Avenue and St. James AME on the corner of Hoback Street and Fifth Avenue, as well as the "colored Masonic Lodge" located, in the early 20th century, at 14 ½ S. Main (no longer extant). More frequently, African-American community groups gathered in existing buildings that primarily served other purposes, like H.P. Maxwell 1890's Cutler Street business (no longer extant), where the First Ward Colored Club sometimes met. Some buildings of this property type may have been downtown commercial blocks that rented space to African-American groups or were owned by African-American people—research for this project indicates that Main Street properties like 137 N. Main (*Colored Citizen*

[338] Rustin A. Quaide, "Section VIII: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, National Register of Historic Places Bulletin (NRB 15)," November 28, 2001, https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_8.htm.

newspaper) and 16 ½, 17, and 19 S. Main were frequently used by African-American community institutions, but construction and ownership details of these properties are at this point not known, and nor is their current status—much of Helena's South Main district was razed during Urban Renewal in the 1970s. Among the buildings demolished during Urban Renewal were 137 N. Main and 16 ½ S. Main. Other properties were built to serve the needs of communities, like Helena's German residents, and became associated with the African-American population when black organizations used them. Such was the case with Germania Hall, at 12-14 N. Park, and Electric Hall, both of which hosted numerous African-American community events over the years. Neither Germania Hall nor Electric Hall still stands.

For several reasons, the physical appearance and evolution of many properties of this type remains unknown. In some cases, African-American institutions met in rotating venues—the 20th century Pleasant Hour women's club, for instance met in members' houses as well as in other spaces like the AME church—and a property's association with an organization isn't always evident. In many cases, the address or property most associated with African-American institutions was not recorded in the sources reviewed for this project. In other instances, the location of institutional spaces was only generally identified, as with the black Elks "hall on Main Street" ca. 1910 and the Masonic hall located at the "foot of Broadway" ca. 1911 (this may be the same building), or the contemporary Capital Club, a black social club at the "upper end of Main Street." Finally, many of those addresses that are recorded in project documentation refer to properties that are no longer extant, and whose historical appearance and attributes we cannot ascertain: some seven blocks of downtown Helena were razed during 1970s Urban Renewal, including Clore Street and much of South Main, where many African-American-associated properties were located.

Known extant buildings within this property type include both the black Baptist and AME churches, the latter of which was surveyed in in conjunction with this MPD in 2016. Both churches are modest but substantial wood-frame buildings on corner lots. Both were built by black congregations to serve as their churches, and both were located in residential neighborhoods where African-American residents concentrated. Both have been substantially modified. The AME church building on 5th and Hoback no longer serves institutional purposes, but has been converted to a residence.

Significance:

Institutional or organizational properties are locally significant under Ethnic Heritage for their association with one of the three Helena African-American history contexts identified in this MPD, ie. Helena's Early African-American Community, ca. 1862-1877; Helena in the Heyday of Montana's African-American Communities, ca. 1877-1910; and Decline and Endurance of Helena's African-American Community, ca. 1910-1970. The majority of these property types should thus be considered for listing under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A. Most known, extant institutional resources date to the second and/or third context periods.

Areas of significance for Criteria A vary within limits: properties of this type are all associated with African-American community institutions, be they social, cultural or religious. Particular areas of significance for properties of the institutional type thus depend on the use of the particular building, as well as its history and the history of the group or groups associated with it. Numerous buildings—the AME church foremost among them—

housed several African-American community institutions, and therefore fall into overlapping subtypes within this property type.

African-American institutions—social, cultural, political, religious—formed the core of the thriving, interconnected black community that developed in Helena and Montana. In many ways, the African-American community was defined by the institutions it created and maintained, as well the activities in it conducted in and through them. Indeed, in Helena as elsewhere, the presence of institutions like black clubs, newspapers, and churches marked the existence of a black community, a collective presence and purpose that cohered and reflected a sufficiently large local population. They subsequently served as the social, religious and political backbone of the community, vessels for community members' many, varied activities. The primacy of community institutions is also reflected in the spatial character of the community: although African-American people lived in areas across Helena, they clustered principally in the neighborhoods around the two black churches. Churches, social clubs, fraternal orders, women's organizations, etc., and the many activities they hosted bound together the local black community, and at the same time they often connected it to African-Americans throughout the region, undergirding a web of relations that stretched from Kansas City to Seattle. African-American community institutions were central in the lives of many black individuals and also a key platform for local leaders, many of whom played leadership roles in multiple community organizations and numerous other sectors simultaneously. Purpose-built institutional buildings, like the black churches and the "colored" Masonic Hall, also symbolized the achievement and respectability of the black community in a nation that oft sought to deny it both.

Religious properties were among the most important community institutions. Their significance derives not from their religious status but from the larger role they played in the development of black Helena, Montana's largest black community and the heart of regional African-American life. Institutional properties provided community spaces where black people could freely go to spend time and join forces with friends and associates, places that were safe from prejudice and oppression. Buildings that hosted group African-American activities are important physical testaments to the presence of a distinct black community and to the determination of its members to create a collective existence. They attest to the collective character of the African-American experience during the establishment, growth, and subsequent decline of Helena's black community, from ca. 1862-1970. Crucially, they also are an important reflection of the context of that community's existence. Most, if not all, of the black community's organizations and institutions focused on "racial uplift" and combatting racism in its many forms. All black institutions were thus in some sense political, even if all they did was offer a forum that encouraged and welcomed black public life. Black institutions sometimes clustered together, increasing their historic visibility and significance. Such was the case on South Main, where the "colored" Masonic Hall (14 ½ S. Main, no longer extant) was located near several other African-American-associated institutional spaces like the Manhattan Club, a private black social club found at several different addresses over time, including 16 ½ and 17 S. Main, and the *Plaindealer* newspaper, also located at 17 S. Main. As noted above 16 ½ S. Main no longer stands, but 17 S. Main does, composing a portion of what is now 17-21 South Last Chance Gulch (ie. the St. Louis Block).

Registration Requirements:

In order to qualify for listing in the NRHP, community institution properties must be associated with the history of African-American organizations in Helena or with group activities of the local black community.

Organizations of this sort include religious congregations and their many associated groups (like the St. James Literary Society), women's groups (like the Pleasant Hour Club), fraternal orders (like the Masons and the Elks), black newspapers and political organizations, bands and musical ensembles, business organizations, community improvement and self-help groups, and social clubs like the Manhattan Club. Sites of informal community group activities, like Clore Street saloons that welcomed black customers, are also a type of community institution property.

Some properties of this type are also representative of other property types, and may be eligible in multiple categories. For example, black newspapers and social clubs were both community institutions and black-owned businesses. Properties like 17 S. Main sometimes contained a series of African-American associated endeavors over time. The property at 17 S. Main, for instance, was the site of the *Plaindealer* and the Manhattan Club. Many group meetings and activities also occurred in residential properties, which as a result may qualify as institutional properties as well.

Institutional properties may be associated with the lives of people who are significant in the African-American history of Helena and/or the West (Criterion B). Some residential properties may also be eligible for architectural reasons (Criterion C).

Commercial and Economic Property Type

Description:

Commercial and economic properties in Helena are those whose buildings were associated with businesses that were owned or operated by African American people, or that housed businesses that commonly employed black workers. They were generally commercial buildings, and could range in size, materials and stature from rough, humble log shacks like H.P. Maxwell's 1890's 108 Cutler Street business to the multi-story, architect-designed, purpose-built stone edifice that still houses the Montana Club.

Some commercial buildings were constructed according to the needs of African-American owners and businesspeople. These buildings reflect the success of black business owners and the specific requirements of the businesses. Few of these are known to still exist: the best extant example is the Dorsey Grocery and Residence nominated with this MPS, which boasted a commercial store component to house the family's grocery business and an attached dwelling to house the family itself. More frequently, African-American entrepreneurs rented or leased space in existing buildings. For instance, many black men, and some women, ran barbershops in Helena, but these enterprises were often located in existing commercial properties or in buildings like the International Hotel (where John E. Carpenter ran a barbershop in 1894) or the Merchants Hotel (where L. L. Grisson did likewise), which offered a ready clientele. Other black businesses moved between different downtown storefronts: the Suitatorium clothing business of M.O.J. Arnett and Harry and Ada Salsburg was such an enterprise, located first at 108 E. Broadway and later at 15 N. Park (no longer extant). Black businesses sometimes overlapped with black institutions, and both were often located in Main Street commercial blocks. Helena's two African-American newspapers, located in several Main Street offices, were both community institutions and community businesses. So, too, were the black social clubs, the Manhattan Club (also on Main Street) and the Silver Leaf Club, as well as bars operated and frequented by the African-American community, like the Zanzibar or the Luzon (116 S. Main Street, no longer extant).

Helena's African-American residents owned a significant amount of real estate, and real estate related businesses are probably a relatively common example of this property type, but one which will usually only be revealed on a site-by-site basis with in-depth site history research. At least one black resident appears to have built and owned a downtown commercial block: in 1894 the *Colored Citizen* remarked on "R. J. Lucas . . . owner of the 'Lucas Block.'" Lucas was "an attaché of the U. S. Surveyor General's office," and was "reputed for his business conservatism and foresight." [339] A good portion of the population also made money by renting real estate, especially renting rooms to boarders in their own homes or in dedicated boarding houses, like the Wood Street "rooming house" of Mamie Myers or the "lodging house" on Warren Street South owned and operated by Elizabeth Mundy in 1910. Other black businesses were also associated with black dwellings: and home-based businesses like Rosana Glenn's millinery at 1020 5th Avenue, or Joseph Clarke's work as a "chiropodist" from his home down the street (835 5th Avenue), are another commercial property type.

Buildings associated with the economic history of Helena's African-American population are part of this property type as well. Numerous businesses in Helena, especially those involved in the hospitality industry, commonly hired black employees. Hotels like the Broadwater and the Helena, among others, had many African-American people on staff, and, by some reports, the Montana Club for decades hired black people exclusively. A number of properties that housed businesses that were important to the economy of the African-American population, and were themselves associated with that population—the Montana Club foremost among them—were identified in the research for this MPD context, but many are likely unknown, and may be revealed by further research.

For this and other reasons, the physical appearance and evolution of many properties of this type remains unknown. It is clear that they represented properties across a wide physical spectrum—small and massive, stone and wood, on Main Street, in residential areas, or, like the Broadwater, in the fields on the edge of town. They also represented a range of historical associations, from small owner-operated businesses to substantial black-owned enterprises to the most prestigious private white male club in the region. In many cases a property's association with Helena's African-American commercial and economic history isn't always evident. In others, the address or property most associated with a given African-American business was not recorded in the sources reviewed for this project. In still other instances, the location of commercial spaces was only generally identified, as with the Capital Club, a black social club at the "upper end of Main Street" or L. L. Grisson's 1894 tonsorial parlor (barbershop) "in the upper end of the city." Finally, many of those addresses that are recorded in project documentation refer to properties that are no longer extant, and whose historical appearance and attributes we cannot ascertain: some seven blocks of downtown Helena were razed during 1970s Urban Renewal, including Clore Street and much of South Main, where many African-American-associated properties were located.

Known extant properties of this type include the Dorsey Grocery and Residence, nominated with this MPS, as well as 106 Broadway (the Broadway Suitatorium, re-inventoried in conjunction with this MPS), the St. Louis Block at 17-21 South Main (now Last Chance Gulch), and the Montana Club. Both the St. Louis Block and the Montana Club were previously inventoried as contributing components of the downtown Helena Historic

[339] "Local and Personal" *The Colored Citizen*, September 3, 1894.

District, and the St. Louis Block (24LC2458) was re-inventoried by the MT SHPO in 2016 after its significant association with Helena's African-American history was identified.

Significance:

Commercial and economic properties are locally significant for their association with one of the three Helena African-American history contexts identified in this MPD, ie. Helena's Early African-American Community, ca. 1862-1877; Helena in the Heyday of Montana's African-American Communities, ca. 1877-1910; and Decline and Endurance of Helena's African-American Community, ca. 1910-1970. The majority of these property types should thus be considered for listing under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A. Most known, extant commercial and economic resources date to the second and/or third context periods.

African-American commercial and economic properties were often visibly associated with the black community: a black business sector thrived during the heyday of that community, serving both that community and Helena's population more broadly. The black business sector also functioned as a focal point of the local black community, an exemplar of black achievement and a space run by, and supportive of, African-American residents. The black community cohered around black-owned businesses, and concentrated in certain other industries, like hospitality, and prominent businesses therein. Commercial and economic properties thus reveal much about the occupational and economic conditions confronted and created by Helena's African-American community, and how those conditions evolved over time. Some businesses were based in black people's homes, or provided dwellings to African-American people, and thereby reveal multiple aspects of the community's past. They also indicate much about the skills, background, and activities of community members, as well as their simple presence. Black businesses thrived when Helena's black population was sufficient to sustain an independent African-American community, and withered when that community itself dwindled.

White-owned properties and businesses were associated with the history of Helena's African-American population as well. Numerous businesses in Helena, especially those involved in the hospitality industry, commonly hired black employees. These properties housed businesses that were important to the economy of the African-American population, and were themselves significantly associated with that population. Likewise, some commercial properties like certain saloons catered to a black clientele, and are thus also associated with Helena's African-American history.

Registration Requirements:

In order to qualify for listing in the NRHP, commercial and economic properties must be associated with the history of African-American business endeavors in Helena, with the economy of the local black community either as workers or consumers. Enterprises of this sort include black-owned or operated businesses like barber shops, newspapers, and restaurants. These enterprises were sometimes situated on black-owned properties (like the Dorsey Grocery). They also include businesses that regularly employed black workers, like many of Helena's hotels, or that employed prominent members of the African-American community, like the resident black dentist. They include as well properties that were a component of community members' economic efforts, like rental or investment properties. Finally, businesses that catered to the black community could be included in this property type. For instance, certain Clore Street saloons might have qualified as commercial properties associated with Helena's African-American history if they survived. Further research may reveal extant resources that do.

Some properties of this type are also representative of other property types, and may be eligible in multiple categories. For example, black newspapers, bands and social clubs were both community institutions and black-owned businesses. Properties like 17 S. Main sometimes contained a series of African-American associated endeavors over time. The property at 17 S. Main, for instance, was the site of the *Plaindealer* and the Manhattan Club. Many businesses were home-based, and like boarding house enterprises may qualify as both commercial and residential properties. Commercial blocks often contained living spaces as well as spaces for businesses and, sometimes, group activities of the black community.

Commercial and economic properties may be associated with the lives of people who are significant in the African-American history of Helena and/or the West (Criterion B). Some residential properties may also be eligible for architectural reasons (Criterion C).

Residential Property Type

Description:

Residential buildings associated with African Americans are an important element in the evolution and growth of Helena's black community. Residential buildings were generally one to two stories and constructed of wood. The buildings used or built by African Americans resemble other houses built in Helena between ca. 1862-1970. They reflect broader building trends, methods and materials of the period. Home ownership was quite common among established black families, some of whom contracted for the construction of their own homes, while others purchased or existing dwellings. Black families and individuals also rented or leased homes, usually from white owners. Many black individuals lived for periods of time in group residences, like boarding houses, or in the homes of other members of the black community who rented out rooms or took in boarders.

The houses inhabited by African Americans, and the neighborhoods where they lived, provide important information on residential patterns in Helena and similar western population centers of the period. In Helena, in a pattern that reflects the relative integration that often characterized western settlements, black people's homes could be found in almost every neighborhood, scattered throughout the city. Some of them were among the more impressive homes in a neighborhood, architectural testaments to the prosperity some local black families were able to achieve. The Crump-Howard House (1003 9th Avenue), nominated with this Multiple Property Submission, is one such residence.

Some African-American-associated dwellings that remain in Helena represent the entrenchment and gradual rise of certain families, as the owners and their kin prospered economically and moved from one property to another or expanded their real estate holdings. The Dorsey Grocery and Residence, nominated herewith, was the third, and most impressive, iteration of a combined Dorsey business/dwelling property. Not far away, the Harrell family eventually owned three adjacent houses on N. Ewing Street. Other residential properties, like those belonging to owners who took in boarders or ran larger, more established boarding houses, are indicative of the housing patterns of, and options available to, shorter term residents and/or black individuals, as well as the economic strategies and business opportunities availed by Helena's African-American population. Still others are modest houses rented by black people, often in extended family units, while they lived in Helena for varying periods of time.

There are numerous known extant properties of this type, including 24 residential properties inventoried in 2016 in conjunction with this MPS.

Significance:

Residential properties are locally significant for their association with one of the three Helena African-American history contexts identified in this MPD, ie. Helena's Early African-American Community, ca. 1862-1877; Helena in the Heyday of Montana's African-American Communities, ca. 1877-1910; and Decline and Endurance of Helena's African-American Community, ca. 1910-1970. The majority of these property types should thus be considered for listing under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A. Most known, extant residential resources date to the second and/or third context periods.

Residential properties represent these significant historic themes in a number of specific ways. They reveal significant integrated residential patterns in which African-American homes clustered in particular neighborhoods (especially those near the black churches) but could be found in almost all areas of the city. The histories of their occupants indicate the contours of black migration to Helena as well as the city's African-American occupational and economic conditions. In addition to serving as residences for people who worked elsewhere, houses sometimes functioned as home-based businesses, and thereby reveal multiple aspects of the community's past. Residential properties likewise suggest much about the way the black community lived more broadly, with households often composed of interconnected multigenerational extended families as well as boarders. Occupants' group activities, sometimes conducted in residential properties, demonstrate that Helena's African-American population tended to be highly educated and politically active, taking active roles in their community and its institutions, many of which focused on "racial uplift" and combating racism in its many forms. Some residential properties may be specifically associated with these community institutions. For instance, pastors of the AME church, the most critical black community institution in Helena, lived in a variety of residential properties, including an on-site parsonage that existed for many decades behind the church building itself.

Residential properties may be associated with the lives of people who are significant in the African-American history of Helena and/or the West (Criterion B). Some residential properties may also be eligible for architectural reasons (Criterion C).

Registration Requirements (Residential properties)

In order to qualify for NRHP registration as a residential property, a building should have housed African-American residents during one of the three context periods identified in this MPD.

Properties may have been built, owned, or rented by African-American families or individuals. Some properties may have served as boarding houses that contained African-American residents.

Some properties of this type are also representative of other property types, and may be eligible in multiple categories. For example, many businesses were home-based, and like boarding house enterprises may qualify as both commercial and residential properties. Commercial blocks often contained living spaces as well as spaces for businesses and, sometimes, group activities of the black community. Residences that housed leaders of local institutions, like black minister or pastors, might be considered both residential and institutional properties.

Section G: Geographical Data

The geographic area is encompassed by the incorporated limits of the City of Helena, Lewis and Clark County, Montana. See Appendices.

Section H: Summary of Evaluation and Identification Methods

The multiple property documentation of African American Heritage Places in Helena, Montana is based on initial research, conducted under the direction of the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), begun in 2005 with grant funding from the Montana Cultural Trust. In "the first phase of the project, historians, staff and volunteers combed the Montana Historical Society collections looking for manuscripts, oral histories, newspaper articles, artifacts, census records, and photographs that told the stories of the state's African-American residents." From there researchers compiled and annotated primary- and secondary-source bibliographies and several biographical databases. They also transcribed, onto spreadsheets, the information on African-American residents in Montana listed in the 1870, 1910, and 1930 censuses. The goal of the first phase was "to make more visible an understudied group of Montanans by identifying who they were and where they lived."[340] A second Montana Cultural Trust grant, in 2007, funded the development of timelines, lesson plans, and a website on Montana's African-American history and historical resources.

Before this effort, little information was available regarding African American historical sites in Helena and the surrounding region. At the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, existing historic property records provided some documentation. A few properties associated with Montana African-American history had been identified as such and individually listed in the NRHP, including Fort Assiniboine, Fort Missoula, the Morgan-Case Homestead on Rock Creek, the Samuel Lewis House in Bozeman, and the Union Bethel AME Church in Great Falls.[341] Others were sometimes identified when they were included in listed historic districts, like Missoula's Northside Railroad neighborhood, where the Ephram Dorsey family and others lived together in a cluster on N. Second Street.[342] Other properties in the state now known to be associated with African-American history are listed in the NRHP but their registration forms do not include any discussion of their association with Black Montanans, eg. St. Peter's Mission and Fort Keogh. In 2014, Montana Historical Society personnel Ellen Baumler, Kate Hampton, and John Boughton completed a NRHP nomination for one of the most significant known African-American residential properties in Helena, ie. the Haight-Bridgwater House. This was the first listing of a historic resource for its association with Helena's African-American heritage.

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[340] Scott Meredith, "Identifying African American Resources Project," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 57, no. 1 (2007): 61–96.
[341] James R. McDonald and Patricia Bick, "Fort Missoula Historic District NRHP Inventory-Nomination Form," April 29, 1987, http://npgallery.nps.gov/pdfhost/docs/nrhp/text/87000865.pdf; Gary Wilson and Toni Hagener, "Fort Assinniboine National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" (Fort Assinniboine Preservation Association, May 8, 1989), http://npgallery.nps.gov/pdfhost/docs/nrhp/text/89000040.pdf; Hagen and Caywood, "Morgan-Case Homestead National Register of Historic Places Registration Form"; Strahn, "Samuel Lewis House National Register of Historic Places Registration Form"; Behan, "Union Bethel AME Church National Register of Historic Places Registration Form."
[342] Allan Mathews, "Northside Missoula Railroad Historic District NRHP Registration Form" (Missoula Historic Preservation Office, 1994), 6, http://focus.nps.gov/GetAsset?assetID=950b1eee-3709-4493-90e6-3ba65f48617a.

Within the City of Helena, past local survey efforts produced hundreds of recorded historic sites. These survey efforts emphasized local history broadly, or specific architectural or development patterns. Although properties historically associated with Helena's African American community were occasionally included in these surveys, this significant association was often omitted, overlooked or simply unknown. For example, properties in the downtown Helena Historic District contain no information about African-American associations in their Historic Site Records. Helena's largest employer of black people was the Montana Club, an elite private white male social club that long "employed only blacks."[343] The Montana Club was inventoried in 1989, but its Historic Site Record does not mention the fact that it was for decades an important employer of the black community, and was itself heavily associated with that community, which had a large, prominent role at the club for most of its history (and all of its significant period). Other Helena properties known to have been significantly associated with the African-American community, but not previously recorded as such, include dwellings like 314 Miller and commercial buildings like 106-108 E. Broadway and 17-21 South Last Chance Gulch (formerly Main Street).

A second phase of the project, which sought to identify extant properties that were significantly associated with Helena's African-American history, began in 2014. That year, the National Park Service awarded a number of "Underrepresented Community Grants" to "increase the number of listings in the National Register of Historic Places associated with communities currently underrepresented, including African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and LGBT Americans." One of these grants—just thirteen of which were awarded nationwide—went to the Montana State Historic Preservation Office's "Identifying Montana African American Heritage Places Project."[344] Over the next two years, the Montana History Foundation provided nearly $10,000 in additional support.

With this funding, staff and interns started to identify Helena's African American heritage places by first checking the accuracy of addresses from the 1910 census. That year, the census enumerated Helena's black population separately, leading to complications caused by incomplete recording of street names. Moreover, in some cases the reported census information came not from door-to-door enumeration but from the recollection of enumerator Joseph Bass, who was required to account for all 420 members of the black community. To verify census addresses, project staff checked names in the census against Polk's city directories for the years 1909, 1910, and 1911. In this period, people often moved around within the black community, so research included checking to see if listed addresses (in either the census or city directories) corresponded to addresses of buildings shown on the 1892 or 1930 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. Occasionally, the census and city directories indicated that a person lived at two similar addresses, e.g. 537 and 534 Hollins Ave. In such cases, checking Sanborn Maps showed which of these addresses actually existed. Hollins Avenue, for instance, never had a house numbered 537, but it did contain 534, the home of the black family of Jefferson Harrison, a veteran of the "colored" Army units stationed at Fort Harrison.

This first step produced an accurate list of some 110 historical addresses associated with Helena's African-American community. The next step entailed determining whether those buildings still stood. In order to do this, staff first looked at the construction dates listed in county property tax records (MT Cadastral) to see if the

[343] Hilander, "Helena Native Has 'Roots' Galore."
[344] National Park Service, "State, Tribal, and Local Plans & Grants," accessed September 15, 2016, https://www.nps.gov/preservation-grants/community-grants.html.

current buildings dated to the period in which the property was associated with black residents. Staff also reviewed satellite imagery of the properties (Google Earth Street View) to visually assess building age to see if current structures dated to the African-American period. If these remote inquiries indicated that a resource was likely extant, that resource was then field surveyed for a final assessment. This produced an initial list of some 43 extant properties associated with the history of Helena's African-American community.

These extant historical properties and their occupants were then researched to identify the properties most associated with African-Americans in Helena. This involved determining the length of time each property housed black people or their activities. Using spreadsheets to compile information, staff reviewed city directories to determine the duration of African-American occupancy at each property, ie. the beginning and end of black families being listed at that address. These families' prior and subsequent addresses sometimes turned out to be previously unidentified, yet enduring. In those cases, these new significant addresses went through the above verification process and new properties were added to the list of Helena's extant African-American historical resources.

SHPO Community Preservation Coordinator Kate Hampton, along with Steffany Meredyk and Anthony Wood, then conducted a reconnaissance survey of extant historical resources with some of the strongest associations to Helena's black community. They drafted a basic physical description of surveyed properties and photographed them to assess level of integrity and potential eligibility. The results of this survey were incorporated into a list of about 25 properties targeted for intensive survey as part of a Multiple Property Submission project on African-American Heritage Places in Helena, Montana. SHPO then contracted Dr. Delia Hagen to complete that intensive survey and Multiple Property Submission, which would include two National Register of Historic Places registration forms in addition to the MPD.[345]

The first phase of the MPS and intensive survey project involved research on both the history of Helena's African-American community and on individual properties associated with that community. Research on the history of individual properties and their occupants included site-specific research augmented by relevant information gleaned from research conducted for the MPD. Site-specific research entailed scrutiny of Lewis and Clark County records (plat maps, property titles, property tax files, and marriage licenses), Helena city building permits, city directories, census records, death and grave records, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, MHS photo collections and vertical files, and oral histories of property owners and neighborhood inhabitants.

Individual properties were also field inventoried by SHPO, which entailed taking detailed field notes on, and photographing, the general and specific features of each site's buildings, structures and/or landscape elements. SHPO also prepared location maps and site maps, showing the size of features and the relationship of buildings and structures to each other and to associated landscape elements. Inventory documentation served as the basis

[345] Additional related work was undertaken concurrently, including improving and expanding the project webpage, preparing Montana Historic Property Record forms for African-American historic resources from other Montana locales, collecting oral histories from elders of Montana's black community (ie. Jim Brooks, Joan A. Duncan, Jules Harrell, Ruth Parker McLendon, Wade Parker, and Nancy Radcliff), creating a corrected version of Helena's 1910 census of African-American residents, transcribing significant portions of Montana's historic black newspaper, designing sophisticated interactive maps highlighting the properties identified under the project, and completing an article (by Anthony Wood) on Helena's retired Buffalo Soldiers (forthcoming in *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*).

for evaluating the style, condition and integrity (ie. its retention of those features necessary to convey its historical significance) of each site. Montana Historic Property Record forms were then completed. These forms included an assessment of each site's significance, ie. its association with the historic contexts detailed in the accompanying Multiple Property Documentation.

The Multiple Property Documentation identified three historic contexts and three general property types associated with Helena's African American heritage (see sections E and F of this document). These contexts and property types developed from the results of research in a host of primary and secondary sources on the past patterns and trends that produced Helena's African American properties. Research sources were located in federal, state, county and local repositories as well as online collections under various auspices. A full list of sources consulted for the project is available in the bibliography below (section I).

Although the MPD relied on hundreds of sources, it is especially indebted to early work on the African-American community in Montana and the West that was produced during the broader mid-century embrace of social history, some of it by members of the regional black community. In 1957, Jim Smurr published an article on Montana race relations titled "Jim Crow Out West," and Nolie Mumey completed a book on James Beckwourth, a renowned early black resident of the Montana area.[346] During the 1960s, numerous histories of black people in the West began to appear, among them works by Jean Castles, Kenneth Porter, and Dale Schoenberg.[347] In 1970, Lucille Smith Thompson, longtime librarian at Montana State University and member of a prominent black family from Great Falls, compiled a select bibliography of resources associated with the African American experience in Montana titled *The Negro in Montana 1800-1945*. Two years later, Mrs. Thompson also published an article based on her research, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung."[348]

Around the same time, historian Quintard Taylor, along with colleagues Charles Ramsay and John Dawkins from the Black Studies Department at Washington State University, conducted a series of interviews with African American pioneers and their descendants throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. This work became the basis for Taylor's 1979 doctoral dissertation, "A History of Blacks in the Pacific Northwest, 1788-1970." [349] Montana scholars, too, turned to the subject in this period. In 1973, Rex C. Meyers wrote a history of "Montana's Negro Newspapers" from 1894-1911.[350] Historian William Lang, meanwhile, researched and wrote a pair of articles Helena's black community, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks of Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912" and "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT, 1906."[351] Other articles and books relating to the

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[346] Smurr, "Jim Crow Out West"; Mumey, *James Pierson Beckwourth, 1856-1866, an Enigmatic Figure of the West*. The publication of Beckwourth's memoir itself followed.
[347] Castles, "The West"; Kenneth W Porter, "Negro Labor in the Western Cattle Industry, 1866-1900.," *Labor History* 10, no. 3 (1969): 346–74; Kenneth W. Porter, *The Negro on the American Frontier.* (New York: Arno Press, 1971); Dale Schoenberg, "The Black Man in the American West," *Negro History Bulletin* 32 (1969): 7–11; Porter, "Negroes and the Fur Trade."
[348] Thompson, Jacobs, and Montana State Library, *The Negro in Montana, 1800-1945; a Selective Bibliography,*; Thompson, "Early Montana Negro Pioneers: Sung & Unsung."
[349] "Black Oral History Interviews, 1972-1974"; Taylor, "A History of Blacks in the Pacific Northwest, 1788-1970." See bibliography for a full list of these interviews.
[350] Myers, "Montana's Negro Newspapers, 1894-1911."
[351] Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch, 1900-1912"; Lang, "Tempest on Clore Street: Race & Politics in Helena, MT 1906."

African American experience in the West followed, among them studies focused on Montana, like Christian McMillen's "Border State Terror & the Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge & Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890," and Peggy Riley's "Women of the Great Falls African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1870-1910."[352] These scholarly works formed a sound foundation for this MPD.

[352] McMillen, "Border State Terror and The Genesis of the African-American Community in Deer Lodge and Choteau Counties, Montana, 1870-1890"; Riley, "Women of the Great Falls African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1870-1910."

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Figures

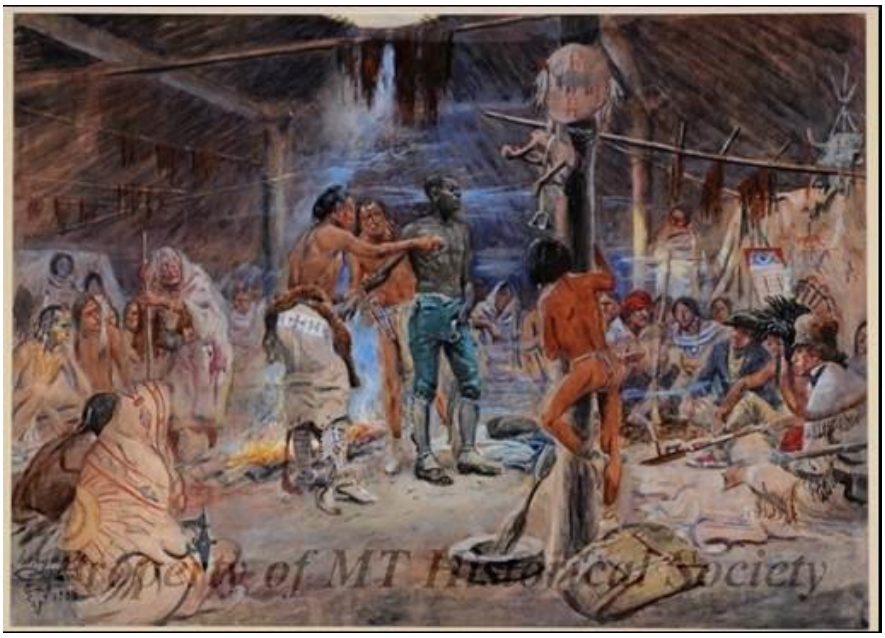

Figure 1: Charles M. Russell, York*, 1908. Montana Historical Society, Catalog #1909.01.01. Reproduced from Montana Historical Society online gallery.*

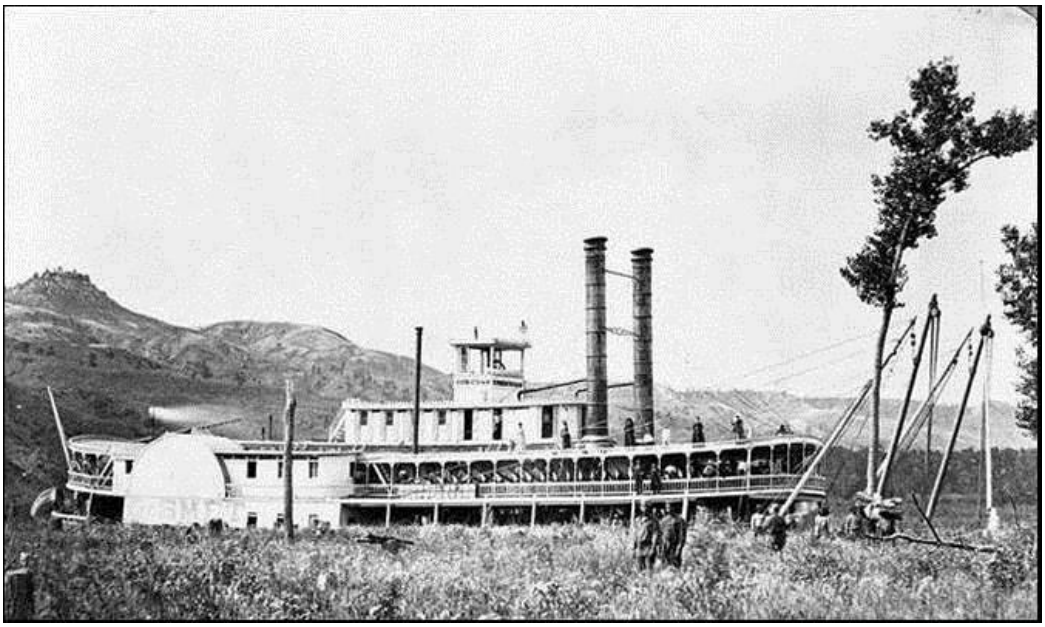

Figure 2: Unknown, "Mrs. William Guthrie (top deck at left) and son Georgie on steamboat [DeSmet] bound for Fort Benton, ca. 1874. [African-American workers in right foreground]," Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog # PAc 74-15.5

Figure 3: Unknown, "Buffalo soldiers of the 25th Infantry, some wearing buffalo robes, Ft. Keogh, Montana," 1890, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C., Digital I.D. #: cph 3g06161 http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3g06161.

Figure 4: J.P. Ball and Son, "Studio portrait of William C. Irvin, Helena, Montana, ca. 1890," Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog # 957-597. Irvin is wearing his Grand United Order of Odd Fellows uniform.

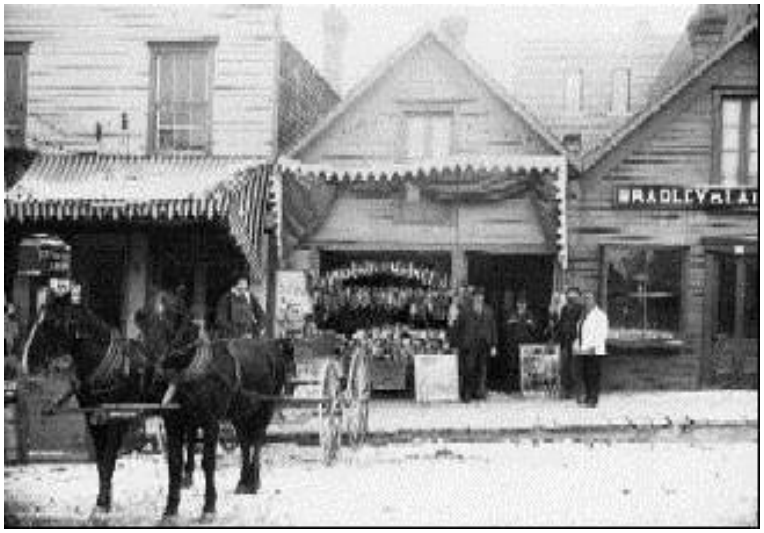

Figure 5: "Barber J.E.W. Clark & others standing in front of Broadway Fish Market Helena, Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 1889," Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog # 953-137.

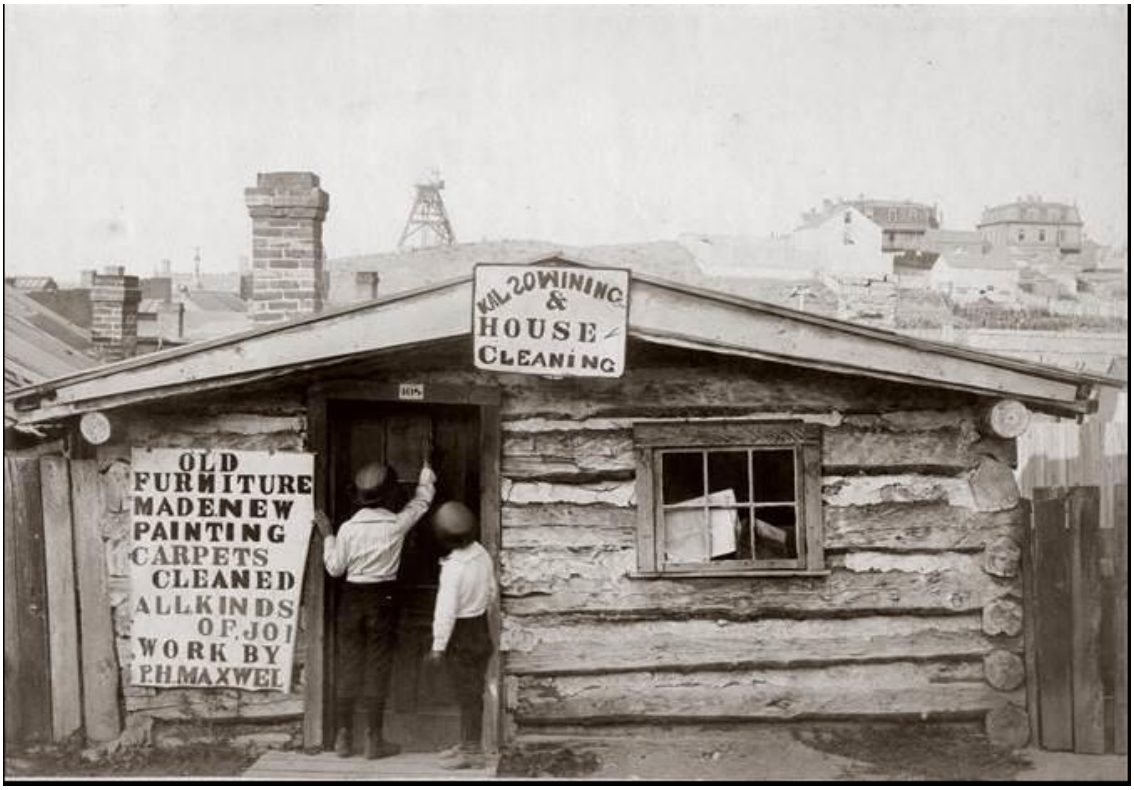

Figure 6: J.P. Ball and Son, "P. Henry Maxwell's Business- 108 E. Cutler Street," Kennon Baird Collection, Helena As She Was website, accessed 10/3/2016, http://helenahistory.org/henry-maxwell-108-cutler-st.htm.

Figure 7: "Walter Dorsey & daughters in front of their grocery store, Helena, 1905-1907," Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog # Pac 74-104.266GP.

Figure 8: "African American Dry Cleaning and Tailoring Shop, ca. 1910," Tom Mulvaney Collection, Helena As She Was website, accessed 10/5/2016, http://www.helenahistory.org/Miles_York.htm. This photo is thought to be the interior of Miles York's shop, though the address has not been confirmed.

Figure 9: Julian Anderson, c. 1943. Scanned from Julian Anderson, "Golden jubilee edition: recipes by the master of mixers, as served by him at the Montana Club, Helena, Montana, for fifty continuous years, June 1893 to June 1943," Helena, MT: State Publishing Company, 1943, Montana Historical Society Research Center, Call #PAM 2946.

Figure 10: J.P. Ball and Son, "Studio portrait of an unidentified African-American man, wearing a fraternal apron, Helena, Montana, ca. 1890," Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog # 957-606. His apron design indicates he was a member of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows.

Figure 11. Photographer unknown, "William Woodcock with Alexander C. Botkin, ca. 1900," Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog # 941-192.

Figure 12. Photographer unknown, "Studio Portrait of William Biggerstaff, Helena, 1896," Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog # 957-610.

Figure 13. Photographer unknown, "William Holland," The Montana Plaindealer, *December 18, 1908, p. 4.*

Figure 14. Photographer unknown, "Arthur C. Ford, ca. 1920," Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog #PAc 2002-36.14.

Figure 15. Photographer unknown, "Ladies Shopping Outside New Cash Market, 58 South Main Street," n.d., Wes and Carol Synness Collection, courtesy Helena As She Was website, http://www.helenahistory.org/new_cash_market.htm; also Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog #PAc 97-13.8

Figure 16: Catalog # 96-25.13, L.H. Jorud, photographer, "32nd Annual Convention, Pleasant Hour Club, [Montana State Federation of Negro Women's Clubs], Helena MT, July 13-15, 1953. [photo taken July 14th], Montana Historical Society Research Center Photograph Archives, Helena, MT, Catalog # 96-25.13