

**BLACK LA CROSSE,
WISCONSIN,
1850-1906:**

**SETTLERS, ENTREPRENEURS,
& EXODUSERS**

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OCCASIONAL PAPERS: La Crosse County Historical Society Occasional Papers explore topics specific to greater La Crosse area history. The LCHS especially seeks original research manuscripts that either shed new light on traditional local topics or explore previously uncovered areas of interest. We invite proposals by query for future publications. All queries will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

ABSTRACT: Between 1850 and 1906, La Crosse, Wisconsin, was typical of Mississippi River towns that received waves of Black settlers who followed the promise of an expanding frontier and available paths to that frontier. This work on Black La Crosse provides biographical sketches of recorded heads-of-household and families that lived in La Crosse during this half-century and presents data in comparative forms respecting residence, occupation, and personal information for all known persons of African descent who lived in La Crosse before 1906 and a narrative analysis of that data. The author also includes reproductions of three articles respecting La Crosse's Black experience, written for and published by the La Crosse County Historical Society in its magazine, *Past, Present, & Future*. The work concludes with a bibliography of works cited and consulted in this study and a name-index for persons mentioned. The research was conducted, in part, with the support of the University of Wisconsin System American Ethnic Studies Coordinating Committee.

KEY WORDS: Black, African-American, settlers, exodusers, La Crosse, occupations, Mississippi River, barbers, whitewashers, domestics, coachman, bootblack, porter, migration, George Taylor, George Poage, genealogy, historical method, historiography, urban history.

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INTRODUCTION

Thirty years ago, it was accepted wisdom in La Crosse that there had been no African-American settlement in the city's history, with the possible exceptions of one family that had provided the city with barbers since mid-nineteenth century, of a former slave who had operated a farm between La Crosse and West Salem after the Civil War and after whom a prominent knoll was named, and of a cateress who was frequently mentioned with respect to a social event at which she had served triple-duties as maid, butler, and provider of appetizers. Not a single article had been written about a Black person or about Blacks as a group that had lived in La Crosse. The standard history of La Crosse, published by Sanford and Hirschheimer in 1951, failed to mention any Black resident by name. For all practical purposes, it was as if there had been no Black settlement at all.

Instead of no or only a few settlers, however, La Crosse, by upper Mississippi River standards, had been home to a sizeable Black community and several notable persons of color who were known in their own times at the state and national levels. Located as it was in the upper reaches of the Mississippi River and serving as it did as a center of river commerce, as a convenient river-crossing point for Conestoga wagons, and as a major center for timber and grain milling, La Crosse had attracted Black frontiersmen looking for opportunities as well as White ones from its earliest days. In its first half-century as an incorporated town, La Crosse drew at least 171 Black heads-of-household who remained in La Crosse long enough to be counted in census records or other official documents: In all, 445 African-Americans are known to have lived in La Crosse during that half-century. To be sure, a majority (126) of heads-of-

household remained in La Crosse for five or fewer years, but many others established long-standing and economically sound roots. One family continues in 2002 to live in the La Crosse area after first settling there in 1859.

In that half-century, Black settlement at La Crosse followed national trends within the larger Black community. Earliest travelers tended to come to La Crosse onboard riverboats and many were connected, in one way or other, to river commerce. Most came from states that were easily served by river traffic that made its way into the larger Mississippi River. No settler was known to have been a runaway slave, unless those who were liberated early in the Civil War were considered as runaways. One of the aftermaths of the Civil War was the opening of floodgates that permitted Blacks to move fairly easily toward the North and West and away from slavery roots in the South. That also was the case in La Crosse, although La Crosse appeared not to have experienced a significant influx of *exodusters* from the Deep South. Most of its Black newcomers tended to come from border states between North and South. Indeed, many came as freemen, perhaps never having held slave status, and a sizeable number were able to read and write.

Blacks in La Crosse carved out economic sectors for themselves in the same way they managed elsewhere. In La Crosse, it was the barbering profession that became an expected monopoly for Blacks and where they were given a preference over Whites who entered that trade. Fifty-three heads-of-household worked as barbers, either exclusively or at some time during their residence in La Crosse. At least ten of these operated shops that had four or more chairs working at the same time, and some of these shops were located in major hotels that served

both the river and the local community. No absolute barbering monopoly was technically ever established in La Crosse, however, with perhaps the exception of one of the city's first barber who was recorded to have been a Black. No other occupation was so segregated for Black control, although Blacks did provide a large number of porters, typesetters, coachmen and horse trainers, hotel workers, blacksmiths, and whitewashers within the city. To be expected, many others were associated with river commerce as fishermen or as firemen, cooks, porters, and waiters on river boats that made La Crosse their home base.

Some of those who stand out in 2002 also were those who were recognized, in their own times, as holding high status within the city. Perhaps in a community where the numbers of Blacks never exceeded 1.8% of the population, it would have been expected for Blacks to play a subordinate role vis-a-vis the city's White ruling structure. That certainly was the case in La Crosse. Most respected among the city's first Blacks were its barbers who clearly served the function of "service" to an almost exclusively White clientele. Several of these came to La Crosse with capital and invested in business ventures and land speculation, always welcome in a community that was struggling to grow and that was capital-poor. Some became relatively wealthy by frontier standards and retired away from La Crosse with significant resources. One, John W. Birney, was selected by the Governor of Wisconsin in 1884 to represent the State of Wisconsin at the New Orleans Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, a recognition of his significant respect and regard within La Crosse's commercial and political community. Indeed, perhaps it was mainly La Crosse's barbers who most interacted with those who exercised political and economic power within the city, and it was its barbers who were best known.

Some were not so highly regarded, however, and yet are identifiable as unique and as having deserved respect in consequence of their impressive accomplishments. Perhaps the most contentious of

these persons was George Edwin Taylor who was a thorn in the side of La Crosse's White establishment, not because he was Black but because he was a advocate of Labor and an opponent of "Capital," "Rent," and anything that opposed the "oppressed working class." Taylor championed White Beaver Powell's successful campaign for the mayorship of La Crosse and played an important role in Powell's administration, however chaotic that Labor-friendly regime may have been. Taylor also represented the Wisconsin State Union Labor Party at its national convention in 1887 and was one of four persons asked to address that body in Cincinnati, Ohio, along with Henry George who lectured the cheering like-minded assembly on "The Value of the Single Tax." Taylor operated a newspaper in La Crosse, *The Wisconsin Labor Advocate*, that served the Labor cause in its early editions, but that paper increasingly became more racial-focused as Taylor became identified locally as a "Colored" advocate of "dynamiters" and of those who sought the collapse of the capitalist system. Taylor left La Crosse in disgust and disgrace, but certainly not defeated. In the election of 1904, Taylor became the standard bearer of the National Liberty Party for the office of President of the United States, the first Black to run for that high office.

Equally prominent, and perhaps even more important for sports fans, was George Coleman Poage, who obtained a significant measure of achievement after leaving La Crosse, and a success that reflected well upon an adolescence spent within the city and upon opportunities that La Crosse afforded to persons of color. Poage's father had been a coachman employed by one of the city's leading businessmen. At his father's death, Poage's mother was retained as manager of the household servant staff, and the Poage family lived within her employer's compound. Poage achieved significant academic success within the La Crosse schools and continued his studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he obtained bachelor's and master's degrees. By 1904, Poage could read and write five languages. While at La Crosse and

Madison, Poage excelled as a sportsman, particularly in track where he set several records within the state. In 1904, he ran for the Milwaukee Athletic Club at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Games (also called the St. Louis Olympic Games of 1904) where he won bronze medals in the 200-meter and 400-meter hurdles. He was the first Black to receive a medal in a modern olympiad.

Joining the ranks of those who were well-known in their own times were some who might otherwise be overlooked, except by those especially interested in social or feminist histories. Nathan Smith is locally known because of a hill that took his name and as a former slave who supposedly received a farm as a gift from General Cadwallader Washburn for faithful service as his valet during the Civil War. But Smith was much more than that. Smith and his wife Sarah were foster-parents to numerous homeless boys and girls who worked on their farm near West Salem, Wisconsin, and some of whom they sent to receive a higher education at boarding schools at the Smiths' significant expense. Smith mortgaged his farm on several occasions to pay their tuitions and boards. Smith also provided a home to indigents and elders within the Black community, in exchange for labor on his farm. But perhaps equally significant, Smith was an active participant in La Crosse's political and labor movements, even to the point that he was one of thirteen local representatives to the Neenah Convention of the Wisconsin's People's Party in 1886.

Several women also achieved noteworthy success in La Crosse, but in ways that might not have been recognized at the time. Elizabeth Burt invested in property and building projects with very limited resources, operated a boardinghouse to supplement her husband's meager wage as a steamboat cook, and raised three children in addition to several other young boarders who resided at her address. She was a shrewd businesswoman who apparently also was interested in politics; it was perhaps not accidental that George Taylor paid her property taxes at a time when she was unable to do so. Similarly interesting and praiseworthy was Mary Cummings, who lived

in La Crosse for nearly thirty years. Mary arrived at age fourteen, pregnant, and unmarried. She soon married the child's father, but he turned out to be a bigamist and served two years in Waupun Prison. Mary raised three children in La Crosse, all of whom attended local schools. Another successful homemaker was Emma Smith. Emma arrived in La Crosse with her husband and parents from Augusta, Georgia, in 1887. The Smiths had four children, all of whom received basic education in La Crosse. Emma and her mother soon were widowed and both became active locally as domestics, cooks, cateresses, nurses, and as operators of a boarding-house of sorts. In effect, Emma and her mother were hard workers and did whatever was necessary to raise their family. The Smith children became successful in the trades of coopering, printing, catering, and acting (vaudeville). All of the Smiths were buried in La Crosse's Oak Grove Cemetery.

In addition to notable persons, there were particular characteristics of the Black experience in La Crosse that were worthy of notice. There was no retail or wholesale trade operated by Blacks within La Crosse. No business was established in the city to serve an exclusive Black clientele, with the possible exception of boardinghouses that might even better be defined as rooming houses where a few surplus rooms were rented to Blacks. Blacks in La Crosse provided mutual assistance in the form of housing/board for indigents and orphans. No Black churches were established before 1906, but there was a Literary Society (Colored) that was exclusive to Black membership. There was only one Black-specific holiday celebrated throughout the whole Black community. That was Black Independence Day, held on 1 August to celebrate the freeing of slaves in the British West Indies. There was no Black newspaper, with the exception of *The Wisconsin Labor Advocate* that became increasingly Black-focused toward the end of its run of publication.

None of these persons or accomplishments have been recognized by the city of La Crosse in any way.

As usual, studies of this sort cannot be accomplished without the aid of many people. From the beginning of my search, I found persons who were keenly interested in what I was doing and who joined my search or made my study much easier to do. At the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse there were several at the Area Research Center, Murphy Library, whose assistance was significant. Edwin Hill and Linda Sondreal, director and assistant director of the ARC, were well-versed in local history, and were able to help me locate primary documents that I might never have found or have known to exist. Jean Bonde, Mary Baldwin, and Lavonia McCarthy of the Interlibrary Loan Office at Murphy Library have always been supportive of my many unusual requests. Another important person at the university was Jan Larkin, secretary to the Department of History, who patiently typed numerous early drafts of bits and pieces of data that were sloppy and incoherent but that eventually took form to what is presented here.

The second most useful location of documents was the La Crosse County Register of Deeds Office where birth records, marriage records, death records, deeds, and many other official records of La Crosse County are kept. Mary Holinka was then Document Clerk at that office, and she was friendly and helpful by making it possible for me to review materials that, perhaps otherwise, might have escaped my attention. The La Crosse Public Library and its Archives and Local History Room were significant for this research as well. This source has microfilm copies of all known early La Crosse newspapers and a complete run of the city's directories. Indeed, it was in one of the public library's basement storage areas that we found the only known copies of *The Wisconsin Labor Advocate*. I also appreciate the encouragement and interest of the La Crosse County Historical Society for publishing my results in its magazine and for sponsoring the publication and distribution of this volume.

And, finally, I cannot but thank my dear wife who has patiently endured 25 years of table-talk about La Crosse's Black community and the

frustrations associated with this research. My daughter, Audrey, who is now completing work on her doctorate at Brown University, fondly (she says differently) remembers spending time during her youth chained to a microfilm reader in Winona, Minnesota, reviewing microfilmed census records for "B[lack]s", "M[ulatto]s", and "C[olored]s" and being paid a measly 25 cents per hour for her labor. I suspect that her memory is faulty on the latter, although it is possible that I was that cruel and exploitative. I humbly affirm that I never chained her to a reader.



Figure 1. Mouser, photocopying *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* at La Crosse Tribune. Source: *La Crosse Tribune*, 15 March 1984.

CHAPTER I.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES:

BLACK SETTLERS

1850-1906

These biographical sketches are presented in a style that summarizes activities of heads-of-household and their families while living in La Crosse and suggests the discovery process that occurs in this type of historical reconstruction. Dates given after name/principal-financial-supporter of household in parentheses (-) indicate inclusive dates for residence in La Crosse. Numbers in brackets [-] indicate number of persons living in the household. Words/names in *italics* indicate either book titles or business firms in La Crosse. Data concerning persons buried in Oak Grove Cemetery is (2002) electronically searchable at <http://lplcat.lacrosse.lib.wi.us/genealogy/>. Below are abbreviations for frequently used sources cited in footnotes and abbreviations used within biographical sketches:

aka – also known as.

c. – circa, or approximately.

BOGC – *Burials at Oak Grove Cemetery*, compiled by Carlos Abraham, typescript of 1995, laser-printed 22 April 2000, copy in Archives and Local History Room, La Crosse Public Library. A companion and searchable database is available at the La Crosse Public Library.

BR – La Crosse County, Wisconsin, Birth Record (Register of Deeds, La Crosse, Wisconsin). Birth Records listed names and race of parents, date of birth, and names of siblings. A microfilm copy of this record is found at the Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

BReg – La Crosse County, Wisconsin, Birth Register (Register of Deeds, County Court House, La Crosse, Wisconsin). The term "Register" appeared on only one volume of Birth Records.

BLC – "Black La Crosse: From Trading Post to Frontier Boomtown," by Bruce L. Mouser, *Past, Present, & Future: The Magazine of the La Crosse County Historical Society*. Part 1, published vol.20, 6(November/December 1998); Part 2, vol.21, 1(January/February 1999); Part 3, vol.21, 2(March/April 1999).

BSN – *Blacks in Selected Newspapers, Censuses, and Other Sources*, compiled by James de T. Abajian (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1977).

CSCR – Chronological and Serial Change Register, First Baptist Church, La Crosse, Wisconsin (held by the church). The CSCR lists baptisms and letters of membership-transfer to and from the church.

CTL – La Crosse City, City Tax List (Series 36). These records are kept by the Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

- DR – La Crosse County, Wisconsin, Death Record (Register of Deeds, County Court House, La Crosse, Wisconsin). Death Records listed names of parents, surviving spouse and siblings, cause of death, and frequently place of burial.
- HF – A card file kept by H. J. Hirschheimer, co-author of *A History of La Crosse, Wisconsin: 1841-1900* (La Crosse: La Crosse County Historical Society, 1951). This file is kept in the La Crosse Public Library, La Crosse, Wisconsin.
- JR – La Crosse County, Wisconsin, Jail Register (Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse).
- LCD – La Crosse City Directory (plus year). These are kept both at the La Crosse Public Library and at the Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. The Murphy Library copies for 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891 and 1893 editions are those used by local postal officials and have notations in margins that indicate change of address between LCD editions. Numbering of houses in the hundred-block system did not appear in LCDs until the 1884 edition. Before that date, houses were numbered according to appearance along streets; in many early editions, addresses were given according to placement (north or south side) and between crossing streets. LCDs listed only (except for 1888/89) head-of-household, generally a male, and female only if that person was single, widow, divorced, or had a separate residence. Children were not listed (except for 1888/89 when near-adult children and attending high school) until they reached maturity and entered the city's workforce. LCDs, before 1900, generally were published every two years. Only those few LCDs kept by the Post Office reflected changes in address between publication dates.
- MR – La Crosse County, Marriage Record (Register of Deeds, County Court House, La Crosse, Wisconsin). A microfilm copy is found at the Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.
- PR – La Crosse County, Welfare Department (Series 23), Poorhouse Record/Register (Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse).
- PTL – Property Tax Ledger, County of La Crosse (Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse).
- RB – Record of Burials in Oak Grove Cemetery, La Crosse (office of Oak Grove Cemetery, La Crosse, Wisconsin).
- USC – U. S. Bureau of the Census, Census Population, Wisconsin, La Crosse County (plus year). Census counts were made each ten years, as in 1860, 1870, and so forth. Full records are kept in the La Crosse Public Library and in the Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.
- WC – Wisconsin State Census, La Crosse County (plus year). Census counts were made every ten years, as in 1865, 1875, and so forth. Full records are kept in the La Crosse Public Library.
- WLA – *Wisconsin Labor Advocate*, Labor newspaper printed in La Crosse (c. 1886-?1888). Photocopies of this newspaper are located in the Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, and the Archive and Local History room, La Crosse Public Library. The only known originals are held by the Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.

Felix Aaron (1878) [1 person]. Felix Aaron appeared only once in La Crosse. La Crosse Jail Register recorded that Aaron was arrested on 7 August 1878 and charged with stealing a boat. He was released on 21 August.¹

John Abram (1870) [1 person]. John Abram was born c.1852 in North Carolina. Abram worked as a barber in the city. In 1870 he lived at the residence of John Johnson (see John L. Johnson).²

John F. Adams (1886-1893) [8 persons]. It is likely that Adams was a practicing barber upon his arrival in or before 1886, but by the time of the birth of his son, Cager (Coyah) Greenwood Adams, on 23 May 1886, he was employed as a janitor at the *La Crosse Club*. He was married to Betsey (later listed as Patsey) Wescott [?Boswell]. Children born before 1886 were Doria and Margaret L. In 1889, another child was born – Geneva on 20 July. A daughter, Grace Adams, born in June 1891, died on 24 December 1801 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, La Crosse. A child was stillborn in 1893, at which time the family consisted of John, Betsey/Patsey, Doria, Margaret, Cager/Coyah, and Geneva. The Adams lived at 327 Jay (1886), 1111 Pine (1889), and in the alley between Sixth/Seventh and Main/State (1889-1891).³

William Bedford Allen [Allan] (1897-1906) [6 persons]. William Allen, Sr., was born in Cairo,

Illinois, in December 1877, to Dick Mitchell and Mary Mitchell Allen; Lillian [aka Lillie] Abel, his wife, was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in April 1880. They married in La Crosse on 25 January 1897 when William was a porter for *Linker Bros.*, a barbershop and bath rooms located at 329 Main Street. He had lived first at 209 Main Street, and then 512 Pine before he and Lillian established residence at 507 Pine. Four children were born to the Allens – William, Jr., in March 1897; Earl Robert on 4 December 1898; Emma M. on 17 July 1900; and Fletcher Bedford on 26 July 1905. William Allen, Sr., remained a porter for *Linker Bros.* until 1906. They moved frequently; in 1901/02 they moved from 114 North Third to 112 South Fourth, and then to 328 Main. By 1905/06, they lived at 1836 Wood.⁴

Tamos [Anon.] (1900) [1 person]. Tamos was born in April 1848 in Mississippi. The only reference for Tamos is his residence at 123 North Third Street at census time in 1900.⁵

Harry E. Armstrong (1901) [2 persons]. Harry Armstrong, born in Michigan, was married to Clara Thompson, a White Canadian, in La Crosse on 13 April 1901. He was a horse trainer/horseman. The Armstrongs lived at 215 State.⁶

Harriet Ayers (?1900-1904) [1 person]. Harriet Ayers was born in Coon Green, Kentucky, in c.1809 on a slave plantation. She lived for "many years with her daughter and grandchildren" at 1320 Vine Street, the residence of Francois Ayers Gibson. Harriet Ayers died in La Crosse on 7 May 1904 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.⁷

Frederick H. Ball (1887) [4 persons]. Frederick

¹JR, 7 August 1878.

²USC 1870. In BSN, I, 2, a John Abram was listed as a porter in Indianapolis in 1869 and his residence at 129 N. California St., in that city. It is not certain that that Abram and the La Crosse Abram were the same.

³BReg. vol.4, 188; LCD 1886/87, 1888/89, 1890, 1891; BR, vol.5, 279; RB, vol.A, 89; BR, vol.7, 14; DR, vol.2, 319. A John Adams, whitewasher, residence at 221 North Third (1902/03) and 219 Pine (1903/04), appeared in LCD 1902/03 and 1904/05. This John Adams was not noted in WC 1905. His occupation and region of residence indicates, perhaps, that he may have been the same John Adams described above.

⁴USC 1900; LCD 1897/1898; MR, vol.7, 283; LCD 1897/98, 1901/02, 1905/06; BR vol.9, 282; BR vol.10, 77; BR vol.11, 302.

⁵USC 1900.

⁶MR, vol.8, 160; LCD 1901/02.

⁷DR, vol.5, 259; obituary, *Leader Press*, 9 May 1904, 8.

Ball and his wife (unnamed) were apparently short-term residents of La Crosse. Frederick Ball was associated with J. Vinegar (see John Vinegar below) in 1887 as co-proprietor and barber at the *Palace Shaving Parlor* [aka *Ball & Vinegar*] at 133 South Fourth Street. The *Palace* advertised itself as having bath rooms, and as "the Neatest and Cosiest Barber Shop in the City" with "plenty of clean towels, keen razors and workmanship second to none. Ladies and Children's hair cutting a specialty. Shampooing done at Residences by a lady attendant, when desired. Orders promptly attended to. Telephone No. 157." It is likely that Mrs. Ball was the person mentioned above as "lady attendant." She later was described as an organizer of the 1 August Ball which was celebrated in La Crosse and the upper Midwest as Black Independence Day (the date of the freeing of slaves in the British West Indies).⁸ Frederick apparently had a brother, John M., also a barber, who was born in Toledo, Ohio, and who married Ella Swift, born in Detroit, Michigan, in La Crosse on 14 July 1887. The latter were visiting in La Crosse in July and August and returned to Detroit soon after their marriage.⁹

William Batterfield (1866/67) [1 person]. William Batterfield, a barber, worked for John Birney and boarded at Mrs. Maria Sherlock's boardinghouse at the southeast corner of Vine and North Fourth streets in 1866/67.¹⁰

John W. Birney (1857-1885) [6 persons]. John Birney, born in December 1834 in Louisville, Kentucky, and his wife Penelope L. [Williams], born in October 1835 in Louisville, Kentucky, arrived in La Crosse from Kentucky where he had

been a barber. A daughter, Mary Ellen [aka Ella], was born in Frankfurt, Kentucky, on 23 September 1856. Two other children were born to the Birneys while they were in La Crosse – Florence L., in September 1861, and John, Jr., c.1871.¹¹ By 1857, Birney had purchased lot 147, Block 17, in the Overbaugh & Burns Addition, where he built his home at what became 1001 State Street. While in La Crosse, he speculated in land development, purchasing lots 9 and 10, Block 16, in the Clinton & Rublee Addition, and lots 148-155 and 172-177, Block 17, in the Overbaugh & Burns Addition. He built at least five houses on these properties.¹² Birney first operated a barbershop on South Front Street, and he later moved to the *Augusta House Hotel* (became the *International Hotel*) where he remained for several years. In 1865, he opened a barbershop on North Third Street in partnership with Peter Alexander Cromwell from New York and employed a newly-arrived African-American barber, John Vinegar, who came from Birney's home state of Kentucky. After a fire destroyed his shop, *Birney & Cromwell* moved to the south side of Main Street between South Second and South Third streets, then to Second Street, and eventually settled at the corner of North Third and Main streets (301 Main), in the basement of the newly constructed Post Office Block (also called the Valentino Building). By the end of 1865, the partnership between Birney and Cromwell had

¹¹USC 1860, 1870, 1880. USC 1860 identified Birney as a barber with real property worth \$2,000 in 1860. For in-depth treatment of Penelope Williams Birney, see Bruce L. Mouser, "Discovering Local History," *Past, Present, & Future: The Magazine of the La Crosse County Historical Society*, 20 5(September/October 1998), 6-7. United States Census for 1900, State of Kentucky, Louisville Township, District 75, Sheet 13, Line 6, noted that Penelope was born in Louisiana and that Florence L. Birney (married name of Lewis, with a Nellie M. Lewis, born December 1895, living with them in 1900) was born in September 1861. The 1900 census record also indicated that both John Birney, Sr., and Penelope Birney could read and write.

⁸*WLA*, 6 May 1887, 1:6, and 6 August 1887, 1:3.

⁹*MR*, vol.5, 435; *WLA*, 6 August 1887, 1:3. An advertisement in *WLA*, 29 April 1887, 1:2, noted Ball's shop as a place where "Ladies who desire a shampoo or haircut will find it very convenient to call at Ball and Vinegar's Palace Shaving parlors, 133 S. 4th Street. The quietest place of the kind in the city."

¹⁰LCD 1866/67, p.16.

¹²PTL 1857-1865; BLC, part 2, 7.

dissolved, but Birney remained in the Post Office Block location until he sold his property/business interests in 1885.¹³ For a short period in 1873/74, Birney and Abram Holland joined firms in *Birney & Holland*, but that partnership was short-lived. It is easy to speculate that Birney's business became a magnet for younger members of his extended family who received apprenticeships in the barbering profession. By African-American standards, Birney was a wealthy man by the early 1880s. In 1884, he was appointed, along with millionaire F. D. Holton of Milwaukee, by Governor Ross of Wisconsin to represent the State of Wisconsin at the World Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition in New Orleans (1884-1885). Birney's role in the expedition is unknown, except that a hall set aside for "The Colored People" displayed the crafts of African-Americans at that expedition; he represented "Colored Wisconsin" and its industries/peoples.¹⁴ Penelope, Mary Ellen, and Florence joined the First Baptist Church in La Crosse and remained active churchgoers.¹⁵ All the Birney children attended school, as well as did George Williams (see George Williams), Penelope's brother, who was living with the Birneys in 1870. Mary Ellen did not finish high

school, partly because of poor health. Florence was a good student, graduating from high school in 1879 and attending Eastern Colored School (a college) in Louisville, Kentucky, where she later became an instructor. John, Jr., attended the First Ward School, then located at the corner of Pine and Fifth, where he was ranked fourth in his class of 24 students.¹⁶ By late 1884, and perhaps because of

¹³USC 1870 listed Mary and Florence as attending school and a 14 year-old, George Williams, as a boarder and attending school. Williams was Penelope's brother. For Mary Ellen's death, see DR, 1878, vol. 1 (burial in Oak Grove Cemetery); *Republican and Leader*, 19 December 1878, for her obituary; CSCR, 495. *History of La Crosse County, Wisconsin* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881), 521, noted that Florence Birney graduated from high school in 1879 in a class of nine students. Her graduation was the first recorded for an African-American in the city, even more significant because graduating-class sizes for classes were three in 1876, sixteen in 1877, one in 1880, and nine in 1881. See also "Pupils of the Old First Ward School," *News and Notes*, no. 4 (January 1944), La Crosse County Historical Society as amended on June 9, 1944; Wesley S. Moe, "Pleasant Memories" in *La Crosse County Historical Sketches*, series 7 (La Crosse: La Crosse County Historical Society, 1945), 108. In "Class Book [for] 1875, class of [teacher] C. W. Ruby," La Crosse, Wisconsin, School District, Teacher Registers, Third District, Ruby noted that Florence received a grade of "A" for that year's work. Florence apparently returned in 1880 after her graduation to take an additional course at the high school; for the latter, see La Crosse High School, "Report for Term Ending Friday, March 26th, 1880," La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 7, Folder 5. See also "Record of 2nd Intermediate Grade First Ward, [for] Sept. 3rd 1877 thru 1888," (for 1878-1879), School District, Teacher Registers for First District School, La Crosse, Wisconsin, for John Birney, Jr., in 1881-82 class taught by Belle Pettigrew who ranked him fourth in his class of 24. For Florence L. Birney in Louisville, Kentucky, and her role as instructor at Eastern Colored School, see Letter, Wayne Cox to Mouser, 4 August 1982, Mouser Files, La Crosse County Historical Society, La Crosse, Wisconsin. For activities and academic achievements of John W. Birney, Jr., in Louisville, Kentucky, see Letter, Dorothy Rush to Mouser, 20 August 1982, Mouser Files, La Crosse County Historical Society, La Crosse, Wisconsin. For a description of Mary Ellen's achievements in La Crosse (continued...)

¹³LCD 1866/67, 1868/69, 1870/71, 1873/74, 1876/77, 1880/81, 1884. For *Birney & Cromwell*, see *La Crosse Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1898.

¹⁴Herbert S. Fairall, *The World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition: New Orleans, 1884-85* (Iowa City: Republican Publishing Company, 1885), 379-380, 426; *The Sunday News*, 31 August 1884, 4:4. The mention of Birney's barbershop as located under the Post Office in 1882/83 refers to a series of connecting building units (called a block) built in the same architectural style and integrity. The Post Office Block was also called the Valentino building.

¹⁵"Baptist Church—La Crosse, Wisconsin," typescript (La Crosse Public Library, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 3, Folder 3, Mss F), #1865, 1876; "Chronological List of Members of First Baptist Church of La Crosse, Wisconsin" (La Crosse Public Library, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 3, Folder 2), #1865, 1876; CSCR, numbers 310, 494, 495; Membership Roll, First Baptist Church, 24-25 (held by the church).

lingering grief from Mary Ellen's death in 1878, Penelope and John, Jr., left La Crosse to join Florence then in Louisville, Kentucky. John, Sr., completed his commitment to represent Wisconsin at the New Orleans' exposition and returned to La Crosse in 1885 to settle his affairs. He sold his barbershop to Nelson Robinson (see Nelson Robinson) and George Williams, the latter his brother-in-law. Birney was a founding member of the Old Settlers Association of La Crosse, and, upon his departure, his business peers presented him with a gold watch, delivered with a speech by I. L. Usher, a prominent member of La Crosse society.¹⁷ A later account indicated that Birney continued as a barber in Louisville and died there in November 1890.¹⁸

Mary Black (1870) [1 person]. Mary Black, born c.1845 in Pennsylvania, was listed only once and as a domestic servant. She lived in the First Ward, close to the commercial center of the city.¹⁹

Robert Blackley (1870) [4 persons]. The Blackley family appeared only once in the record. Robert Blackley, born c.1842, in Washington, D.C., was married to Jenny, born c.1841 in Ohio. Two children were born in Ohio -- Nancy c.1863 and Florence c.1864. Robert was listed as "Black," while Jenny, Nancy and Florence were listed as

"Mulatto." Robert worked as a whitewasher, and Jenny was a "house keeper." They lived on North Second Street, between State and Vine streets.²⁰

William Blackman (1870) [1 person]. William Blackman was born c.1843 in Virginia. He was listed as a "laborer."²¹

Charles Blackwell (1878-1895) [3 persons]. Charles [aka Whistling Charlie] Blackwell was born c.1838 in Virginia and was illiterate. By February 1878 he had run afoul of the law and was arrested twice, once for an unknown charge and second on a charge of assault and battery with a deadly weapon for which he received a sentence of 20 days in jail.²² He married Kate (aka Katie) Bell Vinegar (perhaps a sister of John Vinegar following), born c.1844 and listed as a domestic, on 21 August 1884. The Blackwells had one son, William, who was born in Cleveland, Ohio. By 1885, Charles had become a reputable member of society; he apparently made a living as a cook (1885/86) and as a musician of sorts, using his whistling talent for profit. In April 1887, he performed before the meeting of the Home Literary Circle (Colored), a study and social group composed of leading African-Americans in La Crosse. In 1885, the Blackwells lived at 336 Jay. At the time of Kate's death (16 August 1895), records show that she was survived only by Charles (location unknown) -- William was not noted. Kate lived at 313/319 Pine Street and was buried in "potter's field" at Oak Grove Cemetery.²³

Charles J. Boyer (1898-1900) [2 persons]. Charles

¹⁶(...continued)

High School, see obituary, *Republican and Leader*, 15 January 1879, 4.

¹⁷Benjamin F. Bryant, *Memoirs of La Crosse County* (Madison: Western Historical Association, 1907), 160, noted that Birney was one of 43 founding members who had come to La Crosse by 1857. Interestingly, "La Crosse-County Old Settlers Association," typescript, n.d., (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 6, Folder 10) contains a member-list that does not include Birney's name.

¹⁸BSN, vol.1, 174, noted that John W. Birney of Louisville, Kentucky, had died. See also Birney death notice in *The Appeal*, 22 November 1890, that his funeral had been held at the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, Louisville, Kentucky.

¹⁹USC 1870.

²⁰USC 1870.

²¹USC 1870.

²²USC 1880; JR, arrested 20 February 1878, with a sentence of six months; La Crosse Circuit Court, State of Wisconsin vs. Charles Blackwell, filed 22 May 1878, #426.

²³MR, vol.5, 250; La Crosse Series 33, vol.8, for 21 August 1884; *WLA*, 29 April 29 1887; LCD 1885/86, 1895; DR, vol.3, 91; La Crosse County Welfare Department, Series 23, vol.13; RB, vol.A., 126.

[aka C. J.] Boyer, born in August 1877 in New York City, New York, married Mary [aka Minnie] Allen, born in Rock Island, Illinois, in September 1881, in La Crosse on 15 August 1898. He worked as a workman and porter. They lived at 210 North Fifth Street.²⁴

John Braddock (1870) [1 person]. John Braddock, born c. 1852 in Kentucky, was a laborer who lodged at the residence of Robert William, a lumberman in La Crosse. He appeared only once in the record.²⁵

George Bradford (1885) [1 person]. Bradford's name appeared only once, during the 1885 Wisconsin State Census.²⁶

George Bradley (1876/77) [1 person]. George Bradley, a barber, lived on the northeast corner of North Second and Pine in 1876/77. His residence in the center of the Black housing district and his occupation are the only indicators that he was of African descent. No other references appeared for this person in official records.²⁷

George Brady (1876) [1 person]. George Brady, born c. 1856, a barber, appeared in justice records as arrested on a charge of attempted murder and as released on bail on 22 April 1876.²⁸

Michael C. Brady (1873-1906) [2 persons]. Michael Brady and his wife Agnes lived in La Crosse for more than a quarter-century. Michael was a construction laborer who worked variously as carpenter, plasterer, and mason. The Bradys lived variously at the northeast corner of North Second and Pine (1876/77), the alley between Sixth and

Seventh between Main and State (1878/79), the northwest corner of State and North Second streets, 129 North Seventh Street, and 131 North Seventh (1885-1906). Michael had retired by 1893. He and his wife shared their residence with his brother, Patrick T. (see below). Michael had died by 1903.²⁹

Patrick T. Brady (1873-1906) [2 persons]. Patrick Brady was married to Nellie (maiden name unknown), and worked as a printer/composer for the *Republican & Leader* (1876/77), *Tucker & Company* (1884-1886), *The La Crosse Morning Chronicle* (1893), *Gus A. Keller: English & German Book and Job Printer* (1895), *W. J. Boycott Publisher* (1901/02), and *Scherty-Wiltz Printing Company* (1903). They lived with Michael and Agnes Brady (see above) at the northeast corner of North Second and Pine (1876/77), the alley between Sixth and Seventh and Main and State (1878/79), the northwest corner of State and North Second streets, 129 North Seventh Street, and 131 North Seventh (1885-1906). For a short period in 1902, they moved to 508 North Eighth Street.³⁰

Thomas H. Brigham (1900) [2 persons]. Thomas Brigham, born in January 1863 in Kansas, and Tillie, born in April 1867 in Kentucky, lived at 407 North Third Street. He was employed as a porter for the *Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway*.³¹

William Brooks (1868) [2 persons]. William Brooks, born in Baltimore to William and Mary Brooks, and Francis Cornelius, born to Henry and Ellen Cornelius, were married in La Crosse on 8 November 1868. This is the only reference to their residence in the city.³²

²⁴MR, vol.8, 1: USC 1900.

²⁵USC 1870.

²⁶WC 1885.

²⁷LCD 1876/77, p.56. This is one of only two instances (see also B. W. Johnson) where the race of a person was not given, and therefore the inclusion of this person within the list of African-Americans living in La Crosse is questionable.

²⁸JR, 22 April 1876.

²⁹WC 1875; LCD 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1884, 1888/89, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1901/02 (post office edition), 1903/04, 1905/06.

³⁰WC 1875; LCD 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1884, 1888/89, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1901/02 (post office edition), 1903/04, 1905/06.

³¹USC 1900; LCD 1900.

³²MR, vol.4, 7.

Annie Brown (1900) [1 person]. Annie Brown, born in Georgia in April 1864, was listed in the 1900 census as a resident at 407 North Third Street, as a widow, and as working as a domestic.³³

Cyrus Brown (1865) [2 persons]. Cyrus Brown, born in Cincinnati, Ohio, was married to Rachael Lymus in La Crosse on 11 September 1865.³⁴

Robert Brown (1895-1896) [1 person]. Robert Brown was recorded in the 1895 census and identified in the city directory as a porter working at the *Mecca Buffet* and as rooming at 325 Jay Street.³⁵

Albert Burt (1855-1878/79) [6 persons]. Albert Burt, born c.1833 in Pennsylvania [?Massachusetts], and his wife Elizabeth, born c.1833 in Pennsylvania, arrived in La Crosse from Ohio in 1855. The Burts had three children: Arthur, born c.1863 in Wisconsin; Mary E., born c.1863 in Wisconsin; and E. Albert, born 1867 in Wisconsin. Arthur and Mary were attending school at the time of the 1870 census. Albert was not without financial resources; in 1860 he was listed as having real property of \$1,600 value and personal property of \$40 value, a fairly significant amount for that time (see John Birney). Albert was listed as a cook on a river boat (river steward in 1873/74) that likely was La Crosse-registered, and he was absent from La Crosse for long periods. It was Elizabeth who speculated in land purchase and development in the Overbaugh and Burns Addition (her real property holdings amounted to \$1,500 in 1870). Elizabeth also ran a boardinghouse at her residence. Perhaps her most-to-be-famous boarder was George Taylor (see George Taylor below for 1881). The Burts lived at 1114 Vine Street, a property that they purchased in 1858 (owned 1858-1882). An Albert Burt [spelled Burke, likely E. Albert] (colored) attended the First Ward School in the mid-1870s. In

1878/79, Albert Burt was recorded as a cook and as a single dweller living at 116 Vine. An E. A. [bert] Burt was listed as a barber working for Samuel Thompson and living singly at 1114 Vine, the family residence. The Burts left La Crosse for Minneapolis, Minnesota.³⁶

John Cameron (1870) [2 persons]. John Cameron, born c.1847, and Sarah, born c.1847, lived in the First Ward of the city. John was listed as a farmer and Sarah as a housekeeper.³⁷

John Campbell (1869-1870) [2 persons]. John Campbell, born in Washington D.C., was married to Sarah (Brown) in La Crosse on 8 December 1869. John was listed as "laboren"; Sarah was listed as "keeping house." In April 1870, La Crosse police

³³USC 1860, 1870; WC 1875; LCD, 1866/67, 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79; PTL, for lot 169, block 18, Overbaugh and Burns Addition for 1858 to 1864; BLC, part 2, 5-7 and notes; BLC, part 3, 5; Bruce L. Mouser, "Discovering Local History," *Past, Present, & Future: The Magazine of the La Crosse County Historical Society*, 20 5(September/October 1998), 7; "1st Ward School. Names furnished by Arthur Farnam and Grace Norbeck" (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 7, Folder 3). See "Record of Grammar Grade First Ward School for the year commencing Sept. 1877, book of J. J. Cleveland," School District, Teacher Registers for First District School, La Crosse, Wisconsin, for Mary Burt. See "Record of 2nd Intermediate Grade First Ward, [for] Sept. 3rd 1877 thru 1888 (1878-79)," School District, Teacher Registers for First District School, La Crosse, Wisconsin, for Albert Burt, who maintained an 88% average mark in his class of 29 students. *WLA*, 16 July 1887, 1:1, noted that Arthur Burt had lived in Minneapolis since 1885. Elizabeth Burt did not sell her property at 1114 Vine Street until May 1882; see Deeds, La Crosse County Court House, vol.56, 271, transfer dated 15 May 1882. Apparently there may be a contradiction/impossibility described in this reconstruction. For E. Albert (the barber mentioned in 1876/77) to have been the same as the child born in 1867 would have meant that he would have been only ten years old when he had become a practicing barber. Assuming that the 1878/79 city directory was correct, the second Albert Burt must have been a relative and not the son of Albert/Elizabeth Burt born in 1867.

³⁴USC 1900.

³⁵MR 1865; BLC, part 3, 5.

³⁶WC 1895; LCD 1895.

³⁷USC 1870.

searched his house for stolen goods.³⁸

Benjamin Kane. See Benjamin Kane.

Ben Carl (1895) [1 person]. Ben Carl was a resident of Onalaska, Wisconsin, outside the city of La Crosse.³⁹

Charles Carley (1860) [2 persons]. Charles Carley, born c. 1835 in Mississippi, was a barber, with real property worth about \$300 in 1860. His wife, Caroline, was born c. 1843 in Ohio.⁴⁰

George Carlisle (1898) [2 persons]. George Carlisle and Bell Cole were married in La Crosse on 7 November 1898. Mary Mitchell (see Mary Ellen Mitchell below) "stood up" for the couple. George listed his occupation as an actor. It is likely that George Carlisle was visiting in La Crosse at the time or working on a river boat. There is no evidence that the Carlises lived in La Crosse.⁴¹

James Carter (1880/81) [1 person]. James Carter, a barber, was employed by August Samuel Thompson in 1880/81, and resided on the south side of Main, east of South Third Street.⁴²

John Carter (1857-1890) [8 persons]. John Carter, born c. 1815 in Maryland, was listed variously as a laborer (1860), cook (1866/67), and boatman (1870). It is likely that he was associated with river commerce and worked on a locally-registered river boat. His wife, Margaret A., was born c. 1820 in Pennsylvania. They lived at the northwest corner of North Second and Vine streets (1866/67), on the west side of North Second between State and Vine streets (1870-1873/74), on North Eleventh Street (1880), and at 125 North Seventh Street (1888-90). They had five children: William, born c. 1848 in

Maryland; Ann, born c. 1850 in Maryland; Philisha J. [aka Felissa, Jennie O., Ofelia J.], born c. 1856 in Illinois; Elisa May [aka Helen and Ellen], born c. 1857 in Wisconsin; and Andrew [aka Andy], born c. 1859 in Wisconsin. Philisha, Elisa, and Andrew were attending school in 1870. By 1878, John was no longer listed, and Margaret was described as a "charwoman" and Philisha and Elisa as taking in "washings." Philisha married B. Kane (see Benjamin Kane) and Elisa/Ellen married George Webb (see George Webb). Ellen was baptized in the First Baptist Church on 26 March 1876, and she requested a letter of transfer in 1889 to a Minneapolis-based church.⁴³ Margaret was listed as the widow of John in the city directories of 1888 and 1890, with a notation in the latter that she had moved to 2101 Gans [Street] in Minneapolis, Minnesota, likely near Ellen who had moved there a year earlier.⁴⁴ Andrew [aka John, Jr.] boarded at the Matthew Schooley residence on Vine Street (1880/81) where he was listed as a "laborer," and at the residence of Levi Withee of *Bright & Withee*,

³⁸LCD 1866/67, 1873/74, 1878/79, 1884, 1888/89, 1890 (list M. A. as widow of C.); USC 1860, 1870, 1880; WC 1875; CSCR, 502; BLC, part 2, 6-7. "Pupils of the Old First Ward School," *News and Notes*, no. 4 (January 1944), published by the La Crosse County Historical Society as amended on 9 June 1944, listed four children with the surname of Carter as attending school in the mid-1870s. These were Olivia Carter, Andy Carter, Virginia Carter, and Nelly Carter. This listing did not include racial identification. While these Carters may have been African-Americans, it is reasonable to assume that they were White. For Olivia, see also "1st Ward School. Names furnished by Arthur Farnam and Grace Norbeck," in (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 7, Folder 3). The problem of reconciling children's names in this family is significant. It is possible that there were more than five children as listed here.

⁴⁴LCD 1888/89, 1890. An obscure notice appeared in the *La Crosse National Democrat* on 7 March 1879, that Margaret, widow of John Carter, living on North Second Street between Vine and State streets and a resident of La Crosse since 1857, was leaving the city and that a son [Andrew] had married a girl living there [?here].

³⁸MR, vol. 4, 18; La Crosse County Circuit Court, #252 (April 1870).

³⁹WC 1895.

⁴⁰USC 1860; BLC, part 2, 6.

⁴¹MR, vol. 8, 21.

⁴²LCD 1880/81.

lumbermen (1884). In the 1885 Wisconsin Census and in the city directory for 1885/86, Andrew's residence was listed as 126 [?125] North Seventh Street and he as a carpet layer at *Trade Palace*; this latter residence contained one male and one female.⁴⁵

John and Andrew Carter (1870-1882) [3 persons]. John Carter [identified as John Carter 2 in "Addresses"], born c. 1820 in Virginia, was listed as a "colored laborer" in the 1870 census, with a residence on the west side of South Fifth Street and south of Adams Street. A likely son, Andrew [identified as Andrew Carter 2 in "Addresses"], born in Wisconsin in 1856 and listed as "Mulatto," lived with him. From 1870 to 1877, John appeared in city directories, first at the Fifth Street location (above), then on the southwest corner of Fifth and Famam Street. In 1876, John was listed as a whitewasher. Andrew apparently lived with John during that period. He was attending school in 1870 (then 14 years old). After an absence of three years, Andrew Carter reappeared in La Crosse, as a laborer and a resident of 114 Vine (1880/81). A Mrs. Andrew Carter lived at 114 Vine in 1881/82.⁴⁶

John Cochran (1886-?1887) [1 person]. Cochran, born c. 1830, was admitted to the La Crosse County Poor House, with a diagnosis of suffering from tuberculosis, on 31 December 1886. He died on 20 January 1887.⁴⁷

O. Julius Cook (1885-1895) [1 person]. In 1885, Cook, locally known as O. J., operated a barbershop and bath rooms at 110 Main Street, a shop that he had obtained from Charles Scott. By 1890, he had ceased being self-employed, and was then a barber employed in the White-owned barbershop of Alex Weidner at 227 Main Street. In 1888, he lived at

320 South Fourth Street, and in 1891, he dwelled at 518 South Fourth. He was listed in the Wisconsin Census of 1895 as living alone in the city's First Ward.⁴⁸

Rebecca/Samuel Cooper (1885-1906) [3 persons]. Earliest references identify Rebecca Cooper as the widow of Samuel Cooper. Rebecca was born c. 1857 in Kentucky and resided at 405 North Fourth Street (1885/86-1888) and 319 Pine Street (1897-1906). She worked as a laundress out of her home; the city directory for 1897 identified the 319 Pine address as a laundry. Two younger women lived with her, perhaps her daughters. These were Cora, born c. 1882, and Mamie C., born c. 1886. In 1903/04, Lizzie Woods boarded at the 319 Pine address, and at that time Cora and Mamie were working as domestics. Rebecca's name appeared once in Welfare Department records with a residence noted at 222 Slab Alley (location undetermined). In 1905/06 (likely 1906), Rebecca moved from the 319 Pine address to 430 Cedar Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (c/o R. B. Montgomery).⁴⁹

Frank Craig (1892-1893) [1 person]. Frank Craig, a "Mulatto" born c. 1876 and from Madison, Wisconsin, was admitted to Saint Francis Hospital on 25 December 1892, suffering from what was called "winter cholera." On 24 April 1893, he was

⁴⁵LCD 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891; WC 1895. In 1885, Cook noted in a special advertisement for his barbershop that he was "Successor to Chas Scott" and as operating a barbershop at 110 Main. Whether Scott was of African descent is uncertain in located sources.

⁴⁶WC 1895; USC 1900; LCD 1885/86, 1888/89, 1895, 1897, 1900, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06; La Crosse County, Welfare Department, Supervisor of the Poor, La Crosse Series 23, vol. 5. "Pupils of the Old First Ward School," *News and Notes*, no. 4 (January 1944), published by the La Crosse County Historical Society as amended on 9 June 1944, mentioned Mamie Cooper as attending school in the mid-1870s to early 1880s. Mamie could not have been born c. 1886 and attending school in the early 1880s. No local records have been located to clarify that discrepancy.

⁴⁵USC 188; LCD 1880/81, 1884, 1885/86; WC 1885.

⁴⁶USC 1870; LCD 1870/71, 1873/74, 1876/77, 1880/81, 1881/82.

⁴⁷PR, admitted 31 December 1886; La Crosse County, Welfare Department, Series 23, vol. 6

readmitted for typhoid.⁵⁰

Alexander D. Cromwell (1866-1879). [1 person]. Alexander Cromwell, a barber, operated a barbershop in La Crosse for more than a decade. From 1873 to 1878, he formed a partnership in *Cromwell & Rice* (included A. D. Cromwell, J. T. Cromwell and William S. Rice) and operated from a shop located in the basement of the *International Hotel*. This shop was advertised as a "Parlor Barber Shop, Shaving Hair Dressing and Shampooing, Ladies Hair Dressing and Childrens Hair Cutting a speciality, Tremont Block, cor Main and Front." By 1879, that partnership had dissolved, and he operated his own shop over 13 Main Street. He maintained a residence at the southwest corner of Winnebago and South Third (1866/67), 8 North Third (1870/71), west side of South Seventh between Cass and Cameron (1873/74), 58 South Sixth (1876/77), and west side of South Seventh and south of Cass (1878/79).⁵¹

Charles Cromwell (1876-1879). [1 person]. Charles Cromwell, a barber, worked for John W. Birney in 1876/77 and for Alexander Cromwell in 1878/79. He boarded on Third Street (1876/77) and at the *Cromwell & Rice* barbershop in 1878/79.⁵²

James T. Cromwell (1873/74-1878/79) [1 person]. James Cromwell was co-proprietor of *Cromwell & Rice* in 1873/74 and one of three owners of the

barbershop in 1876-1878. He lived at the southwest corner of South Third and Winnebago from 1873/74 to 1876/77.⁵³

Peter W. Cromwell (1878-1880) [3 persons]. Peter Cromwell, born c.1848 in New York state, was a barber who worked and boarded at the barbershop operated by Alexander Cromwell (13 Main, above) in 1878/79. In 1880, he lived on Pearl Street, near the *American House Hotel*. He was married to Julie, born c.1858 in Minnesota. They had a daughter, Grizella, born c.1879 in Minnesota.⁵⁴

William W. Cromwell (1878/79) [1 person]. William Cromwell was a barber who worked and boarded at the barbershop operated by Alexander Cromwell (13 Main, above) in 1878/79.⁵⁵

James Robert Cummings (1869-1898) [5 persons]. James Robert Cummings [aka Robert Cummings], born in c.1821 in Kentucky, married Mary [aka Maggie and Margaret] McMahan/McMann, born c. 1855 in Galena, Illinois, in La Crosse on 20 June 1869. Robert had lived earlier in Galena, Illinois, where he was a farmer. On 23 September 1869, Robert was charged with the offense of committing bigamy and was found guilty and sentenced to two years in Waupun Prison. He received a "Governor's pardon" on 11 January 1871.⁵⁶ Three children were born to the

⁵¹LCD 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79.

⁵⁰PR, vol. 7, for 25 December 1892 and 24 April 1893.

⁵¹LCD 1866/67, 1870/71, 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79. There is a reference to an Alex Cromwell who formed a partnership with John W. Birney in 1865 in La Crosse. Whether that Alex Cromwell was the same as Alexander Cromwell, above, is uncertain from located data. For the latter, see "The Wisconsin State Directory, 1857 and 8," typescript copy of material concerning La Crosse (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 4, Folder 14); *La Crosse Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1898. The latter reference indicated that Cromwell moved to Boston c.1885 where his two daughters were teachers.

⁵²LCD 1876/77, 1878/79.

⁵⁴"The Wisconsin State Directory, 1857 and 8," typescript copy of material concerning La Crosse (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 4, Folder 14); *La Crosse Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1898; USC 1880; BLC, part 2, 5.

⁵³LCD 1878/79, p.64.

⁵⁶USC 1870, 1880; WC 1875, 1885; MR, vol.4, 4; *La Crosse Leader*, 23 and 24 September, 20 and 21 November 1869, described the charges and noted that Cummings was accused of having previously married Esther Jane Ferrell and had fathered three children in Illinois; La Crosse County Circuit Court, Sixth Judicial District, State of Wisconsin vs. James R.[obert] Cummings, filed November 24, 1869, #226. Mary lived (continued...)

Cummings – George [aka Georgie] L., born 26 December 1869 in Wisconsin and while Robert was in prison; Steven [aka Stephen, Stevie, and Henry], born 19 January 1872 in Wisconsin; and Mamie, born c.1874 in Wisconsin. Robert worked variously as a farmer (1869), a teamster (1873/74), a fireman (likely working on a river boat or railway) (1880/81), and an engineer for *Yeo & Clark City Mills* of 327 North Second Street (1884). Robert died on 18 January 1890 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery in La Crosse. The Cummings household lived variously at 62 North Third Street (1873/74-77), west side of North Second and south of Pine (1880/81), 401 North Second (1884), 307 North Third (1885/86-1890), 107 South Front (1893), and 1111 Pine (1895). George L., Steven (called Henry in school records), and Mamie attended school, with Mamie and Steven/Henry listed as pupils at First Ward School in the mid-1870s to early 1880s. George L. died on 31 March 1886 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery. By 1897, Mamie had established a separate residence at 512 Vine Street and then moved to 615 South Second. Mamie and her son, named Georgie and born in August 1898, were both shot and killed on 19 September 1898 and buried in Oak Grove Cemetery. From c.1891 to c.1893, Steven [aka Stephen and Henry] worked as a barber in the barbershop of Nelson Robinson at 301 Main Street (the site of the former shop belonging to John Birney), and he resided at the home of his parents. Steven died on 9 November 1894, and Margaret/Mary, his mother, died on 15 November 1894; both were buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.³⁷

³⁶(...continued)

with the Hendersons (see Richard Henderson) at the time of the 1870 census count and while Robert was in prison. Information about Cummings, prisoner #1451 at Waupun Correctional Institution, is found in Letter, Israel to Mouser, 26 March 1982, found in Mouser Files, La Crosse County Historical Society, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

³⁷LCD 1873/74, 1875, 1876/77, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1884, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897; USC 1870, 1880; WC 1875, 1885. There is (continued...)

Charles Cunningham (1878) [1 person]. Cunningham, born c.1844 in Kentucky and resident of Louisville, was arrested on 20 February 1878 in La Crosse and sentenced to six months in jail.³⁸

Frank C. Davis (1870-1875) [2 persons]. Davis, born in 1838 in Springfield, West Virginia, to Jac[k] and Sylvia Davis, moved to Iowa and served in the Civil War, later in the First Iowa Cavalry. He described himself as a spy and Indian Fighter and as having served with both General Custer and General Thompson. He lived in Chicago in 1891. In 1870/71, he was a barber in La Crosse, with a residence on the east side of South Second between Cass and King (1870/71) and on King Street between South Second and South Third (1873/74). By 1873/74, he was operating his own barbershop in the location formerly occupied by Charles Wilkins, at 1 Main Street. On 19 April 1875, he married Mrs. Eliza Bryant, a White widow, in La Crosse.³⁹

Jefferson W. Davis (1868-1900) [2 persons].

³⁷(...continued)

an unusual reference in Pauper Register, 1891-95 (La Crosse County Court House), with an identification of Mary as a "pauper." See "Record of 2nd Intermediate Grade First Ward, [for] Sept. 3rd 1877 thru 1888," (for 1878-1879), School District, Teacher Registers for First District School, La Crosse, Wisconsin, class of Belle Pettigrew, class of 1881/82, for George Cummings; "Record of 2nd Intermediate Grade First Ward, [for] Sept. 3rd 1877 thru 1888," (for 1878-1879), School District, Teacher Registers for First District School, La Crosse, Wisconsin, class of Abbie Barry (1881-1882) and class of Minnie Walker (1881-1882) for Stevie Cummings; classes of C. P. Shepard and Minnie Walker (1880/81) for George Cummings; and class of Emma Wilder (1888-1889) for May Cummings. For burial details, see BOGC, 74. For details of the "Double Murder and Suicide," see *La Crosse Morning Chronicle*, 22 September 1898, 1:1-3.

³⁸JR for 20 February 1878.

³⁹LCD 1870/71, 1873/74; MR, vol.4, 65; La Crosse Series 33, vol.3, 692, La Crosse County Court House, La Crosse, Wisconsin; BSN, 1, 529; *St. Paul Appeal*, 19 December 1891, 2:1-2.

Jefferson [aka Jeff] Davis, identified as a "Black" born c.1830 in Kentucky, was married to Amelia, a "Mulatto" born c.1837 in Pennsylvania. There were no known children. The Davises lived at 59 North Third (1870/71), on Avon between Wall and Windsor (1873/74), at the corner of St. Paul and Caledonia (1876/77), on Jay Street (1880), on King east of South Second/also 127 Caledonia (1880/81), over 207 Pearl (1885/86), and "back of" 221 Jay Street (1894). Jefferson worked as a foundry worker for [Seth] Dean, [W. H.] Smith & Co. (owners of *Eagle Foundry*) (1868/69), as a laborer (1878/79), and as a teamster (1880-7/1886). Amelia was a housekeeper. By 1894, Jefferson was legally certified as blind. In 1894 he was listed in the Pauper Register of La Crosse and on 25 March 1895 admitted himself to the La Crosse County Poor Farm. He died there of tuberculosis on 19 February 1900 and was buried at the La Crosse County Poor Farm.⁶⁰

Mary Davis (1893) [1 person]. On 15 March 1893, Mary Davis, born c.1847, then working at the *Yung's Hotel* in the city, requested the county welfare department for transportation to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where her husband and children lived.⁶¹

T. Davis (1875) [1 person + 8]. T. Davis, unmarried and head-of-household, was reported in the 1875 Wisconsin Census as sharing his residence with eight White females.⁶²

Ida Dean (1900) [1 person]. See Andrew Hickey.

Laird Dean (1870) [1 person]. Laird Dean, born

1832 in Illinois, a fireman (likely working on a river boat or for a railway), lived with the Hendersons (see Richard Henderson) on North Second Street between Pine and Vine in 1870.⁶³

Boston Decker (1886-87) [1 person]. Boston Decker, a "Mulatto" and born on 25 May 1841 in Cincinnati, Ohio, was admitted to Saint Francis Hospital and the County Poor House twice – on 6 November 1886 and 4 December 1886, the latter time with a fever. He died on 8 May 1887 and was buried in potter's field at Oak Grove Cemetery.⁶⁴

Andrew A. Devine (1878) [3 persons]. Andrew Devine was a barber who sired an illegitimate daughter with Arabel A. Jeffreys. This child, named Nina, was described as "brown."⁶⁵

A. J. Dugan (1877) [1 person]. Dugan was born c.1852 and came to La Crosse from St. Louis, Missouri. He was jailed on 14 August 1877 for gambling and released from jail on 5 October 1877.⁶⁶

Jefferson Duuss (1870) [1 person]. Jefferson Duuss, born in Kentucky c.1840, was working as a teamster in 1870.⁶⁷

R.[ichard] Edward[s] (1870) [2 persons]. R. Edward[s], a "Mulatto" and born c.1840 in Arkansas, was married to Judy, born c.1845 in Tennessee. He was a stonemason, and Judy was a housekeeper. They lived in the First Ward. Edward[s] reportedly had real property of \$700

⁶⁰USC 1870.

⁶¹LCD 1868/69, 1870-71, 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1884, 1885/86; USC 1870, 1880; Pauper Register for 1891-96; PR for 25 March 1895; DR, vol.4, 254, 19 February 1900. The Wisconsin Census for 1895 listed Jefferson Davis as living in Shelby Township, a "suburb" of La Crosse.

⁶²Welfare Department, vol.13, for 15 March 1893 (La Crosse County Court House, La Crosse, Wisconsin).

⁶³WC 1895.

⁶⁴PR for 6 November 1886 and 4 December 1886; DR, vol.2, 159; BOGC; La Crosse County, Welfare Department, Vol.6.

⁶⁵BR, vol.1, 144. There were several African-American families with surnames of Jeffreys who lived in the Winona, Minnesota, area at that date.

⁶⁶JR, entries dated 14 August and 5 October 1877.

⁶⁷USC 1870, 11.

value.⁶⁸

Felix H. Elliott (1900) [2 persons]. Felix Elliott was born in April 1872 in Alabama, and his wife, Ida, was born in November 1881 in Texas. Both were musicians working in a local hotel.⁶⁹

Benjamin Evans (1877) [2 persons]. Benjamin Evans, born c.1849 in Mississippi, was married to Josephine Olsen, a White woman, in La Crosse on 20 February 1877. He was a whitewasher/stonemason. Evans was arrested twice in 1877, once for illegal voting and once for "wife-beating." He served only seven days for each charge.⁷⁰

William Evans (1866/67) [1 person]. Evans, a barber, was working for John W. Birney in 1866. No residence was noted in the record.⁷¹

Samuel Ewens (1877) [2 persons]. Samuel Ewens, a "mulatto," was married to Dora Miller, a White woman, on 22 January 1877 in La Crosse.⁷²

O. P. Farmer (1889) [2 persons]. Farmer, born in Trenton, Tennessee, married Alice Cain, born in Knoxville, Tennessee, in La Crosse on 19 March 1889. Farmer was employed as a cook, likely on a river boat. There was no noted local residence.⁷³

Ephriam Foster (1875-1891) [2 persons]. Ephriam [aka Ephraim and Ephriham] Foster and his daughter Anna Eliza [aka Liza], born 11 February 1845, lived in La Crosse for fifteen years. Ephriam was a barber, working for the barbershop of *Vinegar & Foster* on Mill Street (1876-81), a shop at 51 Main (1881/82), a shop in the basement at 230 Main Street (1884), and at 704 Mill Street (1885/86). He lived at the back of 221 Jay (1884,

1888/89) and at 704 Mill (1885/86). Ephriam moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Liza remained in La Crosse and lived at 225 Jay Street (1891). Liza apparently moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, after Ephriam's death, but died on 12 November 1901 in La Crosse while visiting friends. She was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.⁷⁴

Jackson Gibson (1864-1920) [10 persons]. Jackson Gibson, illiterate and born c.1829 in Kentucky (or Missouri), and Francis Ayers Gibson [aka Frances], illiterate and born on 10 April 1840 in St. Charles, Missouri, had five children: William H., born c.1858 in Missouri; Henry, born c.1861 in St. Charles, Missouri; Charles E., born c.1864 in La Crosse, Wisconsin; Alfred [aka George], born c.1866 in Wisconsin; and John [aka Johnnie], born on 28 April 1875 in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Jackson was a laborer and janitor. The Jacksons lived on North Second between State and Vine (1873); west side of North Second and north of Badger (1876/77), southeast corner of North Second and Badger (1879-1880/81), 602 North Second (1884-86), and 1320 Vine Street (after 1886). The latter address was purchased on 23 August 1886. Mrs. Lizzie Gibson, born on 10 April 1864 in St. Louis, Missouri, a likely relative of Jackson, lived with them in 1893, for she was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery on 5 July 1893. Jackson died on 16 May 1895 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery. Francis died on 3 December 1898 and was buried next to her husband.⁷⁵ William H. Gibson was listed

⁶⁸WC 1875; LCD 1876/77, 1881/82, 1884, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1891; DR, vol.5, 19; RB, vol.1A, 177; BOGC, 115. 221 Jay was a boardinghouse in 1884.

⁶⁹USC 1870, 1880, WC 1875, 1885, 1895; LCD 1873/74, 1876/77, 1879/80, 1880/81, 1884, 1885/86, 1890, 1895, 1897; Deeds of Record, La Crosse County, vol.68, 71, for 23 August 1886, and vol.95, 234; PTL 1888, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1905, 1910, 1916; DR, vol.3, 81 for Jackson Gibson; DR, vol.4, 121, for Francis Gibson; Oak Grove Cemetery Plat Book, vol.C, lot 2306, section 3B; RB, burial date of 5 July 1893; BOGC, 128-129. There is a notice in Daily Journal of Judgments and Decrees, vol.1, transcript #1262 (La Crosse County Court

(continued...)

⁶⁸USC 1870.

⁶⁹USC 1900.

⁷⁰JR, for 3-10 April and 23-30 June 1877; MR, vol.4, 87.

⁷¹LCD 1866/67, p.35.

⁷²MR, vol.4, 82.

⁷³MR, vol.6, 74.

as a sailor in the 1880 census, and he apparently never married nor remained in city, having established residence in West Superior, Wisconsin, by 1898. William died in 1924 and was buried at Oak Grove Cemetery.⁷⁶ Henry Gibson, listed as a laborer in the 1880 census, remained in La Crosse and worked as a teamster. In 1883, he was found guilty of having committed adultery and was fined \$100; the other party was sentenced to six months in jail. He lived in the alley between South Second and South Third and Jay and Main in 1884. In 1885, he was charged with raping Theresa Henapel, but that case was dismissed. On 10 October 1895, Henry, then working as a teamster, married Carrie Larson, a White woman. In that year they moved to 1623 Badger Street, then to 1718 Market, to 512 Vine Street, and finally to 182 Main Street. In 1897, their address was 1718 Market. Henry died on 9 June 1903 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.⁷⁷ Charles E. attended school, never married, and resided at the family address until his death from heart disease on 8 November 1901. He worked variously as an engineer for *La Crosse Plow Works* (1885/86-1888/89), as an engineer with the *La Crosse Public Works Department* (1890) and as a sleeping car porter with the *Chicago, Burlington & Milwaukee Railway* and the *Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway*. He never served in the military and was buried in Oak Grove

Cemetery.⁷⁸ Alfred [aka George] Gibson was listed as a laborer in 1880. Alfred worked as a cooper for *Doud, Son & Co.* (1885/86) and as a clerk at the *Trade Palace* (?1890-1895) and the *Park Store* (1895-1906). He never married and lived at the 1320 Vine Street address; he purchased his brothers' shares of the family property after his mother died in 1886. Alfred died in 1920 and was buried near Charles in Oak Grove Cemetery.⁷⁹ John Gibson also never married. He worked as a laborer and janitor and resided in the family home at 1320 Vine Street until his death on 4 February 1899 from stomach cancer or tuberculosis. He was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, next to his mother and father.⁸⁰

W. C. Goode (1875) [3 persons]. The residence of W. C. Goode contained two "Colored" males and one "Colored" female in 1875.⁸¹

Frank Gregg (1895) [1 person]. Frank Gregg lived in the Fourth Ward in 1895.⁸²

Joseph Grisson (?1855-1870) [3 persons]. Joseph Grisson, born c. 1831 in Pennsylvania, was a brother

⁷⁶LCD 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1901/02; DR, vol.5, 18; RB, vol.A, 177, lot 2579, section 39.

⁷⁷LCD 1890, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06; Deeds, La Crosse County, vol.95, 234, for 1898 purchase of brothers' shares in property at 1320 Vine; DR, vol.5, 18; Oak Grove Cemetery Plat Book, vol.D, 173, for lot 2579, section 39.

⁷⁸LCD 1893, 1895, 1895, 1897; DR, vol.4, 140. Oak Grove Cemetery Plat Book, vol.C, 164, lot 2306, section 38. See "Record of 2nd Intermediate Grade First Ward, [for] Sept. 3rd 1877 thru 1888," (for 1878-1879), School District, Teacher Registers for First District School, La Crosse, Wisconsin, for Alfred in 1877-78 who performed well in the class of Mary Elder. The LCD for 1900 listed a Mrs. Irwin Gibson as living at 1320 Vine. While her relationship to others in this residence is unknown, it is likely that she was a relative who was housekeeping for Alfred and Charles Gibson.

⁸¹WC 1875.

⁸²WC 1895.

⁷⁵(...continued)

House), *Kemp vs. [Jackson] Gibson*, June 1894, that Jackson had been sued and was required to pay \$114.74.

⁷⁹USC 1880; WC 1885, 1895; Deeds, La Crosse County, vol.95, 234; Oak Grove Cemetery Plat Book, vol.D, 173; RB, vol.C, 13, for burial on 19 February 1924.

⁷⁷LCD 1884, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1901/02; WC 1895; MR, vol.7, 181; La Crosse County Circuit Court, *State of Wisconsin vs. Henry Gibson and Thina Anderson*, filed 29 May 1883, #582, and *State of Wisconsin vs. Henry Gibson*, filed 1 May 1885, #666; MR, vol.7, 181; BOGC, 129.

of Elizabeth Williams, wife of John Williams (see John Williams below), who operated a barbershop in La Crosse after 1852. It is probable that Grisson was living (after 1855) in La Crosse before his presence was noted in the census of 1860. In 1868/69, he was listed as a barber, working at the barbershop of *Mass & Holland*, with a residence at 50 Pearl Street. By 1870, he had married Isabella, born c.1830 in Ohio, and a son/stepson, Lafayette, born c.1860 in Canada, was then attending school. In 1870, Joseph was working as a steamship porter with real property of approximately \$600 value. L.[afayette] L. Grisson, was mentioned as a barber in Helena, Montana, in 1894.⁸³

Jonas Hale (1869-1870) [3 persons]. Jonas Hale, born c.1840 in Virginia, a boatman, married Eliza Wagner, a White woman born c.1848 in Indiana, in La Crosse on 28 December 1869. Jonas was the son of Samuel and Betsey Hale; Eliza was the daughter of Henry and Nancy Wagner. Thomas and Elizabeth Powell (see Thomas Powell below) were married in La Crosse on the same date. In 1870, five persons lived at their residence between Tenth and Eleventh streets on Pine – Jonas; Eliza; Mary Powell, age six; Caroline Shelly; a 26-year-old White woman (see John Shelly below); and Caroline's son, William, one year of age and described as a "mulatto."⁸⁴

Clark Harris (1874-?1906) [10 persons]. Clark Harris, born c.1855 in Georgia, and his wife Maude Susan [aka Maud, Maudie, and Susan], born c.1855 [?1859] in Missouri, moved to La Crosse before 1875 from Missouri. They had eight children – Ida, born 28 May 1874 in Missouri; Josie L., born in November 1875 in Wisconsin; Walter H., born in March 1876 [?1877, 1878] in Wisconsin; Clark, born c.1879 in Wisconsin; Louis D., born in

December 1879 in La Crosse, Wisconsin (died 10 April 1881); Maude S., born in December 1882 in Wisconsin; unidentified son, born August 1885 in La Crosse (died 3 June 1888); and Russell F. [aka Ross], born on 26 January 1894 in La Crosse. Clark worked as a whitewasher (1880, 1884, 1888/89), and although he apparently did not live regularly in the household after 1885, Maude continued to use his name in city directories until 1890. The first notice that she was the widow of Clark appeared in 1903/04. Clark, and then Maude, moved frequently. They/she lived first on North Second Street (1880), then at 114 North Front (1884), 336 Jay (1885/86), 208 Pearl (1885/86), 1102 Pine (1885/86), 209 State (1888/89), 308 North Second (1890, 1895), 313 Pine (1891), 721 St. Paul (1893), 615 South Second (1897-1900), 1131 South Third (1901/02), 1116 Charles (1903/04), and 512 Pine (1905/06). Maude's name appeared in the Pauper Register c.1895/96, at which time she resided at 308 North Second.⁸⁵ Ida's life was short; she died of unspecified causes on 16 January 1878.⁸⁶ Josie attended school (1891) in the city and remained unmarried until after 1900 when her name no longer appeared in local records.⁸⁷ Walter also attended local schools (1891) and by 1893 was working as a printer for *La Crosse Morning Chronicle* and lived at the *American House*, a boardinghouse used by unmarried workmen at the newspaper. Walter was listed as a bartender (1895) and painter for *Segelke & Kohlhaus Manufacturing Co.* (1900). Walter generally lived at the same address as his mother, but in 1905/06, he gave his residence as 210 North Second.⁸⁸ Clark [aka Clarke] attended school (1891), worked as a packer (banana messenger) for

⁸³USC 1880, 1900; WC 1885, 1905; LCD 1878/79, 1884, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06; BOGC, 153.

⁸⁴DR, for Ida Harris, 16 January 1878 (vol. and page not available); BOGC, 153.

⁸⁵LCD 1891; USC 1880, 1900; WC 1885, 1895.

⁸⁶USC 1880, 1900; WC 1885, 1905; LCD 1891, 1893, 1895, 1900, 1905/06; BR, vol.8, 20.

⁸³USC 1860, 1870; LCD 1868/69; BSN, vol.2, 97, citing *Helena Colored Citizen*, 3 September 1894:3.2 and 1 October 1894:3.2; BLC, part.2, 6. The Grissons did not appear in the 1865 Wisconsin Census.

⁸⁴MR, vol.4, 18; USC 1870; La Crosse County Circuit Court, #252, for April 1870.

John C. Burns' *Wholesale Fruit House* (1897-1905/06), and resided with his mother/father until 1903/04, after which he received his mail irregularly c/o J. C. Burns.⁸⁹ Louis apparently did not remain in La Crosse; by 1893, he was working for the *Chicago, Burlington & Northern Railway* (then at approximately 14 years of age), likely as a porter, although he did maintain a mailing address at 721 St. Paul Street in La Crosse.⁹⁰ Maude Susan remained in the household until after 1905.⁹¹ Russell was living in the Harris household in 1905. In 1893, a "Miss Cora Harris," relationship unknown, lived at the Harris residence at 721 St. Paul.⁹²

Melvin Harris (1876) [1 person]. Melvin Harris, born c.1852, worked as a river man, likely on one of the river boats registered at La Crosse. He was illiterate and maintained a La Crosse residence address. On 17 January 1876, he was arrested on a charge of petty larceny and sentenced to 90 days in jail. He escaped from jail on 12 March 1876.⁹³

Robert A. Harris (1900) [1 person]. Robert Harris, born in February 1867 in Kentucky, was employed as a porter, likely with a locally-based railroad. He maintained a residence at 520 Cass Street.⁹⁴

Louis Harrison (1887-1900) [2 persons]. Louis Harrison was married and lived in La Crosse in 1887. His wife, unnamed, was identified as an organizer for the ball to be held by the Colored Home Literary and Debating Society, in conjunction with Black Independence Day celebrations for 1 August 1887. Louis Harrison, a

coachman, was listed in 1888/89 as living at 1111 Pine. From 1897 to 1900, The Harrisons lived at the rear of 309 North Eighth where Clara Johnson rented rooms.⁹⁵

William Henry Harrison (?1858-1861) [3 persons]. William Harrison, born c.1831 in Kentucky, and his wife Eliza [aka Louisa], born c.1833 in Missouri, lived in or visited La Crosse often during the late 1850s and early 1860s. Harrison worked as a gardener and lived in Winona, Minnesota (1866). Both had come from Cincinnati where they were members of the Fifth Street Baptist congregation. Winona census records and Winona city directories place them with a residence address on Hamilton, between Sanborn and Wabasha streets, between 1866 and 1881. They transferred their church membership from the La Crosse First Baptist Church in June 1858 (a second reference stated May 1859) to the one in Cincinnati, and reinstated their membership in the La Crosse First Baptist Church in October 1861. Daniel B. Harrison, their son, was admitted to the La Crosse church at the same time. Church records indicate that William Harrison died on 13 May 1898 and that Eliza Harrison died on 18 March 1887. While no local records indicate that they lived in La Crosse during those years, church membership might indicate that they lived briefly in La Crosse before they established long-term residence in Winona c.1866. Daniel Harrison's name disappeared from records in Winona by 1875, and the name of an adopted son, Joseph Warren, born c.1874 in Kentucky, appeared in the Harrison's household count.⁹⁶

⁸⁹USC 1880, 1900; WC 1885, 1905; LCD 1891, 1903/04, 1895/06; BR, vol.8, 20.

⁹⁰USC 1880; WC 1885; LCD 1893.

⁹¹USC 1900; WC 1885, 1905; BR, vol.8, 20.

⁹²BR, vol.8, 20; WC 1905; USC 1900; LCD 1895.

⁹³JR, entries for 17 January 1876 and 12 March 1876.

⁹⁴USC 1900.

⁹⁵WLA, 25 June 1887, 1:4, and 6 August 1887, 3:1; LCD 1888/89, 1897, 1900.

⁹⁶Baptist Church – La Crosse, Wisconsin," typescript (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 3, Folder 3; "Membership of First Baptist Church," typescript (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 3, Folder 2). For Winona residence until 1881, see USC, Minnesota, Winona County, 1880; Minnesota State Census, Winona

(continued...)

Maude Hattie (1895) [6 persons]. Maude Hattie was listed as head-of-household for a residence containing three males and three females. No further reference was noted for Hattie.⁹⁷

Samuel Hayes (1880) [1 person]. Samuel Hayes, born c.1848 in Louisiana, lived in La Crosse in 1880. He was employed as a fireman (likely working on a river boat or railroad)⁹⁸

Richard Henderson (1869-1900) [9 persons]. Richard [aka Dick] Henderson was born c.1845 in Kentucky. His first wife, Lucilla, was born c.1847 in Kentucky. They had moved to Minnesota before 1867 where Cora was born c.1867. Louisa was born in Iowa c.1869. Later that year they moved to Wisconsin, presumably La Crosse, where Israel was born in late 1869. The 1870 census placed them in La Crosse. The Hendersons maintained a residence on North Second Street between Pine and Vine (1870-1880/81), on the northeast corner of Front and Jay (1880/81), on the east side of South Front and south of Mt. Vernon (1881/82), and at 709 North Seventh (1888/89). Mary Cummings (see James Robert Cummings) and Laird Dean (see Laird Dean) boarded in their home in 1870. The Wisconsin 1875 census placed four males and four females in their residence, perhaps suggesting that Lucilla supplemented Richard's income by renting rooms. Richard worked as a fireman (likely working on a river boat or railroad) (1870) and laborer (1876-1889). A son, Frank, was born in early 1877, at which time Richard's wife, Lucilla, may have died, perhaps in childbirth or as a result of complications thereafter. Richard married Fanny White, a White woman, on 18 June 1877. Frank Henderson died at age six months on 1 August 1877. Richard ran afoul of the law once, in April 1870. At the time of the 1900 census, Henderson

was residing on the farm operated by Nathan and Elizabeth Smith (see Nathan Smith below) near West Salem. He was admitted to the La Crosse County Poor House on 9 October 1900 and died there on 19 December 1900. He was buried at the La Crosse County Poor House Cemetery.⁹⁹

Andrew Hickey (1900) [3 persons]. Andrew Hickey, born in October 1867 in Ohio, and his wife, Carrie, born in June 1878 in Indiana, lived at 712 State Street. An Ida Dean, born in May 1882 in Indiana and listed as a servant, lived in the household. Ida Dean's relationship to the Hickeys is not known.¹⁰⁰

George Hill (1870-1878) [1 person]. George Hill, born in 1852 and a resident of Campbell town near La Crosse, was arrested twice in La Crosse -- in April 1870 for burglary (found innocent of charges) and on 16 September 1878 on a charge of burglary. He was sentenced to 18 months in Waupun Prison on the latter charge. No La Crosse residence was noted in the record. See Louis Hill below.¹⁰¹

Louis W. Hill (1870-?1895) [3 persons]. Louis [aka Lewis] Hill, born in October 1839 in North Carolina, and his wife [Mary] Bell [aka Belle], born in October 1839 in Pennsylvania (or Kentucky), lived in La Crosse for nearly 25 years. Louis first appeared in city records in a court case (charged with burglarizing the shop of Olson & Toliffson on 26 February 1870, but he was not found guilty) when he was described as working for *Paul's Mill*. He also was described as a whitewasher (1870, 1884-1891), laborer (1873/74), and plasterer

⁹⁷USC 1870, 1900; WC 1875, 1895; LCD 1873/74, 1876/77, 1880/81, 1881/82, 1888/89, 1890; DR, vol.1 for 1 August 1877; DR, vol.4, 302; MR, vol.4, 86; La Crosse County Circuit Court, #252, April 1870; PR, 13, entered 9 October 1900, died 19 December 1900, headstone #17.

⁹⁸USC 1900.

⁹⁹La Crosse County Circuit Court, State of Wisconsin vs. Thomas Powell, Charley E. Shelly/Shelby and Louis Hill, filed April 1870, #252; JR, for 16 September 1878.

⁹⁶(...continued)

County, 1875; Winona City Directory[ies], 1866, 1872, 1875, 1881.

⁹⁷WC 1895.

⁹⁸USC 1880.

(1878/79). They lived variously at 8 North Fourth (1873/74-1876/77), south side of Vine and west of North Second (1878/79), east side of South Front and south of Mt. Vernon (1880/81), 812 Mississippi (1884-1888/89), 412 North Seventh (1888/89), 1625 Denton (1890), 222 Vine (1891-1893), 117 South Second (1895), and 404 Main Street (1895). One "Colored" male and two "Colored" females were listed at his residence in 1890. Louis died on 6 September 1893 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery in a single plot. Mary Hill was admitted to St. Francis Hospital, suffering from tuberculosis, on 21 December 1894 and was listed on the County Pauper Register in 1895. She died of tuberculosis on 2 April 1895 and was buried in potter's field in Oak Grove Cemetery.¹⁰²

Perry H. Hill (1905-1906) [1 person]. Perry H. Hill, born c.1883, single, was a lodger at 213 Pearl Street, Second Ward, in 1905/06. His occupation is unknown.¹⁰³

Hayward L. Hoke (1891-1906) [2 persons]. Hayward [aka Howard] Hoke was born in July 1836 in North Carolina. His wife, Millie, was born in August 1846 in Pennsylvania. He worked as a barber for Nelson Robinson and operated his own barbershop at 513 Main (1901-1906) and 309 North Third (1905/06). The Hoke's residence was at 227 Jay (1891-1893), 323 Jay (1895), 324 Jay (1900), 420 North Tenth (1901/02), 520 North Eleventh (1903/04), and 320 North Eleventh (1905/06). Of their three children, only one was still living and

none were present in La Crosse in 1900.¹⁰⁴

L. H. Hole (1895) [2 persons]. Hole was recorded in the 1895 Wisconsin Census as living in the Second Ward, in a household containing one White female and one Black male. No further information was available.¹⁰⁵

Abram H. Holland (1856-1876) [3 persons]. Abram Holland [aka Abraham and Abe], born c.1835 in Indiana, was married to Julia Ann Cromwell, a White female born c.1820 in New York, in La Crosse on 12 December 1864. Julia had a daughter, Julia, who was born before her marriage to Holland c.1857 in Wisconsin. Abram was a barber and was formally associated in a partnership with Zacharias Louis Moss in the barbershop of *Moss & Holland*, located at 50 Pearl Street in 1868/69. That partnership had ended by 1873/74, when the firm of *Birney & Holland* appeared in the official record. The Hollands lived at 128 South Third (1870/71) and at the southwest corner of South Third and Winnebago (1873/74). Abram died on 7 June 1876 of heart disease.¹⁰⁶

David Huffman (1870-1871) [1 person]. David Huffman, a barber, lived in the center of the Black-occupied district of La Crosse, on the north side of Vine between North Second and North Third, in 1870/71. There was no designation of race, although occupation and residence suggest a person

¹⁰²La Crosse County Circuit Court, State of Wisconsin vs. Thomas Powell, Charley E. Shelby and Louis Hill, filed April 1870, #252; WC 1875, 1885; USC 1870, 1880; LCD 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891, 1893, 1895; La Crosse County Pauper Register 1895; DR, vol.3, 15, for Louis Hill; RB, vol.A, 109, for Louis Hill; PR, vol.7, admitted 21 December 1894; DR, vol.3, 79, for Mary Hill; RB, vol.A, 122, for Mary Hill, in potter's field; BOGC, 166; La Crosse County, Welfare Department, Series 23, vol.7, for admission of Mary Hill to St. Francis Hospital.

¹⁰³WC 1905; LCD 1905/06.

¹⁰⁴USC 1900; LCD 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06.

¹⁰⁵WC 1895.

¹⁰⁶USC 1870; LCD 1868/69, 1870/71, 1873/74; MR, for 1864; [La Crosse] *Morning Liberal Democrat* for 7 June 1876; BLC, part 3, 5. *La Crosse Leader*, 17 December 1869, wrote: "Go into Moss & Holland's new barber shop, in Esperson's Block, three doors from Pearl street, and see the old hands at work. Take down your razor to get it ground, get shaved while it is being ground, and you will be sure to 'leave' it there and get one of those little round things for a dollar which entitles you to get shaved for a good while or more, they will use you so well you will forget all about your razor."

of African descent.¹⁰⁷

Marcus Hutchinson (1901-1906) [1 person]. Hutchinson, born c. 1857 in the Dakotas, worked as a porter for W. D. Cameron, proprietor of *Mint Sample Rooms* at 120 North Third, a boarding-house/tavern and bowling alley. He roomed at 520 Cass Street (1901/02), with the John Vinegar family at 308 North Second Street (1903/04), and at 120 North Third Street (1905/06).¹⁰⁸

Nina Jeffreys. See Andrew Devine.

Sam Jensen (1875) [1 person]. Sam Jensen lived in La Crosse in 1875. No additional information was available.¹⁰⁹

Johnson: see footnote.¹¹⁰

Charles W. Johnson (1876-1880) [2 persons]. Charles Johnson, born in Illinois, first appeared in La Crosse records in May 1876 when he was jailed on a charge of adultery. He was arrested twice in 1877 on larceny charges. Charles worked as a teamster/drayman. He married Mrs. Mary Ann Peram [aka Ella] in La Crosse on 31 March 1878. No address was noted.¹¹¹

Clara Virginia/Robert Johnson (1895-1908) [5

persons]. Clara Virginia Johnson, born a slave on 5 July 1842 in Augusta, Georgia, daughter to Alexander and widow of Robert Johnson, is documented first in La Crosse records in 1895 when two males and three females were reported as living in her residence at the rear of 309 North Eighth. An account written at the time of her death in January 1908 noted that she and her husband, Robert, had left Georgia in the mid-1880s (likely 1887) and had traveled to La Crosse where she became known as a chef/cook/cateress who prepared meals in various homes. Clara/Robert Johnson had at least two children: Sophie Johnson, who was listed as a household member in 1905; and Emma Johnson Smith (see Joseph/Emma Smith below), born on 5 June 1861 in Augusta, Georgia, who also lived in La Crosse in 1895 and maintained a separately-listed household. Robert Johnson never appeared in local records. Clara Johnson may have been the "aged mother" mentioned in the Pauper Register (1895) in an application for public assistance by Emma Smith. Clara worked as a cook and lived at the rear of 309 North Eighth (1895-1906), the address listed for Emma Smith during the same period. It is likely that Clara also operated a rooming house of sorts; John Adams (1897) (see John Adams) and Louis Harrison (1900) (see Louis Harrison), among others, lived at the 309 North Eighth address. Clara Johnson died in La Crosse on 28 January 1908 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.¹¹²

John L. Johnson (1870-1888) [3 persons]. John Johnson, born c. 1845 in Kentucky, and his wife Nancy, born c. 1845 in North Carolina, lived at 79 South Second Street in 1876/77. John was described as a boatman (1870), river man (1884), and fireman (likely working on a river boat) (1888). From 1884 to 1888, the Johnsons lived at 1436 Avon in north La Crosse. John became a member of the First Baptist Church on 2 January 1876. John

¹⁰⁷LCD 1870/71. This is one of only two barbers who were not formally identified as Black but whose residence and employment circumstance suggest a person of African descent.

¹⁰⁸WC 1905; LCD 1901/02, 1903/04; 1905/06.

¹⁰⁹WC 1875.

¹¹⁰For most of the 1890s, three additional persons named Johnson were active as barbers in La Crosse. Bernard, J. O., and Julius Johnson shared the same mailing address. Bernard Johnson worked for *Wagner & Johnson*, and J. O. and Julius Johnson worked for *Garry Rogers*. For several years, the three Johnsons operated their own shop as *Johnson & Johnson*. Data currently found has not identified these persons to have been of African descent. Their names, occupations, and residence at 437 South Third suggest, however, that they were of African descent. See LCD 1890 and ff.

¹¹¹JR for 15 May 1876 and 3 January and 10 February 1877; MR, vol. 4, 92; USC 1880.

¹¹²WC 1895, 1905; USC 1900; LCD 1897, 1900, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06; BOGC, 192; obituary in *La Crosse Tribune*, 29 January 1908.

Abram (see John Abram), a young barber, boarded with the Johnsons in 1870.¹¹³

John W. Johnson (1884-1887) [2 persons]. John Johnson, born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and coachman at the residence of Jason Easton (corner of Cass and Thirteenth), a noted La Crosse financier, married Lulu Belle Poage (see James Poage) of Paris, Missouri, in La Crosse on 18 December 1884. There were married in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Lulu Belle Johnson died in August 1887 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.¹¹⁴

R. W. Johnson (1873-1874) [1 person]. R. W. Johnson was a barber working in the barbershop of Frank Davis, with a residence in the barbershop at 1 Main Street.¹¹⁵

Samuel Johnson (1873-1874) [1 person]. Samuel Johnson was a barber working in the barbershop of Charles Wilkins. He lived on Fourth between Main and State (1873/74).¹¹⁶

William Johnson (1873-1875) [2 persons]. William Johnson, a barber, boarded at the *Tremont House* in 1873/74. He and an unidentified "Colored" female in the same household appeared only in the 1875 Wisconsin Census.¹¹⁷

Benjamin F. Kane/Cane (1881-1888) [3 persons]. Benjamin Kane, born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, married Jennie O. [aka Ofelia J., Felisha] Carter, born c.1856 in Illinois to John and Margaret A. Carter, on 26 April 1881 in La Crosse. A daughter, Grace N., was born on 31 March 1882. In 1887, Jennie was noted as an "organizer" of the ball that was to accompany the 1 August Independence Day celebration. Benjamin Kane, a laborer, lived at 125

North Seventh in 1888.¹¹⁸

Charles Loving (1897-1905/06) [1 person]. Charles [aka Charley] Loving was born c.1880 [?Vernon County, Wisconsin] and by 1897 was listed as a barber in the barbershop owned by Ashley Shivers and boarded with the Shivers family at 418 Mill Street. In 1901/02, Loving was not listed in La Crosse. By 1903/04, however, he was working in the barbershop of Zacharias Henry Moss, his uncle, and residing with the Moss family at 517 St. Cloud Street. In 1905/06, he moved permanently to Sparta, Wisconsin, where he operated a barbershop for several years.¹¹⁹

William J. Lyles (1890) [2 persons]. William Lyles, born in Maryland, married Mary Koch, a White woman born in Springfield, Illinois, in La Crosse on 30 January 1890. No known residence was noted in the record.¹²⁰

Thomas McCollan (1860) [3 persons]. Thomas McCollan, born c.1795 in Virginia and a widower, his daughter, Isabella, born c.1842 in Pennsylvania, and his son, Charles, born c.1852 in Ohio, lived in La Crosse only one year. They arrived from Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. Thomas was listed as a day laborer. The McCollans lived with the Albert Burt family at 1114 Vine in 1860. Isabella may have been the Isabella McCollan who married Princess Milton Richardson in La Crosse in 1861 (see Princess Richardson).¹²¹

Henry S. McLane (1900-1902) [1 person]. Henry McLane, born in July 1847 in Pennsylvania and a widower, operated a barbershop at 1810 (?1816) George Street where he maintained his residence.¹²²

¹¹³USC 1870; LCD 1876/77, 1884, 1888/89; CSCR, 2 January 1876.

¹¹⁴MR, vol.6, 271; LCD 1885/86.

¹¹⁵LCD 1873/74, p.95.

¹¹⁶LCD 1873/74, p.95.

¹¹⁷LCD 1873/74, p.96; WC 1875.

¹¹⁸MR, vol.5, 45; BR, vol.3, 120; WLA, 6 August 1887, 1:3; LCD 1888/89.

¹¹⁹LCD 1897, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06; WC 1905. See Ashley Shivers and Zacharias Moss.

¹²⁰MR, vol.6, 131.

¹²¹USC 1860; BLC, part 2, 6-7.

¹²²USC 1900; LCD 1901/02.

John McPowell (1870-1873/74) [1 person]. McPowell, a barber born c.1847 in Kentucky, lived in north La Crosse in 1870. In 1873/74, he operated his own barbershop on Mill Street north of St. Andrew and lived at his barbershop.¹²³

Charles Marshall (1876-1878/79) [1 person]. Marshall was a barber working for August Samuel Thompson. He boarded on the north side of Vine and west of Fourth (1876/77) and at the corner of Pine and North Second (1878/79).¹²⁴

Leonard Martin (1866-1869) [1 person]. Leonard Martin, a barber, worked in the barbershop operated by Charles Wilkins. No residence was given in the record.¹²⁵

Milton Martin (1866-1870/71) [1 person]. Milton Martin, a barber, born c.1850 in Virginia, worked at the barbershop of Charles Wilkins and boarded at the residence of Charles F. Wilkins, on North Third between Badger and La Crosse streets.¹²⁶

Phyllis Meaux (1900) [1 person]. Phyllis Meaux, born in April 1872 in Missouri, a widow, worked as a laundress at her residence at 319 Pine Street in 1900.¹²⁷

David Michel (1875-1884) [1 person]. David Michel [aka Mitchell], born c.1845 in Alabama, was a barber and river man who had come to La Crosse from St. Louis, Missouri, likely on a river boat. He was arrested six times in La Crosse for vagrancy. He was admitted to St. Francis Hospital in April 1879 where he was described simply as "n— without legs." On 1 November 1881, La Crosse County Poor House records indicate that he was considered "insane." He died on 23 January 1884 and was buried in Oakwood/Oak Grove

Cemetery.¹²⁸

Clara Miles (1905) [1 person]. Clara Miles was a prisoner in jail in 1905.¹²⁹

David Mitchell (1873/74) [1 person]. David Mitchell, a barber working for *Birney & Holland* in 1873/74, lived at the Birney residence at Tenth and State (1101 State).¹³⁰

Mary Ellen (Sheldon) Mitchell (1898-1901) [1 person]. Mary Mitchell, born 8 July 1860 in Louisville, Kentucky, died in La Crosse on 21 May 1901, and her body was taken to Lakewood Cemetery, Minneapolis, Minnesota, for burial. Her husband, P. J. Mitchell, preceded her in death, and was likely buried in Lakewood Cemetery. Mary Mitchell lived at 507 Pine Street in 1900.¹³¹

Henderson/Lydia Moss (1857-1866) [4 persons]. Henderson Moss, born c.1824 in Virginia (likely Wheeling, in western Virginia, before West Virginia was separated from Virginia during the Civil War—see Zacharias Louis Moss below), a barber, and his wife, Lydia, born c.1828 in Virginia, had lived in Ohio before arriving in La Crosse in 1857. A son, Henry, was born to the Mosses while they were in Ohio in c.1847. Henderson speculated in land development, purchasing lot 150, block 17, in the Overbaugh & Burns Addition, in 1857. Henderson apparently moved to Battle Creek, Michigan, for he died there in June 1864. Lydia and Henry either remained in La Crosse in his absence or returned there by 1866 when they both were listed as barbers at a barbershop owned by Lydia

¹²³WC 1875; JR, 10 November-10 December 1875, 13 December-11 February 1875; 15 February-14 May 1876, 1 July-29 August 1876, 3 September-2 December 1876 (tramp), 14 May-16 August 1877; PR, 1 April 1879, 24 May 1881, 1 November 1881, 1 April 1884; DR, vol.2, 70; La Crosse County, Welfare Department, Vol.6, pp. 8, 12, 19.

¹²⁴WC 1905.

¹²⁵LCD 1873/74. It is possible that this David Mitchell is the same as the David Michel listed above.

¹²⁶USC 1900; DR, vol.4, 351.

¹²³USC 1870; LCD 1873/74.

¹²⁴LCD 1876/77, 1878/79.

¹²⁵LCD 1866/67, 1868/69.

¹²⁶USC 1870; LCD 1866/67, 1868/69, 1870/71.

¹²⁷USC 1900.

and operated from a location on the north side of State Street between North Second and North Third streets. By that date, Henry and Lydia had established separate residences—Lydia on the south side of Vine between North Second and North Third and Henry on the north side of Vine between North Second and North Third streets. Lydia married George Thurston (see George Thurston) in La Crosse on 7 October 1866.¹²²

Zacharias Louis Moss (?1859-1891 or 1893 and 1901-1902) [5 persons]. Zacharias [aka Zach] Louis Moss, born c.1823 in Wheeling, West Virginia, apparently arrived in La Crosse by 1859 when his presence was reported in the *Mercantile*, perhaps as a barber in the shop of a likely relative and possible brother, Henderson Moss (see above). He married Mary E. (L.) Hunter, born c.1846, likely after his arrival in La Crosse, probably in the mid-1860s. Three children were born to the Moss couple – Zacharias Henry (see below) in 1866, Ella [aka Clara] in 1868, and Ernest Hunter on 10 August 1879. By 1866/67, Zacharias Louis had established a partnership in the shop of *Thompson & Moss* (see August Samuel Thompson) located on the south side of Pearl between South Second and South Third (1866/67). By 1868/69, he was associated with Abram Holland in the barbershop of *Moss & Holland* located at 57 Pearl Street, near the city center. The latter business moved to the southwest side of South Third between Main and Pearl streets in 1870/71. Moss established a separate business shop on Mill Street at the northwest corner with St. Andrew Street in north La Crosse in 1873/74 and remained there until 1880 when he returned to south La Crosse where he barbered at 50 North Third (1880/81), at 610 Third Street (1884), and then at 610 Mill (1885/86-1891). Zacharias Louis lived variously on South Third between King and Jay (1866/67), on the north side of Jay between South Third and South Fourth (1870/71), northwest

corner of Mill and St. Andrew (1873/74-1884), 617 Caledonia (1885/86-1890), and 610 Mill (1890-1891). Moss was locally known as a boxer of some talent. Zacharias L. Moss and his family reportedly moved to Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1891 and remained there until returning to La Crosse when his son, Zacharias Henry, opened a barbershop in north La Crosse. After 1901/02, Zacharias Louis lived at 517 St. Cloud, with his son's family. Zacharias Louis died on 8 April 1902 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery in La Crosse.¹²³

¹²²USC 1860; LCD 1866/67; PTL 1857, 1858; HF, cited *La Crosse National Democrat* for 13 June 1864 (not found); MR for 1866, 7 October 1866; BLC, part 2, 6.

¹²³USC 1870; WC 1875, 1885, 1905; LCD 1866/67, 1868/69, 1870/71, 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1884, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891, 1893, 1901/02; HF for reference to *Mercantile* citation; *La Crosse Morning Chronicle*, 9 April 1898; BR, vol. 1, 230; DR, vol. 5, 62; RB, vol. A, 181, single grave, row 15, grave 25; BOGC, 281; *La Crosse Leader*, 17 December 1869; *WLA*, 25 March 1887, 1:3; *La Crosse Daily Press*, 9 April 1902. The LCD (Post Office Edition) for Zacharias Henry Moss indicated that he had moved to 216 Main Street in Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1891. Raymond Moss, great grandson of Zacharias L., told the author that Zacharias had a brother living in La Crosse before his arrival in 1859 and that family traditions indicated that Zacharias L. had come to La Crosse via the Mississippi River from New Orleans. See "Record of Grammar Grade First Ward School for the year commencing Sept. 1877 [and thereafter], book of J. J. Cleveland," School District, Teacher Registers for First District School, La Crosse, Wisconsin, for Clara Moss who was in the Second Grammar grade in September 1879. She scored in 80% most of the time. Whether Clara and Ella were the same person is unclear, although other records do not note a Clara Moss. Fred Moss (15 years of age and relationship to Mosses in La Crosse unclear) was recorded to be attending school in 1877/78 (see "Teacher Registers, Third District," La Crosse, Wisconsin, School District (classes taught by John Bird in 1877 and Josie Lemon in 1878). An advertisement for "Old Reliable Barbershop and Bath Rooms" claimed that his was the "Largest Shop, Most Men and Best Work of any barber in north La Crosse" appeared in *The Sunday News* for 26 October 1884, 5:3. The only instances of a Black barbershop-operator hiring White barbers was Z. L. Moss. In 1878/79, John Koch worked in his shop. By 1880, however, Koch had established his own barbershop in north La Crosse. From 1884 to 1886, Julius Miller, boarding at 1712 Berlin (renamed Liberty) (1884) and (continued...)

Zacharias Henry Moss (1866-1891 and 1900-1906) (see Zacharias Louis Moss above) [8 persons]. Zacharias Henry Moss married Emily Waldron [Waldon], born c.1869 in Vernon County (likely Hillsboro), Wisconsin, probably after his father left La Crosse in 1891. They had six children: Josh (living in 1904 but not listed in 1905 WC, nor mentioned thereafter); William, born in La Crosse on 12 August 1898, buried in the Catholic Cemetery on 13 August 1898; June E., born c.1900 in Wisconsin (perhaps in Vernon County); Orby Z., born on 9 May 1902 in La Crosse, and Jerema [aka Jorena], born c.1904 in Wisconsin. From 1884 to 1891, Zacharias Henry worked in his father's barbershop (called *Moss & Son* in 1891) and resided with his parents during years before his marriage. In 1891, he was noted in the La Crosse City Directory, Post Office Edition, as having moved to 216 Main in Battle Creek, Michigan. The Moss name reappeared in La Crosse in 1900 (perhaps after his marriage to Emily Waldron) when Zacharias H. was noted to be operating a barbershop at 512 Mill Street in north La Crosse, in partnership with Ted Waldron (*Moss & Waldron*) who likely was his brother-in-law. The Mosses lived at the rear of 422 Mill (1900) and at 517 St. Cloud Street (1901-1906). The 1905 Wisconsin Census noted that his nephew, Charley [aka Charles] Loving (see Charles Loving), also a

barber, was boarding at the Moss' St. Cloud address.¹³⁴

George A. Neal (1900) [1 person]. George Neal, born in February 1874 in Canada, and described as a porter, likely with the railroad, lived at 520 Cass Street in 1900.¹³⁵

Bill Negro (1875) [1 person]. Bill Negro (unlikely real name) appeared only once in the record. He was listed as head-of-household, First Ward, in the 1875 census.¹³⁶

William Nighter (1890) [3 persons]. William Nighter, born in Richmond, Kentucky, a whitewasher/plasterer, and Katy Stiles, born in St. John, Missouri, gave birth to a stillborn male child on 20 January 1890, who was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.¹³⁷

Minnie Norton (1904) [1 person]. Minnie Norton, born c.1858, a cook, died in La Crosse on 10 September 1904 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.¹³⁸

Ole Olson (1894) [5 persons]. Ole Olson (an unlikely name) claimed to have been born in Africa. He was a blacksmith. He and Mary Anderson, born in Norway, became parents to Arthur on 20 August 1894 in La Crosse. There were two other children – John and Abraham. No other data was found.¹³⁹

¹³³(...continued)

Sherman House (1885/86), worked in Moss' shop. By 1888, Miller had established his own barbershop at 523 Hagar in north La Crosse. F. A. Barlow, race unknown, worked for *Moss & Son* and boarded at 610 Mill in 1891. LCD 1891, p.273, listed Z. L. Moss as working for Z. H. Moss. This circumstance would suggest perhaps that Z. H. Moss, the son, had become the senior partner in *Moss & Son* by that date. The account of Z. L. Moss' death in *Morning Chronicle*, 9 April 1902, 3:2, claimed that Z. L. Moss was the first barber to arrive in La Crosse and that he was born in 1802, a slave. By that account, his wife and a daughter named Anna were living in Battle Creek, Michigan, at the time of his death. That account also indicated that Z. L. was survived by four children. Anna's name did not appear in any La Crosse records, and only three children were listed while he lived in La Crosse.

¹³⁴WC 1905; BR, vol.11, 150, for Jorina; BR, vol. 10, 307, for Orby Z.; LCD 1884, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891, 1900, 1901/02, 1905/06. Stuart Haile wrote a short essay, "The Moss Family," for a history class (History 395) taught at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in 1988, and this essay includes some information about the Moss family after 1906 (copy in Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse).

¹³⁵USC 1900.

¹³⁶WC 1875.

¹³⁷BR, vol.6, 6.

¹³⁸DR, vol.5, 282.

¹³⁹BR, vol.8, 312. The author double-checked (continued...)

John/Murrie Parker (1895-1905) [2 persons].

John P. [aka J. P.] Parker and Murrie [aka Mary Ann], born c.1871 in Pennsylvania, lived at 728 State Street. John never appeared in the official record. Murrie lived at 728 State Street (1897-1901/02) and in the Second Ward (1905). She was described as the widow of J. P. (1901/02) and as a housewife (1895, 1905). Lot 170, Overbaugh & Burns Addition (next door to the property of Albert Burt) that was owned by Parker was sold for taxes.¹⁴⁰

Charles/Isaac Perkins (1870-1906) [2 persons].

Charles Perkins, born in 1850 in Ohio and his brother Isaac, born c.1851 in Ohio, were boatmen when they were first noted in the 1870 census and when they were living at the residence of Albert Burt (1114 Vine). From 1895 to 1898, both were working for Joseph C. Perkins who operated a Turkish bath, and lived at 421 State, in the residence of Joseph C. Perkins (see below). In 1903/04-1906, they were porters for V. A. Bigelow, a tobacconist, and had rooms at 1131 South Third Street.¹⁴¹

Jan B. Perkins (1905) [1 person]. Jan Perkins, female, born c.1884, was a domestic servant living

in a White household in 1905.¹⁴²

Joseph C. Perkins (1884-1905) [10 persons].

Joseph C. Perkins [aka J. C. Perkins] was a barber (1891) with a residence at second floor at 107 South Front (1884), 321 South Third (1891), 421 State (1893-1895), 1500 Adams (1897), and 328 Main (1897). In 1884, he worked as a barber in the barbershop located on the ground floor at 107 South Front. From 1893 to 1898 he operated a "Turkish bath" at 205 North Third (1893) and 204 Main Street (1895-1897). The Wisconsin Census for 1895 noted that six males and four females lived in his residence. These persons may have been employees in his Turkish bath (see Charles/Isaac Perkins above). It is likely that this J. C. Perkins was the same as an African-American with the same name who served as Justice of the Peace in Shelby Township from 1903 to 1905.¹⁴³

Joseph B. Perkins (1891-1906) [11 persons].

Joseph Perkins, born c.1840 in Mississippi, and his wife, Florence N. (Crosby), a White woman born c.1857 in Wisconsin, had nine children. These included Charles A., Wilbur G., Delilah May (born ? July 1882 in Iowa), Leslie B. (male, born c.1888 in Wisconsin), Ida B., Joseph B., Jr., Florence N. (born on 15 March 1891 in La Crosse), William Lloyd (born on 25 January 1894 in La Crosse), and Esther A. (born c.1896 in Wisconsin). Joseph had been a farmhand in Mississippi, but by 1896 was listed as a bath man in a Turkish bath. He worked for *W. H. Webb* who operated a Turkish bath at 329 Main Street; the Perkins family lived above the shop. Joseph B., Sr., and Leslie B. were both farmhands in 1905. Delilah May Perkins, working as a domestic in the city, married John B. Nigg of Shelby, a White man, on 16 June 1903. At the time of that marriage, Charles A. Perkins was present for

¹⁴⁰...continued)

this reference to confirm that accurate data from the Certificate of Birth was entered in the Record of Birth. Unfortunately, fourteen Ole Olsons lived in La Crosse in 1895, and none could be established as the father of Arthur. Tracing a period of residence for this Olson household, therefore, was impossible.

¹⁴¹LCD 1897, 1901/02; WC 1895, 1905; La Crosse County, City of La Crosse, Treasurer, Lands sold for taxes (1858-1921) La Crosse Series 39, vol.2, 514. For Murrie Parker to have been only 14 years of age when married is unlikely.

¹⁴²LCD 1884, 1895, 1897, 1903/04, 1905/06; USC 1870. The gap between a recorded presence in 1870 and 1895 may suggest that the Parkers were not residents of La Crosse for two decades before they again appeared in official records in 1895.

¹⁴³WC 1905.

¹⁴⁴LCD 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897; WC 1895; Record of Officers, vol. 1, Justices of the Peace for La Crosse County, p.308, for J. C. Perkins, "Colored", whose term began 4 May 1903 and ended 4 May 1905.

the ceremony, signing the marriage papers.¹⁴⁴

Young Perry (or Perry Young) (1905) [1 person]. Perry, born c.1879, "Colored" and resident in the Second Ward, was a porter in a city hotel in 1905.¹⁴⁵

Elizabeth Pierce (1870-1874) [2 persons]. Elizabeth [aka Betsey A.] Pierce, born c.1852 in Louisiana, was a domestic, living on Windsor Street in north La Crosse. She was the widow of Hezekiah Pierce. Amelia Pierce, born c.1869, perhaps her daughter, lived with her in 1870.¹⁴⁶

James Poage (1885-?1900) [5 persons]. James Poage [aka Podge], born in Madison, Missouri, on 15 September 1849, and his wife, Annie [aka Anna] Coleman Poage, born c.1853 in Missouri, came to La Crosse in c.1884. James' sister, Lulu Belle, born on 15 September 1867 in Paris, Missouri, married John W. Johnson (see John W. Johnson) on 18 December 1884 in La Crosse. Johnson was a coachman for the Easton Family, and Poage's move to La Crosse may have been linked to similar employment among La Crosse's upper class. Poage was employed as a horseman/coachman at the residence of A. W. Pettibone (145 South Eighth), a noted financier. Their residence was first at the Pettibone home, and they then moved to 40/46 King Street (1885), 324 Jay Street (1888/89), and finally to 1304 Vine Street (1888/89). For a time they received their mail at the Easton address. The last move may have followed the death of James of tuberculosis on 22 July 1888; his burial was in Oak Grove Cemetery. The Poages had three children - Nellie Poage, born c. 1879; George Coleman Poage, born on 6 November 1884 in Hannibal, Missouri; and Freddie Jansen Poage, born 31 August 1885. Freddie died on 1 November 1888 of diphtheria and

was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery. Lulu Belle preceded both James and Freddie in death, and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery on 11 August 1887. After James' death, Annie and Nellie obtained employment at the Easton estate (1305/1315 Cass), with Annie acting as stewardess (manager of household staff) and Nellie as teacher/nanny to the Easton's young children.¹⁴⁷ Nellie and George C. attended school in La Crosse. Both apparently graduated, and both enjoyed significant success. Nellie became a teacher in the East Saint Louis, Illinois, school system, pressing Annie and George to join her there. Annie, however, chose to remain in the Easton's employment, at least until George graduated from La Crosse Central High School on 23 June 1899, second in his class of 25 students, having followed a curriculum heavy in ancient-classical studies. With Easton financial support, George was admitted to the University of Wisconsin in Madison in Fall 1899, and there he continued the ancient-classical course of study through a master's degree obtained in 1904. He was able to read/write five languages by 1904. While at La Crosse and later in Madison, he also excelled in sports, especially track. In 1913, he received a coveted "W" from the university for his service there. In 1904, George ran for the Milwaukee Athletic Club in its bid for awards during the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Games held in St. Louis, Missouri. Poage won two bronze medals - one in the 200-meter hurdles and a second in the 400-meter hurdles. His were the first medals

¹⁴⁷MR, vol.3, 302; LCD 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1893; RB for July and November 1888; USC 1900; DR, vol.1, 230; Bruce L. Mouser, "George Coleman Poage: His La Crosse Years, 1885-1904," *Past, Present, & Future: The Magazine of the La Crosse County Historical Society*, vol.20 1 (January/February 1998), 3-5. Briefly in 1885/86, their residence was "Easton's barn," an outbuilding on the Easton estate at Cass and Thirteenth streets. Internet website <http://plcat.lacrosse.lib.wi.us/genealogy/cemeteryresuIts.asp?surname=poage&firstname=*1*&gender=both> notes that Lulu Belle Poage was the daughter of James and Anna Poage, an unlikely circumstance unless Anna became a mother at the age of fourteen years.

¹⁴⁴LCD 1903/04, 1905/06; BR, vol.6, 182, for Florence, and vol.7, 254, for William Lloyd; MR, vol.8, 290.

¹⁴⁵WC 1905. See Zachariah Young; it is possible that Perry was a son of Z. Young.

¹⁴⁶USC 1870; LCD 1873/74.

awarded to an African-American in a modern olympiad. It is apparent that the Poages moved from La Crosse in c.1900 soon after Mr. Easton's death, although James continued to use the Easton address as his formal residence address until 1904. After his successes at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Games, Poage was employed for a decade as a teacher in Sumner High School in St. Louis, Missouri, where he taught English Composition, Latin, and English Literature. From 1914 to 1920, he operated a farm in southern Minnesota. After 1920, he finished his career in Chicago as an employee of the U.S. Postal Service. He never married. Poage died in Chicago, Illinois, on 11 April 1962.¹⁴⁸

John Pope (1905-1906) [1 person]. John Pope, born c.1875 in Iowa, worked as a porter for *J. B. Funke Co.* and lived at 210 North Front Street.¹⁴⁹

Mary Powell (1870) [1 person]. Mary Powell, born c.1864 in Minnesota, was living with the Jonas Hale family (Pine between Tenth and Eleventh streets) in 1870 at the age of six. Powell may have been an orphan or may have been the daughter of Thomas/Elizabeth Powell, below.¹⁵⁰

Thomas Powell (1869-1870) [2 persons]. Thomas Powell, born in Kentucky, and son of James T. and Mary Powell, married Elizabeth Garling-House in La Crosse on 28 December 1869. Thomas ran afoul of the law early in 1870 and was sentenced to two years in Waupun Prison on a conviction for burglary. Powell was a laborer/chimney sweep.¹⁵¹

William T. Reed (1868-1870) [2 persons]. William [aka W. T.] Reed, born c.1836 in Iowa, and his wife Amanda, a White woman born c.1825 in Ohio, lived in La Crosse for three years. William worked as a barber, and the Reeds lived at 81 South Third Street (1868/69).¹⁵²

Joseph Revels (1892, 1898) [2 persons]. Joseph Revels, born in Vernon County, Wisconsin, and a barber, married Della Bass, also born in Vernon County, in La Crosse on 6 September 1892. For a time, Revels worked in a Sparta-based barbershop, but he moved to La Crosse early in 1898 and opened a barbershop in north La Crosse.¹⁵³

William S. Rice (1863-?1877) [7 persons]. William Rice, described as a boatman (1870), married Elizabeth Cromwell, in La Crosse on 16 July 1863. From 1873/74 to 1876/77, he was listed as co-proprietor of *Cromwell & Rice*, a barbershop located in the basement of the *International Hotel* and later at the corner of Main and Front. The Wisconsin 1875 census enumerated two "Colored"

¹⁴⁸*The Booster* [for] 1926, *La Crosse High School*, p.213; *La Crosse Daily Republican and Leader*, 24 May, 27 May, 29 May, 23 June 1899; *La Crosse Leader Press*, 1 September 1907, 18 June 1913; George Coleman Poage File, Recommendation for Admission, dated 26 September 1899, Registrar's Office, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Pat Press, "First Over the Hurdles," *The Washington Post*, 9 August 1984; Mouser, "George Coleman Poage," I, 3-7; *Wisconsin Alumni*, July/August 1988, 22-23; "Down Memory Lane," in *Sumner High School (St. Louis) 190 Graduating Class Reunion Book of 1959*, pp.11-17 (publication data unknown-copy in Area Research Center, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse); D. M. O'Keefe, "Beating the Odds," *Wisconsin West* (July/August 1996), 8-10. See also data collected in the "Poage biography file," Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

¹⁴⁹WC 1905; LCD 1905/06.

¹⁵⁰USC 1870.

¹⁵¹MR, vol.4, 18; La Crosse County Circuit Court, 252, for April 1870. Powell, Louis Hill, and Charley E. Shelby/Shelly were charged with having burglarized the shop of Olson & Toliffson, stealing a coat, sugar, hair oil, syrup, coffee, tea, four or five pocket knives, navy tobacco, and butter. Mary Powell may have been born to an earlier marriage or with Elizabeth Garling-House before they legally registered their arrangement in 1869. Information for Powell, prisoner #1506 in Waupun Correctional Institution, is found in Letter, Israel to Mouser, 26 March 1982, Mouser Files. La Crosse County Historical Society, La Crosse, Wisconsin. He was released on 12 February 1872.

¹⁵²USC 1870; LCD 1968/69.

¹⁵³MR, vol.6, 310; *The Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1898.

males and five "Colored" females as living at the Rice residence at the corner of South Third and Winnebago.¹⁵⁴

Charles Richardson (1870) [1 person]. Charles Richardson, born c.1856 in Illinois, was boarding with the Charles Wilkins family (North Third between Badger and La Crosse streets) at the time of the 1870 census. He was 14 years old at the time – barely old enough to be in the general workforce.¹⁵⁵

Princess Milton Richardson (1861) [2 persons]. Princess Richardson, born in Memphis, Tennessee, a blacksmith, married Isabella McCollough in La Crosse on 2 December 1861. Both were described as "mulatto."¹⁵⁶

Asa W. Robinson(1895-1896) [2 persons]. Asa Robinson, and his wife Mary, lived in the Twelfth Ward in 1895. Asa apparently died in 1895, and Mary lived at 1928 La Crosse Street in 1895.¹⁵⁷

James H. [M.] Robinson (1885-1888) [2 persons]. James Robinson, a laborer (1885/86) and cook (1888), resided at 314 North Second in 1885. His wife, Mary, was mentioned in his residence of 1231 Pine (1888) and then 320 North Tenth (1888). They moved to 1006 Flora Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri, in 1888.¹⁵⁸

John H. Robinson (1900) [2 persons]. John Robinson, born in May 1871 in Missouri, and his wife Effa H., born in February 1878 in Arkansas, were both musicians working in a local hotel in

1900.¹⁵⁹

Nelson Robinson (1869-1898) [1 person]. Nelson [aka Nel] Robinson, born c.1851 in Virginia, was first mentioned as a domestic servant working at the home of Donald McDonald in 1870. By 1876, he was listed as a barber, with a residence on Eleventh Street north of State, likely one of the properties owned by John W. Birney who was noted as his employer in 1873 and 1880. From 1880 to 1885, Robinson remained in Birney's employment, and in 1885, he and George Williams acquired Birney's barbershop and established a partnership in *Robinson & Williams*. This partnership, located at the corner of Main and North Third streets (301 Main), lasted from 1885 to ?1893. In 1901/02, Robinson was described as a laborer. *Robinson & Williams* advertised their barbershop as "Everything new and first-class, skilled workmen [1885/86];" "Expert tonsorial artists. Only first-class assistants employed. Satisfaction awaits all customers who will favor this shop with their patronage. Centrally located at 301 Main, corner of Third [1888];" and "Shaving, shampooing, hair cutting and dressing to suit the most fastidious [1893]." The barbershop, then owned solely by Robinson, moved to 227 Main in c.1894. Robinson boarded at Eleventh and State (1876/77); boarded at north side of Vine and west of North Second (1878/79); lived on North Second and north of Vine Street (1880/81); 401 North Second (1884); 307 North Third (1885/86-1891); boarded at 107 South Front (1893-1896); and 227 Main Street (site of his barbershop in 1897). Robinson died in April/May 1898.¹⁶⁰

Otto W. Robinson (1893-1897) [1 person]. Otto

¹⁵⁴MR, for 1863; WC 1875; USC 1870; LCD 1873/74, 1876/77; BLC, part 3, 5. The Marriage Record indicated that Elizabeth Cromwell was White; other data suggest that she was indeed of African-American descent. It is likely that she was related closely to the Cromwells who associated commercially with Rice in the firm of *Cromwell & Rice*.

¹⁵⁵USC 1870.

¹⁵⁶MR, for 1861; BLC, part 3, 5; LCD 1895.

¹⁵⁷WC 1895; LCD 1895.

¹⁵⁸WC 1885; LCD 1885/86, 1888/89.

¹⁵⁹USC 1900.

¹⁶⁰USC 1870; WC 1885; LCD 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1884, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897; *La Crosse Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1898; *WLA*, 3 June 1887, 1:1. According to George Taylor, *Robinson & Williams*, "barbers at the old stand, corner of Main & Third streets keep four chairs running. They are all skilled workmen." The LCD 1885/86 claimed that Robinson had resided in La Crosse since 1869.

W. [aka Ott, Ot, O.W.] Robinson worked as a waiter at *Columbia Restaurant* (1893), a porter for *Linker Bros.* (1895), and a porter for *Henry Taggart* (1897). All were White-operated enterprises. *Linker* and *Taggart* were barbershops/bath rooms. Robinson lived at the restaurant (1893), 419 State (1895), 512 Vine (1896), and 208 North Second (1896-1897).¹⁶¹

Sam Robinson (1905) [1 person]. Sam Robinson, born c.1880 in Illinois, was employed as a bootblack in 1905, likely in a local barbershop or hotel.¹⁶²

Matthew B. Schooley (1860-?1887) [2 persons]. Matthew Schooley, born c.1808 in Pennsylvania and likely a brother to Morris Schooley (below), arrived in La Crosse before 1860. On 5 December 1865, at age c.55, he married Anna M. Henry, born c.1850 in Maryland and described as a "mulatto," in La Crosse. No children were born to this marriage. Matthew was described as a fisherman (1870, 1884), laborer (1878/79), and as in charge of the *Temperance Coffee House* at 313 South Fourth (1888/89). Anna [aka Ann] took in washings and apparently boarders in the family home (Andrew Carter boarded there in 1880). They lived variously on the north side of Vine between Eleventh and Twelfth streets (1870/71-1880/81), at 1113 Pine (1884-1885/86), and at 313 South Fourth (?1887). Anna was baptized in the First Baptist Church on 2 January 1876. She requested a letter of transfer to Superior, Wisconsin, on 11 December 1901. The *Wisconsin Labor Advocate*, 6 August 1887, mentioned that the Schooleys were then residents of Boston (?Massachusetts) and were visiting friends in La Crosse.¹⁶³

Morris Schooley (1870-1874) [6 persons]. Morris Schooley, born c.1808 in Pennsylvania and possible brother of Matthew Schooley (above), and his wife Sarah, born c.1818 in Pennsylvania, moved to La Crosse from Cincinnati, Ohio, in c.1870, along with their four children – Sarah, born 1854 in Ohio; Caroline [aka Catherine], born c.1855 in Ohio; Clifford, born c.1859 in Ohio; and Charles, born c.1862 in Ohio. Both Clifford and Charles were attending school in La Crosse in 1870. Morris' wife Sarah and daughters Catherine and Sarah joined the First Baptist Church in La Crosse, having obtained letters of membership-transfer from a Cincinnati-based church on 29 September 1871. Morris was a cook working on a river boat, likely one registered in La Crosse. His wife Sarah died on 15 May 1874, and by the end of the year, letters of church-membership-transfer were sent from the La Crosse-based First Baptist Church to the Main Street Baptist Church in Cincinnati for Catherine and Sarah. This branch of the Schooley family had returned to Cincinnati by the beginning of 1875.¹⁶⁴

James H. Scott (1868-1871) [1 person]. James Scott, born c.1845 in New York, worked as a porter at the *International Hotel*, located at the corner of Front and Pearl streets in La Crosse. He lived in the hotel.¹⁶⁵

Samuel Sewell (1880) [3 persons]. Samuel Sewell, born c.1845 in Illinois, and his wife Dora, a White female born c.1856 in Wisconsin, lived on King Street in 1880. They had one daughter, Dora J., born c.1878 in Wisconsin and described as a "mulatto."¹⁶⁶

John Charles E. Shelly (1870-1877) [3-75 persons]. John [aka Charlie] Shelly [aka Shelby] and his wife, Caroline, a White female born c.1844

¹⁶¹WC 1895; LCD 1895, 1897.

¹⁶²WC 1905.

¹⁶³USC 1860, 1870; WC 1875, 1885; LCD 1870/71, 1873/74, 1876/77, 1880/81, 1884, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890; MR, for 5 December 1865; CSCR, for 2 January 1876; Membership Roll, First Baptist Church, La Crosse, #512; BLC, part 2, 6.

¹⁶⁴USC 1870; CSCR, vol. 1, items 416, 471, 418, 482; Membership Role, First Baptist Church, La Crosse, items 455, 456, 457.

¹⁶⁵USC 1870; LCD 1868/69, 1870/71.

¹⁶⁶USC 1880.

in Sweden, first appeared in La Crosse records in April 1870 when he was sentenced to serve two years in Waupun Prison for theft. Caroline and their son, William Edward, born c.1869 in Wisconsin and described as "mulatto," lived with the Jonas Hale family (Pine between Tenth and Eleventh) during John's incarceration. John later was a whitewasher and operated a boardinghouse in the alley between State and Vine streets and North Front and North Second streets (1873/74). In 1875, three Black males, one Black female and one White female lived at this residence.¹⁶⁷

Ashley Shivers/Sivers (1890-1906) [10 persons]. Ashley Shivers, born c.1863 in Tennessee, and his wife, Helen [aka Ellen] F. Waldron, born c.1865 in Wisconsin, had arrived in La Crosse by 1890. A later report that they had married in 1893 was probably incorrect, since a son, Claud[e], was born to them on 21 August 1890 in La Crosse. The Shivers first lived at 1300 Vine Street, then at 709 Mill Street, and finally at 422 Mill Street, close to the barbershop operated by Zacharias L. Moss where he worked. In 1891, he lived at 222 Vine Street, but continued to work at the shop owned by Moss. In 1893, he operated a barbershop at 411 North Third Street and lived at the same address. In 1895, he moved his business (129 North Third) and residence (221 State Street) to 418 Mill Street, the approximate location of Moss' former business (Moss had left La Crosse in 1891 or 1893), and he remained at that location until 1904. In 1904 or 1905, he opened a new barbershop at 303 North Third, but his residence remained at the 418 Mill address. Seven children were born to the Shivers while they were in La Crosse: Claud[e], born in La Crosse on 21 August 1890; Spencer, born in January 1894; Hazel May, born in La Crosse on 1 June 1895; Betha Aster [aka Ester], born in La Crosse on 20 December 1896; Frank B. [aka Robert or Bobbie], born on 3 March 1898; Theodore, born

c.1903; and John Ashley, born 3 November 1906 (died 18 June 1907). The 1900 census listed Spencer, Ester, and Robert as living in the household; the 1905 census mentioned Spencer, Hazel May, Ester, Bobbie, and Theodore as living in the Shivers' residence.¹⁶⁸

Louis Sides (1905) [2 persons]. Louis Sides, born c.1864 in Missouri, and his wife, Mamie, born c.1876 in Virginia, were living in La Crosse at the time of the 1905 census. Louis was a porter, and his wife was listed as a housewife.¹⁶⁹

Eliza Smith (1870) [1 person]. Eliza, born c.1845 in Virginia, a tailoress, lived in the First Ward in 1870.¹⁷⁰

Joseph/Emma Smith (1887-1906) [7 persons] Joseph and Emma Johnson Smith had arrived in La Crosse by August 1887. Joseph, listed only as a "laborer," and Emma [aka Emilein] Johnson Smith, born on 5 June 1861 in Augusta, Georgia, daughter to Robert and Clara Johnson (see Clara Virginia/Robert Johnson above), had four children: Amy [aka Emi] Aridenia, born 27 June 1883 in Augusta, Georgia; Joseph Robert, born in September 1886 in Augusta, Georgia; Richard D., born in La Crosse on 26 August 1888; and Lillian B., born in December 1895. By 1895, Joseph, Sr., was no longer listed in the household, for Emma was placed on the Pauper Register in that year. At

¹⁶⁸USC 1900; WC 1895, 1905; LCD 1890, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06; BR, vol.6, 21 August 1890 for Claud; BR, vol.8, 77 for Hazel May; BR vol.8, 329, for Bertha Aster; BR, vol.9, 139, for Frank; DR, vol.6, 149 for John Ashley Shivers' death; BOGC, 374, for John Ashley Shivers. For the Shivers family in Vernon County, Wisconsin, see Zachary Cooper, *Black Settlers in Rural Wisconsin* (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977). 7. Cooper wrote that Ashley Shivers arrived in Wisconsin from Tennessee in 1879. A picture of the Ashley Shivers family in front of his barbershop (c.1900) is found on page 16 of *Black Settlers*.

¹⁶⁹WC 1905.

¹⁷⁰USC 1870.

¹⁶⁷WC 1875; LCD 1873/74, 1876/77; USC 1870; La Crosse County Circuit Court, #252, April 1870. For the charges against Shelly, see note for Thomas Powell.

that time, Emma's mother, Clara Virginia Johnson was living in the household. The *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* in August 1887 noted that Emma was one of the organizers for the ball that was to accompany the 1 August celebration of Black Independence Day. Emma and her family lived at 1304 Vine (1888/89), 123 Pearl (1891), 118 North Eighth (1893), 435 South Fourth (1895), 1103 La Crosse (1895), and the rear of 309 North Eighth (1895-1906). She made her living as a "washwoman" (1891) and a nurse (1893-1897). Her mother, Clara Virginia Johnson was a cook, and it is likely that Emma assisted her mother's business as a cateress in area homes. Emma was a member of the St. Luke's United Methodist Church. In 1905, Joseph Robert was employed as a cooper; Richard D, was a printer; and Lillian was a student. Between 1900 and 1945, Emma and her daughter Amy were self-employed as housecleaners and cateresses in the La Crosse area. Richard D., then living in Winona, Minnesota, was killed in an automobile accident and was buried on 23 June 1908 in Oak Grove Cemetery. Emma died on 26 December 1945; Joseph Robert, on 19 May 1951; Amy Aridenia, on 7 October 1953; and Lillian B. Smith Davenport of Chicago, Illinois, on 28 September 1964. All members of this family were buried in the same lot in Oak Grove Cemetery. Emma and Amy were known affectionately in the La Crosse region as providing services to upper middle-class residents. Lillian and her husband were reported to have become vaudeville celebrities in the Chicago area.¹⁷¹

Nathan Smith (?1865-1905) [3 persons]. Nathan

[aka N----- Nathan] Smith, born c.1820 in Tennessee, and his first wife, Sarah [aka Sara and Aunt Sally], born c.1835 in Tennessee, arrived in La Crosse at the end of the Civil War, along with his reported sponsor, General Cadwallader C. Washburn, a La Crosse resident and later governor of the State of Wisconsin. Smith had served Washburn as a valet and a horse tender (horse boy) while Washburn was in Tennessee. From 1866 to 1870, Smith maintained two residences—one in the city's Second Ward and one at a farm near West Salem, Wisconsin. Smith continued his service to Washburn after he arrived in La Crosse, but in 1866 he began to make payments for purchase of the West Salem farm. Although the Smiths had no known children of their own living with them (a child was left in the South at the time of their trek northward), their farm at West Salem became home to several young people between 1870 and 1900. In that period, a farm could use many farmhands, and the Smiths apparently raised a number of homeless boys and girls whom they treated as their own children. These included George Southall (see Henry Southall), Joseph Louis (a White), George Edwin Taylor (see George Taylor), and Kelly Vaughn (see Kelly Vaughn). The censuses of 1875 recorded two males and one female at the farm, whereas that of 1880 reported three males and one female and that of 1895, of one "Colored" male, three males, and four females. Sarah died in 1892 and was buried in the Hamilton Cemetery near West Salem.¹⁷² It is clear that Smith was respected

¹⁷¹WC 1895, 1905; USC 1900; LCD 1891, 1893, 1895, 1898, 1903/04, 1905/06; Pauper Register for 1895; Case Histories of County Poor, vol.8; BR, vol.5, 205, for Richard D.; Oak Grove Cemetery, Plat Book D, p.375; *WLA*, 6 August 1887, 1:3; St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Membership Book; Robbie L. Moss Interview, 1981, Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse; Lucy Haack Interview, Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse; *La Crosse Tribune*, 11 August 1946.

¹⁷²BLC, part 3, 6; WC 1875, 1895; USC 1870, 1880; *La Crosse Tribune*, 24 September 1965, article by Estella Bryhn of West Salem; Warrantee Deeds, La Crosse County, vol.31, 56; Warrantee Deeds, La Crosse County, vol.30, 64; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.10, 160; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.12, 431; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.13, 487; vol.28, 123; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.27, 250; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.45, 263; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.93, 301; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.96, 509; BLC, part 3, 6-7. Lucy Haack, in "Lucy Haack Interview," Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, remembered (continued...)

and active within La Crosse between 1866 and 1892. Perhaps the local perception that General/Governor Washburn was his friend/sponsor reassured that respect, but Smith's conduct reinforced that regard, at least to a degree. He and Sarah raised, by local reports, one White and at least three African-American orphans, sending one to Gale College/University (Galesville, Wisconsin) and three to Wayland Academy (a private boarding school in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin). Without question, Smith was an energetic defender of the politically-active Labor and Farmer (worker) movement in Wisconsin in the 1880s. In 1886, for instance, he and a foster son, George Edwin Taylor, represented La Crosse, along with thirteen other delegates, at the Neenah Convention of the Peoples' Party, a precursor to the ill-fated Union Labor Party in Wisconsin. That Taylor became a national political figure and in 1904 became the candidate of the National Liberty Party for President of the United States provides ample testimony to Smith's likely interest in politics. Smith was also reported as one of those who lynched "Scotty," the murderer of Frank Burton, in October 1884. At age 75, Nathan married Elizabeth [aka Lizzie, Libbie] Johnson, a White widow born in 1848 in Wisconsin and who already had raised eight of her ten children, on 2 May 1895 in La Crosse. Two of her children (Susie Johnson, born in 1885 in Wisconsin; and Minnie Johnson, born in 1892 in Wisconsin) and Dick Henderson (see Henderson above) lived with the Smiths in 1900. In December 1900, the Smiths sold their farm and purchased Lot

9 of Section 19, Township 16, range 7, First Addition to Green Park in French Island, a plot of nearly three acres that later would be numbered 1622 Lakeshore in French Island, and moved there in retirement. Nathan died on 26 March 1905 and was buried alongside his first wife, Sarah, in Hamilton Cemetery. Elizabeth Smith also was buried in Hamilton Cemetery.¹⁷³

William H. Smith (1899) [3 persons]. William H. Smith and his wife, Alice, gave birth to Elvina C., born 8 January 1899, in La Crosse. Elvina died on 12 August 1899 and was buried in Catholic Cemetery.¹⁷⁴

Henry Southall (1865-1866/67) [2 persons]. Henry Southall, born in Nashville, Tennessee, a steamboat cook and resident of St. Louis, married Agnes LaPoint, a White woman, in La Crosse on 11 December 1865. In 1866/67, the Southalls lived on the southwest corner of Pine and Sixth. These may have been the parents of George Southall (see Nathan Smith) who was living with Nathan Smith

¹⁷³Bruce L. Mouser, "The Wisconsin Labor Advocate of La Crosse, the Knights of Labor, and George Edwin Taylor." *Past, Present, & Future: The Magazine of the La Crosse Historical Society*, vol.20 3(May/June 1998), 5-7; MR, vol.7, 143; WC 1895; USC 1900; *La Crosse Tribune*, obituary for 27 March 1905; Hazel Rahn Heider, *Along the Waterloo Road* (West Salem: Heider, 1981), 83-84 (picture of Smith on page 84); Wesley S. Moe, "Pleasant Memories," in *La Crosse County Historical Sketches*, series 7 (La Crosse: La Crosse County Historical Society, 1945), 103; *La Crosse Tribune*, 19 April 1907, 2:1-2; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.60, 509; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.60, 385; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.61, 386; Mortgages, La Crosse County, vol.68, 554; Warranty Deeds, La Crosse, County, vol.98, 125, and vol.98, 139. It may be that Smith was influenced by Washburn in his political thinking; Washburn, for instance, believed that the federal government should own the railroads. For the latter, see James Gray, *Pine, Stream and Prairie* (New York: Knopf, 1945), 64-65.

¹⁷⁴DR, vol.4, 195.

¹⁷²(...continued)

Nathan Smith's origins differently. She, 22, "thought it was near Canada where they first started out and then came down here." Indeed, there was a Nathan Smith, recorded in *Voice of the Fugitive* (Windsor, Ontario, Canada) (see BSN, vol.3, 361), 3 June 1852, 2:2, that noted that a Nathan Smith, formerly of Louisville, Kentucky, had purchased his and his two daughters' freedom for \$3,500. The rest of the family was freed in a will. They went first to Canada to avoid possible court review of the will. Haack also remembered Smith, 23, as a good storyteller.

in 1880.¹⁷⁵

John Sparks (1873-1877) [2 persons]. John Sparks, "Mulatto" son of Manuel Sparks, married Lucilie Walbright in La Crosse on 18 January 1877. He was a "laborer" who had lived at 55 North Third Street since 1873.¹⁷⁶

Alice Wicks Stone (1900) [2 persons]. Alice Wicks, a Black female from Mount Pleasant, Iowa, married Sherman Stone, a White laborer born in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, in La Crosse on 29 January 1900. Stone was living at 1113 Pine, the residence of James Albert Wicks, in 1900. It is likely that Alice Wicks was a relative of Edward and James Albert Wicks below.¹⁷⁷

Eliza Tatman (1870) [1 person]. Eliza Tatman, born c.1855 in Missouri, was listed, at age 15, as a boarder in the home of Charles Wilkins (North Third between Badger and La Crosse) in 1870.¹⁷⁸

Eliza Taylor (1878) [1 person]. Eliza [aka Fran Eliza] Taylor, born c.1854, and resident in the Town of Farmington (not far from La Crosse), was listed on the Jail Register of 25 January 1878 as insane. She was taken to the County Poor House and died there on 17 April 1878.¹⁷⁹

George Edwin Taylor (1865-?1890) [2 persons]. George Taylor, born in Little Rock, Arkansas, on 4 August 1857 to Bryant/Nathan Taylor and Awanda Hines, and into a family of thirteen children, lived in Alton, Illinois, with his father after his mother

died c.1863. By his own recollections, he scavenged for his existence after that time and traveled alone (at age 7 but probably with his father) onboard the river boat *Hawkeye State* and landed at La Crosse on 8 May 1865. For nearly a year, George Taylor attended school in the city. Failing to find sufficient work in La Crosse, however, his father abandoned him c.1866, and Nathan Smith (see Nathan Smith above) took him to his farm near West Salem and raised him there. Smith treated Taylor as his own son, although Taylor continued to carry his father's surname.¹⁸⁰ When Taylor was 20 years old (?1877), Smith sent him to Wayland Academy, a boarding school in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, where he received a remarkable education for that time. He failed to complete the full four years training at Wayland Academy because of poor health and crushing financial problems. In the meantime, when

¹⁸⁰This and the following reconstruction of Taylor's life is an attempt to reconcile conflicting accounts that appeared in sources: "Sketch of George Edwin Taylor," *Voice of the Negro* (Atlanta, Georgia), October 1904, 476-478; *La Crosse Tribune*, 19 April 1907, 2:1-2; Mark Pomeroy, *Reminiscences and Recollections of "Brick" Pomeroy* (New York: Advance Thought Company, 1890), 162; *Ottumwa Courier*, 22 July 1904, 6:1; and Hazel Rahn Heider, *Along the Waterloo Road* (West Salem: Heider, 1891), 83-84. All of these accounts were of flawed "recollections" and were not supported by official records. The dates present here and below, therefore, are approximate dates and a best-attempt to reassemble events. "Sketch," 477, for instance, claimed that Taylor never saw his father after Alton, Illinois, and that he traveled to La Crosse as a lone child of seven. The *La Crosse Tribune* article wrote that his father abandoned him after they arrived in La Crosse and that Smith "picked the boy up and educated him." Pomeroy claimed his name to have been Joe Taylor and that he moved to Alvin, Illinois, after he left La Crosse. Indeed, Pomeroy's Taylor may have referred to George's father who may have followed Pomeroy as typesetter when he removed the *Democrat* to New York City c.1868. Heider remembered that Taylor took the name of Henry (really George) Southall and that it was Southall (see Henry Southall above) that ran for President of the United States in 1904. For more on Pomeroy, see Harry Frederick Bangsberg, "Mark M. Pomeroy: Copperhead Editor, A Study in Transition" (paper, Department of History, State University of Iowa, 1953), 64, 89.

¹⁷⁵MR, 11 December 1865; USC 1880; BLC, part 3, 5; LCD 1866/67.

¹⁷⁶La Crosse Series 33, vol.4; LCD 1873/74.

¹⁷⁷MR, vol.8, 101; LCD 1900. For more on Black settlement at Mount Pleasant, Iowa, see Robert R. Dykstra, "Dr. Emerson's Sam: Black Iowans before the Civil War," *The Palimpsest*, 63 no.3(May/June 1982), 81.

¹⁷⁸USC 1870.

¹⁷⁹JR, for 25 January 1878. La Crosse County, Welfare Department, Series 23, vol.6, noted that she was about 40 years old.

Wayland Academy was not in session, Taylor worked as a typesetter (devil), and later as city-editor, for Brick Pomeroy, editor/owner of the *Democrat*, who re-established his newspaper in La Crosse between 1878 and 1880. For a time after Pomeroy left La Crosse in 1880, Taylor was a "freelance" writer for the *La Crosse Daily Republican and Leader*, *La Crosse Morning Chronicle*, and *Chicago Inter-Ocean*. Between 1882 and 1885, however, Taylor became more involved in city politics when he joined the staffs of the *La Crosse Free Press* and its successor *La Crosse [Evening] Star*, both of which were political arms of the mayoralty of Frank "White Beaver" Powell who served two terms as pro-labor mayor of La Crosse (1882-84 and 1886-88). Opposition newspapers called Taylor the "brains of the Star," and Taylor later claimed himself to have been its half-owner. In 1881, he was living at the home of Elizabeth/Albert Burt at 1114 Vine Street. He married Mary L. Hall, daughter of Ja[m]e[s] E. Lynch and Mary Ann Morrison, on 15 October 1885 in Prairie du Chien, Crawford County, Wisconsin. In 1885/86, the Taylors lived at 222 Vine Street, and they then moved to 207 Main, above a store located there. By 1888, they were living at 201 Main.¹⁸¹ Taylor became the campaign

manager for Powell in his bid for reelection as mayor of La Crosse in 1886. During Powell's two terms, Taylor expanded his own political interests in La Crosse and within Wisconsin by helping to organize local and regional chapters of the Knights of Labor and by being the sole owner/editor of the *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* (1886-7/1889). He, along with Nathan Smith and thirteen others, represented La Crosse Farmer/Labor (workingmen) interests at the 1886 Neenah Convention, and he quickly improved his position within a newly-organized statewide party called the People's Party, later Union Labor Party. He became that party's statewide treasurer, and his newly-established and La Crosse-based newspaper, *Wisconsin Labor Advocate*, was designated the official voice of the state party. The only extant copies of that paper run from 20 August 1886 to 6 August 1887, although it was known to continue after the latter date. Taylor and eight others represented the State of Wisconsin at the Union Labor Party's national convention held in Cincinnati, Ohio, in February 1887, and he was one of four persons selected to address the convention of more than 800 delegates. Upon his return to La Crosse, Taylor's own editorial objectives changed considerably, with his newspaper becoming more national in scope and interest. He became an outspoken critic of "rent" and "landlordism" and lambasted growing monopolistic enterprises in each issue of the *Advocate*. By late 1887, Taylor had lost most of his local support base, and by late 1890 he had abandoned La Crosse for more promising editorial prospects in southeastern Iowa where large numbers of Black exodusters (those leaving southern states) had established residence (he arrived in Oskaloosa, Iowa, early in 1891) within that state's coal mining regions and where they were championing the objectives of the Union Labor Party. Taylor

¹⁸¹See the footnote immediately above and Bruce L. Mouser, "The *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* of La Crosse, the Knights of Labor, and George Edwin Taylor," *Past, Present, & Future: The Magazine of the La Crosse County Historical Society*, vol.20 3(May/June 1998); Bruce L. Mouser, "*Wisconsin Labor Advocate, 1886-1888*," unpublished paper presented at Wisconsin Labor History Conference (Milwaukee), 27 April 1988 (copy in Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse), especially notes; WC 1875 for Nathan Smith; USC 1880 for Nathan Smith; Crawford County, Marriages, vol.6, 142; LCD 1885/86, 1888/89; PTL 1881, for taxes paid by Taylor for property in Overbaugh & Burns Addition, 169/18, Burt residence; *Ottumwa Courier*, 22 July 1904, 6:1. *La Crosse Tribune*, 27 March 1905, reported that Taylor attended Gale University, a likely error. For more on Wayland Academy, see Elmer E. Ferris, *Jerry at the Academy* (New York: Doubleday, 1940), passim and p.5, where he (continued...)

¹⁸¹(...continued) mentioned that Bill Waldron attended Wayland c.1880. Waldron, a prominent Black family in Vernon County, Wisconsin, provided spouses to at least two families in La Crosse, the Moss and Shivers families.

remained politically active by participating in the liberal wing of the Iowa Republican Party. In 1892 he was elected president of the Colored Peoples' National Protective Association, a group that opposed the Republican Party's nomination of Harrison in 1892. By 1897, many African-Americans, including Taylor, had left the Republican Party and had become a radical fringe group in the National Democrat Party, promoting equal rights for Blacks within the party and country. He established *The Negro Solicitor*, a newspaper (it supposedly lasted for nine years) that built a nationwide constituency and was based in Oskaloosa, Iowa. From c.1900 to c.1904, Taylor was a justice of the peace (Judge) in Hilton, Iowa. It was in 1904 that a significant number of Black leaders broke with the National Democrat Party before its St. Louis Convention to form a new party that would promote its equal rights agenda. This party was known as the National Liberty Party. Taylor, then living in Ottumwa, Iowa, was selected as that party's candidate for President of the United States in 1904, even while he was chairman of the advisory board of the National Negro Democratic League that was still affiliated with the National Democrat Party. Taylor died in Jacksonville, Florida, on 23 November 1925.¹⁶²

¹⁶²*Voice of the Negro*, August 1904, 298-299, and October 1904, 476-479; *Independent*, vol.57, 844-846; *WLA*, all extant issues; George Edwin Taylor file, Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse; Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People of the United States* (New York: Citadel Press, 1951), 820, 852-853; Paul H. Ferguson, *The American Party Drama* (New York: Vantage Press, 1961), 331; Hanes Walton, Jr., *Black Political Parties* (New York: Free Press, 1872), 35, 51; Hanes Walton, Jr., *Black Politics: A Theoretical and Structural Analysis* (New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1972), 128; James Q. Wilson, *Negro Politics: The Search for Leadership* (New York: Free Press, 1971), 51; *Cleveland Gazette*, 9 July 1904, 2; *Ottumwa Courier*, 16 August 1904, 2-4. A picture of Taylor appeared in *Voice of the Negro*, October 1904, 476. Herbert Aptheker, "The Negro Who Ran for President," *Negro Digest*, March 1947, 64-67, used the *Voice of the Negro* article of

(continued...)

Jack Taylor (1871-1900) [1 person]. Jack Taylor, born c.1810, lived in the Town of Farmington in 1871. He may also have been the blacksmith who lived for a time in Mindoro, Wisconsin. By 1895, he was living in Shelby Township, south of La Crosse, where his household contained himself and eight White females. On 3 May 1895, he was admitted to the La Crosse County Poor House because of old age. By 1900, he had been transferred to the County Asylum for Chronic Insane in West Salem, Wisconsin.¹⁶³

Sarah Taylor (1904) [1 person]. Sarah Taylor, born c.1876, was a piano player who was a resident of the La Crosse County Poor Farm. She died of Bright's disease on 10 August 1904 and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery.¹⁶⁴

August Samuel Thompson (1864-1885) [3 persons]. Thompson [aka Sam/Samuel Thompson], born a slave c.1846 in Virginia, was working as a barber when Union troops of the Fourteenth Wisconsin Regiment liberated him. He arrived in

¹⁶³(...continued)

October 1904 in his reconstruction, yet much of his data failed to follow facts presented in that article. Aptheker's reconstruction of the period after 1900, however, likely is more correct than that presented in the 1904 article. For Taylor's later activities in Jacksonville, Florida, see *The Florida Times-Union*, 27 February 1984, B1-2, article by Marlene Sokol, "Black journalist wrote and politicized for change." For Taylor's activities in Oskaloosa, Hilton, and Ottumwa, Iowa, see *Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, 22 July 1904; *Ottumwa Courier*, 23 July 1904; and Letter, Doller to Mouser, 23 February 1984, Mouser Files, La Crosse County Historical Society.

¹⁶⁴PTL, for Farmington in 1871; WC 1875, 1895; La Crosse County Poor Farm Register, p.2; USC 1900; W. E. Barber, "Recollections of Early Days in La Crosse County," in *La Crosse County Historical Sketches, series 2*, edited by A. H. Sanford (La Crosse: for the La Crosse County Historical Society, 1935), 67. The twenty-year gap in local records may indicate that these persons named Jack Taylor were different persons. Both, however, were identified as persons of African descent.

¹⁶⁵DR, vol.5, 279; BOGC, 408.

La Crosse in 1864 when a member of that regiment returned to Wisconsin, and he worked locally as a musician and barber. On 10 February 1865, Thompson enlisted as one of the first persons of color to do so in Wisconsin, as a member of the 29th Regiment of Colored Troops. By 1866, he had returned to La Crosse and became established in a partnership with Zacharias L. Moss (*Thompson & Moss*) on the south side of Pearl between South Second and South Third streets. A year later, he married Anna Shanks in La Crosse on 6 May. It is unclear that this marriage survived, for in 1870 he was listed in the national census as married to Mary, born c.1848 in Michigan, and that they had a son, Joseph, born c.1864 in Minnesota. It may be assumed that Anna and Mary were the same person and that Anna/Mary may have been a widow before her marriage to August. His partnership with Moss had ended before 1873, for in that year he was working for Charles Wilkins who operated a barbershop on South Second Street between Main and Pearl streets. He later operated his own barbershop in the Post Office Block (1876/77), above 66 Main (1878/79), and on the south side of Main Street and east of South Third Street (1880/81). He had left La Crosse or died by 1884, for Mary was listed as head-of-household in that year. The Thompsons lived on the alley of south Jay between South Third and South Fourth streets (1866/67), on the south side of Pine between Eleventh and Twelfth streets (1870/71-1877), north side of Pine and east of North Second (1878/79), north side of State and east of North Second (1880/81), and 725 South Second (1884). The Thompsons boarded several barbers who worked in his shop. No mention of the Thompsons occurred after 1885.¹⁸¹

George Thurston (1866) [2 persons]. Thurston, born in Hamilton, Wisconsin, and Lydia Moss (see Henderson Moss), were married on 7 October 1866 in La Crosse. Thurston was a barber.¹⁸⁶

John A. Turner (1895-1900) [2 persons]. John Turner, born in August 1840 in Alabama, lived in La Crosse for five years. In 1895, he and a Black female occupied the same address in the Fourth Ward, but no later reference to a possible spouse appeared in the record. In 1895 he was working as a coachman, as a cook for H. A. Hill in 1897, and as a porter at the *Porter Club House* at 114 North Sixth Street in 1900. He lived in the Fourth Ward (1895), at 213 North Eighth (1895), 116 Mill (1897), and 114 North Sixth (1900).¹⁸⁷

Robert Turner (1869-1871) [2 persons]. Robert Turner, born c.1825 in Arkansas, and his wife Louisa, born c.1828, in Arkansas, lived at the residence of Elizabeth Burt on the south side of Vine between Eleventh and Twelfth streets in 1870. Robert worked as a musician and organized the "Turner LaX Band," described by the *Daily Democrat* as "a first class band." Louisa was a dressmaker.¹⁸⁸

Stephen Turner (1880) [2 persons]. Stephen Turner, born in Richmond, Virginia, and working at a hotel, married Ida Chatwood, a White woman, in La Crosse on 14 June 1880.¹⁸⁹

Kelly Vaughn (?1870-1901) [4 persons]. Kelly Vaughn, born c.1840 in Mississippi, lived in the household of Nathan Smith in c.1870. He married Mrs. Lisbeth Howell, a White woman, in La Crosse on 27 May 1872. In 1874, he married Adeline Jones, a White woman, on 14 September. And in 1894, he married Sarah Bowers, also White, on 15

¹⁸¹WC 1875; USC 1870; *Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers*, vol.11, 959; HF, for Samuel Thompson - "Colored barber - came 1864 with 14th Regiment a slave[.] Picked up music here & had a dance orchestra"; LCD 1866/67, 1870/71, 1873/74, 1876/77, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1884; MR, for 1867; BLC, part 3, 5; BLC, part 4, 5-6.

¹⁸⁶MR, for 1866.

¹⁸⁷WC 1895; USC 1900; LCD 1895, 1897.

¹⁸⁸[*La Crosse*] *Daily Democrat*, for 10 April 1869, as noted in HF; USC 1870 for Burt residence; LCD 1870/71.

¹⁸⁹MR, vol.5, 1.

August. He was admitted to the La Crosse County Poor Farm on 15 September 1899 and died there on 27 August 1901, with burial at the La Crosse County Poor Farm.¹⁹⁷

John Isaiah Vinegar (1865-1911) [7 persons]. John Vinegar, born c.1847 in Lexington, Kentucky, to Henry Vinegar, married Anna Eliza Pugsley [aka Eliza], born c.1853 in New York, in La Crosse on 16 September 1865. John worked as a barber (1876-1906) and a steamboat man (1870, perhaps as a barber aboard) while in La Crosse. Henry and Anna had at least five children: Henry L., born c.1867 in Wisconsin; Carrie B., born c.1868 in Wisconsin; Clara C., born c.1869 in Wisconsin; St. Elmo C. [aka Elmo], born c.1870 in Wisconsin; and Karin Bell, uncertain date of birth. Three Vinegar children (Elmo, Henry, and a sister) were attending school in the mid-1870s to early 1880s. John formed a business partnership/relationship with *Vinegar & Foster* (see Ephraim Foster) at 77 Mill Street (1876-81) and with *Ball & Vinegar Palace Shaving Parlors* at 133 South Front (see Frederick Ball) (1887). Vinegar operated his own shop in the basement of 230 Main Street in 1884, 1828 George (1891), 1701 Onalaska (1893-1895), 1812 George (1897), and 208 North Second (1901/02-1904/05). The duration of Vinegar's marriage to Anna is unclear in the documents. They lived on the southwestern side of North Third between Vine and Pine streets (1866/67), on North Second between

Vine and Pine streets (1873/74), and on Tenth Street (1880). Anna was listed as head-of-household in 1880 and her name no longer appeared in the record after that date. In the 1895 Wisconsin Census, John was listed as a single dweller at his home. John lived on Tenth Street (1880), 221 Jay (1884), (boarded at) 304 South Third (1888/89), 1826 George (1888/89), 1430 Rose (1891), 1118 Rublee (1891), 1522 Loomis (1891-1896), and 308 North Second (1897-1906). On 24 January 1888, John married Ella Dochterman, born in March 1843, a White woman, in La Crosse, and they moved from La Crosse's south side to north La Crosse. The 1900 census reported that John and Ella claimed to have had nine children, an unlikely circumstance unless the total count reflected children from former marriages. John Vinegar died on 19 June 1911. His son, Elmo, married Miss Smith, in 1890 in St. Paul, Minnesota. Henry L. Vinegar maintained a separate address at 1810/1812 George Street (the address of his barbershop) in 1895.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰Shelley Goldbloom, "Black added his bit to Wisconsin's history," *Milwaukee Journal*, 19 April 1981, part 2, 1:5; MR, vol.4, 37; MR, vol.4, 77; MR vol.7, 80; PR, p.10, for 15 September 1899; DR, vol.5, 15; BLC, part 3, 5. Vaughn was reported to have been one of the boys raised by Nathan Smith and sent to Wayland Academy in Beaver Dam. The date of his arrival in La Crosse, 1870, must be wrong. He would have needed to have been in the 16-20 year old range to attend Wayland, which means that his date of birth must have been later than 1840. It is possible that the Vaughn raised by Smith was a different Kelly Vaughn than listed here. That he married three times is registered officially in marriage records. It is questionable that he would have waited until 1872 to marry for the first time if he had been born in 1840.

¹⁹¹MR, for 1865; MR, vol.5, 478; La Crosse Series 33, vol.8, for 21 August 1884; WC 1875, 1885, 1895; USC 1870, 1880, 1900; LCD 1873/74, 1876/77, 1880/81, 1884, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06; WLA, for 29 April 1887 description for *Ball & Vinegar Palace Shaving Parlors*; DR, vol.15, 346; BOGC, 427; BSN, vol.3, 566, citing *St. Paul Appeal* for 21 August 1884; "Pupils of the Old First Ward School," *News and Notes* (January 1944, no.4), printed by the La Crosse County Historical Society as amended on June 9, 1944; BLC, part 3, 5-6. See "Record of 2nd Intermediate Grade First Ward, [for] Sept. 3rd 1877 thru 1888," (for 1878-79), School District, Teacher Registers for First District School, La Crosse, Wisconsin, for Henry Vinegar (1879-1880) who had entered only in mid-year. Elmo and Carrie Vinegar were recorded in "Record of 2nd Intermediate Grade First Ward, [for] Sept. 3rd 1877 thru 1888," grade books for 1881-1882, School District, Teacher Registers for First District School, La Crosse, Wisconsin. An article in *Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1898, reported that John Vinegar and Zacharias Moss had served together during the Civil War. Twenty-four years' difference in ages, however, suggests that that was not likely the case. It is more plausible that Vinegar followed a La Crosse-
(continued...)

Louise Wade (1870) [3 persons]. Louise Wade, born c.1840 in Virginia, was a "Mulatto" housekeeper and provided room/board for Herbert Williams (11 years of age) and William Young (or Young William - five years of age).¹⁹²

Malinda and Marie Waldron (1905) [2 persons]. Malinda Waldron, born c.1879, and Marie Waldron, born c.1869, and both from Vernon County, Wisconsin, were listed as "domestics" living at the residence of Ashley Shivers (?418 Mill) in 1905. Ashley's wife Helen/Ellen was a Waldron and was born in 1865; Malinda and Marie may have been Helen's sisters or relatives. Zacharias Henry Moss (see above) was married to Emily Waldron, born in 1869 in Wisconsin.¹⁹³

Ted Waldron (1900) [1 person]. Ted Waldron was a barber who was in partnership with Zacharias Henry Moss in *Moss & Waldron* in 1900. This barbershop was located at 511 Mill; Waldron boarded with Z. H. Moss at 422 Mill.¹⁹⁴

Jeremiah Walker (1867) [2 persons]. Jeremiah Walker, born in New Orleans, Louisiana, and a

fireman working on a river boat, married Sarah Brown in La Crosse on 6 March 1867.¹⁹⁵

Milton Walker (1866-1867) [1 person]. Milton Walker, a barber, worked for Charles F. Wilkins and boarded at the *Westcott House* in 1866/67.¹⁹⁶

Charles E. Warner (1873-1893) [5 persons]. Charles Warner and his wife Theresa, lived variously on the north side of Vine between Eleventh and Twelfth streets (1873/74), 75 South Third (1878/79), northeast corner of South Second and Cass (1880/81), 213 King (1884), 1206 South Front (1885/86-1888), 818 Mill (1890), and 907 St. James (1891). Charles worked as a carpenter (1873/74), steward (1878/79), laborer (1880/81), photographer (1884), liveryman for *Palmer Brothers* (1885/86), laborer for *N. B. Hohway Lumber* (1888), laborer (1890), and brakeman for *Chicago, Burlington and Northern Railway* (1891). In 1875, the Wisconsin Census recorded one "Colored" male, two White males, and two White females living at his residence, a circumstance that suggests that Theresa was White and that she may have brought three children (among them Stephen) to her marriage with Warner. By 1890, Stephen Warner had established a separate residence at 1521 Green Bay. In 1893, Theresa was listed in the city directory as the widow of Charles, and a residence at 1521 Green Bay with her son Stephen.¹⁹⁷

John Watson (1885-1888) [2 persons]. John Watson was a railroad sleeping car porter. He and his wife lived at 1013 Vine Street.¹⁹⁸

Ed Webb (1885) [2 persons]. Ed Webb and a Black female were counted in La Crosse during the 1885

¹⁹²(...continued)

formed Civil War regiment upon its return to Wisconsin in 1865. River transport was well developed and readily available to anyone from northern Kentucky. He may have had a sponsor in La Crosse; that has not been suggested in records. A "Vinegar, Mrs.-", residence at 4 South Tenth, was listed in the LCD for 1880/81. Whether this Vinegar was related to the Vinegars above is uncertain.

¹⁹³USC 1870.

¹⁹⁴WC 1905. One might speculate that Malinda and Marie Waldron were living in La Crosse primarily for employment opportunities, but they might have considered La Crosse as having greater potential for finding marriageable spouses. Vernon County was principally a farming community, La Crosse perhaps represented liberation from the confined Black community in Vernon County. Malinda Waldron was 26 years of age and Marie Waldron was 36 years of age in 1905.

¹⁹⁵LCD 1900.

¹⁹⁶MR, for 1867.

¹⁹⁷LCD 1866/67.

¹⁹⁸WC 1875; LCD 1873/74, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1884, 1885/86, 1888/89, 1890, 1891, 1893.

¹⁹⁹WC 1885; LCD 1888/89.

census.¹⁹⁹

George B. Webb (1886-1888) [3 persons]. George B. Webb, a laborer, and his wife Ellen M. Carter, [aka Elisa May or Helen], born c. 1857 in Wisconsin to John (see John Carter above) and Margaret Carter of La Crosse, gave birth to a daughter, Alis M., on 30 January 1886 in La Crosse. The Birth Register described Alis as "mixed White, Indian & Black." The Webbs lived at 125 North Seventh in 1888, the residence of John Carter.²⁰⁰

George W. Webb (1873) [2 persons]. George W. Webb, born in Ohio and a barber from New Ulm, Minnesota, married Mary A. Killian in La Crosse on 9 July 1873.²⁰¹

James A. Week (1895) [4 persons]. James A. Week lived in the Second Ward in 1895. His residence included one "Mulatto" male, two "Mulatto" females, and one White female.²⁰²

Nancy Welsh (1885-1889) [1 person]. Nancy Welsh [aka Welch], born in North Carolina and widow of Jesse Welsh, was a person who "did all sorts of work." She lived at the back of 221 Jay in 1888. She died in La Crosse on 5 August 1889 and was buried in potter's field in Oak Grove Cemetery.²⁰³

Edwin White (1860) [1 person]. Edwin White, born c. 1807 in South Carolina, a "mulatto,"

appeared only once in La Crosse records.²⁰⁴

Timothy White (1880-1881) [3 persons]. Timothy White, born c. 1830 in Connecticut, a cook at a hotel, and Hattie, a White woman born c. 1835, lived on Farnam Street (1880) and on the southeast corner of Eighth and Hood (1880/81). They had a son, ?William, a White person born c. 1865, who was attending school in 1880.²⁰⁵

Charles S. Wicks (1903-1904) [1 person]. Charles S. Wicks, laborer, lived at 1113 Pine in 1903/04, the residence of Edward Wicks in 1902.²⁰⁶

Edward F. Wicks (1895-1906) [3 persons]. Edward Wicks [likely born in Mount Pleasant, Iowa (see James Wicks below)], and his wife Florence Riem, had a daughter, Edna Francis, who was born in La Crosse on 28 July 1898. Edward worked as a laborer (1895 and 1905/06) and as coachman for J. W. Losey (1901-1904). They lived in the Second Ward (1895), and at 324 Jay (1895), 323 Cameron (1895), 1117 Pine (1897), 1113 Pine (1901/02), 514 North Twelfth (1901/02-1903/04), and 409 Oakland (1905/06).²⁰⁷

James Albert Wicks (1893-1906) [7 persons]. James Wicks, born in September 1872 in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, was married to Sarah Mathilda Stone (born in November 1876 in Mount Pleasant, Iowa) in La Crosse on 28 November 1893. Sarah's brother Sherman married James' sister Alice in La Crosse on 29 January 1900. The Wicks had seven children: James, Jr., uncertain date of birth; Gertrude, born June 1894 in Wisconsin; Nellie, born 30 July 1896 in La Crosse; Gladys/Glades, born 16 October 1898 in La Crosse; Albert, born c. 1901 in Wisconsin; Grace, born 6 August 1903 in La Crosse; and Laura, born c. 1906 in Wisconsin. James, Sr., worked as a laborer (1895) and as a

¹⁹⁹WC 1885.

²⁰⁰BR, vol. 4, 160; LCD 1888/89.

²⁰¹MR, vol. 4, 49. City directories also mention a William H. Webb, barber, who operated a barbershop and bath rooms at 129 North Third in the late 1880s and early 1890s. There was no ascertainable data to establish a relationship between W. H. Webb and the two Webbs mentioned above, nor did data identify his race; his name has not been included in this listing as a consequence.

²⁰²WC 1895.

²⁰³WC 1885; DR, vol. 2, for 5 August 1889; RB, vol. A, 70; BOGC, 440; LCD 1888/89.

²⁰⁴USC 1860; BLC, part 2, 6.

²⁰⁵USC 1880; LCD 1880/81.

²⁰⁶LCD 1903/04.

²⁰⁷WC 1895; LCD 1895, 1897, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1904/05; BR, vol. 9, 185.

coachman (1901/02-1905/06) for W. W. Cargill who operated a grain elevator in the city. They lived in the Second Ward (1895), at 324 Jay (1895), 323 Cameron (1895), 1011 Pine (1897-1900), 1113 Pine (1900), 514 North Twelfth (1901/02), and 1424 Pine (1905/06). It is likely that Charles, Edward, James and Morris Webb were brothers or near-relatives, since their addresses were the same during many of these years.²⁰⁸

Morris Wicks (1903-1904) [1 person]. Morris Wicks, laborer, boarded at 1113 Pine, the residence of Charles S. Wicks, in 1903/04.²⁰⁹

Charles F. Wilkins (1866 to 1887) [6 persons]. Charles Wilkins, born c.1837 in Wisconsin, and Emma, born c.1843 in Virginia, lived in La Crosse for more than two decades. They came to La Crosse via Kentucky and Iowa where two children were born: Lucinda/Lurizda c.1852 in Kentucky; and Charles, born c.1862 in Iowa. They had two more children – Cyrus, born c.1864 in Wisconsin; and Kate [aka Kittie, Kitty], born c.1869 in Wisconsin. Charles' mother (possibly Mrs. Lucinda Wilkins of Winona, Minnesota) may have lived with them while they were in La Crosse. Charles worked as a barber (1866/67-1871) and as a teamster (1876/77). His barbering business was located on the north side of Main between Front and North Second streets (1 Main) (1866/67-1868/69) and the west side of South Second between Main and Pearl streets (1870/71). Their residences were on North Third between Badger and La Crosse streets (1866/67-1873/74), and 34 Mill Street (1876/77). The Wilkins also apparently operated a boarding-house in their residence on Third between Badger

and La Crosse streets. Eliza Tatman (at 15 years of age), Charles Richardson (at 14 years of age), and Milton Martin (at 20 years of age) lived with them in 1870, and in 1875, the residence included three "Colored" males and five "Colored" females. Kate was living in Winona by 1887.²¹⁰

Charles Williams (1875-1900) [2 persons]. Charles [aka Charley] Williams, born in July 1849 in Illinois, lived in La Crosse for 25 years. In 1875, his household contained one "Colored" male and one "Colored" female. Ten years later, it included one Black male and one White female. In 1900, Williams was working as an ice dealer, and his residence was at 425 Adams Street.²¹¹

George E. Williams (1863-1886, 1887-1906) [8 persons]. George Williams, born c.1856 in Louisville, Kentucky, first appeared in current records in La Crosse in 1870, when he was living, at age 14, in the home of John and Penelope Birney. It is likely that Penelope was a Williams before her marriage; George Williams was her brother. A later newspaper account suggested that George had arrived in La Crosse in 1863, clearly too young to be living with a strange family. In 1870 he was attending school in La Crosse. From 1876/77 to 1878/79, Williams was serving his barbering apprenticeship in the shop operated by August Samuel Thompson, but he continued to live with the Birneys. George married Mary [aka Maggie] A. Harrison (born c.1856 in Missouri) in La Crosse on 16 October 1879. He moved to the shop operated by John Birney on Main Street soon thereafter, and became a partner in the shop of Nelson Robinson & Williams when Birney sold his La Crosse interests in 1885. Williams apparently left La Crosse briefly in 1886, for his name did not appear in the local city directory, and a notice in the *Wisconsin Labor*

²⁰⁸MR, vol.7, 40; WC 1895; USC 1900; BR, vol.8, 267; BR, vol.9, 209; BR, vol.11, 73; LCD 1895; 1897, 1900, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06. Robbie L. Moss interview, Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, indicated that the Wicks family was a large group in La Crosse before World War II. USC 1910 noted that James was married to Lillie, a mulatto born in Iowa.

²⁰⁹LCD 1903/04.

²¹⁰USC 1870; WC 1875; LCD 1866/67, 1868/69, 1870/71, 1873/74, 1876/77, 1880/81, 1888/89; *WLA* of 6 August 1887, 1:1, 1:3.

²¹¹WC 1875, 1885; USC 1900. The fifteen-year gap in data may suggest that these were separate Charles Williams.

Advocate of 6 August 1887 indicated that he, then a resident of Augusta, Georgia, and an unidentified Nancy Williams, perhaps his sister, were visiting friends in La Crosse. By 1887, however, Williams had returned to La Crosse where he remained until at least 1906. In 1897, Williams operated a barbershop at 512 Pine Street. The Williams had six children – Alice D. [aka Alldi], born in May 1880 in Wisconsin; Nellie L., born in July 1881 in Wisconsin; Rachel, uncertain of birth place or date; George H. [aka Georgie], born on 23 April 1886 in La Crosse; John B., born on 25 March 1889 in La Crosse; and Lawrence, born on 19 November 1892 in La Crosse. The birth record of Lawrence indicated that his mother was named Margaret A. Houisse of Wisconsin, an anomaly unless the record was in error or Williams had remarried. The latter may have been the case, for Williams and Margaret became members of the First Baptist Church about that time – he on 21 April 1889 and she on 14 January 1891. Williams worked variously as a barber (1876/77-1891, 1893-1901/02) and as a porter for the *Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway* (1892, 1905/06). The Williams lived at the Birney residence on State Street (1876/77), at 117 Vine Street (1880-1880/81), 1203 Pine Street (1884), 1141 Pine (1885/86-1891), 1524 Pine (1893), 1402 Pine (1895), 409 Oakland (1895-1900, 1903/04-1905/06), and 123 South Eleventh (1901/02). By 1900, Alice Williams was living in Louisville, Kentucky, with her uncle and aunt, John W. and Penelope Birney.²¹²

²¹²USC 1870, 1880, 1900; WC 1885, 1895; MR, vol.4, 107; BR, vol.4, 190, for George H.; BR, vol.5, 245, for John B.; BR, vol.7, 71, for Lawrence; *WLA*, 6 August 1887, 1:3; LCD 1876/77, 1878/79, 1880/81, 1884, 1888, 1890, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1901/02, 1903/04, 1905/06; CSCR, #730 for George and #792 for Margaret. An account, found in *The Sun*, 23 January 1876, of "George, the colored young gentleman, who acts as usher at the weddings and parties, has got up a reputation as the best dressed man in the city, and the politist. George is becoming indispensable at all well regulated affairs. At the wedding on Tuesday evening he was the observed of all, and made deep and lasting

(continued...)

Herbert Williams (1870-?1881) [1 person]: Herbert Williams, born c.1859 in Kentucky, was living in the household of Louise Wade, as a minor, in 1870. By 1876/77, he was listed as a barber with a residence on the south side of Pine and east of Eleventh Street. On 19 August 1876, he was jailed on a warrant of "insanity," but was released. On 28 December 1876, he was incarcerated on the same charge, and taken to the La Crosse County Poor House. At age 18, he was admitted to the County Poor House with a diagnosis of part insanity and part epilepsy and held there until 19 July 1878. He was re-admitted to the County Poor House on 20 September 1881.²¹³

John Williams (1852-1861) [5 persons]: John Williams, born c.1832 in Pennsylvania, and his wife Elizabeth Grisson, born c.1840 in Pennsylvania, came to La Crosse in 1852 from Winona, Minnesota, the first barber to arrive in La Crosse. His household in 1855 contained three Black males and one Black female. One of these was likely

²¹³(...continued)

impressions on many. Long may he wave." may have been referring to Williams. There is an alternate reconstruction that may explain inconsistencies in this biographical sketch; it is possible that there were two heads-of-household with the name of George Williams. In LCD 1885/86, Williams claimed to have been a La Crosse "resident since 1863." United States Census for 1900, State of Kentucky, Louisville Township, District 75, Sheet 13, Line 6, indicated that Alice D. Williams was living with the John W. Birney family in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1900.

²¹³USC 1870; LCD 1876/77, 1880/81; JR, for 19 August 1876 and 28 December 1876; RP, 1877, and 1881, date 20 September; La Crosse County, Welfare Department, Series 23, vol.6. Williams may have been mentally retarded, a possible explanation for his early confinement in a custodial institution. La Crosse County operated two facilities for those persons judged as "insane" – a County Poor House/Farm for those diagnosed as mildly afflicted and a County Asylum for Chronic Insane for those violent or unable to tend to basic personal care/hygiene. That Williams was sent to the Poor House suggests that he was of the former category.

Joseph Grisson (see Joseph Grisson above), brother to Elizabeth, and all were probably apprentice-barbers in his shop. The Williams had three children, all born in Wisconsin: Gertrude, born c.1857; Fanny, born c.1859; and Cane, born in 1860. Williams was known as a "gentleman's barber." He purchased property near the city center and in the Cameron Addition, and he speculated extensively on land purchases in Winona, Minnesota. He built a house on Fourth Street. For unknown reasons, he sold his interests in Winona and La Crosse in 1860/1861 and moved to Marquette, Michigan, where he continued in the barbering trade for many years.²¹⁴

Lumbu E. Williams (1898-1903) [1 person]. Lumbu [aka L. E.] Williams, born in June 1843 in Santo Domingo in the West Indies, was a naturalized American citizen and barber who lived at 227 Main Street (former site of Nelson Robinson's barbershop) in 1900. Williams operated the shop at 227 Main after Robinson's death in 1898. By 1903, Williams had sold his business to *Carlen & Dahlgren*, but he continued to work and live in the barbershop.²¹⁵

Nancy Williams (1887) [1 person]. Nancy Williams was likely a relative of George Williams (see George Williams above) who arrived in La

Crosse in 1887. She was noted to be one of the organizers for the ball that was part of the 1 August celebration of Black Independence Day.²¹⁶

Henry Wilson (1883) [2 persons]. Henry Wilson, a shampooer in a Turkish bath and born in Jackson, Mississippi, married Susie Wallace of Red Wing, Minnesota, in La Crosse on 4 March 1883.²¹⁷

William H. Woodruff (1871-1891) [5 persons]. William Woodruff, born c.1840 in South Carolina, married Betsey Swiss, born c.1847 in Mississippi, in La Crosse on 27 September 1871. The Woodruffs had one child, Frank, born c.1873 in Wisconsin, who was attending school in 1880. In 1875, his household contained three "Colored" males and one "Colored" female. Both William and Betsey ran afoul of the law often between 1875 and 1884. He was arrested and jailed three times for vagrancy and she four times. Woodruff also was convicted on nine counts for burglary and sentenced to serve eighteen months in Waupun Prison in 1891. While in La Crosse, William worked as a steamboat man, and Betsey worked as a cook. A marriage record for 1887 indicated that Betsey married Samuel Martin Anderson, a farmer, on 6 April.²¹⁸

Lizzie Woods (1903-1906) [1 person]. Lizzie [aka

²¹⁴USC 1860; WC 1855; PTL, 1860 and 1861

for lot 1, block 20G (approximate at 212 Main Street); HF, citing *La Crosse Chronicle* for 3 April 1898, Marquette (Michigan) *Morning Chronicle* for 17 October 1883, and *La Crosse Democrat* for 6 September 1853; W. H. Hill, *History of Winona County* (Chicago: H. H. Hill, 1883), 190. A longer description of Williams appeared in BLC, part 2, 5, and notes. An advertisement for "John Williams, Hair Dressing, and Shaving Saloon, first door south of Webster & Lake's Brick Store, Front Street, La Crosse" appeared in *La Crosse National Democrat* on 25 July 1856, 1.

²¹⁵USC 1900; *Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1898, 5:2; LCD 1900, 1901/02, 1903/04. US Census for 1910 noted that Williams was born in Haiti, that his father was English, and his mother was Haitian. The 1910 report also indicated that Williams operated his own barbershop in that census year.

²¹⁶WLA, for 6 August 1887, 1:3.

²¹⁷MR, vol.5, 166.

²¹⁸Justice of the Peace Dockets, La Crosse, p.25, for 27 September 1871; WC 1875; USC 1880; JR, for 5 October 1875, 2 December 1875, 9 August 1876, 3 October 1876, 8 September 1877, 22 January 1878; MR, vol.5, 419. A notice in *The Sunday News*, 20 July 1884, 5:1, indicated that Betsey Woodruff had been charged with being a "lewd and lascivious person" and sentenced to 30 days in jail. There is a notice in La Crosse County Circuit Court, State of Wisconsin vs. William Woodruff (Black), filed 29 August 1891, #943, that Woodruff was charged with breaking and entering and was sentenced to Waupun Prison for 18 months. Whether this William Woodruff was the same as the Woodruff above is unclear. For the latter, see Letter, Israel to Mouser, 26 March 1982, Mouser Files, La Crosse County Historical Society, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Elizabeth] Woods was a domestic and housekeeper who lived with Rebecca Cooper at 319 Pine Street in 1903/04. By 1905/06, she lived at 119 South Second.²¹⁹

Joseph Wright (1886-1887) [1 person]. Joseph Wright, illiterate, was admitted to the County Poor House on 9 December 1886 for frozen feet and readmitted on 3 March 1887, suffering from advanced syphilis.²²⁰

William Young (1870-1880/81) [1 person]. William Young, born c.1865 in Delaware, was living with Louisa Wade as a minor at the time of the 1870 census. By 1880/81, he was working as a barber for August Samuel Thompson and living at the corner of Division and Sixth, a property owned by John Birney.²²¹

Zachariah Young (1865) [2 persons]. Zachariah Young, born in Lexington, Kentucky, married Mary Louisa Price in La Crosse on 9 June 1865.²²²

Barbers.

BIRNEY J. W. s s Main bet
Second and Third
Kirk Christonous, s s Pearl bet Sec-
ond and Third
Moss Mrs Lydia, n s State bet Second
and Third
Thompson & Moss, s s Pearl bet Sec-
ond and Third
Wilkins Charles F. n s Main bet Front
and Second

Billiard Rooms.

Figure 3. Barbershops in La Crosse in 1866.
Source: *La Crosse City Directory, 1866-67*.

²¹⁹WC 1905; LCD 1903/04, 1905/06.

²²⁰PR, for 9 December 1886 and 3 March 1887; La Crosse County, Welfare Department, Series 23, vol.6, Vol.7.

²²¹USC 1870; LCD 1880/81. It is possible that William was the son of Zachariah Young below.

²²²MR, for 1865. As noted above, Zachariah Young may have been the father of William Young above.

F. H. BALL.

J. VINIGAR.

PALACE SHAVING PARLOR.

—AND BATH ROOMS—

—133 SOUTH FOURTH STREET—

THE NEATEST and COSIEST
BARBER SHOP IN THE CITY.
Plenty of clean towels, keen razors and
workmanship second to none.

Ladies and Children's hair cutting a
specialty. Shampoos done at Resi-
dences by a lady attendant, when de-
sired. Orders promptly attended to.

TELEPHONE NO. 157.

Figure 4. Ball & Vinegar Barbershop Ad. Source:
Wisconsin Labor Advocate, 6 May 1887, 1:6.



Figure 5. Nathan Smith c.1900. Courtesy: Area
Research Center, Murphy Library, University of
Wisconsin-La Crosse.

CHAPTER II.

PERSONAL/RESIDENTIAL/OCCUPATIONAL DATA: BLACK SETTLERS 1850-1906

SOURCES: United States Census records and State of Wisconsin Census records, while official sources for information about household size and composition, racial identification, date and place of birth, occupation, approximate residence, level of education, and estimated wealth in a specific year, represent only answers to specific questions asked by census-takers, or believed to have been asked, and provided by heads-of-household or their representatives when census-takers collected information. The correctness of that information depended upon the thoroughness of census-taker, accuracy of information-giver, and the understanding/listening of information-taker. Early census-takers gathered information within districts rather than by house address. As a consequence, information found in early records seldom provide accurate housing addresses. Information available in city directories was collected in a variety of methods, and the data provided there is subject to similar issues of accuracy, and for kindred reasons. One might accept information found in directories as little more than a photograph or "snapshot" of the city's residents for a given time. Many Black residents in the city, and certainly others, moved frequently, so that given addresses were often inaccurate even before directories were printed and distributed. Fortunately, the Post Office kept track of changing addresses by noting those changes in its copies of the published directories. Five of these "Post Office editions" have survived and are now housed in the Area Research Center, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. An additional problem associated with residency information is the instance that La Crosse, c.1884, changed its system of numbering residences from one that identified houses on a street to houses on numbered property lots within 100 numbered blocks. This meant that a person's residence before 1884 that appeared to differ from year to year did not indicate, necessarily, that residents had moved at all – perhaps a house had been renumbered because a building had been constructed, destroyed, or burned nearby. Directories often indicated whether an address was a residence and whether a person roomed or boarded there; that information, however, was not entered consistently. Directories also contain information about occupation, and sometimes about employers, but that data also was time-specific, reflecting only information available to the collector when data was collected. The usefulness of the above sources, however, is significant, for in most cases, few additional sources survive to verify that a person was present in La Crosse at a given time. No diaries, letters, private papers, or privately-owned photographs have been found to add dimension to this study. Newspaper accounts, while adding some data for specific time and place, can be valuable, but only to a degree. Newspaper accounts captured only that understanding present at the moment and lacked depth and follow-up, although they did, on occasion, review the past history of a person at a crucial time, perhaps at his/her death. Those and later accounts of a person or event should be viewed as likely skewed, for time-pressures controlled their

reconstructions – the printing presses needed to roll. Perhaps the most reliable sources were those found in records that dealt with property ownership, tax collection, court proceedings, welfare, birth, marriage, death, and burial. In some of these records, accuracy was required to specify property descriptions and charges levied against persons involved in court cases. In birth and death records, it was common to list parents, dates of birth, and relationships to other family members. In a few cases, burial records were the only source that indicated that a particular person had lived in the city. In the instance of La Crosse, unfortunately, only one of the original families of Black settlers still resided in the city in the mid-1980s, and that family, for whatever reasons, was not eager to discuss the nature of Black settlement in La Crosse or its own family traditions.

PERSONAL DATA BY HEAD-OF-HOUSEHOLD

Non-Residents (but active in La Crosse society): William Henry Harrison

State of birth for male head-of-household:

None given [66 persons]: Felix Aaron, John Adams, Frederick Ball, William Batterfield, George Bradford, George Bradley, George Brady, Michael Brady, Patrick Brady, Robert Brown, John Cameron, Ben Carl, George Carlisle, James Carter, John Cochran, O. Julius Cook, Samuel Cooper, Frank Craig, Alexander Cromwell, Charles Cromwell, James Cromwell, William Cromwell, T. Davis, Andrew Devine, A. J. Dugan, William Evans, Samuel Ewens, Ephriam Foster, W. C. Goode, Frank Gregg, Melvin Harris, Louis Harrison, George Hill, Perry Hill, L. H. Hole, David Huffman, Sam Jenson, R. W. Johnson, Samuel Johnson, William Johnson, Charles Marshall, Leonard Martin, David Mitchell, Bill Negro, John Parker, Joseph C. Perkins, Young Perry, William Rice, Asa Robinson, James Robinson, Otto Robinson, John Shelly, Joseph Smith, William Smith, John Sparks, Jack Taylor, Milton Walker, Charles Warner, John Watson, Ed Webb, George B. Webb, James Week, Charles Wicks, Morris Wicks, Henry Wilson, Joseph Wright

Africa: Ole Olson

Canada: George Neal

Santo Domingo: Lumbu Williams

Alabama [3 persons]: Felix Elliott, David Michel, John Turner

Arkansas [3 persons]: Richard Edwards, George Taylor, Robert Turner

Connecticut: Timothy White

Dakotas: Marcus Hutchinson

Delaware: William Young

Georgia [2 persons]: Clark Harris, Robert Johnson

Illinois [7 persons]: William Allen, Laird Dean, Charles Johnson, Charles Richardson, Sam Robinson, Samuel Sewell, Charles Williams

Indiana: Abram Holland

Iowa [4 persons]: John Pope, William Reed, Edward Wicks, James Wicks

Kansas: Thomas Brigham

Kentucky [17 persons]: John Birney, John Braddock, James Robert Cummings, Charles Cunningham, Jefferson Davis, Jefferson Duuss, Jackson Gibson, Robert Harris, Richard Henderson, John L. Johnson, John McPowell, William Nighter, Thomas Powell, John Vinegar, George Williams, Herbert Williams, Zachariah Young

Louisiana [2 persons]: Samuel Hayes, Jeremiah Walker
 Maryland [3 persons]: William Brooks, John Carter1, William Lyles
 Michigan: Harry Armstrong
 Mississippi [5 persons]: Tamos, Charles Carley, Benjamin Evans, Kelly Vaughn, Henry Wilson
 Missouri [3 persons]: James Poage, John Robinson, Louis Sides
 New York [3 persons]: Charles Boyer, Peter Cromwell, James Scott
 North Carolina [3 persons]: John Abram, Hayward Hoke, Louis Hill
 Ohio [7 persons]: Frederick Ball, Cyrus Brown, Boston Decker, Andrew Hickey, Charles Perkins, Isaac Perkins, George W. Webb
 Pennsylvania [8 persons]: Albert Burt, Joseph Grisson, John W. Johnson, Benjamin Kane, Henry McLane, Matthew Schooley, Morris Schooley, John Williams
 South Carolina [2 persons]: Edwin White, William Woodruff
 Tennessee [5 persons]: O. P. Farmer, Princiss Richardson, Ashley Shivers, Nathan Smith, Henry Southall
 Virginia [9 persons]: William Blackman, John Carter2, Jonas Hale, Thomas McCollan, Milton Martin, Henderson Moss (likely West Virginia), Nelson Robinson, August Samuel Thompson, Stephen Turner
 Washington, D. C. [2 persons]: Robert Blackley, John Campbell
 West Virginia [2 persons]: Frank Davis, Zacharias L. Moss
 Wisconsin [6 persons]: Charles Loving, Zacharias H. Moss, Joseph Revels, Ashley Shivers, George Thurston, Charles Wilkins

State of birth of nonwhite spouse of male head-of-household:

None given [23 persons]: John Adams, Michael Brady, William Brooks, Cyrus Brown, John Cameron, John Campbell, George Carlisle, Louis Harrison, Charles Johnson, William Johnson, Z. L. Moss, Thomas Powell, Princiss Richardson, Asa Robinson, J. Robinson, John Turner, Jeremiah Walker, John Watson, Ed Webb, George W. Webb, Edward Wicks, Charles Williams, Zachariah Young
 Arkansas [2 persons]: John H./Effa Robinson, Robert/Louisa Turner
 Georgia: Joseph/Emma Smith
 Illinois [3 persons]: James/Mary Cummings, Charles/Mary Boyer, Benjamin/Jennie Kane
 Indiana: Andrew/Carrie Hickey
 Iowa: James/Sarah Wicks
 Kentucky [4 persons]: John/Penelope Birney, Thomas/Tillie Brigham, Richard/Cora Henderson, Louis/Mary Hill
 Maryland: Matthew/Anna Schooley
 Michigan: Samuel/Mary Thompson
 Minnesota [2 persons]: Peter/Julie Cromwell, Henry/Susie Wilson
 Mississippi: William/Betsey Woodruff
 Missouri [6 persons]: Jackson/Francis Gibson, Clark/Maude Harris, John W./Lulu Belle Johnson, William/Katie Nightger, James/Annie Poage, George/Mary Williams
 New York: John/Anna Vinegar
 North Carolina: John L./Nancy Johnson
 Ohio [4 persons]: William/Lillian Allen, Robert/Jenny Blackley, Charles/Caroline Carley, Joseph/Isabella Grisson
 Pennsylvania [8 persons]: Albert/Elizabeth Burt, John/Margaret Carter, Jefferson/Amelia Davis,

Hayward/Millie Hoke, Thomas/Isabella McCollan, John/Murrie Parker, Morris/Sarah Schooley,
John/Elizabeth Williams

Tennessee [3 persons]: Richard/Judy Edwards, O. P./Alice Farmer, Nathan/Sarah Smith

Texas: Felix/Ida Elliott

Virginia [3 persons]: Henderson/Lydia Moss, Louis/Mamie Sides, Charles/Emma Wilkins

Wisconsin [6 persons]: Charles/Kate Blackwell, Zacharias L./Mary Moss, Zacharias H./Emily Moss,
Joseph/Della Revels, Ashley/Helen Shivers, George B./Ellen Webb

State of birth for female head-of-household:

None given [7 persons]: Mary Davis, Maude Hattie, Clara Miles, Minnie Norton, Jan Perkins, Eliza
Taylor, Lizzie Woods

Georgia [3 persons]: Annie Brown, Clara Johnson, Emma Smith

Iowa: Alice Wicks Stone

Kentucky [3 persons]: Harriet Ayers, Rebecca Cooper, Mary Mitchell

Louisiana: Elizabeth Pierce

Missouri: Phyllis Meaux

North Carolina: Nancy Welsh

Pennsylvania [3 persons]: Mary Black, Elizabeth Burt, Murrie Parker

Virginia [3 persons]: Lydia Moss, Eliza Smith, Louise Wade

Wisconsin [2 persons]: Malinda Waldron, Marie Waldron

Age upon arrival (first mention) for head-of-household (or persons who became heads-of-household while living in La Crosse):

None noted [84 persons]: Felix Aaron, John Adams, Harry Armstrong, Frederick Ball, William
Batterfield, George Bradford, George Bradley, Michael Brady, Patrick Brady, William Brooks,
Cyrus Brown, Robert Brown, John Campbell, Ben Carl, George Carlisle, James Carter, O. J.
Cook, Frank Craig, Alexander Cromwell, Charles Cromwell, James Cromwell, William Cromwell,
T. Davis, Andrew Devine, William Evans, Samuel Ewens, O. P. Farmer, Ephriam Foster, W. C.
Goode, Frank Gregg, Louis Harrison, Maude Hattie, L. H. Hole, David Huffman, Sam Jenson,
Charles Johnson, John W. Johnson, R. W. Johnson, Samuel Johnson, William Johnson, Benjamin
Kane, William Lyles, Charles Marshall, Leonard Martin, Milton Martin, Clara Miles, David
Mitchell, Bill Negro, William Nighter, Ole Olson, James Poage, Thomas Powell, Joseph Revels,
William Rice, Princess Richardson, Asa Robinson, James Robinson, John Shelly, Joseph Smith,
Henry Southall, John Sparks, Alice Wicks Stone, Eliza Taylor, George Thurston, Stephen
Turner, Kelly Vaughn, Ted Waldron, Jeremiah Walker, Milton Walker, Charles Warner, John
Watson, Ed Webb, George B. Webb, George W. Webb, James Week, Nancy Welsh, Charles
Wicks, Edward Wicks, Morris Wicks, Henry Wilson, Lizzie Woods, Joseph Wright, Zachariah
Young

7: George Williams

9: George Taylor

11: Herbert Williams

14 [2 persons]: Murrie Parker, Charles Richardson

15 [2 persons]: Eliza Tatman, William Young

16: Frank Craig

17: Charles Loving

18 [8 persons]: John Abram, John Braddock, Ida Dean, George Hill, Elizabeth Pierce, Nelson
Robinson, August Samuel Thompson, John Vinegar

- 19 [2 persons]: Clark Harris, Isaac Perkins
 20 [5 persons]: William Allen, George Brady, Milton Martin, Charles Perkins, John Williams
 21 [4 persons]: Charles Boyer, Abram Holland, Jan Perkins, James Wicks
 22 [2 persons]: Albert Burt, Perry Hill
 23 [5 persons]: John Birney, John Cameron, Joseph Grisson, John McPowell, James Scott
 24: Melvin Harris
 25 [7 persons]: Mary Black, Charles Carley, A. J. Dugan, Richard Henderson, John L. Johnson, Sam Robinson, Eliza Smith
 26 [6 persons]: Zacharias L. Moss, George Neal, Young Perry, Emma Smith, Malinda Waldron, Charles Williams
 27 [2 persons]: William Blackman, Ashley Shivers
 28 [6 persons]: Robert Blackley, Rebecca Cooper, Felix Elliott, Benjamin Evans, Phillis Meaux, Sarah Taylor
 29 [3 persons]: Jonas Hale, John Robinson, Charles Wilkins
 30 [7 persons]: Peter Cromwell, Jefferson Duuss, Richard Edwards, David Michel, John Pope, Louise Wade, William Woodruff
 31: Louis Hill
 32 [3 persons]: Frank Davis, Samuel Hayes, William Reed
 33 [3 persons]: Robert Harris, Andrew Hickey, Henderson Moss
 34: Charles Cunningham
 35: Samuel Sewell
 36 [2 persons]: Annie Brown, Marie Waldron
 37: Thomas Brigham
 38 [3 persons]: Laird Dean, Jefferson Davis, Mary Mitchell
 39: Jackson Gibson
 40: Charles Blackwell
 41: Louis Sides
 42: John Carter
 44 [2 persons]: Marcus Hutchinson, Robert Turner
 45 [3 persons]: Mary Davis, Boston Decker, Nathan Smith
 46: Minnie Norton
 48: James Robert Cummings
 50 [2 persons]: John Carter², Timothy White
 52: Tamos, Matthew Schooley
 53 [3 persons]: Clara Johnson, Henry McLane, Edwin White
 54: Lumbu Williams
 55 [2 persons]: Hayward Hoke, John Turner
 56: John Cochran
 61: Morris Schooley
 62: Jack Taylor
 65: Thomas McCollan

Linkage to relatives/close-friends already in La Crosse [39 persons]: Harriet Ayers, Mary Carter, ?Charles Cromwell, James Cromwell, Peter Cromwell, William Cromwell, Mrs. Irwin Gibson, Lizzie Gibson, Joseph Grisson, Jonas Hale, ?Marcus Hutchinson, Clara Johnson, Charles Loving, ?Leonard Martin, Zacharias L. Moss, Zacharias H. Moss, ?Ole Olson, ?Jan Perkins, James Poage, Mary Powell,

Joseph Revels, Morris Schooley, Ashley Shivers, Nathan Smith, Alice Stone, ?Eliza Tatman, August Samuel Thompson, John Vinegar, Malinda Waldron, Marie Waldron, Ted Waldron, George B. Webb, Charles Wicks, Edward Wicks, Morris Wicks, George Williams, Herbert Williams, William Young

Persons having had slave status [6 persons]: Harriet Ayers, Clara Virginia Johnson, Robert Johnson, Nathan Smith, Sarah Smith, August Samuel Thompson

Educational level for children: *[Note: educational level of head-of-household is difficult to ascertain. Census records occasionally indicated whether a person could read or write. Numbers of children below indicate only those mentioned in official records as attending school.]*

Attending school [38 persons]: John Birney (3), Albert Burt (3), John Carter1 (3), John Carter2 (1), Rebecca Cooper (1), James Cummings (3), Jackson Gibson (5), Joseph Grisson (1), Clark Harris (3), Zacharias L. Moss (2), James Poage (2), Morris Schooley (2), Joseph/Emma Smith (1), Henry Southall (?1), George Taylor (self), Kelly Vaughn (self), John Vinegar (3), Timothy White (1), George Williams (self)

Attending high school [6 persons]: John Birney (2), James Poage (2), George Taylor (self), Kelly Vaughn (self)

Finishing high school [4 persons]: John Birney (1), James Poage (2), George Taylor (3, perhaps 4 years?)

Finishing higher education [3 persons]: John Birney (1), Poage (2)

Finishing master's program: Poage (1)

Family size (includes fathers, mothers, children):

Two persons, with no African-American children living in household while in La Crosse [57 persons]: Harry Armstrong, Frederick Ball, Charles Boyer, Michael Brady, Patrick Brady, Thomas Brigham, William Brooks, Cyrus Brown, John Cameron, John Campbell, Charles Carley, Andrew Carter1, Andrew Carter2, Frank Davis, Jefferson Davis, Richard Edwards, Felix Elliott, Benjamin Evans, Samuel Ewens, O. P. Farmer, Jonas Hale, Louis Harrison, Andrew Hickey, Hayward Hoke, L. H. Hole, Charles Johnson, John L. Johnson, John W. Johnson, William Johnson, William Lyles, John Parker, Thomas Powell, William Reed, Joseph Revels, William Rice, Princes Richardson, Asa Robinson, James Robinson, John Robinson, Matthew Schooley, Louis Sides, John Sparks, Alice Wicks Stone, George Taylor, George Thurston, John Turner, Robert Turner, Stephen Turner, Kelly Vaughn?, Jeremiah Walker, Charles Warner, John Watson, Ed Webb, George W. Webb, Charles Williams, Henry Wilson, Zachariah Young

Widow/widower and one child in household [4 persons]: John Carter2, Ephriam Foster, Clara Johnson, Elizabeth Pierce

Widow/widower and two children in household [3 persons]: Rebecca Cooper, Thomas McCollan, Louise Wade

3 persons [21 persons]: John Adams, Charles Blackwell, Peter Cromwell, Andrew Devine, W. C. Goode, Joseph Grisson, Jonas Hale, Louis Hill, Abram Holland, Clara/Robert Johnson, Benjamin Kane, Henderson Moss, William Nighter, Samuel Sewell, Nathan Smith (one left in South), William Smith, Henry Southall, August Samuel Thompson, George B. Webb, Timothy White, Edward Wicks

4 persons [2 persons]: Robert Blackley, James Week

5 persons [8 persons]: Albert Burt, James Cummings, Zacharias L. Moss, Ole Olson, James Poage, Charles Warner, John Williams, William Woodruff

6 persons [6 persons]: William Allen, John Birney, Maude Hattie, Zacharias H. Moss, Morris

Schooley, Charles Wilkins

7 persons [4 persons]: Jackson Gibson, William Rice, Joseph Smith, John Vinegar, James Wicks

8 persons [4 persons]: John Adams, John Carter1, Zacharias Henry Moss, George Williams

9 persons [2 persons]: Richard Henderson, Ashley Shivers

10 persons: Clark Harris

Single (never/no evidence of married) status while living in La Crosse (does not include those born in La Crosse) [74 persons]: Felix Aaron, Tamos, William Batterfield, Mary Black, William Blackman, John Braddock, George Bradford, George Bradley, George Brady, Robert Brown, Ben Carl, James Carter, John Cochran, O. J. Cook, Frank Craig, Charles Cromwell, James Cromwell, William Cromwell, Charles Cunningham, T. Davis, Laird Dean, Boston Decker, A. J. Dugan, Jefferson Duuss, William Evans, Frank Gregg, Melvin Harris, Samuel Hayes, George Hill, Perry Hill, David Huffman, Marcus Hutchinson, Sam Jensen, R. W. Johnson, Samuel Johnson, Charles Loving, John McPowell, Charles Marshall, Leonard Martin, David Michel, Clara Miles, David Michell, Henry Moss, George Neal, Bill Negro, Minnie Norton, Charles Perkins, Isaac Perkins, Jan Perkins, Young Perry, John Pope, Charles Richardson, Nelson Robinson, Otto Robinson, Sam Robinson, James Scott, Eliza Smith, Eliza Tatman, Eliza Taylor, Jack Taylor, Sarah Taylor, Malinda Waldron, Marie Waldron, Ted Waldron, Milton Walker, Nancy Welsh, Edwin White, Charles Wicks, Morris Wicks, Herbert Williams, Lumbu Williams, Lizzie Woods, Joseph Wright, William Young

Widows [18 persons]: Annie Brown, Margaret Carter, Rebecca Cooper, Mary Cummings, Maude Harris, Maude Hattie, Mary Hill, Clara Johnson, Phyllis Meaux, Mary Mitchell, Lydia Moss, Murrie Parker, Elizabeth Pierce, Annie Poage, Mary Robinson, Emma Smith, Theresa Warner, Betsey Woodruff

Widowers [8 persons]: John Carter2, Alexander Cromwell, Ephriam Foster, Richard Henderson, John W. Johnson, Thomas McCollan, Henry McLane, Nathan Smith

Short-term residents:

One year or less (heads-of-household whose presence was recorded in only one source) [103 persons]: Felix Aaron, John Abram, Tamos, Harry Armstrong, Frederick Ball, William Batterfield, Mary Black, Robert Blackley, William Blackman, John Braddock, George Bradford, George Bradley, George Brady, Thomas Brigham, William Brooks, Annie Brown, Cyrus Brown, Robert Brown, John Cameron, John Campbell, Ben Carl, Charles Carley, George Carlisle, James Carter, John Cochran, Frank Craig, William Cromwell, Charles Cunningham, Mary Davis, T. Davis, Ida Dean, Laird Dean, Andrew Devine, A. J. Dugan, Jefferson Duuss, Richard Edwards, Felix Elliott, Benjamin Evans, William Evans, Samuel Ewens, O. P. Farmer, W. C. Goode, Frank Gregg, Jonas Hale, Melvin Harris, Robert Harris, Louis Harrison, Maude Hattie, Samuel Hayes, Andrew Hickey, Perry Hill, L. H. Hole, David Huffman, Sam Jensen, R. W. Johnson, Samuel Johnson, William Lyles, Thomas McCollan, John McPowell, Phyllis Meaux, David Mitchell, Clara Miles, George Neal, Bill Negro, William Nighter, Minnie Norton, ?Ole Olson, Jan Perkins, Young Perry, Mary Powell, Thomas Powell, Joseph Revels, Charles Richardson, Princes Richardson, Asa Robinson, John Robinson, Sam Robinson, Samuel Sewell, Louis Sides, Eliza Smith, William Smith, Henry Southall, Alice Wicks Stone, Eliza Tatman, Eliza Taylor, Sarah Taylor, George Thurston, Stephen Turner, Louise Wade, Malinda Waldron, Marie Waldron, Ted Waldron, Jeremiah Walker, Milton Walker, Ed Webb, George W. Webb, James Week, Edwin White, Charles Wicks, Morris Wicks, Henry Wilson, William Young, Zachariah Young

2-5 years[32 persons]: Harriet Ayers, Charles Boyer, Charles Cromwell, James Cromwell, Peter Cromwell, Frank Davis, Boston Decker, Charles Johnson, John W. Johnson, William Johnson, Henry McLane, Charles Marshall, Leonard Martin, Milton Martin, Mary Mitchell, Elizabeth

Pierce, John Pope, William Reed, James Robinson, Otto Robinson, Morris Schooley, James Scott, John Sparks, John Turner, Robert Turner, John Watson, George B. Webb, Nancy Welsh, Timothy White, Lumbu Williams, Lizzie Woods, Joseph Wright

Long-term residents:

Uncertain, since collected data included only that until 1906 [20 persons]: William Allen, Michael Brady, Patrick Brady, Rebecca Cooper, Jackson Gibson, Clark Harris, Hayward Hoke, Marcus Hutchinson, Clara Johnson, Charles Loving, Zacharias H. Moss, Murrie Parker, Charles Perkins, Isaac Perkins, Ashley Shivers, Joseph/Emma Smith, John Vinegar, Edward Wicks, James Wicks, George Williams

6-10 years [11 persons]: John Adams, William Allen, George Hill, Marcus Hutchinson, Benjamin Kane, Charles Loving, David Michel, Henderson Moss, Murrie Parker, John Shelly, John Williams

11-15 years [12 persons]: John Carter², Andrew Carter², O. J. Cook, Alexander Cromwell, Joseph Grisson, Hayward Hoke, Clara Johnson, James Poage, William Rice, Edward Wicks, James Wicks, Herbert Williams

16-20 years [9 persons]: Charles Blackwell, Ephraim Foster, Abram Holland, John L. Johnson, Ashley Shivers, Joseph/Emma Smith, Jack Taylor, Charles Warner, William Woodruff

More than 20 years [26 persons]: John Birney, Michael Brady, Patrick Brady, Albert Burt, John Carter¹, Rebecca Cooper, James Robert Cummings, Jefferson Davis, Jackson Gibson, Clark Harris, Richard Henderson, Louis Hill, Zacharias L. Moss, Zacharias H. Moss, Charles Perkins, Isaac Perkins, Nelson Robinson, Matthew Schooley, Nathan Smith, George Taylor, August Samuel Thompson, Kelly Vaughn, John Vinegar, Charles Wilkins, Charles Williams, George Williams

Religious affiliation: (memberships only)

First Baptist Church [11 persons]: John Birney (3), George Williams (2), John Carter¹, John L. Johnson, Matthew Schooley, Morris Schooley (3)

Methodist Episcopal Church: John W. Johnson

St. Luke's United Methodist Church: Emma Smith

Diseases/deformities:

Blind: Jefferson Davis

Bright's disease: Sarah Taylor

Diphtheria: Freddie Poage

Epilepsy: Herbert Williams

Fever: Boston Decker

Frostbite: Joseph Wright

Heart disease [2 persons]: Charles Gibson, Abram Holland

Insanity [4 persons]: David Michel, Eliza Taylor, Jack Taylor, Herbert Williams (possible mental retardation)

Legless: David Michel

Stillborn: William Nighter

Stomach cancer: John Gibson

Syphilis: Joseph Wright

Tuberculosis [5 persons]: Mary Ellen Birney, John Cochran, Jefferson Davis, Mary Hill, James Poage

Typhoid: Frank Craig

Winter cholera: Frank Craig

Burial:

Died in La Crosse, burial place unspecified [9 persons]: unnamed child of John Adams, Michael

Brady, Abram Holland, ?Asa Robinson, Sarah Schooley, Joseph Smith, Eliza Taylor, Anna Eliza Vinegar, Charles Warner

Catholic Cemetery [2 persons]: William Moss; son of William Smith

Hamilton Cemetery [3 persons]: Nathan Smith, Sarah Smith, Elizabeth Smith

Lakewood Cemetery, in Minneapolis, Minnesota: P. J. Mitchell

Oak Grove Cemetery (also called Oakwood/Oaklawn Cemetery) [39 persons]: Grace Adams, Harriet Ayers, Mary Ellen Birney, James Robert Cummings, Mary/Margaret Cummings, George Cummings, Marie Cummings, Georgie Cummings, Steven Cummings, Anna Eliza Foster, Alfred Gibson, Charles Gibson, Francis Gibson, Henry Gibson, Jackson Gibson, John Gibson, Lizzie Gibson, Mrs. Irwin Gibson, William Gibson, Ida Harris, Louis Hill, Mary Hill, Clara Johnson, Lulu Belle Poage Johnson, David Michel, Zacharias L. Moss, unnamed son of William Nighter, Minnie Norton, James Poage, Freddie Poage, Ashley Shivers, John Ashley Shivers, Richard D. Smith, Emma Smith, Amy Smith, Lillian Davenport (Smith), Sarah Taylor, John Vinegar

Oak Grove Potter's field [4 persons]: Kate Blackwell, Boston Decker, Mary Hill, Nancy Welsh

Poor Farm/House cemetery [3 persons]: Jefferson Davis, Richard Henderson, Kelly Vaughn

Leaver patterns:

To Augusta, Georgia: George Williams

To Battle Creek, Michigan [3 persons]: Henderson Moss, Zacharias L. Moss, Zacharias H. Moss

To Boston [2 persons]: Alexander Cromwell, Matthew Schooley

To Chicago: Frank Davis

To Cincinnati, Ohio: Morris Schooley

To Helena, Montana: Lafayette Grisson

To Iowa: George Taylor

To Kansas City, Missouri: James Robinson

To Louisville, Kentucky: John Birney

To Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Rebecca Cooper

To Minneapolis, Minnesota [4 persons]: Albert/Elizabeth Burt, Margaret Carter, Mary Davis, Ellen Webb

To Minnesota: Samuel August Thompson

To Sioux Falls, South Dakota [2 persons]: Ephriam Foster, Liza Foster

To Sparta, Wisconsin: Charles Loyal

To St. Louis, Missouri (?East St. Louis, Illinois) [3 persons]: Annie Poage, George Poage, Nellie Poage

To Superior, Wisconsin: William Gibson

Arrived with financial resources sufficient to invest in business or property [19 persons]:

Frederick Ball, John Birney, Albert Burt, Charles Carley, Alexander Cromwell, James Cromwell, Richard Edwards, Ephriam Foster, Jackson Gibson, Joseph Grisson, Abram Holland, Henry McLane, John McPowell, Henderson Moss, Zacharias L. Moss, Robert Turner, Ted Waldron, Charles Wilkins, John Williams

OCCUPATIONAL DATA

None ascertained [39 persons]: Felix Aaron, Harriet Ayers, George Bradford, William Brooks, Cyrus Brown, Ben Carl, John Cochran, Frank Craig, Charles Cunningham, Boston Decker, Samuel Ewens,

W. C. Goode, Frank Gregg, Maude Hattie, Andrew Hickey, George Hill, Perry Hill, L. H. Hole, Sam Jenson, William Lyles, Clara Miles, Mary Mitchell, Bill Negro, Ole Olson, John Parker, Charles Richardson, Asa Robinson, Samuel Sewell, William Smith, Alice Wicks Stone, Eliza Tatman, Kelly Vaughn, Louise Wade, Ed Webb, George B. Webb, George W. Webb, Edwin White, Herbert Williams, Zachariah Young

Occupation of head-of-household upon arrival in La Crosse:

"All sorts of work": Nancy Welsh

Actor: George Carlisle

Barber [53 persons]: John Abram, John Adams, Frederick Ball, William Batterfield, John Birney, George Bradley, George Brady, Charles Carley, James Carter, O. J. Cook, Alexander Cromwell, Charles Cromwell, James Cromwell, Peter Cromwell, William Cromwell, Frank Davis, T. Davis, Andrew Devine, William Evans, Ephriam Foster, Joseph Grisson, Hayward Hoke, Abram Holland, David Huffman, R. W. Johnson, Samuel Johnson, William Johnson, Charles Loving, Henry McLane, John McPowell, Charles Marshall, Leonard Martin, Milton Martin, David Mitchell, Henderson Moss, Lydia Moss, Zacharias L. Moss, Zacharias H. Moss, Joseph C. Perkins, William Reed, Ashley Shivers, August Samuel Thompson, George Thurston, John Vinegar, Ted Waldron, Milton Walker, George W. Webb, Charles Wilkins, George Williams, John Williams, Lumbu Williams, William Young

Blacksmith [3 persons]: Ole Olson, Princess Richardson, Jack Taylor

Boatman/river man [11 persons]: Jonas Hale, Melvin Harris, John L. Johnson, Leonard Martin, Charles Perkins, Isaac Perkins, William Rice, Morris Schooley, Henry Southall, Jeremiah Walker, William Woodruff

Boardinghouse operator [4 persons]: Elizabeth Burt, ?Maude Hattie, Clara Johnson, Louise Wade

Bootblack: Sam Robinson

Carpenter: Charles Warner

Chimney sweep: Thomas Powell

Coachman [5 persons]: Louis Harrison, John W. Johnson, James Poage (horseman and coachman), John Turner, Edward Wicks

Cook [8 persons]: Charles Blackwell, Albert Burt (river boat steward), Clara Johnson, O. P. Farmer, Minnie Norton, Morris Schooley (on a river boat), Henry Southall, Timothy White (in hotel),

Domestic servant/housekeeper [9 persons]: Mary Black, Annie Brown, Clara Johnson, Jan Perkins, Elizabeth Pierce, Nelson Robinson, Malinda Waldron, Marie Waldron, Lizzie Woods

Editor: George Taylor

Farmer (still possible c. 1870 to maintain truck farms/raise animals close to the city center) [2 persons]: John Cameron, James Robert Cummings

Fireman (river boat or railroad) [4 persons]: Laird Dean, Samuel Hayes, Richard Henderson, Jeremiah Walker

Fisherman: Matthew Schooley

Foundry worker: Jefferson Davis

Gambler: A. J. Dugan

Horse trainer [2 persons]: Harry Armstrong, Nathan Smith (valet and horse tender)

Hotel worker [6 persons]: Mary Davis, Felix Elliott, Young Perry, John Robinson, James Scott, Stephen Turner

Ice dealer: Charles Williams

Laborer [19 persons]: William Blackman, John Braddock, Michael Brady, John Campbell, John

Carter1, John Carter2, Jackson Gibson, Louis Hill, Benjamin Kane, Thomas McCollan, Thomas Powell, James Robinson, Joseph Smith, John Sparks, George B. Webb, Charles Wicks, Edward Wicks, James Wicks, Morris Wicks

Laundress [2 persons]: Rebecca Cooper, Phyllis Meaux

Musician [6 persons]: Charles Blackwell, Felix Elliott, John Robinson, Sarah Taylor, August Samuel Thompson, Robert Turner

Porter [13 persons]:

Uncertain type: Charles Boyer, Melvin Harris, George Neal, Louis Sides

Hotel: Young Perry, James Scott

Railroad: Thomas Brigham, Louis Harris, John Watson (sleeping car)

Funk Co.: John Pope

Linker Bros. barbershop: William Allen

Mecca Buffet: Robert Brown

Mint Sample Rooms (tavern, boarding rooms, and bowling alley): Marcus Hutchinson

Printer/composer/typesetter [2 persons]: Patrick Brady, George Taylor

Shampooer: Henry Wilson

Stonemason [2 persons]: Richard Edwards, Benjamin Evans

Tailoress: Eliza Smith

Teamster/drayman [2 persons]: Jefferson Duuss, Charles Johnson

Waiter: Otto Robinson (*Columbia Restaurant*)

Whitewasher/plasterer [6 persons]: Robert Blackley, Michael Brady, Benjamin Evans, Clark Harris, William Nighter, John Shelly

Head-of-household later employed as:

Uncertain: Charles Perkins and Isaac Perkins were working at a Turkish bath, Matthew Schooley in charge of the *Temperance Coffee Shop*.

Barber [2 persons]: William Rice, Nelson Robinson

Boatman/river man [3 persons]: John Carter1, David Michel, John Vinegar

Brakeman: Charles Warner

Carpenter: Michael Brady

Coachman [2 persons]: Edward Wicks, James Wicks

Cook [3 persons]: John Carter1, James Robinson, John Turner

Engineer: James Robert Cummings

Farmer: Nathan Smith

Fireman [2 persons]: James Robert Cummings, John L. Johnson

Janitor [2 persons]: John Adams, Jackson Gibson

Laborer [4 persons]: John Adams, James Robert Cummings, Jefferson Davis, Charles Warner

Liveryman: Charles Warner

Mason: Michael Brady

Photographer: Charles Warner

Plasterer: Michael Brady

Porter [6 persons]: Joseph Grisson, Charles Perkins, Isaac Perkins, Otto Robinson (*Linker Bros. Turkish bath, and Harry Taggart's barbershop*), John Turner, George Williams

Steward: Charles Warner

Teamster [3 persons]: James Robert Cummings, Jefferson Davis, Charles Wilkins

Whitewasher/plasterer [2 persons]: John Adams, Louis Hill

Both spouses working (spouse's occupation):

Barber: Lydia Moss
 Boardinghouse operator [9 persons]: Betsey Adams, Elizabeth Burt, Eliza Hale, Lucilla Henderson,
 Elizabeth Rice, Sarah Smith, Anna Schooley, Caroline Shelly, Emma Wilkins
 Cateress [2 persons]: Clara Johnson, Emma Smith
 Charwoman/housecleaner [2 persons]: Emma Smith, Margaret Carter
 Cook [2 persons]: Clara Johnson, Betsey Woodruff
 Domestic: Kate Blackwell
 Dressmaker: Louisa Turner
 Housekeeper [7 persons]: Jenny Blackley, Sarah Cameron, Sara Campbell, Amelia Davis, Judy
 Edwards, Murrie Parker, Mamie Sides
 Musician [2 persons]: Ida Elliott, Effa Robinson
 Washings: Anna Schooley

Children working in La Crosse as:

Barber [6 persons]: E. Albert Burt, Steven Cummings, Lafayette Grisson, Henry Moss, Zacharias H.
 Moss, Henry L. Vinegar
 Bartender: Walter Harris
 Carpet layer: Andrew Carter1
 Cateress: Amy Smith
 Cooper: Joseph Robert Smith
 Domestic [2 persons]: Cora Cooper, Manie Cooper
 Engineer: Charles Gibson
 Laborer [4 persons]: Andrew Carter1, Andrew Carter2, Henry Gibson, John Gibson
 Packer: Clark Harris, Jr.
 Painter: Walter Harris
 Porter [2 persons]: Charles Gibson, Louis Harris
 Printer [2 persons]: Walter Harris, Richard Smith
 Sailor: William Gibson
 Servant: Ida Dean
 Teacher/nanny: Nellie Poage
 Teamster: Henry Gibson
 Vaudeville: Lillian Smith Davenport
 Washings [2 persons]: Philisa Carter, Elisa Carter

Self-employed (owned/operated own business enterprise) [Note: domestic, cook, whitewasher, or housekeeper also could be self-employed]:

Frederick Ball - barber, *Ball & Vinegar, Palace Shaving Parlor*
 John Birney - barber, *Birney & Cromwell, Birney & Holland*
 Elizabeth Burt - boardinghouse operator
 John Cameron - farmer
 O. J. Cook - barber
 Rebecca Cooper - laundry
 Alexander Cromwell - barber, *Cromwell & Rice, Parlor Barber Shop*
 James Cromwell - barber, *Cromwell & Rice*
 Frank Davis - barber
 A. J. Dugan - gambler

Felix Elliott - musician
 Ephriam Foster - barber, *Vinegar & Foster*
 Hayward Hoke - barber
 Abram Holland - barber, *Moss & Holland, Birney & Holland, Thompson & Holland*
 Clara Johnson - boardinghouse operator
 Nancy Johnson - boardinghouse operator
 Thomas McLane - barber
 John McPowell - barber
 Phyllis Meaux - laundry
 Henderson Moss - barber
 Lydia Moss - barber, *Moss & Thurston*
 Zacharias H. Moss - barber, *Moss & Son, Moss & Waldron*
 Zacharias L. Moss - barber, *Moss & Holland, Thompson & Moss, Moss & Son*
 Joseph C. Perkins - Turkish bath operator
 Joseph Revels - barber
 William Rice - barber, *Cromwell & Rice*
 Nelson Robinson - barber, *Robinson & Williams*
 John Shelly - boardinghouse operator
 Ashley Shivers - barber
 Nathan Smith - farmer
 George Taylor - newspaper-owner and editor, *Wisconsin Daily Advocate*
 August Samuel Thompson - barber, *Thompson & Moss, Thompson & Holland*
 George Thurston - barber, *Moss & Thurston*
 Robert Turner - musician, *Turner LaX Band*
 John Vinegar - barber, *Vinegar & Foster, Palace Shaving Parlor, Ball & Vinegar*
 Henry L. Vinegar - barber
 Ted Waldron - *Moss & Waldron*
 Charles Wilkins - barber and boardinghouse operator
 George Williams - barber, *Robinson & Williams*
 John Williams - barber
 Lumbu Williams - barber

Apprenticeships [14 persons]: Charles Cromwell, Steven Cummings, Joseph Grisson, Charles Loving, Henry Moss, Zacharias L. Moss, Zacharias H. Moss, Joseph Revels, Nelson Robinson, Ashley Shivers, George Taylor, August Samuel Thompson, Henry L. Vinegar, George Williams

Hotel service occupations [12 persons]: John Birney, Mary Davis, Felix Elliott, Ida Elliott, Minnie Norton, Young Perry, John Robinson, Effa Robinson, Sam Robinson, James Scott, Stephen Turner, Edward Wicks

Railroad/river occupations [23 persons]: Thomas Brigham, Albert Burt, John Carter I, Laird Dean, A. J. Dugan, O. P. Farmer, Henry Gibson, Jonas Hale, Louis Harris, Melvin Harris, Robert Harris, Samuel Hayes, John L. Johnson, Richard Henderson, George Neal, Morris Schooley, Henry Southall, Jeremiah Walker, Milton Walker, Charles Warner, John Watson, George Williams, William Woodruff

Service to "swells" (upper class) of La Crosse (does not include domestic, unless employer specified) [18 persons]: James Braddock, Andrew Carter I, Louis Harrison, Clara Johnson, John W. Johnson, Jan Perkins, Elizabeth Pierce, James Poage, Annie Poage, Nellie Poage, Emma Smith, Nathan Smith, John Turner, Malinda Waldron, Marie Waldron, Edward Wicks, James Wicks, Lizzie Woods

Land speculators/property developers [8 persons]: John Birney, Elizabeth Burt, Henderson Moss, Zacharias L. Moss, Zacharias H. Moss, Nathan Smith, Charles Wilkins, John Williams

RESIDENTIAL DATA

[Note: For details, see separate listing of addresses for heads-of-household and businesses owned/operated by African-Americans. High mobility of short-term young/single persons in La Crosse from housing unit to housing unit meant that some accumulated numerous mailing addresses within a single year, or double year in the case of publication of LCD editions. City directories did not specify, necessarily, that addresses represented where people actually lived or where they received mail. Generally, however, city directories used abbreviations (*wks* = works for, *bds* = boards, *res* = residence, *rms* = rooms, *res same* = lives in business place) to indicate type of employment and habitation.]

Home owners [12 persons]: John Birney, Michael Brady?, Albert Burt, Samuel Cooper?, Jackson Gibson, Zacharias L. Moss, Zacharias H. Moss, John/Murrie Parker, Ashley Shivers?, Nathan Smith, Charles Wilkins?, John Williams

Business (place of business) and residence were the same [18 persons]: John Cameron, O. J. Cook, Rebecca Cooper, Charles Cromwell, Peter Cromwell, William Cromwell, Ephriam Foster, R. W. Johnson, Henry McLane, John McPowell, Phyllis Meaux, Zacharias L. Moss, Joseph B. Perkins, Otto Robinson, James Scott, Ashley Shivers, Henry L. Vinegar, Lumbu Williams

Lived/boarded with employer [8 persons]: John W. Johnson, Charles Loving, Milton Martin, David Mitchell, Charles Perkins, Isaac Perkins, James Poage, James Scott

Lived with relatives [24 persons]: Harriet Ayers, Michael Brady, Patrick Brady, E. Albert Burt, Andrew Carter2, Cora Cooper, Mamie Cooper, James Cromwell, Ida Dean?, Mrs. Irwin Gibson, Lizzie Gibson, Cora Harris, Lulu Bell Poage Johnson, Charles Loving, Charles Perkins, Isaac Perkins, Malinda Waldron, Marie Waldron, Ted Waldron, Charles Wicks, Edward Wicks, James Wicks, Morris Wicks, George Williams

Lived in homes owned by Whites (as coachman, domestic, nanny) [3 persons]: John Braddock, John W. Johnson, James Poage

Provided temporary/long-term housing for employees/apprentices [8 persons]: John Birney, Alexander Cromwell, Charles Loving, Joseph C. Perkins, William Rice, August Samuel Thompson, Charles Wilkins, John Williams

Operated rooming/boardingshouses: [Note: housing differed by categories listed below]

Rented spare rooms to help maintain residence or meet housing expenses (supplemented by spouse's other employment) [9 persons]: Betsey Adams, Elizabeth Burt, Rebecca Cooper, Eliza Hale, Lucilla Henderson, Nancy Johnson, Elizabeth Rice, Anna Schooley, Emma Wilkins

Rented rooms and boarded as principal source of income (no other known occupation listed for self/spouse) [2 persons]: Maude Hattie, Clara Johnson

Rented rooms and boarded as a source of income (also engaged in other income-producing occupation such as domestic, "washings," or laundry) [4 persons]: Elizabeth Burt, Joseph C. Perkins, Anna Schooley, Caroline Shelly

Rooms provided for elders, indigents, youths, orphans [5 persons]: Eliza Hale, Lucilla Henderson, Sarah Smith, Louise Wade, Emma Wilkins

Rooms provided for relatives [8 persons]: John Birney, ?Elizabeth Burt, Rebecca Cooper, Jackson Gibson, Zacharias H. Moss, Joseph C. Perkins, Ashley Shivers, James Wicks

County Poor House/Farm [9 persons]: John Cochran, Frank Craig, Jefferson Davis, Boston Decker, Richard Henderson, David Michel, Sarah Taylor, Kelly Vaughn, Herbert Williams

Migration pattern (last/next known residence):

From:

Georgia [3 persons]: Clara/Robert Johnson, Joseph/Emma Smith, George Williams
 Illinois [3 persons]: John Carter (originally from Maryland), James Cummings (Galena), George Taylor
 Indiana: Andrew Hickey
 Iowa [9 persons]: Frank Davis, Richard Henderson, William Reed, Alice Wicks Stone, Charles Wicks, Edward Wicks, James Wicks, Morris Wicks, Charles Wilkins
 Kentucky [3 persons]: John Birney, Charles Cunningham, George Williams
 Massachusetts: Alexander Cromwell
 Minnesota [3 persons]: Peter Cromwell, Mary Mitchell, George W. Webb (New Ulm)
 Missouri [4 persons]: A. J. Dugan (St. Louis), Jackson Gibson, Clark Harris, James Poage
 Ohio [5 persons]: Robert Blackley, Charles Blackwell, Albert Burt, Henderson Moss, Morris Schooley
 Tennessee [2 persons]: Nathan Smith, August Samuel Thompson
 Wisconsin [8 persons]: Frank Craig (Madison), Charles Loving (Vernon County), Thomas McCollan (Prairie du Chien), Joseph Revels (Sparta), Ashley Shivers (Vernon County), Malinda Waldron (Vernon County), Marie Waldron (Vernon County), Ted Waldron (Vernon County)

To:

Georgia: George Williams (Augusta)
 Illinois [2 persons]: Frank Davis (Chicago), Lillian Smith/Davenport (Chicago)
 Kentucky: John Birney
 Massachusetts [2 persons]: Alexander Cromwell (Boston), Matthew Schooley (Boston)
 Michigan [4 persons]: Henderson Moss (Battle Creek), Zacharias L. Moss (Battle Creek), Zacharias H. Moss (Battle Creek), John Williams (Marquette)
 Minnesota [4 persons]: E. Albert Burt, Margaret Carter, Mary Mitchell (burial in), Richard Smith (Winona)
 Missouri: James Robinson (Kansas City),
 Montana: Lafayette Grisson (Helena)
 Ohio: Morris Schooley
 South Dakota [2 persons]: Ephriam Foster, Anna Eliza Foster
 Wisconsin [4 persons]: Rebecca Cooper (Milwaukee), William Gibson (Superior), Charles Loving (Sparta), Joseph Revels (Sparta)

INTERACTION WITH WHITES WITHIN LA CROSSE

[Note: By definition, all Blacks living in La Crosse, because of their small numbers, interacted daily with Whites in one way or another. There were no Black-owned businesses that catered solely to Black customers/consumers.]

Labor related issues [3 persons]: Zacharias L. Moss, Nathan Smith, George Taylor

Religion/clubs/associations [15 persons]:

Old Settlers Association: John Birney, John Williams

Church organizations/memberships: Penelope Birney, Mary Ellen Birney, Florence Birney, John Carter1, John L. Johnson, John W. Johnson, Anne Schooley, Catherine Schooley, Sarah Schooley1, Sarah Schooley2, Emma Smith, George Williams, Margaret Williams

Political involvement [2 persons]: Nathan Smith, George Taylor

Military Service [3 persons]: Frank Davis, Nathan Smith, August Samuel Thompson (twice),

Voting patterns [2 persons]: Benjamin Evans, J. C. Perkins (Justice of the Peace, 1903/05)

Ease of money borrowing: Nathan Smith

Working in White-owned barbershops [3 persons]: William Allen, O. J. Cook, Lumbu Williams

Working in other White-locally-owned (specifically-named) shops/businesses [30 persons]: John Adams, Patrick Brady, Robert Brown, John Carter1, Andrew Carter1, James Cummings, Jefferson Davis, Mary Davis, Jackson Gibson, Charles Gibson, Alfred Gibson, John Gibson, Clark Harris, Walter Harris, Louis Hill, Marcus Hutchinson, Charles Perkins, Isaac Perkins, Joseph B. Perkins, Young Perry, John Pope, Otto Robinson, Matthew Schooley, James Scott, George Taylor, John Turner, Stephen Turner, Charles Warner, Charles Williams

White sponsorship [4 persons]: Nathan Smith, August Samuel Thompson, John Vinegar, John Williams

Interracial marriage (relative ease in La Crosse): [Note: Some of these marriages occurred in La Crosse, with no indication that a La Crosse residence was ever maintained by either spouse].

Black husbands, White wives [30 persons]: Harry/Clara Armstrong, Frank/Eliza Davis, Benjamin/Josephine Evans, Samuel/Dora Ewens, Henry/Carrie Gibson, Jonas/Eliza Hale, Richard/Fanny Henderson, L. H./? Hole, Abram/Julia Holland, Charles/Mary Johnson, William/Mary Lyles, Ole/Mary Olson, William/Amanda Reed, William/Elizabeth Rice, Samuel/Dora Sewell, John/Caroline Shelly, Nathan/Elizabeth Smith, Henry/Agnes Southall, John/Lucilia Sparks?, Samuel/Anna Thompson, Stephen/Ida Turner, Kelly/Lisbeth Vaughn, Kelly/Adeline Vaughn, Kelly/Sarah Vaughn, John/Ella Vinegar, Charles/Theresa Warner, James/? Week, Timothy/Hattie White, Charles/? Williams, Zachariah/Mary Young

Black wives, White husbands [2 persons]: Alice Wicks/Sherman Stone, Betsey Woodruff/Samuel Anderson

BLACK ISSUES: RELATED TO BLACK COMMUNITY ONLY

Source of spouses within Black community: [Note: some of these marriages occurred in La Crosse, with no indication that either Black spouse was a resident of La Crosse at that time.]

Married a Black spouse in La Crosse [28 persons]: William/Mary Allen, Frederick/? Ball, John/Ella Ball, Charles/Kate Vinegar Blackwell, Charles/Mary Boyer, William/Francis Brooks, Cyrus/Rachael Brown, John/Sarah Campbell, George/Bell Carlisle, James/Mary Cummings, O. P./Alice Farmer, John W./Lulu Belle Johnson, Benjamin/Jennie Kane, Lydia/George Moss/Thurston, Zacharias L./Emily Moss, Joseph/Amanda Revels, Princess/Isabella McCollan Richardson, John/Lucilia Sparks?, George/Mary Taylor, George/Lydia Thurston, Jeremiah/Sarah Walker, George B./Ellen Webb, George W./Mary Webb, James/Sarah Wicks, George/Mary Williams, Henry/Susie Wilson

Did not find Black spouses in La Crosse (remained in La Crosse and never married) [28 persons]: O. J. Cook, Charles Cromwell, James Cromwell, William Cromwell, George Cummings, Steven Cummings, Anna Eliza Foster, Clark Harris, Jr., Louis Harris, Charles Gibson, Alfred Gibson, John Gibson, Henry McLane, John McPowell, Charles Marshall, Leonard Martin, Milton Martin, Charles

Perkins, Isaac Perkins, Jan Perkins, Nelson Robinson, Sam Robinson, James Scott, Amy Smith, Eliza Smith, Ted Waldron, Lumbu Williams, Elmo Vinegar

Black Swells (highly regarded by Black/White community) [20 persons]: Frederick Ball, John Birney, Alexander Cromwell, James Poage, Charles Loving, Benjamin Kane, Henderson Moss, Zacharias L. Moss, Zacharias H. Moss, Annie Poage, Nelson Robinson, Ashley Shivers, Emma Smith, Nathan Smith, George Taylor, August Samuel Thompson, Robert Turner, John Vinegar, George Williams, John Williams

Indian Mix: George B. Webb

Care for Black orphans, retarded, abandoned [5 persons]: Jonas Hale, Nathan Smith, Louise Wade, Emma Wilkins, Herbert Williams

PROBLEM AREAS:

Arrest/crime patterns [19 persons]: unspecified (Charles Cunningham, Richard Henderson, Louis Hill, Clara Miles), adultery (Henry Gibson, Charles Johnson), assault and battery (Charles Blackwell), attempted murder (George Brady), bigamy (James Cummings), burglary (George Hill-twice, Thomas Powell, William Woodruff-nine counts), gambling (A. J. Dugan), house searched for stolen goods (John Campbell), illegal voting (Benjamin Evans), lewd behavior (Betsey Woodruff), petty larceny (Melvin Harris, Charles Johnson-twice), rape (Henry Gibson), theft of a boat (Felix Aaron), vagrancy (David Michel-six times, William Woodruff-three times, Betsey Woodruff-four times), wife beating (Benjamin Evans)

Welfare/Poverty [19 persons]:

County Poor House: John Cochran, Frank Craig, Jefferson Davis, Boston Decker, Richard Henderson, Mary Hill, David Michel, Eliza Taylor, Jack Taylor, Herbert Williams, Joseph Wright

County Poor Farm: Sarah Taylor, Kelly Vaughn

Potter's field: Charles Blackwell, Boston Decker

Welfare/Pauper rolls: Rebecca Cooper, Jefferson Davis, Mary Davis, Maude Harris, Mary Hill, Emma Smith

County Asylum for Chronic Insane: Jack Taylor

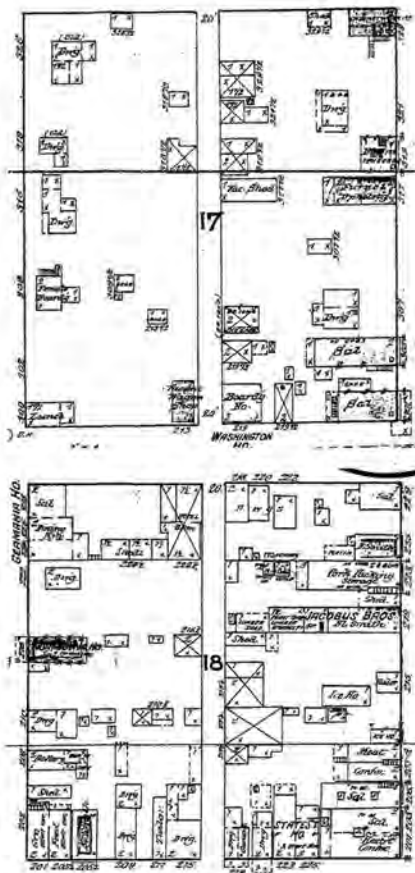


Figure 14. Blocks 17 & 18, Section 3, *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1884*. North/South streets were North Second on left, North Third on right. East/West streets were (North to South) Pine, Vine, and State.

CHAPTER III.

RESIDENCE/BARBERSHOP ADDRESSES: BLACK SETTLERS 1850-1906

RESIDENCES

[Note: Name of head-of-household/person is followed by year (70=1870, 01=1901, 70/01=1870 to 1901). *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for La Crosse, Wisconsin* (New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Co., 1884), as amended in January 1886, provides a superb understanding of building shapes, construction, and locations in the mid-1880s. See Figure 14, previous page.]

None ascertainable [47 persons]: Felix Aaron-78, John Abram-70, Harry Armstrong-01, Frederick Ball-87, William Blackman-70, George Bradford-85, William Brooks-68, Cyrus Brown-65, John Campbell-69/70, Ben Carl-85, Charles Carley-60, George Carlisle-98, T. Davis-75, Andrew Devine-78, Jefferson Duuss-70, Felix/Ida Elliott-00, William Evans-66, Samuel Ewens-77, O. P. Farmer-89, W.C. Goode-75, Maude Hattie-95, Samuel Hayes-80, Sam Jenson-75, John W. Johnson (not specific enough), William Lyles-90, Leonard Martin-66/69, William Nighter-90, Minnie Norton-04, Ole Olson-94, Joseph Revels-92 & 98, Princess Richardson-61, John Robinson-00, Sam Robinson-05, Morris Schooley-70/74, Louis Sides-05, William Smith-99, Alice Stone-00, George Thurston-66, Steven Turner-80, Louise Wade-70, Jeremiah Walker-67, Ed Webb-85, George W. Webb-73, Edwin White-60, Nancy Williams-87, Henry Wilson-83, Zachariah Young-65

Jail/Prison [15 persons]:

Felix Aaron-78, George Brady-76, Charles Cunningham-78, A. J. Dugan-77, Benjamin Evans-77, Melvin Harris-76, George Hill-70 & 78, Charles W. Johnson-76/77, David Michel-75/77, Clara Miles-05, Thomas Powell-70, John Shelly-70/72, Eliza Taylor-78, William Woodruff-91, Betsey Williams-84

Alley:

btw Main and State/Sixth and Seventh [3 persons]: John Adams-89/91, Michael Brady-78, Patrick Brady-78

222 Slab Alley: Rebecca Cooper-?

alley btw State and Vine and Front and Second: John Shelly residence-73/74

alley btw Jay and King and Third and Fourth: Samuel Thompson-66/67

alley btw Main and State and Second and Third: Henry Gibson-84

Boardinghouses:

Mrs. Maria Sherlock (southeast corner of Vine and North Fourth): William Batterfield-66
Samuel Thompson's residences

Tremont House (likely located in *Tremont Block* at corner of Front and Main): William Johnson-73/74
Westcott House: Milton Walker-66/67

221 Jay, back of [4 persons]: John Vinegar-85, Nancy Welsh-88, Jefferson Davis-88, Ephriam Foster-84/85 & 88/89

213 Pearl: Perry Hill-06

Pine at cor with Second: Charles Marshall-78/79

319 Pine (residence of Rebecca Cooper): Lizzie Woods-03/04

Pine btw Tenth and Eleventh (Jonas Hale residence): John Shelly-70

alley btw State and Vine and Front and North Second: John Shelly-73/74

1114 Pine: Albert Burt-58/82

State and Eleventh: Nelson Robinson-76/77

Vine, n s and btw North Front and North Second: Nelson Robinson-78/79

Vine, n s btw North Third and North Fourth

107 South Front: Nelson Robinson-93/96

North Third btw Badger & La Crosse (Charles Wilkins' residence) [2 persons]: Charles Richardson-70, Eliza Tatman-70

304 South Third: John Vinegar-88

1131 South Third [2 persons]: rooming house, Charles/Isaac Perkins-03/06

125 South Seventh: John Carter-90, let rooms/bds: George B. Webb-88

309 North Eighth, rear of [3 persons]: Clara Johnson-97/06, John Adams-97, Louis Harrison-00

Hotel: Mary Davis-93, John Robinson?, James Scott-68/71

Poor House/Poor Farm [13 persons]: John Cochran-86/87, Frank Craig-92, Jefferson Davis-95/00, Boston Decker-86/87, Richard Henderson-00, Mary Hill-94, David Michel-81/84, Eliza Taylor-78, Jack Taylor-95/00, Sarah Taylor-04, Kelly Vaughn-99/01, Herbert Williams-78 & 81, Joseph Wright-86/87

Names of others (Whites):

John Braddock (w Robert Williams)-80, Andrew Carter (w Levi Withee)-84, John W. Johnson (w Jason Easton)-84/87, Jan Perkins-05, James/Emma Poage (w Jason Easton)-87/00

[Note: Designation of address by ward number is meaningless, since ward boundaries changed significantly over the years. The numbers of wards and names of persons within wards are provided here only to indicate that a region of La Crosse was indicated in census records.]

First Ward: Mary Black-70, John Cameron-70, O. J. Cook-95, Richard Edwards-70, Bill Negro-75, Eliza Smith-70

Second Ward: L. H. Hole-95, John Parker-05, Young Perry-05, Nathan Smith-66, James Week, Edward Wicks-95, James Wicks-95

Fourth Ward: Frank Gregg-95, Clara Johnson-95, John Turner-95

Twelfth Ward: Asa Robinson-95

Shelby: Jack Taylor-05

Adams Street:

425: Charles Williams-00

1500: Joseph C. Perkins-97/98

Avon Street: north La Crosse

btw Wall and Windsor: Jefferson Davis-73

1436: John L. Johnson-84/88

Badger Street:

1623: Henry Gibson-97

Cameron Street:

323 [2 persons]: Edward Wicks-95/96, James Wicks-95/96

Cass Street:

520 [3 persons]: Robert Harris-00, Marcus Hutchinson (roomer)-01/02, George Neal-00

Caledonia Street: north La Crosse

cor St. Paul: Jefferson Davis-76

127: Jefferson Davis-80

520: Robert Harris-00

617: Zacharias L. Moss-89/90

Charles Street: north La Crosse

615: Clark Harris-97/00

1116: Clark Harris-03/04

Denton Street:

1625: Louis Hill-90

Farnam Street:

non-assigned: Timothy White-80

sw cor Farnam and South Fifth [2 persons]: John Carter2-77, Andrew Carter2-77

Green Bay Street:

1521: Stephen Warner-90/93

George Street: north La Crosse

1810 (barbershop and residence) [2 persons]: Henry McLane-01/02, John Vinegar-95/96

1826: John Vinegar-88

Jay Street:

ne cor Front and Jay: Richard Henderson-80/81

n s btw Third and Fourth: Zacharias L. Moss-70/71

alley btw Jay and King and Third and Fourth: Samuel Thompson-66/67

non-specific: Jefferson Davis-80

221, back of (boardinghouse) [4 persons]: Jefferson Davis-88 & 94, Ephriam Foster-84/85 & 88/89,

John Vinegar-84/85, Nancy Welsh/Welch-88

223: Howard Hoke-95

324: Edward Wicks-95/96, James Wicks-95/96

225: Anna Eliza Foster-91

227: Hayward Hoke-91/93

323: Hayward Hoke-95

324 [4 persons]: Hayward Hoke-00, James Poage-88/89, Edward Wicks-95/96, James Wicks-95/96

325: Robert Brown-95/96

327: John Adams-86

336 [2 persons]: Charles Blackwell-85, Clark Harris-85

King Street:

non-specific: Samuel Sewell-80

btw South Second and South Third: Frank Davis-73

e of Second: Jefferson Davis-80

213: Charles Warner-84/85
40/46: James Poage-85

La Crosse Street:

1103: Emma Smith-95
1928: Mary Robinson-95/96

Loomis Street: north La Crosse

1522: John Vinegar-91/96

Main Street:

s s Main & east of Third: James Carter-80 (likely location of Samuel Thompson's barbershop)
1 (site of Davis' barbershop): R.W. Johnson-73
13 above (site of Alexander Cromwell's barbershop in 78) [3 persons]: Charles Cromwell bds-78, Peter Cromwell-78, William Cromwell-78
182: Henry Gibson-85
201: George Taylor-88
207: George Taylor-86
209: William Allen-97
227 (at barbershop) [2 persons]: Nelson Robinson-98, Lumbu E. Williams-98/04
328: William Allen-02, Joseph C. Perkins-97/98
329: Joseph B. Perkins (lived above Turkish bath where he worked)-96
404: Louis Hill-95

Market Street:

1718: Henry Gibson-95 & 97

Mill Street: north La Crosse (would become Copeland)

n of St. Andrew: John McPowell (in barbershop):70/73
nw cor Mill and St. Andrew: Zacharias L. Moss-73/84

34: Charles Wilkins-76/77

116: John Turner-97/98

418 [4 persons]: Charles Loving-97/99, Ashley Shivers-95/06, Malinda/Marie Waldron-05

422 [3 persons]: Ashley Shivers-90, Zacharias Henry Moss-00, Ted Waldron-00

610: Zacharias L. Moss-90/91

704: Ephriam Foster (also site of barbershop)-85/86

709: Ashley Shivers-90

818: Charles Warner-90

Mississippi Street:

812: Louis Hill-84/88

Oakland Street:

409 [2 persons]: George Williams-95/00 & 03/06, Edward Wicks-05/06

Pearl Street:

non-specific (near *American House Hotel*): Peter Cromwell-80

50: Joseph Grisson-68

123: Emma Smith-91

207, over: Jefferson Davis-85

208: Clark Harris-85

213: Perry Hill (lodger)-05

Pine Street:

ne cor Pine & Second [4 persons]: George Bradley-76, Michael Brady-78, Patrick Brady-78, Charles Marshall (bds)-78

n s Pine and btw Second and Third: Samuel Thompson-78/79

btw Tenth and Eleventh [3 persons]: Jonas Hale-70, Mary Powell-70, Caroline Shelly-70/72

sw cor Pine and Sixth: Henry Southall-66/67

s s Pine btw Eleventh and Twelfth [2 persons]: Samuel Thompson-70/77, Herbert Williams-76
221: John Adams-02

313 [2 persons]: Charles Blackwell-95, Clark Harris-91

319 [4 persons]: Charles Blackwell-95, Rebecca Cooper-97/06, Lizzie Woods-03/04, Phyllis Meaux
(had laundry there)-00

507 [2 persons]: William Allen-97, Mary Mitchell-98/01

512 [2 persons]: William Allen-97, Clark Harris-05/06

1011: James Wicks-97/02

1102: Clark Harris-85

1111 [3 persons]: John Adams-89, James Cummings-95, Louis Harrison-88.

1113 [5 persons]: Matthew Schooley-84/86, Charles S. Wicks-03/04, Edward Wicks-01/02, James
Wicks-00, Morris Wicks-03/04

1117: Edward Wicks-97/98

1141: George Williams-85/91

1203: George Williams-84/85

1231: James Robinson-88

1424: James Wicks-05/06

1524: George Williams-95/96

Rose Street: north La Crosse

1430: John Vinegar-91

Ruble Street:

1118: John Vinegar-91

St. James Street: north La Crosse

907: Charles Warner-91

St. Paul Street: north La Crosse

721 [2 persons]: Clark Harris-93, Cora Harris-93

St. Cloud Street: north La Crosse

517 [3 persons]: Charles Loving-03/05, Zacharias H. Moss-01/06, Zacharias L. Moss-01/02

State Street:

alley btw State and Vine and Front and Second: John Shelly-73/74

nw cor State and North Second [2 persons]: Michael Brady-78, Patrick Brady-78,

n s State and between Second and Third: Samuel Thompson-80/81

s s btw Second and Third: Henry Moss-66

209: Clark Harris-88

215: Harry Armstrong-01

221: Ashley Shivers-95

419: O. W. Robinson-95

421 [3 persons]: Joseph C. Perkins-93/96, Charles Perkins-95/98, Isaac Perkins-95/98,

712: Andrew Hickey-00

728: John Parker-97/01

1101 [3 persons]: John Birney-57/85, David Mitchell-73/74, George Williams-63/77

Vine Street:

unspecified: Andrew Carter-81

alley btw State and Vine and Front and Second: John Shelly-73/74

nw cor Vine & Second: John Carter-66

s s and west of Second [i.e., btw Front and Second]: Louis Hill-78

n s btw Second and Third: David Huffman-70/71, Henry Moss-66

n s btw Third and Fourth: Charles Marshall (bds)-76/78

s s btw Second and Third: Lydia Moss-66

n s and west of Second (btw Front and Second): Nelson Robinson (bds)-78/79

n s Vine btw Eleventh and Twelfth [3 persons]: Andrew Carter-80, Matthew Schooley-70/80, Charles Warner-73/74

114 [2 persons]: Andrew Carter-2-80, Mrs. Andrew Carter-2-80

116: Albert Burt-78

117: George Williams-80/81

222 [3 persons]: Louis Hill-91/93, Ashley Shivers-91, George Taylor-85,

512 [3 persons]: Mamie Cummings-97, Henry Gibson-95, O. W. Robinson-96

1013: John Watson-87/88

1114 [7 persons]: Albert Burt (owned 58/82), E. Albert Burt-77, Thomas McCollan-60, George Taylor-81, Charles Perkins-70, Isaac Perkins-70, Robert Turner-70

1300: Ashley Shivers-90

1304: James Poage-88, Emma Smith-88,

1320 [4 persons]: Harriet Ayers-04, Jackson Gibson-86/06, Alfred Gibson-86/06, John Gibson-86/99

Windsor Street: north La Crosse

non-specific: Elizabeth Pierce-70/74

Wood Street:

1836: William Allen-05

North Front Street:

alley btw State and Vine and Front and Second: John Shelly-73/74

114: Clark Harris-84

210: John Pope-05/06

South Front Street:

e s and south of Mt. Vernon: Richard Henderson (perhaps same as ne cor Front and Jay)-80, Louis Hill-80

e s btw Cass and King: Frank Davis-70

107, above [3 persons]: James Cummings-93, Joseph C. Perkins-84/85, Nelson Robinson-93/97

1206: Charles Warner-85/88

North Second Street:

non-specific: Clark Harris-80

alley btw State and Vine and Front and Second: John Shelly-73/74

btw State and Vine: Robert Blackley-70, Jackson Gibson-73

w s Second btw State & Vine: John Carter-70/73,

w s Second and north of Pine: James Cummings,

w s and south of Vine: James Cummings-80

w s Second and north of Badger: Jackson Gibson-76,

se cor Second and Badger: Jackson Gibson-79/81,
 btw Vine and Pine, n of Vine [5 persons]: Richard Henderson-70, Laird Dean-70, Mary Cummings-70,
 Nelson Robinson-80/81, John Vinegar-73/74
 208 [2 persons]: O. W. Robinson-96/97, John Vinegar-01/05
 210: Walter Harris-05/06
 307: Nelson Robinson-85/91
 308 [3 persons]: Clark Harris-90 & 95/96, Marcus Hutchinson-03/04, John Vinegar-97/06
 314: James Robinson-84/85
 401 [2 persons]: James Cummings-84, Nelson Robinson-84/85
 602: Jackson Gibson-84/86

South Second Street:

es btw King & Cass: Frank Davis-70/71
 ne cor Second and Cass: Charles Warner-80/81
 79: John L. Johnson-76
 117: Louis Hill-95
 119: Lizzie Woods-05/06
 128: Abram Holland-70/71
 308: John Vinegar-97/06
 615 [2 persons]: Mamie Cummings-97, Clark Harris-97/00
 725: Samuel Thompson-84/85

North Third Street:

non-specific: Charles Cromwell-76
 btw Badger and La Crosse [4 persons]: Milton Martin-66/76, Charles Wilkins-66/74, Charles
 Richardson (bds)-70, Eliza Tatman (bds)-70
 sw s Third btw Vine and Pine: John Vinegar-66/67
 8: Alexander Cromwell-70
 55: John Sparks-73/77
 59: Jefferson Davis-70
 62: James Robert Cummings-73/77
 114: William Allen-01
 120: Marcus Hutchinson-05/06
 123: Tamos-00
 205: Joseph C. Perkins-93
 221: John Adams-02
 307: James Cummings-85/90,
 407 [2 persons]: Thomas Brigham-00, Annie Brown-00,

South Third Street:

sw cor Third & Winnebago [4 persons]: Alexander Cromwell-66, James Cromwell-73/77, Abram
 Holland-73/74, William Rice-63 & 73/77
 btw King and Jay: Zacharias L. Moss-66/67
 75: Charles Warner-78/79
 81: William Reed-68/70
 128: Abram Holland-70
 304: boardinghouse: John Vinegar-88
 321: Joseph C. Perkins-91

1131 (?rooming house) [3 persons]: Clark Harris-01/02, Charles Perkin-04/06, Isaac Perkins-04/06

North Fourth Street:

non-specific: Charles Cromwell-76/77
 btw Main and State: Samuel Johnson-73/74
 8: Louis Hill-73/76
 62: James Cummings-73/77
 405: Rebecca Cooper-85/88

South Fourth Street:

non-specific: John Williams-52
 112: William Allen-02
 313: Matthew Schooley-87
 320: O. J. Cook-88
 435: Emma Smith-95
 518: O. J. Cook-91

North Fifth Street:

210: Charles Boyer-98/00

South Fifth Street:

w s of Fifth and s of Adams [2 persons]: John Carter2-70, Andrew Carter2-70
 58: Alexander Cromwell-76/77

North Sixth Street:

114 (site of *Porter Club House*): John Turner-00

South Sixth Street:

cor Division: William Young-80/81
 58: Alexander Cromwell-76

North Seventh Street:

w s btw Cass and Cameron: Alexander Cromwell-73
 125 [3 persons]: John Carter-88/90, George B. Webb-88, Benjamin Kane-88
 ?126: Andrew Carter-85
 129: Patrick Brady-84, Michael Brady-84
 131 [2 persons]: Patrick Brady-85/06, Michael Brady-85/06
 412: Louis Hill-88
 709: Richard Henderson-88

South Seventh Street:

w s btw Cass & Cameron: Alexander Cromwell-73 & 78

North Eighth Street:

118: Emma Smith-93
 213: John Turner-95/96
 309, rear of [4 persons]: Emma Smith-97/03, Clara Johnson-97/06, Louis Harrison-97/00, John Adams-97
 508: Patrick Brady-02,

South Eighth Street:

cor Eighth and Hood: Timothy White-80/81

Tenth Street: non-assigned: John Vinegar-80

North Tenth Street:

320: Hayward Hoke-05/06, James Robinson-88

420: Hayward Hoke-01/02

North Eleventh Street:

unspecified: John Carter-80

Eleventh and State: Nelson Robinson-76/77

n of State: Nelson Robinson-76

320: Hayward Hoke-05/06

520: Hayward Hoke-03/04

South Eleventh Street:

1230: George Williams-01/02

North Twelfth Street:

514 [2 persons]: Edward Wicks-01/04, James Wicks-01/02

BARBERSHOPS

George Street:

1810/12: Henry McLane-00/02, John Vinegar-97

1828: John Vinegar-91

Main Street:

cor Main and Front: *Cromwell & Rice-77*

s s Main btw Second and Third: *Birney & Cromwell-65*

s s and btw Third and Fourth: Samuel Thompson-80

cor Main and Third (301 Main): *Birney & Cromwell, Birney & Holland, Nelson Robinson, Robinson & Williams, George Williams*

above 13 Main: Alexander Cromwell (perhaps boarded barber apprentices there)

Post Office Block (ns and between Third and Fourth): Samuel Thompson-76/77

1 Main: Frank Davis-73, Charles Wilkins-66/69

13 above (also called *Tremont Block*): Alexander Cromwell-79

51 Main: Ephriam Foster-81

66 above: Samuel Thompson-78/79

110 Main: O. J. Cook-85/90

204: Turkish bath of Joseph C. Perkins-95/98

227: White-owned/Alex Weidner-90, Nelson Robinson- 93/98, Lumbu E. Williams-98/03

230 basement: Ephriam Foster-84, John Vinegar-84/85

301: see above: cor Main and Third (301 Main): *John Birney-65/85, Birney & Cromwell-65, Birney & Holland-73, Nelson Robinson-85 & 91/93, Robinson & Williams-85/98, George Williams-85/06*

513: Hayward Hoke-01/04

Mill Street: north La Crosse

non-specific: *Vinegar & Foster-76/81*

n or St. Andrew: John McPowell-70/73

nw cor with St. Andrew: Zacharias L. Moss-73/80

77: John Vinegar-76/81

418: Ashley Shivers-95/06

512: Zacharias H. Moss-00, Ted Waldron-00, *Moss & Waldron-00*

610: Zacharias L. Moss-85/91, *Moss & Son-91*

704: Ephriam Foster-85/86

Onalaska Street:

1701: John Vinegar-93/95

Pearl Street:

s s btw Second and Third: *Thompson & Moss*-66

50/57: *Moss & Holland*-68/73

Pine Street:

512: George Williams-97

State Street:

n s btw North Second and North Third: Lydia Moss-66

South Front Street:

South Front: John Birney-57

Augusta House (became *International Hotel*): John Birney-c.60/65

basement of *International Hotel*: Alexander Cromwell (apparently boarded barbers there also)-73/77

Cromwell & Rice-73/77

107: Joseph C. Perkins-84

133: *Ball & Vinegar*-87

South Second Street:

btw Main and Pearl: Charles Wilkins-70/73

North Third Street:

North Third: John Birney (*Birney & Cromwell*)-65

50: Zacharias L. Moss-84/85

129: Ashley Shivers/shop only-95/04

205 (Turkish bath): Joseph C. Perkins-93

303: Ashley Shivers/shop only-04

309: Hayward Hoke-05/06

411: Ashley Shivers' shop/residence-93/95

610: Zacharias L. Moss-84/85

South Third Street:

sw s btw Main and Pearl: *Moss & Holland*-70/71

205: Turkish bath of Charles Perkin-93

CHAPTER IV.

CHRONOLOGY OF SETTLEMENT: BLACK SETTLERS 1850-1906

Arrival Date	Head-of-household, Date/State of Birth, Marriage, Children, Other occupants	Occupation(s)	Last Date Mentioned
1852	Williams, John, b.1832, Pa. moved to Marquette, Mich. mar. Elizabeth Grisson, b.1840, Pa. dau. Gertrude, b.1857, Wis. dau. Fanny, b.1859, Wis. son Cane, b.1860, Wis 3 more unnamed males in hh. (WC 1855)	barber	1861 1861 1861 1861 1861
1855	Burt, Albert, b.1833, Pa. mar. Elizabeth, b.1833, Pa. son Arthur, b.1863, Wis. dau. Mary E., b.1863, Wis. son E. Albert, b.1867, Wis. moved Minneapolis, Minn. 1885	cook, river steward housekeeper, boardinghouse	1878/79 1878/79 1870 1885
1855	Grisson, Joseph, b.1831, Pa. mar. Isabella, b.1830, Ohio Lafayette, b.1860, Canada	barber, steamboat porter	1870 1870 1870
1856	Holland, Abram H., b.1835, Ind. mar. Julia Ann Cromwell, b.1820, N.Y. dau. Julia, b.1857, Wis.	barber	d.1876 1876 1876
1857	Birney, John W., b.1834, Ky. mar. Penelope L. William, b.1835, Ky. dau. Mary Ellen, b.1856, Ky., d.1878 dau. Florence L. (Lewis), b.1860, Wis. son John W., Jr., b.1871, Wis.	barber	1885 1884 d.1878 1884 1884

1857	Carter, John, b.1815, Md. mar. Margaret A., b.1820, Pa. son William, b.1848, Md. dau. Ann, b.1850, Md. dau. Philisha, b.1856, Ill. mar. Benjamin Kane, 1881 (see 1881) dau. Elisa May, b.1857, Wis. mar George Webb, 1886 (see 1886) son Andrew, b.1859, Wis.	laborer, cook, boatman charvoman boatman washings washings carpet layer	?d.1878 1890 1890 1890 1890 1889 1890
1857	Moss, Henderson, b.1824, Va. moved Battle Creek, Mich., 1864 mar. Lydia, b.1828, Va. mar.(1866) George Thurston son Henry, b.1847, Ohio	barber barber barber barber	d.1864 1866 1866 1866
1858	William Henry Harrison, b.1831, Ky. (residence in Winona, Minn.) mar. Eliza, b.1833, Mo. son Daniel B. foster son Joseph Warren, b.1874, Ky.	gardener	1861. d.1898 d.1887 c.1875
1859	Moss, Zacharias Louis, b.1823, Va. mar. Mary E. Hunter, b.1848 son William, b.1898, Wis. son Zacharias Henry, b.1866, Wis. (see 1866 below) mar. Emily Waldron, b.1869, Wis. dau. Mary Ella, b.1868 son Ernest Hunter, b.1879 dau. Lula, b.1880	barber barber	d.1902 1891 d.1898 + 1906 + 1906 1891
1860	Carley, Charles, b.1835, Miss. mar. Caroline, b.1843, Ohio	barber	1860 1860
1860	McCullan, Thomas, b.1795, Va. dau. Isabella, b.1842, Pa. son Charles, b.1852, Ohio	day laborer	1860 1860 1860
1860	Schooley, Matthew B., b.1818, Pa. mar.1865 Anna M. Henry, b.1850, Md.	fisherman, laborer, Temperance Coffee Shop	1887 1887, 1891
1860	White, Edwin, b.1807, S.C.		1860
1861	Richardson, Princiss Milton, b. Tenn. mar. Isabella McCollough (?McCullan), 1861	blacksmith	1861 1861

1863	Rice, William S. mar. Elizabeth Cromwell, 1863 1875 WC listed 2 Bl. males, 5 Bl. females	boatman, barber	1877 1877
1863	William, George E., b.1856, Ky. mar. 1879, Mary A. Harrison, b.1856, Mo. dau. Alice D, b.1880, Wis. dau. Nellie L., b.1881, Wis. dau. Rachel son John B., b.1889, Wis. son Lawrence, b.1892, Wis.	barber, railway porter	+1906 1900
1864	Gibson, Jackson, b.1825, Ky. mar. Francis Ayers, b.1825, Ky son William H., b.1858, Mo. son Henry, b.1861, Mo. mar. 1895, Carrie Larson son Charles E., b.1864, Wis. son E. Alfred, b.1866, Wis. son John, b.1875, Wis. Mrs. Lizzie Gibson, b.1864, Mo.	laborer, janitor	d.1895 d.1898 1898, d.1924 d.1903 d.1901 d.1920 d.1899 d.1893
1864	Thompson, August Samuel, b.1846, Va. mar. Anna Shanks, b.1848, Mich. son Joseph, b.1864, Minn.	musician, barber	1885
1865	Brown, Cyrus, b. Cincinnati, Ohio mar. Rachael Lyms, 1865	cook	1865 1865
1865	Smith, Nathan, b.1820, Tenn. mar. Sarah, b.1835, Tenn. mar. 1895, Elizabeth Johnson, b.1848, Wis. unnamed child left in South foster son, George Southall foster son, Joseph Louis foster son, George E. Taylor	horse tender, valet, farmer	d.1905 d.1892 1890
1865	Southall, Henry, b. Tenn. mar. Agnes LaPoint, 1865 ?son George Southall (see Nathan Smith, 1865)	steamboat cook	1867 1867
1865	Taylor, George Edwin, b.1857 Arkansas (see Nathan Smith, 1865) mar. Mary L. Hill, 1885	student, typesetter, editor, newspaper owner, politician	1890

1865	Vinegar, John Isaiah, b.1847, Ky. mar. Anna Eliza Pugsley, b.1853, N. Y. mar. 1886, Ella Dochterman, b.1843 son Henry L., b.1867, Wis. dau. Carrie B., b.1868, Wis. dau. Clara C., b.1869, Wis. son St. Elmo C., b.1870, Wis. mar. 1890, Miss Smith, b. Minn. dau. Karin Bell, b. Wis. mar. 1884, William Blackwell (see 1878)	barber	d.1911 d.b.1886 1890 d.1895
1865	Young, Zachariah, b. Ky. mar.1865, Mary Louisa Price		1865
1866	Batterfield, William	barber	1867
1866	Cromwell, Alexander D. Cromwell	barber	1879
1866	Evans, William	barber	1866/67
1866	Martin, Leonard	barber	1869
1866	Martin, Milton	barber	1870
b.1866	Moss, Zacharias Henry, b.1866, La Crosse, Wis. mar. Emily Waldron, b.1869, Wis. son Josh, b. before 1904 son William, b.1898, Wis. dau. June E., b.1900, Wis. son Orby Z., b.1902, Wis. dau. Jerema, b.1904, Wis.		+1906 +1906 1904 d.1898
1866	Thurston, George, b. Wis. mar. 1866, Lydia Moss (see 1857 Moss)	barber barber	1866 1866
1866	Walker, Milton	barber	1867
1866	Wilkins, Charles F., b.1837, Wis. mar. Emma, b.1843, Va. dau. Lucinda, b.1852, Ky. son Charles, b.1862, Iowa son Cyrus, b.1864, Wis. dau. Kate, b.1869, Wis.	barber, teamster boardinghouse	1887 1887 1887
1867	Walker, Jeremiah, b. Loutsiana mar. 1867, Sarah Brown	river boat fireman	1867
1868	Brooks, William, b. Md. mar. 1868, Francis Cornelius		1868
1868	Davis, Jefferson W., b.1830, Ky. mar. Amelia, b.1837, Pa.	teamster, laborer, foundry worker housekeeper	d.1900

1868	Reed, William T., b.1836, Iowa mar. Amanda, b.1825, Ohio	barber	1870
1868	Scott, James H., b.1845, N.Y.	hotel porter	1871
1869	Campbell, John, b. Washington, D.C. mar.1869, Sarah Brown	laborer housekeeper	1870
1869	Cummings, James Robert, b. Ky. mar. 1869, Mary Maggie McMahan/McMann, b.1855, Ill. son George L., b.1869, Wis. son Steven, b.1872, Wis. dau. Mamie, b.1874, Wis. son Georgie, b.1898	farmer, teamster, fireman	d.1890 1898 d.1886 d.1894 d.1898 d.1898
1869	Hale, Jonas, b.1840, Va. mar. 1869, Eliza Wagner, b.1848, Ind.	boatman	1870
1869	Henderson, Richard, b.1845, Ky. mar. Lucilla, b.1845, Ky dau. Cora, b.1867, Minn. dau. Louisa, b.1869, Iowa son Israel, b.1869, Wis. son Frank, b.1876/77, Wis. mar. 1877, Fanny White	fireman, laborer	d.1900 d.?1876/77 d.1877
1869	Powell, Thomas, b. Ky mar. 1869, Elizabeth Garling-House ?dau. Mary, b.1864, Minn.	laborer, chimney sweeper	1870 1870 1870
1869	Robinson, Nelson, b.1851, Va.	domestic servant, barber, laborer	d.1898
1869	Turner, Robert, b.1825, Ark. mar. Louisa, b.1828, Ark.	musician dressmaker	1871 1871
1870	Abram, John, b.1842, N.C.	barber	1870
1870	Black, Mary, b.1845, Pa.	domestic servant	1870
1870	Blackley, Robert, c.1842, Washington, D.C. mar. Jenny, b.1841, Ohio dau. Nancy, b.1863, Ohio dau. Forence, b.1864, Ohio	whitewasher housekeeper	1870 1870
1870	Blackman, William, b.1843, Va.	laborer	1870
1870	Braddock, John, b.1852, Ky.	laborer	1870
1870	Cameron, John, b.1847, Washington, D.C. mar. Sarah, b.1847, Ga.	farmer housekeeper	1870 1870

1870	Carter, John, b.1820, Va. son Andrew, b.1856, Wis. mar. (Mrs. Andrew Carter)	laborer, whitewasher laborer	1876 1881 1882
1870	Davis, Frank, b.1843, Va. (d.1891 Chicago, Ill.) mar. 1875, Mrs. Eliza Bryant	barber, soldier	1875
1870	Dean, Laird, b.1832, Ill.	fireman	1870
1870	Duuss, Jefferson	teamster	1870
1870	Edwards, Richard, b.1840, Ark. mar. Judy, b.1845, Tenn.	stonemason housekeeper	1870
1870	Hill, George, b.1852		1878
1870	Hill, Louis, b.1839, N.C. mar. Mary Bell, b.1839, Pa.	whitewasher, laborer, plasterer	d.1893 d.1895
1870	Huffman, David,	barber	1871
1870	Johnson, John L., b.1845, Ky. mar. Nancy, b.1845, N.C. roomer: John Abram (1870)	boatman, river man, fireman barber	1888
1870	McPowell, John, b.1847, Ky.	boatman	1870
1870	Perkins, Charles, b.1850, Ohio	?barber, porter	+1906
1870	Perkins, Isaac, b.1851, Ohio	?barber, porter	+1906
1870	Pierce, Elizabeth, b.1852, La. dau.? Amelia Pierce, b.1869	domestic servant	1874 1870
1870	Powell, Mary, b.1864, Minn.		1870
1870	Richardson, Charles, b.1856, Ill.		1870
1870	Schooley, Morris, b.1808, Pa. mar. Sarah, b.1818, Pa dau. Sarah, b.1854, Ohio dau. Catherine, b.1855, Ohio son Clifford, b.1859, Ohio son Charles, b.1860, Ohio	river boat cook	1874 d.1874 1874 1874
1870	Shelly, John Charlie E. mar. Caroline, b.1844, Sweden son William Edward, b.1869, Wis.	whitewasher boardinghouse	1877
1870	Smith, Eliza, b.1845, Va.	tailoress	1870
1870	Tatman, Eliza, b.1855, Mo.	foster child	1870

1870	Vaughn, Kelly, b.1840, Miss. mar. 1872, Lizbeth Howell mar. 1874, Adeline Jones mar. 1894, Sara Bowers		c.1901
1870	Wade, Louise, b.1840, Va.	housekeeper, boardinghouse	1870
1870	Williams, Herbert, b.1859, Ky.	barber	1881
1870	Young, William, b.1865, Delaware	barber	1881
1871	Taylor, Jack, b.1810	blacksmith	1900
1871	Woodruff, William, b.1840, S.C. mar. 1871, Betsey Swiss, b.1847, Miss. son Frank, b.1873, Wis. mar. 1887, Samuel Martin Anderson	steamboat man cook farmer	1891 1887 1887
1873	Brady, Michael C. mar. Agnes	construction laborer, carpenter, plasterer, mason	d.1903
1873	Brady, Patrick T. mar. Nellie	printer/composer	+1906
1873	Cromwell, James T.	barber	1879
1873	Johnson, R. W.	barber	1874
1873	Johnson, Samuel	barber	1874
1873	Johnson, William unidentified companion	barber	1875
1873	Mitchell, David	barber	1874
1873	Sparks, John mar. 1877, Lucilie Walbright	laborer	1877
1873	Warner, Charles E. mar. Theresa son Stephen	carpenter, steward, laborer, photographer, liveryman, brakeman	d.71892 1893 1893
1873	Webb, George W., b. Ohio mar. 1873, Mary A. Killian	barber	1873

1874	Harris, Clark, b.1855, Ga. mar. Maude Susan, b.1855, Mo dau. Ida, b.1874 dau. Josie L., b.1875, Wis. son Walter H., b.1876, Wis. son Clark, b.1879, Wis. son Louis D., b.1879, Wis. dau. Maude Susan, b.1882, Wis. son, unnamed, b.1885, Wis. son Russell F., b.1894, Wis. Miss Cora Harris	whitewasher printer, bartender, painter banana messenger railway porter	+ 1906 d.1878 1900 +1906 +1906 1893 1905 1893
1875	Davis, T.		1875
1875	Foster, Ephriam dau. Ann Eliza, b.1845	barber	d.1891 d.1901
1875	Goode, W. C.		1875
1875	Jenson, Sam		1875
1875	Michel, David, b.1845, Ala.	barber, river man	d.1884
1875	Negro, Bill		1875
1875	William, Charles, b.1849, Ill. mar. unidentified, 1875 mar. unidentified, 1885	ice dealer	1900
1876	Bradley, George	barber	1877
1876	Brady, George, b.1856	barber	1876
1876	Cromwell, Charles	barber	1879
1876	Harris, Melvin, b.1852	river man	1876
1876	Johnson, Charles W., b. Ill. mar. Mary Ann Peram	teamster, drayman	1880
1876	Marshall, Charles	barber	1878/79
1877	Dugan, A. J., b.1852	gambler	1877
1877	Evans, Benjamin, b.1849, Miss. mar. 1877, Josephine Olsen	whitewasher, stonemason	1877
1877	Ewens, Samuel mar. 1877, Dora Miller		1877
1878	Aaron, Felix		1878

1878	Blackwell, Charles, b.1838, Va. mar. 1884, Kate Bell Vinegar, b.1844, Wis. son William, b, Ohio	cook, musician domestic servant	1895 d.1895
1878	Cromwell, Peter W., b.1848, N.Y. mar. Julie, b.1858, Minnesota dau. Grizzella, b.1879, Minnesota	barber	1880
1878	Cromwell, William W.	barber	1879
1878	Cunningham, Charles, b.1844, Ky.		1878
1878	Devine, Andrew A. ?mar. Arabel A. Jeffreys dau. Nina, b.1878	barber	1878
1878	Taylor, Eliza, b.1854		d.1878
1880	Carter, James	barber	1881
1880	Hayes, Samuel, b.1848, La.	fireman	1880
1880	Sewell, Samuel, b.1845, Ill. mar. Dora, b.1856, Wis. dau. Dora J., b.1878, Wis.	teamster	1880
1880	Turner, Stephen, b. Va. mar. 1880, Ida Chatwood	hotel porter	1880
1880	White, Timothy, b.1830, Conn. mar. 1880, Hattie, b.1835 White stepson William, b.1865	cook	1881
1881	Kane, Benjamin F., b. Pa. mar. 1881, Felisha Carter, b.1856, Ill. dau. Grace N., b.1882, Wis.	laborer, waiter	1888
1883	Wilson, Henry, b. Miss. mar. 1883, Susie Wallace	shampooer	1883
1884	Johnson, John W., b. Pa. mar. 1884, Lulu Belle Poage, b.1867, Mo.	coachman	1887 d.1887
1884	Perkins, Joseph C.	barber	1905
1885	Bradford, George		1885
1885	Cook, O. Julius	barber	1895
1885	Cooper, Samuel mar. Rebecca, b.1857, Ky. ?dau. Cora, b.1882 ?dau. Mamie c., b.1886	laundress domestic servant domestic servant	1906

1885	Poage, James, b.1849, Mo. mar. Anna Coleman, b.1853, Mo. dau. Nellie, b.1879, Mo. son George Coleman, b.1883, Mo. son Freddie Jansen, b.1885	coachman manager of domestic staff nanny/teacher	d.1888 1900 1904 d.1888
1885	Robinson, James H. mar. Mary	laborer cook	1888 1888
1885	Watson, John mar. unnamed	railway porter	1888
1885	Webb, Ed.	barber	1891
1885	Welsh, Nancy, b. N.C.		d.1889
1886	Adams, John F. mar. Betsey Wescott dau. Doria dau. Margaret L. son, Cager (Coyah) Greenwood, b.1886, Wis. dau. Grace, b.1891 stillborn 1893	barber, janitor	1893
1886	Cochran, John, b.1830		1887
1886	Decker, Boston, b.1841, Ohio		d.1887
1886	Webb, George B. mar. Ellen M. Carter, b.1857, Wis. dau. Alis M., b.1886, Wis.	laborer	1888
1886	Wright, Joseph, b.1837		1887
1887	Ball, Frederick H. mar. unnamed	barber	1887
1887	Harrison, Louis mar. unnamed	coachman	1900
1887	Smith, Joseph mar. Emma Johnson, b.1860, Ga. dau. Amy Aridenia, b.1883, Ga. Joseph Robert, b.1886, Ga. son Richard D., b.1888, Wis. dau. Lillian B., b.1895, Wis. mar. ? Davenport	laborer washwoman, nurse, cateress housecleaner, cateress cooper printer vaudeville actress	?1895 d.1945 d.1953 d.1951 d.1908 d.1964
1887	Williams, Nancy		1887

1889	Farmer, O. P., b. Tenn. mar. 1889, Alice Cain, b. Tenn.	cook	1889 1889
1890	Lyles, William J., b. Maryland mar. 1890, Mary Koch, b. Ill.	railway porter	1890
1890	Nighter, William, b. Ky. mar. Katy Stiles, b. Mo. son, stillborn	whitewasher	1890
1890	Shivers, Ashley, b.1861, Tenn. mar. Mary Ellen F. (Rebecca) Waldron, b.1865, Wis. son Claude, b.1890, Wis. son Spencer, b.1894, Wis. dau. Hazel May, b.1895, Wis. dau. Bertha Aster, b.1896, Wis. son Frank B., b.1898, Wis. son Theodore, b.1903, Wis. son John Ashley, b.1906	barber boardinghouse	d.1907 +1906 +1906
1891	Hoke, Hayward L., b.1836, N.C. mar. Millie, b.1846, Pa. 3 children, 1 living with them in 1900	barber	+1906
1891	Perkins, Joseph B. mar. Florence N. Crosby, b.1857, Wis. son Charles A. son Wilbur G. dau. Delilah May, b.1882, Iowa mar. 1903, John B. Nigg son Leslie B., b.1888, Wis. dau. Ida B. son Joseph B., Jr. dau. Florence N., b.1891, Wis. son William Lloyd, b.1894, Wis. dau. Esther A., b.1896, Wis.	farmer, bath man, farmhand domestic servant farmhand	+1906
1892	Craig, Frank, b.1886, Wis		1893
1892	Revels, Joseph, b. Wis. mar. 1892, Della Bass, b. Wis.	barber	1898
1893	Davis, Mary, b.1847	hotel worker	1893
1893	Wicks, James Albert, b.1872, Iowa mar 1893, Sarah Matilda Stone, b.1876, Iowa son James R. dau. Gertrude, b.1894, Wis. dau. Nellie, b.1896, Wis. dau. Gladys, b.1898, Wis. dau. Grace, b.1903, Wis.	laborer, coachman	+1906

1894	Olson, Ole, b. Africa	blacksmith	?1894
1895	Brown, Robert	restaurant porter	1896
1895	Carl, Ben		1895
1895	Gregg, Frank		1895
1895	Hattie, Maude		1895
1895	Hole, L. H. mar. unnamed wife		1895
1895	Johnson, Charles, b. Ga. mar. Clara Virginia, b.1842, Ga. dau. Sophie dau. Emma Johnson (Smith), b.1861, Ga.	chef, cook, cateress, boardinghouse	d.1908 d.1945
1895	Parker, John mar. Murrie (Mary Ann), b.1871, Pa.	housewife	1905
1895	Robinson, Asa W. mar. Mary		d.?1895 1896
1895	Turner, John A., b.1840, Alabama mar. unnamed	coachman, cook, porter	1900
1895	Week, James		1895
1895	Wicks, Edward F. mar. Florence Riem dau. Edna Francis, b.1898, Wis.	laborer, coachman	+1906
1897	Allen, William Bedford, b.1877, Ill. mar. Lillian Abel, b.1880, Ohio son William, Jr., b.1897, Wis. son Earl Robert, b.1898, Wis. dau. Emma M., b.1900, Wis. son Fletcher Bedford, b.1905, Wis.	barbershop porter	+1906
1897	Loving, Charles, b.1880, Wis.	barber	1905
1898	Boyer, Charles J., b.1877, N.Y. Mary Allen, b. Ill.	workman, porter	1900
1898	Carlisle, George mar. 1898, Bell Cole	actor	1898
1898	Mitchell, Mary Ellen, b.1860, Ky.		d.1901
1898	Williams, Lumbu E., b.1843, Santo Domingo, West Indies	barber	1903

1899	Smith, William H. mar. Alice dau. Elvia, C., b.1899, Wis.		1899 d.1899
1900	Tamos, b.1848, Miss.		1900
1900	Ayers, Harriet, b.1809, Ky. see Jackson Gibson		d.1904
1900	Brigham, Thomas, b.1863, Kansas mar. Tillie, b.1867, Ky.	railway porter	1900
1900	Brown, Annie, b.1864, Ga.	domestic servant	1900
1900	Dean, Ida., b.1882, Ind.	domestic servant	1900
1900	Elliott, Felix H., b.1872, Ala. mar. Ida, b.1881, Texas	hotel musician hotel musician	1900 1900
1900	Harris, Robert A., b.1867, Ky.	porter	1900
1900	Hickey, Andrew, b.1867, Ohio mar. Carrie, b.1878, Ind.	cook rooming house	1900 1900
1900	McLane, Henry S., b.1847, Pa.	barber	1902
1900	Meaux, Phyllis, b.1872, Mo.	laundress	1900
1900	Neal, George A., b.1874, Canada	porter	1900
1900	Robinson, John H., b.1871, Mo. Efla, b.1878, Arkansas	hotel musician hotel musician	1900
1900	Stone, Alice Wicks, b. Iowa mar. 1900, Sherman Stone, b. Iowa		1900
1900	Waldron, Ted	barber	1900
1901	Armstrong, Harry, b. Mich. mar. 1901, Clara Thompson, b. Canada	horse trainer	1901
1901	Hutchinson, Marcus, b.1857, Dakotas	hotel porter	+1906
1903	Wicks, Charles S.	laborer	1904
1903	Wicks, Morris	laborer	1904
1903	Woods, Lizzie	domestic, housekeeper	+1906
1904	Norton, Minnie, b.1858	cook	d.1904
1904	Taylor, Sarah, b.1876	piano player	d.1904
1905	Hill, Perry H., b.1883, Wis.		1906
1905	Miles, Clara		1905

1905	Perkins, Jan B., b.1884	domestic servant	1905
1905	Perry, Young, b.1879	hotel porter	1905
1905	Pope, John, b.1875, Iowa	porter	1906
1905	Robinson, Sam, b.1880, Ill.	bootblack	1905
1905	Sides, Louis, b.1864, Mo. mar. Mamie, b.1876, Va.	porter housewife	1905
1905	Waldron, Malinda, b.1879, Wis.	domestic servant	1905
1905	Waldron, Marie, b.1869, Wis.	domestic servant	1905

CHAPTER V.

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA: BLACK SETTLERS 1850-1906

Note: These data reflect information found for any head-of-household, identifiable as a person of color and of probable African-American descent, who lived in La Crosse between 1850 and 1906. Identification of race membership was most evident in census, marriage, death, welfare, and jail reports and in newspaper accounts. Almost all other records, especially city directories which provided the most complete record of residence-stay, mentioned only the name of the person.

PERSONAL DATA

Place of birth: Of 171 arriving male heads-of-household, 66 were not identifiable with reference to a birthplace. Of the remaining 105, three were born outside the territories of the United States: one each in Africa, Canada, and Hispaniola (Santo Domingo). The most common place of birth for male heads-of-household born in the United States was Kentucky (17); followed by Virginia/West Virginia (11); Pennsylvania (8); Illinois and Ohio (7 each); Wisconsin (6); Mississippi and Tennessee (5 each); Iowa and Tennessee (4 each); Alabama, Arkansas, Maryland, Missouri, New York and North Carolina (3 each); Georgia, Louisiana, South Carolina and Washington, D.C. (2 each); and single heads-of-household from Connecticut, the Dakotas, Delaware, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas and Michigan. Of 25 arriving female heads-of-household, seven were not identifiable for place of birth. Of the remaining 18, three each were born in Georgia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Virginia/West Virginia; two each in Wisconsin; and one each in Iowa, Louisiana, Missouri and North Carolina. The most commonly cited place of birth for all

identifiable heads-of-household was Kentucky (20). Ninety-one heads-of-household were born in states that bordered the Mississippi River or its largest tributaries. Only 40 heads-of-household were born in states comprising the "Deep South," the source of many *exodusers* after the Civil War and where the largest population of African-Americans was located before 1865. Although information about those unidentified by birthplace is lacking, from the available data it is reasonable to suggest that a significant majority came from border states (between North and South) between 1850 and 1906.

Age upon arrival in La Crosse: Of male heads-of-household, age upon arrival was not available for 84 persons. Ages were ascertainable for 107 persons during their course of residence. Of the latter group, the largest segment came within the 20-30 year old range -- a total of 44 persons. Of those who arrived in La Crosse as single persons under the age of 20, a majority remained in La Crosse for long periods.

Linkage to relatives/close friends already in La Crosse: Thirty-nine heads-of-household came to La Crosse to join relatives or close friends already

living in the La Crosse community. Some of these included mothers, nephews, brothers, sisters, persons with the same family name and from the same birthplace, or close friends who had found La Crosse economically rewarding and perhaps a place amenable to having African-Americans within its community. Many of these assuredly came to work in barbershops owned or operated by near relatives.

Former slave status: Only six persons were clearly identified in the sources as having held former slave status. These were Harriet Ayers, Clara Virginia Johnson, Robert Johnson, Nathan Smith, Sarah Smith, and August Samuel Thompson. Several of the earliest settlers came from border states between the North and the South. While it is reasonable to assume that several more from those born in the deep South before 1860 were born into a state of servitude, locally-accessible data does not identify them as having held such status.

Educational levels: Census-takers occasionally noted whether heads-of-household could read or write, but that data was not recorded consistently. Census-takers did note, depending on their dispositions, whether young children in a household were attending school; some of that information was confirmable in irregular school records that survive. Between 1850 and 1906, thirty-eight students were identified as attending primary schools, most of them in La Crosse's First Ward. Three attended Wayland Academy in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, and one attended Galesville University in Galesville, Wisconsin. Both of these latter schools were more similar to boarding-high-schools than they were to colleges. Six students were known to have attended La Crosse High School, with four having finished high school either in La Crosse or elsewhere. Three attended and graduated from post-secondary schools. Only one was known to have obtained a master's degree.

Census data was unreliable to indicate the degree of attendance in La Crosse-based schools, for census-takers recorded only those who were living in La Crosse at census-taking times and who informed census-takers of that circumstance. Close

proximity of First Ward Elementary School to the principal housing district occupied by African-Americans suggests, however, that that location alone would have made it convenient for children of school-age to walk to and attend school. It is likely that larger-than-average numbers (relative to Whites who lived far away from available schools) of African-American children attended schools, especially if they were younger than 13 years of age.

Family size and marital status: This data refers only to the size of families when they lived in La Crosse. A high proportion of African-Americans were transitory persons, moving from one place to another. Many found La Crosse as a place to register a marriage or a place to get married. Seventy-four persons were either single persons or persons whose spouses did not live with them in La Crosse, meaning that their households contained only one person. Fifty-seven heads-of-household either chose La Crosse as a place to marry or were married couples that did not have children living in the household. Some of these may have left children behind with relatives while they traveled the Mississippi River in search of economic opportunity within an urban setting. Twenty-one heads-of-household had one child living in the household at census time or during their periods of residence in La Crosse; two had two children; eight had three children; six had four children; four had five children; four had six children; two had seven children; and one had nine children. In effect, of 104 heads-of-household who were married (spouses living in the household), only 49 had children, and these latter had 130 children (an average of 2.65 children per dual-spouse household over the 1850-1906 period). Widows and widowers accounted for another ten children living in households – four had one child each and three had two children each. Those claiming or noted as having had or obtained widow status while in La Crosse numbered 18 households, and those of widower status comprised eight households.

Terms of residence: By separating terms of

residence into two categories – short term (0-5 years) and long term (6-indefinite) – a striking pattern is apparent. Seventy percent (136 heads-of-household) belonged in the first category and only 30 percent (57) in the latter. One hundred three heads-of-household were noted only once in records or for a residence of a year or less. Thirty-two lived in La Crosse for two to five years. Long term residence was uncertain because data collection ended with the year of 1906, and 20 households were living in La Crosse in that year. The available and consulted data suggests, however, that eleven households lived in La Crosse for 6-10 years, fifteen for 11-15 years, nine for 16-20 years, and twenty-six households for 20 or more years.

Religious affiliations: No records of actual weekly/monthly church attendance were maintained by local churches. It is also uncertain that short-lived informal churches or assemblies did not exist within La Crosse's Black community between 1850 and 1906. Of those persons who chose to initiate formal membership in La Crosse-based churches, the clear preference for membership was the First Baptist Church. Eleven persons joined that church which kept records concerning local baptisms, letters of membership-transfer into the church, and requests for letters of membership-transfer from La Crosse to churches in other communities. One person each joined the Methodist Episcopal Church and St. Luke's United Methodist Church. Records that survive indicate little about general religious activities of African-Americans in La Crosse.

Diseases/deformity/condition: Information about diseases or other physical/mental conditions is also meager and exists only if noted in death, hospital, arrest or welfare records. The most commonly cited fatal disease was tuberculosis/consumption which caused five deaths. Records noted that four persons had been admitted to asylums for insanity. Two each died of heart disease and Bright's disease. Single citations exist for blindness, diphtheria, epilepsy, fever, frostbite, paraplegia, stomach cancer, syphilis, typhoid, and winter cholera. These citations exist only because public service agencies

became involved in these instances or the law required that death certificates include cause of death notations.

Burial: For the 60 persons who were recorded as having died in La Crosse, burial information does not exist for nine persons. Of the remaining 51 persons, thirty-nine were buried in regular plots in Oak Grove Cemetery in La Crosse, and another four persons were buried in that cemetery's potter's field. At least five persons died while residents of the La Crosse County Poor Farm, and three were buried at the Poor Farm. Three persons were buried in Hamilton Cemetery near West Salem, and two were buried in Catholic Cemetery in La Crosse. One was buried in a cemetery that was noted in death records, but that one was located outside the La Crosse region.

Financial condition upon arrival: Information about the financial condition of those arriving in La Crosse is sparse and depends largely upon whether census-takers thought to ask that question and whether the response was truthful. But, assuredly, some did arrive with sufficient funds to open barbershops or purchase land and improve property. Five arrivers were cited in earliest census records as having particular dollar values, and all of these purchased land and built houses on properties. Only one was known to have purchased commercial property in La Crosse's city center, although several city center properties/addresses became regularly occupied by Black-operated businesses in the 1850-1906 period. Five persons operated businesses out of home sites, and these included laundries, barbershops, and boardinghouses. In total, nineteen heads-of-household appear to have brought to La Crosse sufficient financial resources to engage in local business and development ventures.

Migration patterns: Migration patterns to La Crosse and from La Crosse are difficult to confirm with certainty. Census-takers asked information-givers only the birth state for head-of-household, spouse, and children – not the name of a city. While dates and places of children's births helped to

plot directional movement across state boundaries, only in a few instances were these data able to indicate an actual path taken during that course.

Several modes of travel were available to migrants, and these changed over the half-century covered in this study. At the beginning of this period, the preferred and more easily accessible and developed mode of travel was river transport upon the Mississippi and its major westward-draining tributary, the Ohio River. River transport was relatively inexpensive, and it was possible to relocate, for instance, from southern Pennsylvania to western Wisconsin by making only a few transfers along the way. A boat also provided entertainment, housing and meals onboard, the latter perhaps at the discretion of travelers.

A second and much more rigorous path was overland by Conestoga wagon or by regular passenger coach. Overland modes were well-known paths during this period, although they might have been tedious, boring, and perhaps more amenable to periodic stopping along the way to test an intriguing frontier, launch a family, or add a family member. A third path to La Crosse was via railway connections that were complete between the east coast and La Crosse by 1860. On each of these paths, La Crosse was considered as a major port or terminus (a transition or "gateway" point) for further expansion northward and westward into the greater upper Midwest, at least before railway construction resumed further northward in the mid/late 1870s. Certainly most African-Americans coming to La Crosse before 1906 followed one of these paths.

Only thirteen arriving heads-of-household between 1850 and 1906, unfortunately, can be identified as coming directly from designated towns. Four heads-of-household came from two towns located on the Ohio River; these towns were Cincinnati, Ohio, and Louisville, Kentucky. Another three heads-of-household were residents of or born near St. Louis, Missouri. One was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, and that person lived in Alton, Illinois, before moving to La Crosse. One arriver, born in Kentucky, was a farmer in Galena,

Illinois, before arriving in La Crosse. Iowa accounted for another eight heads-of-household, and four of these came from Mount Pleasant, a racially-mixed community in southeastern Iowa located approximately twenty-five miles from Burlington. One came directly from Prairie du Chien. All of these towns in the second half of the nineteenth century were considered to be important river-based communities, and all were served regularly by steamboats. To this list might reasonably be added eight heads-of-household who were gainfully employed in river commerce in one way or another. Family traditions suggest, for example, that the Moss families came via the Mississippi River.

Overland by wagon, coach, or rail was more difficult to determine as a method of arrival. Only five towns were specifically listed as points-of-origin that would have required overland transportation at some point during migration. These were Augusta, Georgia; Madison, Wisconsin; Battle Creek, Michigan; Sparta, Wisconsin; and Vernon County, Wisconsin (likely Hillsboro). While these data are interesting in their own rights, they tell little about the specifics of migration to La Crosse, other than to suggest the likelihood that most early settlers arrived onboard river boats and that few traveled overland. That circumstance likely changed as Conestoga wagon trains and stagecoach lines were displaced by the convenience of railway connections.

Careful attention to the chronology of heads-of-household arriving in La Crosse reveals several striking migration trends, especially if arrivers are divided into groups by decade (see Table, page 99). Of twenty-four heads-of-household who arrived in La Crosse between 1850 and 1866, only one (4.2%) was unidentified by state-of-birth. Of the remaining 23, twenty-one (91.3%) came from states that bordered on the Mississippi River or its major tributaries. Eleven of those identified (45.8%) came from states where slavery was illegal before the Civil War (64.2% from slave-holding states). Six of total arrivers (25%) came from Kentucky, where slavery was legal but where a large free population

of Blacks also lived before the Civil War. Three (12.5%) came from Tennessee, where Union forces were active early in the Civil War and where many slaves had been liberated by 1863.

Arrivers before 1866 tended to establish roots in La Crosse. Only one arriver (4.1%) remained unmarried while living in La Crosse. Twelve heads-of-household (50%) remained in La Crosse for more than twenty years, perhaps suggesting that those were persons or families that had migrated to a specific place (La Crosse) rather than in a general direction (North or Northwest). Eight heads-of-household (33.3%) remained in La Crosse for five or less years. Nine arrivers (37.5%) were barbers; and seven of those barbers (77.7%) opened shops, either separately or in partnership, under their own name(s). In any case, half of total arrivers before 1866 chose to establish a foundation within the La Crosse community and to remain attached, establishing families that accounted for 43 children/foster children (3.58 children per married households).

It is clear that the decade following the war (1866-1875) brought a considerable upsurge in Black migration that both resembled and differed from the previous wave (see Table, page 99). Sixty-eight heads-of-household arrived in that ten-year period, nearly three times the number of the preceding period (24). Of that number, twenty-five (36.7%) were unidentifiable by state-of-birth. Of the remaining 43 heads-of-household, thirty-two (74.7%) came from states bordered by the Mississippi River or its major tributaries; seventeen (39.5%) came from non-slave-holding states; and twenty-six (60.5%) came from states where slavery was legal before 1863. Of those 26 from slave-holding states, ten (38.4%) came from states classified as "Deep South." Eight (30.7%) of arriving heads-of-household from slave-holding states came from Kentucky.

Of the 68 arrivers, twenty-four (35.2%) worked as barbers, not significantly different from what occurred in the preceding decade (37.5%). Only three of newly-arrived barbers (12.5% vs. 77.7% for 1850-65), however, operated shops under their own

names or within partnerships. Nineteen barbers (79.1% vs. 0%) were single or never married while they lived in La Crosse. Forty-two of total arrivers during the decade (61% of households) remained in La Crosse for five or less years. Only ten heads-of-household (14.7%) remained in La Crosse for twenty years or more, accounting for twenty children/foster children (2.0 children per household). Thirty-seven of total arrivers (54.4% vs. 4.1% for 1850-65) never married while living in La Crosse.

While no study was engaged to compare numbers of single Black arrivers to single non-Black arrivers in that decade, it is reasonable to suggest that this decade was an extraordinarily troubled period of migration for many who had fought in the Civil War or who had been displaced by that conflict. This decade also witnessed an unusually large exodus (thus the *exodusers*) of uprooted and single Black persons, some of whom had been liberated from slavery, had moved with Union troops during the period of military occupation of Southern states during and following the war, and/or had followed new-found friends northward when troops were decommissioned. It was also a time when Whites in the North were perhaps most accommodating to newly-arrived Black "strangers" in their midst, at least to a degree. Some Blacks undoubtedly simply migrated westward and northward because these were places located away from slavery-roots and places they had heard about from others. Others moved wherever the Mississippi River led them. La Crosse, in all of those instances, was an attractive and growing community where new roots might be planted. Wanderlust, however, was a commanding psychological condition characteristic of the times, and perhaps many *exodusers* simply were so uprooted by the war and by liberation (and unsettling freedoms that came with liberation) that the prospect of marriage or of establishing roots in one place was not regarded as an option or a consideration.

The decade of 1876 to 1885 saw another 33 heads-of-household arriving in La Crosse. That was

less than half the number (68) that occurred in the previous decade. Of that number, an unusually high number of twenty (60.6%) were unidentifiable by state-of-birth. Of the remaining 13, ten (76.9%) came from states that bordered the Mississippi River or its major tributaries. Eight (61.5%) came from states where slavery had been legal before the Civil War. Twenty-seven of total arrivers (81.8%) remained in La Crosse for five or less years. Of total arrivers, eleven (33.3%) were barbers. Eight (72.7%) of these newly-arrived barbers remained five or fewer years in La Crosse, and nine (81.8%) never married. Four barbers (36.3%) owned or operated shops under their own names. Seventeen (53%) of total arriving heads-of-household remained single persons while living in La Crosse. Of those married couples who remained in La Crosse for more than four years, only three had children, and those had seven children (2.3 children each) amongst them.

During the following decade, from 1886 to 1895, thirty-two heads-of-household arrived in La Crosse. Nineteen (59.3%) of those were unidentifiable by birth state. Of the remaining 13 arrivers, six (46.1%) came from states that bordered on the Mississippi River or its major tributaries, and eleven (87.7%) came from states where slavery had

been legal before 1863. Nineteen of total arrivers (59.3%) remained in La Crosse for five years or less, and eighteen (56.2%) never married while living in La Crosse. Five arrivers (15.6%) were barbers, all of whom were married; and four of these (80%) operated shops under their own names. Eleven heads-of-household (34.3%) had 38 children amongst them, for an average of 3.45 per household-with-children (note that two heads-of-household accounted for 16 of these 38 children).

The final decade of this study, from 1896 to 1905, brought another 37 arriving heads-of-household. Ten of these (27.0%) were unidentifiable by birth state. Eighteen (66.6%) of those identifiable came from states that bordered the Mississippi River or its major tributaries, and eight of those (29.6%) came from states known formerly as slave states. High percentages characterized those who lived in La Crosse for five years or less (89.1%) and remained single while living in La Crosse (67.5%). Of the four new barbers (12.6% of arrivers), three (75%) owned or operated businesses under their own names. Of the twelve married couples, ten were childless and two accounted for five children (2.5 for families-with-children).

Percent of arriving heads-of-household by decade

	1855-65	1866-75	1876-85	1886-95	1896-1905
Unidentified by birth state	4.2	36.7	60.6	59.3	27.0
From states bordering on Mississippi River or major tributaries (for those identifiable by birth state)	91.3	74.7	76.9	46.1	66.6
From states where slavery was legal before Civil War (for those identifiable by birth state)	45.8	60.5	61.5	87.7	29.6
Remained in La Crosse for five or less years	33.3	61.0	81.8	59.3	89.1
Remained single while living in La Crosse	4.1	54.4	53.0	43.8	67.5
Worked as barbers	37.5	35.2	33.3	15.6	12.6
Worked as barbers and owned/operated their own shops	77.7	12.5	36.3	80.0	75.0
Average Number of children per household-with-children	3.58	2.0	2.3	3.45	2.5

Migration patterns for Blacks leaving La Crosse are equally difficult to determine with certainty. As with arrivers, the data for leavers is sparse. If the conclusion that most arrived by steamboat is correct, however, it is reasonable to believe that most left by the same method and moved to towns located along rivers. Only two heads-of-household were known to have returned to towns-of-origin bordering the Ohio River. Five were identified as leaving for towns further north on the Mississippi River. But others were known to have moved to towns that were not served by river-transport -- Augusta, Georgia; Chicago, Illinois; Boston, Massachusetts; Battle Creek, Michigan; Marquette, Michigan; Kansas City, Missouri; and Sparta, Wisconsin.

OCCUPATIONS

Thirty-nine heads-of-household did not provide sufficient information in the record to indicate occupation or how they made a living while in La Crosse. Most of these were persons listed in records collected at census-taking time or in jail, arrest, welfare, birth, marriage and death records. Their residences in the city were generally brief. Those listed below by occupation were noted according to their first notice-of-occupation in official records. Whether these occupations were those held upon

actual arrival is uncertain, however, because in some cases occupation was not noted until a person had been living in La Crosse for one or more years.

Occupation of head-of-household upon arrival:

The most commonly claimed occupation by arrivers was that of barber. Fifty-three claimed that profession. These were of two categories -- those who operated relatively long-term barbershops and those who worked for short/long terms as employees in barbershops operated by others. Most barbers worked in Black-operated shops. Of the former category, ten became owners/partners in shops that had several chairs operating at the same time. At least three of these came to La Crosse with sufficient funds and barbering experience to open individually-owned shops upon their arrivals. These particular shops became magnets for others who came to La Crosse for short periods and for young men who served barber apprenticeships. Only one of these early barbers was a woman.

The seven most frequently cited locations for Black operated barbershops in the city center were in the basement of the *International Hotel*, the basement of *Augusta House Hotel*, at 1 Main Street, at the corner of Third and Main (two shops), at 50 Pearl Street, and in the Court House Block. Black-owned barbershops on La Crosse's north side

tended to be in shop-houses, places that served both as business and residence addresses. Those barbers who operated shops with many chairs tended to provide housing/boarding for employees, either within the shop itself or at their private residences. This arrangement may suggest (certain in some cases) that young barbers were family relatives who came to La Crosse to serve short-term apprenticeships, and many young barbers left La Crosse within a year or two to establish, perhaps, their own businesses elsewhere.

Another division in barbering reflected different target clients. Those shops located in hotels, near government buildings, or in the center of the city's business district tended to serve business persons or travelers upon the river. These were the "gentlemen's" barbershops. Such shops were clearly a majority for barbershops operated by African-Americans in La Crosse during the 1860-1880 period. Those shops located on Third Street (north of the La Crosse County Courthouse) and in north La Crosse likely served another (perhaps more working-class) clientele.

Those heads-of-household who served White customers (aside from barbers) or who lived in White homes included 49 persons. The most commonly cited of these were domestic servant/housekeeper (9), porter (7), printer/typesetter (7), musician (5), cook (5), hotel worker (5), coachman/horse trainer/valet (5), laundress (2), and one each for bootblack, editor, shampooer, and actor. Those working in hotels as porters, cleaners, charwomen, janitors, and cooks, or who were employed as stewards, cooks and porters, and who were not specifically identified to be of African-American heritage, were not included in the above counts.

There likely were several who fit into the latter categories but were not identified by race in consulted records. Those who worked locally as laborers, or with occupations that were not specifically targeted for an exclusive White clientele, included blacksmiths (3), boatmen (11), boardinghouse operators (4), carpenters (1), chimney sweeps (1), farmers (1), firemen (railway

and steamboat) (3), fishermen (1), foundry workers (1), gamblers (1), ice dealers (1), laborers (15), stonemasons (2), tailors (1), teamsters (2), and whitewashers/plasterers (5).

Occupations for heads-of-household changed, for some, after their arrivals. For whatever reasons, less than forty changed their occupations after one or more years' residence in La Crosse. Some changes reflected multiple experiments by individuals, therefore the total occupations do not match with total numbers of heads-of-household. The most commonly cited second/third occupation was six for porter; four for laborer; three each for boatman, cook, and teamster; two each for barber, coachman, fireman, janitor, and whitewasher; and one each for brakeman, carpenter, engineer, farmer, liveryman, mason, photographer, steward and plasterer.

In those instances where records noted occupation of a spouse at arrival, the most commonly cited occupation of spouses was that of operating a boardinghouse (9), followed by charwoman/domestic (3), cateress (2), cook (2), musician (2), and one each for barber, dressmaker, and laundress. Seven spouses described themselves as housekeepers, an occupation description that could mean various things. Three occupations for spouses certainly were under-represented in original sources. These included those of laundress, boarding provider, and tending to children of others.

For children of heads-of-household who remained in La Crosse long enough to enter the general workforce and whose occupations were noted in official records, six followed their fathers in the barbering trade, effectively carrying on the family business. As would be expected, those identified ambiguously as laborers continued in large numbers. Two became domestics, and two became printers/typesetters. The listing of bartender, carpet layer, cooper, engineer, sleeping car porter, teacher/nanny, vaudeville actor, and deep-sea sailor did reflect, however, some upward mobility and perhaps occupational shifting. Whether these changes were the consequence of

greater respect for or improved opportunities for African-Americans within La Crosse, however, is difficult to ascertain. The 1850 to 1906 time span for this study was a long period, and without a doubt many changes occurred in La Crosse and its economy during that 56-year period.

Condition of employment: Self-employed status was most easily identifiable for barbers who advertised their shops under their own names. The number of barbers employed within a single-chaired shop was not so easily ascertainable. Those barbers, especially those who operated shops out of their homes, likely sustained a single barbering chair in operation or at most one or two additional chairs. Without question, however, most La Crosse-based barbers operated shops in which several (four or more) barbering chairs were operating at the same time. This was especially likely for barbershops located within hotels and near the city center. In those cases, barbers were not only self-employed but also were employers or renters of space. Those working within such shops included experienced barbers, barber apprentices, shampooers, bootblacks, and porters (gatekeepers – those who regulated traffic flow to chairs).

Although details of internal barbershop arrangements do not survive for the La Crosse region, it was customary in that time span for financial rewards to be based on individual productivity and upon particular business agreements struck between shop owner/operator and those working within the shop. In effect, a bootblack might maintain an obliquely-defined self-employed status by paying rent for his space to the shop owner/operator, and his income was earned according to his own productivity, the number of hours he committed to his work, and his acumen as a separate businessman.

Experienced barbers within multi-chaired shops were generally ranked by seniority, with the first available customer being directed to the chair operated by the most senior barber. This meant effectively that there were few incentives to remain in such shops for those with low skill or low

seniority, or for those serving barbering apprenticeships. Income for apprentices (at least 14 persons, but probably more than that number) is also difficult to calculate, for many of these persons boarded with shop operators and perhaps received a minimal wage/income during apprenticeships, in effect paying for training and boarding with labor. Only a barbershop porter was likely to be employed for a regular wage.

Incentive to seek new arrangements was therefore high. Within La Crosse, for instance, partnerships in shops that included persons of nearly equal seniority consisted of *Ball & Vinegar*, *Birney & Cromwell*, *Vinegar & Foster*, *Moss & Holland*, *Birney & Holland*, *Thompson & Holland*, *Thompson & Moss*, *Moss & Son*, *Moss & Thurston*, *Robinson & Williams*, *Moss & Waldron*, and *Cromwell & Rice*. Only one shop was known to be co-owned by three barbers – *Cromwell & Rice*. Such dual/triple-operated shops, however, tended to be of short longevities. The fluid nature of current (2002) barbering practice perhaps had its origins in such circumstances, with a single or two/three barbers operating a shop in partnership, and with some working for an hourly wage while others paid for space and earned income according to productivity/popularity and as separate business persons within a shop.

Occupations such as actor, blacksmith, boardinghouse operator, chimney sweeper, domestic, editor, farmer, fisherman, gambler, day laborer, laundress, musician, tailor, and whitewasher could have referred to persons who advertised (none has been found in print) and sold their labor/profession based on skill/productivity/popularity. The particularity (wages versus board or other payments) of the latter grouping of professions perhaps is not ascertainable.

Only eight heads-of-household were identifiable as possible land speculators or property developers. Six of these were self-employed in other professions (one was not specified by employment and another was a steamboat cook). It is assumed that these persons used speculation as a way to invest savings, avoid paying rents, or gamble on

property/savings/city growth. Only one head-of-household was identifiable as owning property in the city center, and that person purchased land in the early 1850s when the town was only beginning, perhaps gambling on inexpensive land that rapidly increased in value as the business center spread outward from the town's waterfront.

Some occupations (sleeping car porter, coachman/horse tender, hotel worker, boat steward, steamboat man, carpenter, cook, live-in domestic, engineer, fireman, foundry worker, typesetter, teamster) were more clearly associated with White-owned businesses and therefore likely to have been of employed status. Most persons in these occupations likely received wages/payments for labor that were partly in the form of employer-paid board/maintenance. Whether a hotel, railway, or steamship porter received wages or obtained income from tips alone is uncertain.

Domestics and coachmen/horse tenders certainly were among those more likely to receive wages in the form of room and board, but even within this group there were some who occupied separate mailing addresses apart from residences of employers. Railway and steamship employees were recorded in this study only if they maintained separate residences, and it is assumed that those in this group who had mailing addresses in boardinghouses received part of their wages from such arrangements with employers. Others, undoubtedly, maintained mailing addresses in towns other than La Crosse, where spouses/families lived.

Another category of service occupations consisted of those who worked in hotels; it was customary for single persons in hotel service trades to receive room and board within hotels. Notations of racial identity for those in that category were available for La Crosse only at census-taking times, and no La Crosse person of color was noted as living at a hotel at those times. While some hotel workers were identifiable in city directories as living in Black neighborhoods, none were included in this study unless they were identified specifically as Black/colored/mulatto in official records.

RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS

Census records were accumulated on the basis of persons who lived along a particular street or block, and that information depended upon the accuracy/attention/interest of the census-taker in describing the type of dwelling and living arrangements of inhabitants (owners/boarders/room renters) for each dwelling. Few actual addresses were included in early census records. City directories followed similar trends. It was not uncommon, for instance, for an address to be cited as "[s]outhw[est] cor[ner of] Main & 3[third]" or "[s]outh s[ide] Pine bet[ween] 2[second] & 3[third]," rather than a numbered address. This addressing problem was most acute in the early period, before the city/post office adopted a numbering system that dedicated numbers to property lots (houses/dwellings/businesses) within a hundred-block system beginning at Front Street (on the west and next to the Mississippi River) and north and south of Main Street (the dividing line between alternate N/S hundred-numbered blocks). The latter system did not come into being until the early 1880s.

City directories were also unreliable in ascertaining continued residence in some instances. A resident might, for instance, be missed in one edition or described as having a residence (res) in one year and as being a boarder (bds) at the same address in another. Such inconsistency made it difficult to track persons and living arrangements within La Crosse. Actual home ownership could be ascertained in property/tax records, but even in that instance, there were a few local home owners who held property after they left La Crosse for other places.

Reaching conclusions concerning residential patterns is further skewed by the large number of Blacks for whom residential information is lacking. Of the 47 heads-of-household for whom residential information was not found, one of those was known to have lived in La Crosse for four or more years. Of the 15 heads-of-household who were incarcerated within the local jail or state prison and

who appeared only in court/jail records, three were arrested/imprisoned more than once and in different years, at least suggesting that their respective stays in La Crosse were for more than a year. Thirteen others were admitted to the County Poor House/Farm, and of that number only three were listed in city directories or other city records.

Conclusions about residential patterns are also complicated by the fact that La Crosse, and in particular its Black community, was characterized by a large floating population. Such a group likely considered La Crosse as a gateway to the West, as a convenient respite in river-bound journeys to more promising commercial opportunities on the frontier, and as a place where one could earn income that would help to build a grubstake for ventures elsewhere. Indeed, many White immigrants viewed La Crosse in the same way. Arriving with little more than a suitcase, many of these temporary residents lived as cheaply as possible and changed residences as often as their tastes/cooks encouraged them. Despite those drawbacks, several trends were noticeable.

Home ownership: Few owned their own homes. Only eight heads-of-household were identifiable as property owners. Four of these were barbers by trade, and these likely provided room and board for apprentices who worked in their shops. One was a steamboat cook, and his investment in property perhaps attested to significant pay or to business shrewdness on his wife's part. She operated a boardinghouse within this home. One was a farmer who also provided room/board for a number of orphans/indigents, in return for labor on his farm. Another was a janitor who raised a large family that remained in La Crosse for a long term of residence. The final person was a widow whose occupation was not noted in the record.

Renters of houses/apartments/rooms: For most of the 1850 to 1906 period, La Crosse was a typical booming town of the frontier. Buildings in the city center tended to be one- to four-storied structures, with upper floors serving as business locations or housing for transient persons, especially those who

were single or married couples with small families. Reliant as La Crosse was on the lumber milling trade, many early city center buildings were first built of timber. While such building materials were readily obtainable and inexpensive, they had the disadvantage of being easily flammable, with the consequence that contagious fires frequently leveled sections of the city's center. Over time, wooden structures were replaced by buildings constructed with brick, stone, and tin/iron/steel. The latter were generally multi-storied, built with firewalls, and gave the downtown district an aura of prosperity, urban planning, and grandeur.

Proximity of residences to places of business/employment also was important in a time when transportation to outlying residential districts relied on horse-drawn buggies, trams, trolleys, and so forth. Many small families or transient workers, therefore, tended to be compressed into a small space with some city center structures even designated as "tenements" on early fire insurance maps. Boardinghouses, hotels with weekly or monthly rates, and "sample rooms" characterized La Crosse's city center.

It was not uncommon in such towns for building styles, consequently, to change dramatically at the edge of the definable business or downtown district. Beyond that district, residences/buildings (identified as "dwellings" on early Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps) tended to be one- to two-storied wooden structures, with sheds and a stable (for horses, a milk cow, and perhaps chickens and hogs) located at the back of property lots. As late as the early 1880s, for instance, 16 single one/one-and-a-half-storied family dwellings (each with sufficient open land for gardening plots) were situated within the one-block grid bordered by Vine and Pine streets and North Second and North Third streets, a section located only two blocks north of the city center. Population density differences between the city center and adjoining residential areas, therefore, tended to be significant.

It is unlikely (data has not been found to corroborate) that apartments in the modern sense existed in La Crosse during the 1850 to 1906

period. It is more likely that single persons (or married couples with small families) rented rooms/space or boarded in boardinghouses, hotels, "sample rooms," or dwellings occupied by others. Rick Brown, in "Lodging in La Crosse [Wisconsin: 1880s]" (*Past, Present, and Future* [1993]), suggests that twelve percent of 2,594 identified heads-of-household in the 1880 census count housed boarders. Assuredly, some rented as a way to meet their own residence overhead, effectively helping to pay for rent and maintenance housing costs. Others, also certainly in the case of La Crosse, rented rooms as a source of extra income, with some using this income to supplement wages/income from working spouses. Others used this income as the principal source of employment (as cooks and boardinghouse operators).

Within this grouping, four persons rented rooms or provided board as a way to supplement spouses' incomes and meet maintenance costs; one as a single (no other known) source of income for the household; and two for income in addition to another income-generating activity employed within the dwelling (laundress, seamstress, domestic servant, housekeeping). Five provided rooms or board to persons who were identified as youths, orphans, elders, or indigents, but the spouse of one of these operated a farm that perhaps needed extra farmhands who could be expected to pay for room/board through an exchange of labor. At least eight persons provided housing to relatives, but in three of these instances young males were serving apprenticeships in barbershops and were perhaps expected to receive lower wages to compensate for training and boarding.

Black housing districts: Three regions of La Crosse were identifiable as heavily Black-occupied districts. The largest of these was located along North Second and North Third streets, beginning at Vine Street or the County Courthouse and extending northward to Pine, Badger and La Crosse streets. Within that district, the largest concentration of Black-occupied structures was found along Third Street and on Vine and Pine

streets between North Second and North Third streets. During the 1860-1880 period, houses, and many structures there were built of wood, and buildings fronted upon alleys as well as streets.

It is clear that this district was perhaps the least residentially-developed district close to the city center and the district most likely to be razed for downtown expansion or improvement. Indeed, the district was fronted on the west by the freight house of the *Milwaukee Railway* and would be bordered on the east by the terminus of the *Northern Railway*, built in 1884/85. Several manufacturing plants also were located in this district; these included the *Hirtzheimer Plow Works* and a buggy/wagon plant. Forty-nine Black heads-of-household were listed (by addresses) as living in this district during the 1850-1906 period. Another seven heads-of-household were identified in census years only as living in the First and Twelfth wards, designations that corresponded in differing counts to this series of blocks.

The second, and less identifiably Black-occupied district, was along the eleven-hundred numbered blocks of Pine Street and State Street and along North Eleventh between State and Pine. The latter district tended to be that area where early Black settlers (arriving before 1860) had bought undeveloped land and had built houses, some were rented to others and some were built only as capital ventures. Twenty-one heads-of-household lived in this district between 1850 and 1906. The third area in which Blacks maintained households was located in the north side of La Crosse along Mill [aka Third and Copeland] Street in the 400-700 blocks and intersecting corners with St. Andrew, Hagar, St. Cloud, and St. James streets. Fifteen heads-of-household lived in that area, and of that number 14 were barbers who operated shops either nearby or from their residences.

Although these areas accounted for 92 heads-of-household (some of whom moved frequently and were counted more than once while in La Crosse), a near equal number of heads-of-household were scattered throughout La Crosse seemingly at random. Some of those were residents in White

households where they held employment positions as maids, housekeepers, domestics, coachmen, horse tenders, cooks, and so forth. Others maintained residence addresses at boardinghouses or near places of business. While the latter circumstance is unclear, it may suggest that many lived in their places of business or they occasionally resided there while in the city (working on the railways or river boats) and used those addresses as anchors for mail delivery or for contact with friends or relatives.

BLACK/WHITE INTERACTIONS

Population statistics suggest that Blacks in La Crosse in the 1850 to 1906 period, in terms of percentage of total population, fluctuated significantly, with perhaps the highest percentage occurring c. 1870 (125 persons in 7,785 or 1.6%). In effect, except for the significant increase in the early 1870s, La Crosse's Black community was small and reasonably insignificant within the city's overall economy and social fabric. There were no Black entrepreneurs who operated groceries, clothing stores, repair shops, or major (or even minor) merchandising businesses. No sector of the Black population served an exclusively Black community, with the possible exception of boardinghouse operators who rented only a few rooms at most. There were no recorded Black churches. In nearly all instances, Blacks in La Crosse were service persons to a larger White-dominated economy and society.

Interaction between Blacks and Whites in La Crosse, therefore, must have been daily and extensive. Three heads-of-household were known to have become involved in La Crosse-based "labor movements," but in those instances, two were participants in its political wing (Labor/Farmer Party), while the other reluctantly collaborated in Labor's attempt to organize trade unions (barbers in particular) and to establish certain guild rules in the barbering profession. Two heads-of-household were members of the city's exclusive Old Settlers Association, perhaps only by virtue of having arrived in La Crosse by 1857. Fourteen persons

obtained memberships in White-dominated La Crosse-based churches. Three were known to have served in the United States military. Four are identifiable as having arrived in La Crosse primarily at the instigation of a White friend or benefactor, someone who brought them to the city as a reward for past services or as an investment in broadening the city's services at a time when the city's origins were still young and not particularly attractive to newcomers. Although all Black males (with the possible exception of three) were citizens and could vote if they met local poll requirements, it is not known that any in fact voted.

Interaction was likely most acute in the workplace. For all practical purposes, barbers served a predominantly White clientele, and it is reasonable to assume that barbers were the persons most interested in maintaining good relations with their commercial base. In La Crosse, a Black monopoly in barbering had ended by 1875, and after that time, the percentage of Blacks in the barbering profession shrank steadily. For a self-employed Black barber to be successful in La Crosse, it was necessary to provide "good service" and good conversation and to project clearly the perception of acceptance of a service role within the La Crosse community. Those three persons who worked within White-operated barbershops, either as employees or as renters-of-space, needed to follow similar rules. Those who worked as porters, hotel personnel, railway coachmen, horse tenders, maids, domestics, and cooks (effectively anyone who openly interacted with the White-based society) would have been expected to adhere to similar etiquette and racial-accepted norms.

No instance of published contemporary comment has been found to shed light on attitudes held by local Blacks or Whites toward interracial marriage which was noted with high frequency in La Crosse between 1850 and 1906. Thirty Black heads-of-household were married to White spouses during their periods of residence in La Crosse. Thirteen of those marriages occurred in La Crosse. Two marriages of Black women to White men also occurred in La Crosse. These data suggest that, at

least locally, there were no legal restrictions placed upon interracial marriage and that it was possible to officially register such marriages.

While circumstances regarding mixed marriages were not noted in records, it is reasonable to conclude from data that there were comparatively few Black females of marriageable age and status within the La Crosse Black community, relative to the large numbers of eligible and presumably single Black males that lived in the city for varying periods of time. Perhaps that circumstance provides one explanation for the large numbers of single Black males who left La Crosse within a year of arrival. Nevertheless, 28 Black heads-of-household surprisingly were able to marry Black/Mulatto spouses in La Crosse during this period. Only two of those female spouses were identified as residents of La Crosse at the time of marriage. To be sure, many of those marriages were recorded in La Crosse, perhaps only because La Crosse was a frequently-used pause in a riverbound journey that intended to be completed elsewhere. In that instance, La Crosse apparently was a permissive and convenient place to register one's marriage.

Education was another sector in La Crosse where racial interaction likely was high. Unfortunately, public school records were not systematically preserved for much of the 1850 to 1906 period, and those fragments that survived do not provide sufficient data upon which to reach testable conclusions. Close proximity of Black residences to public schools, however, suggests that Black school enrollments might have been disproportionately higher than White enrollments in the city, overall. It is doubtful that any Blacks were members of churches that maintained parochial schools in the district.

BLACK ISSUES

Race and racial identification: The issue of racial identification (separateness based on race) was one that could not have been ignored by those African-Americans who lived in La Crosse. "Black," "Colored," "Ethiopian," "Dusky," "Negro," "N—," "Nigra," "Mulatto," "Quadroon," and

"Darky/Darkie" were commonly used words in the local press to denote persons of African descent. To be sure, some used those words in a derogatory sense, but many local persons used them because they were terms commonly assigned at the time to identify persons of African descent. Almost all references to Blacks in the local White-owned press can be characterized as filler and anecdotal material meant to provide amusing (and ridiculous) relief to the serious questions of politics and economy that dominated the press during that time. Only in obituaries were Blacks, particularly those living in La Crosse, treated as real people.

For many Blacks in La Crosse, some degree of racial identification perhaps was an advantage, particularly in a period when Blacks were considered to be preferred barbers, musicians, minstrels, domestics, housekeepers, cooks, porters, coachmen, and whitewashers. Racial identification actually increased marketability of some skills, especially in the early years of the city's history when the White population was chiefly of Yankee (New England) origin.

That circumstance changed over time, however, as newly-arrived immigrants from northern Europe brought attitudes, languages, religions, skills, and requirements that differed significantly from those that prevailed during the Civil War and the decade that immediately followed it. These new immigrants came without the experience of the Civil War and its impact in their pasts and without the mid-century mystique assigned to a Black/service population within a dominant White/user community. To these newly-arrived, Blacks represented a protected population that spoke English, that could vote, that was not required to serve in the nation's wars or military, and that seemingly claimed a monopoly of certain occupations, especially those that did not require significant outlays of capital investment and those that newly-arrived Europeans were prepared to enter.

For all practical purposes, high European immigration to La Crosse in the last third of the century fractured the city into Yankee, Norwegian, German, Irish, Dutch, Syrian, and Jewish

communities that worshiped separately, spoke different languages, read different newspapers, liked different music, carved out separate monopolies, and lived clustered in communities based along ethnic/linguistic/racial lines. These new communities contested Yankee traditions and Black monopolies at every turn. Such circumstances further isolated Blacks in La Crosse and increased a tendency to identify them as a separate "community of interest."

Socio-economic difference: "Separateness," however, was not "sameness." Ranking occurs in all communities, regardless of manufactured notions of egalitarianism. Within capitalist societies, some degree of ranking is obtained on the basis of capital accumulation. Those Blacks who arrived with capital, with apprenticeships completed, and with skills in demand within the White-dominated economic order were likely viewed by Whites as having higher status, and likely so similarly considered by Blacks within their separate community. Those who owned or operated Black barbershops and who remained in La Crosse for ten years or more may have been perceived as being anchors within that separate community. It is questionable, however, that barbers, as a subgroup, viewed themselves in that fashion, at least early in the period covered by this study. Black-barbering, as a profession, had carved for itself a niche within the White economic order, whether Black barbers in La Crosse sought high position/ranking within the city's Black society, however, is unclear.

It is unfortunate that no diaries, records, traditions, or even photographs survive from within the Black community to provide insight into attitudes that were La Crosse-specific. The only printed "record" that dates to the period and that was owned/operated/written by a member of the Black community was the one-year run (1886-?1888) of *The Wisconsin Labor Advocate*, a labor-related newspaper printed in the city. That newspaper's editor, George Edwin Taylor, was interested in the activities of a social club, the Home Literary Circle (Colored), that clearly was

race-specific in membership. Taylor also mentioned that the city's Black community celebrated a race-specific annual holiday, Black Independence Day, on 1 August. This was a day ostensibly reserved for remembering the liberation of slaves in the British West Indies and was characterized by community picnicking and by a ball held in the evening at one of the city's dance halls. It would be hard to argue, however, that the sources for these race-specific activities had their origins within the requirements of a Black community. An equally persuasive argument could be made that Blacks were simply following customs created by other separate communities within the larger, and still dominant, White cultural fabric. Norwegians celebrated Norwegian Independence Day, Germans had their own singing societies, and everyone seemed to have a separate and ethnic-specific literary group.

Despite these reservations, it is reasonable to suspect that some internal ranking occurred with respect to occupation and longevity within the Black community. Those who operated their own shops (barbers and one editor) likely were viewed as highest in ranking, followed by those persons who lived within or served White households. Those who were serving apprenticeships (i.e., on a track to become separate entrepreneurs in the immediate future) were likely given high status as well, although lower than those who had already met guild requirements. Those persons who worked within White-operated shops or stores (i.e., those working inside buildings and serving customers) also likely were considered of higher rank than those who sold their labor in outside tasks, such as day laborers, fishermen, chimney sweeps, foundry workers, and whitewashers.

Social ranking likely followed economic ranking with the exception that those who had received an education and were literate may have enjoyed higher ranking, despite their own economic pursuits or those of spouses. Those who belonged to or participated in the Home Literary Circle (Colored) and those who helped to organize activities surrounding Black Independence Day may have reflected higher social ranking within the

community. And finally, those who joined White-dominated churches (i.e., those who had attempted to integrate themselves within the White-dominated establishment) were likely also viewed as having higher status. In effect, social ranking may have been gauged more by seeking and obtaining status within community-dominated sectors and, inevitably, by period of longevity within La Crosse.

Source of spouses: One issue that likely was considered crucial within the Black community and may have hampered the community's growth was the question of sources of spouses for those sons and daughters who reached marriageable age while in La Crosse or for persons who had arrived in La Crosse at a marriageable age and who might have remained longer within the community had enough potential spouses been present. This is based on an assumption that the Black community welcomed growth, an assumption that cannot be tested. Although 28 persons were able to find and marry Black spouses in La Crosse, only two of those spouses were La Crosse natives or persons who lived in La Crosse before marriage. As noted earlier, another 32 persons found spouses from within the White community. Twenty-eight persons were identifiable as not having found spouses of marriageable age while they lived in La Crosse, although that number likely was much higher. If one considers that 47 persons of single status were identified as living in La Crosse at census times (one day or longer) or were mentioned only once (for a residence of perhaps one/two years at most), the problem of locating spouses within La Crosse might have greater meaning. Assuming, for instance, that census numbers reflected only happenstance and that in non-census years an equal number of persons-of-color may have "floated," uncounted and unmentioned, through the community and might have remained if potential spouses had been available, that figure acquires greater significance. The probability that La Crosse, like other booming communities on the frontier, was a town where eligible men far outnumbered eligible women and where that disparity was

perhaps even more problematic within the Black community, in effect, may have encouraged Black single men to "float through" La Crosse after working a short period of time, receiving apprenticeships in established Black-owned barbershops, and moving on to "greener pastures" (in all senses of the word) elsewhere.

Mutual assistance: Another issue confronting the Black community was the question of care for indigents, orphans, retarded, and abandoned persons. During this period, there did exist some governmental agencies that were designated to serve such persons, but it was also expected that each community of interest would care for its own ethnic members in one way or other. To be sure, confinement for those with communicable diseases or suffering from degrees of instability or mental disorder was viewed as a city or county responsibility, at least in a sense. Thirteen Black persons were noted as having been admitted to the La Crosse County Poor House/Farm and one to the La Crosse County Asylum for Chronic Insane. Six persons were listed as having requested and received "welfare" assistance in some form. While no study has been engaged to compare these figures to non-Black admissions to the County Poor House/Farm or to assistance from welfare departments, it is likely that Blacks did not receive disproportionate admissions or assistances in either of these instances or during the period under study.

Care for children or indigents is another issue, however. The 1850 to 1906 period was a time of higher-than-current instance of mortality at birth for both child and mother. Fathers often found themselves with a brood of children and without a spouse to give them care. Fathers also were more likely to suffer serious injury or death in the workplace. While parents may have wished to be responsible for the care of children, it also was not uncommon that infants were left with relatives while parent(s) traveled the frontier in search of employment and illusive fortune. Even to this date, one hears occasional comment that Black families treat children within a community as belonging to

the community, that some children belong more to the community (other mothers) than to a particular parent or guardian. Some children were simply abandoned. Some were illegitimate, or were of mixed descent, reflecting the consequence of liaisons that may have been frowned upon by both Black and White communities. Five persons were identifiable in La Crosse as providing housing for such persons. Whether those persons received payment in the form of labor or monetary payment could not be ascertained. One, Nathan Smith, a farmer living near West Salem, assuredly received

labor in return for the care that he gave to youths and indigents. It is unlikely that the Black community was significantly different from the White community with respect to youths and indigents, except that larger religious-centered communities in La Crosse offered care in institutions (orphanages, elder homes, and so forth) that were established particularly to serve those needs.

The Barber Shops Of Early Days.

The death of Nelson Robinson reveals many interesting reminiscences regarding the barber shops of this city. His barber shop in the southeast of the second oldest shop in La Crosse. The barber business in the early history of the city was done by colored men exclusively. These drifted in here from the lower river to the Wisconsin, and as they became acquainted, located permanently in the town along the upper river. The first barber shop in the city was opened by a colored man named Williams. He conducted it for some time, and later located at Green Bay and died there. The second one that was located was that of John W. Birney, who came here from Louisville in 1837, landing from a steamboat on the bank of the river, where a pretty new and attractive-looking town on a sand bank. He opened a barber shop on South Front street opposite the old Augusta house, where Levy's block now is. Later he moved across the street adjoining the hotel and remained there for several years, when he again moved to a small frame building on North Third street, just north of the corner now occupied by the Wilhelm-Nelson Carpet company, which was at that time occupied by a one story wooden building which was the seed office. Before moving to this location, however, he catered into partnership with a colored man named Alex Crowwell, and under the firm name of Birney & Crowwell. This was in 1840. This year "Jack" Moss and John Thompson came to the city, the latter taking a chair in the shop of Birney & Crowwell. These two men were in the war together and together had acquired

while in Tennessee, although they came to La Crosse several months apart. This shop was run here until the latter part of 1841, when fire swept out almost everything in that block. The only building that was not destroyed was the bank shop. After the fire the shop was moved across the street to a small frame building where the Rudolf fighting now stands, on the corner of Third and Main streets. At this time Robinson Kiro was the only white barber in the city. He conducted a shop on Front street, on the corner of 1850, Stephen Moulter came to La Crosse, being the second white barber. The next week he opened up in the Charles hotel, of which Louis Kiro was landlord, next west of where Jacob Kiefer's store now is. From there Moulter moved to the Espérance block, on Third street.

"Jack" Moss opened a shop shortly after coming here, and was resident of the city until about five years ago when he left for Battle Creek, Mich., where he died. The firm of Birney and Crowwell was dissolved and Mr. Birney conducted the business alone under the old position of the shop on North Third street until January 24, 1853, when he disposed of the shop to Nelson Robinson, and his brother-in-law, George Williams. Mr. Crowwell afterwards ran a shop alone until he moved to Boston, where he is now living and thriving. He has two daughters in his new location in the public schools of Boston.

Mr. Birney was a well educated and intelligent man. He was appointed by Governor Root, one of the ten commissioners of the state to the World's Fair at New Orleans, Hon. E. D. Hollen, a Milwaukee millionaire, being the other. After departing, he was business manager of the fair. His wife and daughter had been living in that city some year prior to his leaving. Miss Florence Birney, who was a graduate of the La Crosse high school, was then teaching in the state normal school at Louisville, an institution chiefly patronized by colored people. This was the cause of the change and as Louisville was the

in continuous order patronized by colored people was the cause of his being located as Louisville was the birthplace of both Mr. and Mrs. Birney, they preferred to make that city their home.

Before leaving the city Mr. Birney was presented with a handsome gold watch as a token of appreciation by seventy-seven of our leading citizens. The idea was originated by John Stone and G. H. South, who raised the money amounting to \$25. The evening before leaving, his former shop was filled with old friends and the presentation speech was made by the late I. L. Taylor.

The firm of Robinson & Williams conducted the shop at the old stand for some time, after which the former bought on Mr. Williams' old stand on the corner of Main street, where he is now in business at the time of the death. I. E. Williams will continue the business.

In the first city directory for 1840-41, the barber shops are given as follows: J. W. Birney, on Front street, between Second and Third on the north side; Constantine Kiro, north side of Front street between Second and Third; Mr. Lewis Stone, north side of Third street between Second and Third.

Thompson (leg.) & Moss ("Jack"), south side of Front street between Second and Third. Charles E. Williams, north side of Main street between Front and Second. Mr. Kiro was the only white man in this list.

There are now thirty-five barbers about in the city, of which five are conducted by colored men. They are Robinson on Front street, and Ashby, Johnson, John Vester and the Ferguson on the North side. The latter was formerly employed in Rock but has come here a few months ago.

Mr. Robinson's shop, with its interior of walling, has also followed in the same old line of John Birney. Such men as Harvey G. Johnson, John Wood, W. H. Henson, G. M. Woodard, U. H. Smith, Capt. McDonough and many more have long been patrons. The shop was closed for a day or two, and they are likely to continue under the new regime.

Figure 15. Barber Shops of Early Days. Source: *La Crosse Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1898.

NATHAN SMITH DEAD.

The Aged Colored Man Dies Suddenly
A Res. Livior Here Several Years.

Nathan Smith, the aged colored man who has been a familiar figure in the county for the past half century, died suddenly at his little hamlet on French Island about 1 o'clock Sunday morning, aged 80 years.

For the past several weeks he was a daily visitor to town, last Saturday afternoon, was his last appearance upon the streets on the North Side. His death is supposed to have been caused by heart failure and old age. Mr. Smith's remains were shipped to West Salem and the funeral services held at that place.

Nathan's Smith's life has been an interesting one and there has probably been no more familiar figure in the county than his. At one time, his body servant to a governor and foster parent of an orphan who subsequently was a candidate for president of the United States, this kind hearted old negro has been spending his declining days in a dilapidated little house on an exceedingly small farm on French Island. Here for several years he has eked out an existence in raising the few small patches of vegetable and farm produce which his feeble condition would enable him to care for and market.

When Governor Washburn came to La Crosse to live many years ago, he brought with him Nathan Smith as a servant. Through many years of service the colored man had become as one of the family, and during the last years of Mr. Washburn's life he placed the old man in control of a small farm on the north Salem road.

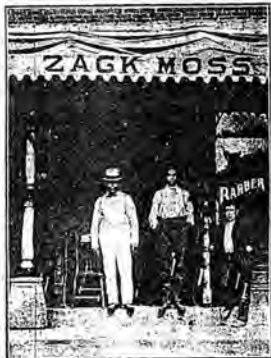
Childless and lonely Nathan Smith sought about for company and finally adopted a small colored boy from a home for neglected children. The boy's foster parent had a great respect for education and sent the lad to school in West Salem, where, after graduation from the Salem school the colored boy went to University in Iowa, where too, he graduated and graduated with honorable mention. Then he came to La Crosse and became a reporter on "Hick" Monroy's paper, also leader of the colored people in the city. Later he went to Iowa, where he was connected with several papers and from there he drifted north to be lost in the memory of La Crosse people for many years. In the last campaign George E. Taylor, who is a rickety old rig with Nathan on the seat, has driven through the streets of La Crosse many years ago, headed the ticket of one of the colored people, a candidate for president of the United States.

When "cocky," the murderer of Frank Byron, was dragged from the jail where now stands the new court house, it was in the arms of a man whose hand that clenched the murderer, and his other that grasped the rope at the end of which hung his pistol at the saddened mob. It was a big, burly justice-loving Nathan Smith who braved his side and led the mob to batter down the prison doors.

George E. Taylor, foster son of the late Nathaniel Smith, and once presidential candidate in a recent election, is in the city. Mr. Taylor came to La Crosse immediately upon notification of the death of Nathaniel Smith, former wicket of the Gov. C. C. Washburn, who died Sunday at his home on French Island. Mr. Taylor is engaged in farming at Ottumwa, Ia., recently having retired from the newspaper business on account of poor health.

Rearred near La Crosse and educated at West Salem and Gale college at Stateville, Mr. Taylor is one of La Crosse's noted persons. He will visit in the city and at West Salem for several days.

Figure 19. Nathan Smith Obituary. Source: *La Crosse Argus*, 1 April 1905, 3.

Zack Moss, Tonsorialist.

Zack Moss, one of the best known barber shop proprietors of North La Crosse is a native of the city, and has spent most of his years here. A quarter of a century ago he ran the leading shop on the North Side, and he is still at it. Mr. Moss has been in his present location at 512 Mill Street for seven years, and has established a profitable patronage, largely among the railroad men, who make their headquarters in the neighborhood.

Good work at fair prices is the Moss motto, and the genial proprietor of the shop has found it a desirable one. Only skilled workmen are employed, and whether a plain shave or a more elaborate service is needed Mr. Moss is the man to see.

Figure 18. Zacharias Henry Moss. Source: *La Crosse Argus*, 3 August 1907.

CHAPTER VI.

BLACK LA CROSSE: FROM TRADING POST TO FRONTIER BOOM TOWN, 1850-1865

Note: This chapter appeared, in an earlier form, in *Past, Present, & Future*, vol.20 6:1, 3-7, vol.21 1:1, 3-7, and vol.21 2:1, 3-7. Slight language and content changes have been made.

The thirty-five-year period from 1960 to 1995 has brought with it significant ethnic change to the City of La Crosse. In the 1960 Census of Population, as few as 22 African-Americans were listed as residents of La Crosse, with only 19 nonwhite households in a total of 14,628 households in the city.²²⁰ By 1970, African-Americans numbered 64 persons, in 15 separate households.²²⁴ A decade later, the number had climbed to 136 persons in 20 households, however 45 of that number were residents of institutions within the city.²²⁵ The 1990 Census of Population, available with computerized search capability and

in a much-enhanced format, enumerated 370 African-Americans in 59 separate households. Of that number, 82 were attending college and another 121 were enrolled in pre-primary, and elementary/secondary schools.²²⁶ Within a total city population that remained basically stable at 50,000 after 1960, African-Americans more than doubled their numbers each decade.

But perhaps the greatest change occurred after 1990. If increases until 1990 doubled each decade, increases since then have jumped significantly. Although the official enumeration in year 2000 listed only 806 persons of African descent in the city, some members within that community consider that figure to be a substantial underestimate.

Some have characterized these recent numbers as a "migration wave," a migration that La Crosse is experiencing in the same way that other cities its size are experiencing similar migrations. This new migration has its own history and its own motives.

²²⁰United States Department of Commerce, 1960 Census of Population, Characteristics of the Population, Wisconsin, Table 21: Characteristics [by race], Heads-of-Household. Total population of 47,575 persons.

²²⁴United States Department of Commerce, 1970 Census of Population, Characteristics of the Population, Wisconsin, Table 23: Race by Sex for Areas and Places; Table 25: Household Relationships. Total population of 51,153 persons.

²²⁵United States Department of Commerce, 1980 Census of Population, General Social and Economic Characteristics, Wisconsin, Table 58: Race by Sex; Table 132: Households. Total population of 48,347 persons.

²²⁶United States Department of Commerce, 1990 Census of Population, Wisconsin, La Crosse [this is now available on CD]. Total population of 51,003 persons.

The origins of these new migrants varies, and each migrant has his reasons for leaving one place and moving to another. Some leave a large metropolitan area as a way to escape unhealthy living conditions, crime, or a bad social environment. Some come to La Crosse for educational or employment opportunities, and some, simply enough, are attracted by its recreational benefits and scenic beauty. Some are escaping from something; some are attracted to something. Some come from the North, some from the South. This new wave has occurred throughout the nation. For La Crosse, however, this is a second wave of African-American migration in its history. The first wave began with the founding of the town in the 1840s, and that wave continued into the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Black La Crosse was much like any other frontier town on the Upper Mississippi River during the years preceding and during the Civil War. Located within the Northwest Territory, Wisconsin was nominally Indian Country, and its laws protected, to some extent, African-Americans who sought refuge there. Many African-American frontiersmen came from the North, from New England and those states that stretched westward to the Mississippi River, and most of these were born free, in territory where slavery was illegal. Many moved westward for the same reasons as Whites, looking for new opportunities, if not riches, supposedly waiting there for the taking. These riches came in the form of land and service occupations in demand in rapidly growing communities.

The history of African-Americans in La Crosse begins almost from the moment that the settlement took its name. This report, covering the 1850 to 1865 period, is divided into three parts. Part I describes the town and those characteristics, and the propaganda distributed by early land speculators designed to draw settlers, that attracted newcomers to the region, whether of European or African-American heritage. Part II focuses on peculiar characteristics of the territory and state that were particularly attractive to African-Americans and

their settlement history during the pre-war years. Part III considers the trauma of the war years and the ways that African-Americans coped as settlers in a town geared to war.

Part I: Attractions of the City; Antebellum, 1850-1861

Those characteristics that drew African-Americans to frontier La Crosse during the second half of the nineteenth century were the same as those that attracted settlers of European ancestry. Located approximately 50 miles north of the long-established community of fur traders at Prairie du Chien at the mouth of the Wisconsin River, La Crosse was positioned on the eastern side of the Mississippi River on a sandy prairie that extended about seven miles along the river's banks and eastward for another two-and-a-half miles before running into bluffs that rose 500 feet above the river's elevation. The eastern bank of the river at this point contrasted dramatically with the general character of the river along this part of its course. To the north, the river channeled a deep but narrow path with the river only a few hundred yards across. To the south, bluffs formed a canyon through which the river sprawled wide, with little room on either bank for man to build settlements, roads, or anything else. Towns along this part of the river tended to be camped at the narrow foot of bluffs or upon the few gentle prairies found along the river's course. La Crosse was located upon one of these prairies.

Other characteristics that drew settlers, and Native Americans before them, were physical features of the prairie that were especially attractive. The plain seemed ready-made for settlement and development. Reasonably flat with few trees that might need to be removed, most of the prairie was high enough above the river's flood stage to assure both safety during the worst of the river's rampages as well as adequate drainage.²²⁷

²²⁷Albert H. Sanford and H. J. Hirschheimer, *A*
(continued...)

Ditches or ravines interrupted sand dunes, here and there. For the 1840s and 1850s, however, these obstacles, still on the outskirts of the settlement, were minor in comparison to tumbleweed that rolled in from the prairie east of Second Street.²²⁸ Later testaments generally listed the absence of malaria as an important attribute of the area; why early settlers neglected to mention mosquitoes can perhaps be excused as self-serving. Fresh water that was clear and odor-free was doubtless a principal attraction.²²⁹ In comparison with other river towns located a hundred miles to the south, this part of the Mississippi system was less disease-plagued, but perhaps no more so than other areas located nearby.

More important were river characteristics that near La Crosse curved from a southeasterly to a southerly direction, creating a natural harbor that was free of sand bars on its east bank and ran clear and deep. This feature soon would attract large paddle wheel vessels and packet ships and transform La Crosse into a major shipping center, with ship building and repair, and maintenance shops among the region's principal employers.²³⁰

White settlers were the first to recognize the importance of these advantages and exploit them. Native Americans had long maintained

settlements along this section of the river, especially along the La Crosse River which joins the Mississippi at Prairie La Crosse.²³¹ During a later era, French fur traders conducted commerce from this prairie, and perhaps they are responsible for the currently-held notion that Prairie La Crosse obtained its name from a lacrosse-like game that they reported local Native Americans as playing.²³² French traders held a prominent role in the economic development of Prairie du Chien, only 50 miles to the south of La Crosse; in 1840, however, no Frenchmen or persons with French surnames were listed as residents of the sand burrs at Prairie La Crosse.

It was from Prairie du Chien that the first English-speaking traders came to La Crosse. Nathan Myrick, a recently-arrived Yankee agent attached to the trading empire of Hercules Dousman of Prairie du Chien, established a trading outpost at La Crosse in 1841 at the foot of the sand hills and opened his fur trade with the indigenous natives. Other Yankees joined him soon thereafter, and the fur trading frontier made another leap into the northwest. One of Myrick's partners, Eben Weld, left La Crosse in 1842 for Fort Snelling in Minnesota, only the first of a long line of leavers who passed through La Crosse for the promise of greater riches to the north and west. From 1841 to 1848 the principal reason for La Crosse's existence was commerce with Native Americans who brought furs to the river's edge. Myrick served from 1843 to 1848 as the settlement's first postmaster and its

²²⁸(...continued)

History of La Crosse, Wisconsin 1841-1900 (La Crosse: La Crosse County Historical Society, 1951), 53; see also Captain Willard Glazier, *Down the Great River* (Philadelphia: Hubbard Brothers, 1887), 221.

²²⁹Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 53; Letter, Laura T. Thornely [Smith] to First Baptist Church, January 16, 1922, La Crosse Public Library Archives. Morrison McMillan, "Early Settlement of La Crosse and Monroe Counties," *Wisconsin Historical Collection*, IV (1906), 387, wrote that when he arrived at La Crosse in 1851, the prairie was "covered with claim shanties, made of rough boards, and of almost every conceivable shape."

²³⁰Anon., *The Industries of La Crosse, Wis., 1888* (La Crosse: Spicer & Buschman, [c.1888]), 6.

²³¹Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 53.

²³²Robert Boszhardt, "A Geographical Perspective on the Archaeological Potential of the Lower La Crosse River Valley," *Wisconsin: Mississippi Valley Archaeological Center of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse*, 1989 (typescript 16+).

²³³Andrew J. Vieau, Sr., "Narrative of Andrew J. Vieau," *Wisconsin Historical Collection*, XI (1888), 227; Alfred Brunson, "Wisconsin Geographical Names," *Wisconsin Historical Collection*, I (1903), 114; [Moses Paquette], "The Wisconsin Winnebagoes," *Wisconsin Historical Collection*, XVII (1892), 426-427; McMillan, "Early Settlement," 383-384; Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 9-10.

elder statesman.²³³

Once traders arrived on the prairie, the lure for land speculation and property development soon followed. Myrick early understood that his outpost needed settlers to increase its value, and he began to draw others to his new settlement. At this he was moderately successful. Those he convinced to come to La Crosse recruited others, and the young settlement grew rapidly. The territory of Wisconsin in the 1840s was an exciting and rapidly changing region. The Mineral Point Land District, of which La Crosse was a part, for example, was surveyed in 1845-56 and offered for sale at auction in January 1848. Myrick and his associates purchased large town plots for a low bid of \$1.25 per acre. Although Myrick himself left for St. Paul in 1848, others, particularly John Levy, Timothy Burns, Peter Cameron, and Asa White, to mention only a few, remained and developed the town.²³⁴ Another event of importance in 1848 was the first removal of Native Americans from the district. Although Native Americans remained a common feature of La Crosse life until the end of the century, their formal removal in 1848 helped to change the settlement from a fur trading village to a frontier community.²³⁵

²³³Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 11-19. Myrick served as the settlement's postmaster from 1843 to 1848. Robert Boszhardt, "Notes on the Fur Trade, Land Speculation, and Indian Removal at Prairie La Crosse, 1837-1841," Wisconsin: Mississippi Valley Archaeological Center of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, 1989 (typescript 89+), 5-12. documents that there probably was an earlier European settlement by John R. Coons and George Cabbage in 1837.

²³⁴Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 42-43; McMillan, "Early Settlement," 383-384. Those who remained included John Levy, Timothy Burns, Peter Cameron, and Asa White, all principal land developers. For Burns, see Theodore Rodolf, "Pioneering the Wisconsin Lead Region," *Wisconsin Historical Collection*, XV (1900), 381.

²³⁵Augusta [Fredericka] Levy, "Reminiscences (continued...)"

By the early 1850s, the village of La Crosse had changed considerably. Improved transportation linked La Crosse by land and river with major centers in the Midwest. Stage coaches operated three times weekly between Milwaukee and La Crosse, and river traffic increased dramatically as well.²³⁶ With statehood for Wisconsin in 1848, a "railroad mania" swept the state, and the legislature introduced more than 50 bills in 1853 alone. Over one hundred railroad companies were chartered in the state during the 1850s.²³⁷

The enthusiasm of an endless and boundless frontier was not just state-capital concentrated either. La Crosse and its citizens also showed signs of the contagion. One account, perhaps self-serving, reported that railroads could be built only as far north as La Crosse because permafrost, further north, made rail foundations unstable; following this logic, La Crosse would become the terminus for all major lines seeking trade with the northwest.²³⁸

Although this premise was soon to be found false, that discovery did little to stop La Crosse from describing itself as the "Gateway" to the northwest. With La Crosse already established in Mississippi River commerce and with railroad construction proceeding steadily from Chicago toward Milwaukee, it was inevitable that La Crosse-based investors would form and capitalize a La Crosse & Milwaukee line in 1852, to entice the former to La Crosse. This railroad would join

²³⁶(...continued)

of Pioneer Days in La Crosse Wisconsin," introduction by A. H. Sanford, typescript, 19[-], 26.

²³⁷Richard N. Current, *The History of Wisconsin* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976), 27.

²³⁸Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 29.

²³⁹Katharine Wesson, "Early Overland Routes of Travel to La Crosse," in *La Crosse County Historical Sketches*, Series 2, edited by A. H. Sanford (La Crosse: for the La Crosse County Historical Society, 1935), 26.

with the "Green Bay, Milwaukee & Chicago Railroad," connecting La Crosse with Chicago and points east.²³⁹ Other investors dreamed of a canal to connect the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, thereby providing the water link between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi and, inevitably, La Crosse.²⁴⁰ But other towns also had such dreams. Prairie du Chien became the first Mississippi terminus of a Wisconsin line in 1857, one year before the first tracks reached La Crosse. The latter, to the dismay of Prairie du Chien investors, however, would soon deal a major blow to their fortunes, because the La Crosse line was 86 miles closer to St. Paul and located along a straighter line between Milwaukee and the twin towns of Minneapolis/St. Paul.²⁴¹

It was common, then as now, for towns to advertise themselves as a way to attract both settlers and investors. The *La Crosse Democrat* in 1853 and its successor *La Crosse National Democrat* in 1854, for example, published directories that listed principal businesses and names of prominent citizens. The 1853 listing enumerated 55 as "business persons," among whom were two tailors, one teacher, 13 store operators, four lawyers, five doctors, three land agents, two

constables, one farmer, seven hotel managers, one baker, two painters, one nursery operator, one ferry operator, two printers, one clergyman, one barber, and one government clerk. The town had become the county seat in 1851.²⁴²

Reverend Spencer Carr wrote a more energetic description in 1854, presumably at the urging of the town fathers. In his *Brief Sketch of La Crosse*, Carr enumerated virtues of town and citizens and, understandably, left out any mention of mosquitoes. He exaggerated the degree to which the region was settled and described La Crosse as the jumping-off place for settlers intending to go to Minnesota or the Dakotas. For Carr, La Crosse was the premier city between Galena, Illinois, and St. Paul. Surrounded by rich agricultural land, it was the site of one lumber mill (with another planned for 1855), was becoming important in shipbuilding because of its location on the river and because of its closeness to an endless supply of firewood, and would become a major center of land transportation between Chicago and St. Paul when the railroad arrived. But perhaps the most intriguing portion of Carr's description is his listing, by name and occupation, of 38 single women who would consider propositions of marriage.²⁴³

²³⁹Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 54-55; Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 15; Bailhasar Henry Meyer, "A History of Early Railroad Legislation in Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Historical Collection*, XIV (1898), 298-299. See John M. Bernd, "The La Crosse and Milwaukee Railroad Grant, 1856," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, XXX (December 1946), 141-153, and Fred L. Holmes, *Badger Saints and Sinners* (Milwaukee: E. M. Hale and Company, 1939), 158-167, for descriptions of the scandal involving bribery, extortion, and thievery that was associated with this particular land grant. See also *Yesterday and Today, 1868-1918, Roosevelt, W. A., Co.* (Chicago: Starvum Thomson and Bennett, privately published, n.d.) for a view of La Crosse as a distribution center for goods and immigrants into Minnesota and the Dakotas.

²⁴⁰Meyer, "History of Early Railroad Legislation," 218-220; Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 21-23.

²⁴¹Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 33.

²⁴²*La Crosse Democrat*, Sept. 27, 1853. Directories, list in pencil. La Crosse Public Library Archive, Ms F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 4, Folder 14; *The Industries of La Crosse, Wis., 1888* (La Crosse: Spicer & Buschman [c.1888]), 4.

²⁴³Rev. Spencer Carr, *A Brief Sketch of La Crosse, Wisconsin, Showing its Location, Scenery, Etc.* (La Crosse: W. C. Rogers, 1854), 8-28. Carr's comment about unmarried females in La Crosse differed remarkably from Mary A. Clarke's description in "Social Life in Early La Crosse," *La Crosse County Historical Sketches*, 6, edited by Albert H. Sanford (La Crosse: La Crosse County Historical Society, 1942), 76-86. Clarke wrote, page 80, referring to the 1860s/70s, that "beaux were so numerous always that we almost swept them from the doorstep," certainly suggesting a significant imbalance in numbers of upper class marriageable males to females.

To what effect these advertisements were responsible for the dramatic rise in population from 745 in 1853, to 1,637 in 1855, and to 3,860 in 1860 is unclear in the sources, but it is certain that La Crosse shared disproportionately in population increases during these years of western expansion. Part of that increase came directly from growth in a lumber industry that had established itself at La Crosse and northward along the Black River where an enormous extent of excellent pine trees was found. Lumber literally "sprang into life" in La Crosse in 1853, as noted earlier by Carr, and continued to dominate the city's economic future into the 1890s. Six billion board feet of logs passed through La Crosse between 1855 and 1899, and much of that was processed in local mills. The first mill was built in 1852, a second in 1853, and another in 1854. By 1856, five were operating in North La Crosse and four in La Crosse. The financial panic of 1857 ruined several mills, and full recovery did not return until after the Civil War. By 1881, however, ten mills were operating in the greater La Crosse area, processing more than 250,000,000 feet of pine per year.²⁴⁴

Concurrent with the rise of lumber processing was a corresponding growth of La Crosse's importance as a center of river trade. Ready access via the river to towns that, needing processed timber and availability of scrap firewood from mills, attracted increasing numbers of paddle wheelers and packets to the city. Repair facilities also dotted the shorelines of the Mississippi and Black rivers. From 309 steam packet arrivals reported at La Crosse in 1853, the number rose

rapidly to 542 in 1854, 904 in 1855, 1,200 in 1856 and 1,569 in 1857. Three million bushels of wheat passed through La Crosse terminals in 1861, and new industries in flour-making and ice-cutting appeared to signal further dramatic growth for the city. When one considers that river traffic at La Crosse ended early in November and returned only in mid-March, this increase of river traffic and growth of new industries must have influenced profoundly the city's character. As a ferry point, La Crosse recorded that 61 prairie schooners crossed the river on one day in June of 1856.²⁴⁵

Social and cultural amenities also were available in La Crosse during the antebellum period, and these attracted settlers. The town's first school opened in 1851, and by 1855, 109 of 164 persons of school age were attending school.²⁴⁶ The Third Ward School, located between Eighth and Ninth on Division Street where Lincoln Middle School now stands, opened in 1855. There also were numerous private schools, common for a frontier where snobbery was fairly commonplace. The first Catholic school opened in 1858. The First Baptist Church opened in 1852, sharing for three years the same structure with Congregationalists. A lyceum series began in 1852-53, and a Library Company lasted from 1853 to 1859 and was the predecessor of the Young Men's Library Association that preceded the city's present library system.²⁴⁷ Three

²⁴⁴Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 154-155; Richard Lewis Canuteson, "The Lumbering Industry of the Black River" (unpublished B. A. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1925), 22-29; Hannibal Plain, "The Black-River Boom," *American Magazine* (March 1888), 549-555; Dorothy Sagen Johnson, "Lumbering on the Black River at Onalaska, Wisconsin, 1852-1902" (unpublished M. S. thesis, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, 1974), passim.

²⁴⁵Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 51, 78, 133-34. Ruth Bristow, "Early Steamboat and Packet Lines," *La Crosse County Historical Sketches*, 1 (La Crosse: Liesenfeld Press, 1931), 32, wrote that once railroads reached La Crosse, all transport through the city increased significantly. Railroads brought immigrants and cargo that needed to be transported by steamer ships further upstream. This meant that La Crosse also became the jumping-off point for any overland traffic into southern Minnesota or to the Dakotas.

²⁴⁶Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 61.

²⁴⁷Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 61-69. Later writing about Cadwallader C. (continued...)

newspapers served the settlement before the Civil War: the *Spirit of the Times* (1852), the *Democrat* (1853) that became the *National Democrat* (1854 and after), and the *Independent Republican* that began publication in 1854.²⁴⁸

Balancing these honorable characteristics were several questionable ones. As a frontier town where shipping, milling, and railroading increasingly dominated, La Crosse had the feel of a boomtown, populated by hardy and independent people. The large number of hotels, eleven in 1856, exemplified the transitory nature of a significant portion of its population.²⁴⁹ Lumberjacks worked hard in the pineries along the Black River, and they descended upon the town during weekends and relaxed as only lumberjacks were able. Barroom fights, brawls, knifings, public drunkenness, and gambling were common, and a large number of "whorehouses" became a continuing feature of the town and a part of local lore.²⁵⁰ These, then, were characteristics that drew White settlers to the city

and the region.

Part II: Attractions and Opportunities for African-Americans, 1850-1861

If there were opportunities in La Crosse for White settlers in the antebellum period, there also were attractions and opportunities for African-Americans. Several philosophical attractions drew African-Americans to Wisconsin, and inevitably some of these attractions drew immigrants to La Crosse. From the beginning of census records, African-Americans were mentioned. In 1820, Crawford County, located at the southwestern corner of the state, contained only 361 civilians and 131 soldiers, of which 16 were "free Negroes."²⁵¹ To be sure, some African-Americans came as slaves (eleven were reported in 1840) attached to military officers at Fort Crawford or to Southern residents in Prairie du Chien, but most African-Americans came as freemen from New England and the Central states, or as "runaways." The 1840 census listed 185 free African-Americans in Wisconsin, with half that number under the age of 24 years. In 1850 the number had climbed to 635, but "still less than 1 per cent of the total population."²⁵² Of that number, 101 were residents of Milwaukee, where they dominated the barber trade in 1850.²⁵³

The transition of Wisconsin from territory to state in 1848 brought change and further encouragement to African-American immigration. Two state referendums regarding African-American suffrage were turned down in 1846 and 1847, but the character of the vote closely reflected deep-seated attitudes with regional origins. Eight counties that favored African-American suffrage in

²⁴⁷(...continued)

Washburn claimed that he endowed a "People's Library" in La Crosse; see "In Memoriam: Cadwallader C. Washburn," *Wisconsin Historical Collection*, X (1909), 346, 358; and H. Russell Austin, *The Wisconsin Story: The Building of a Vanguard State* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Journal, 1948), 156.

²⁴⁸Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 69; see also Mary A. Clarke, "Social Life in Early La Crosse," in *La Crosse County Historical Sketches, Series 6*, edited by Albert H. Sanford (La Crosse: La Crosse County Historical Society, 1942), 76-86; *The Industries of La Crosse, Wis., 1888* (La Crosse: Spicer & Buschman, [1888]), 17, listed the LaDue Brothers as publishers of *Spirit of the Times*, Brick Pomeroy for the *Democrat*, and Charles Seymour and George W. Peck for the *Independent Republican*.

²⁴⁹Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 77-78.

²⁵⁰Sanford and Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse*, 52, 72; Hannibal Plain, "The Black-River Boom," 555-556, publication unknown (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 4, Folder 27).

²⁵¹Alice E. Smith, *The History of Wisconsin*, vol. I (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1973), 163.

²⁵²*Ibid.*, 475.

²⁵³William J. Vollmar, "The Negro in a Midwest Frontier City, Milwaukee, 1835-1870" (unpublished thesis, Marquette University, 1968), 24.

1846 were populated principally by New Englanders, whereas those who opposed African-American suffrage came primarily from the southwestern counties of Grant, Iowa, and Crawford, where earlier Southern migration patterns prevailed. With settlers flooding into southeastern Wisconsin in 1846, the vote began to shift, but still not enough in time for the 1847 referendum. By statehood in 1848, however, continued Yankee migration into southeastern counties resulted in the election of a Wisconsin Legislature that granted equal voting rights to free African-Americans in 1849. A legal challenge kept that law from being implemented until 1866, but African-Americans were encouraged by passage of the law.²⁵⁴ In the mid-1850s, the Wisconsin Legislature again demonstrated its pro-African-American bias by passing in 1857 a personal liberty bill that granted "fugitives [runaway slaves] the right of trial by jury."²⁵⁵

As a practical matter, however, economic considerations and opportunities were probably more important than political rights as incentives for African-American immigration to Wisconsin. African-Americans, as was the case with other settlers, moved into Wisconsin along various paths, depending upon the time of those migrations. Within the larger American landscape of the pre-Civil War North, however, certain

occupations had come to be identified as ones to which African-Americans were particularly suited or to which Whites wanted them to be exclusively identified. Whatever the merits of this circumstance, it was generally accepted within Yankee society that African-Americans were well-suited to service occupations, and only in a few larger cities were African-Americans able to establish separate or independent business firms. Among satellite occupations were positions as musicians, barbers, domestic servants, whitewashers, cooks, teamsters, horse tenders, and day laborers. Whites in Wisconsin were reported to be especially attracted to hotels that employed one or more African-Americans. African-Americans supposedly provided a special "charm" to the business enterprise, perhaps representing the "refined" or servile traditions of the South.²⁵⁶

All of these service occupations appeared in records of La Crosse for African-Americans, but the most commonly listed occupation was that of barber. Barbering had a particular appeal for African-Americans, regardless of the area into which they moved. Barbering was common even among slaves in many parts of the South, where it was possible for one to practice barbering as a way to earn money with which to purchase one's own freedom.²⁵⁷ One author reported that Richmond and Lynchburg, Virginia, during the pre-Civil War period, were "almost totally dependent upon free colored barbers."²⁵⁸ Outside the South, and

²⁵⁴Smith, *The History of Wisconsin*, 635, 665-666, 669n. For good reviews of Wisconsin legislation regarding slavery, fugitive status, and suffrage, see Leslie H. Fishel, Jr., "Wisconsin and Negro Suffrage," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, XLVI (Spring 1963), 180-196; and David H. Overly, Jr., "The Wisconsin Carpetbagger: A Group Portrait," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, XLIV (Autumn 1960), 15-25. Milo Milton Quaife, *Wisconsin: Its History and Its People, 1634-1924*, I (Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1924), 490, 495, noted that in the 1847 vote to ratify the state constitution, the question of suffrage was voted separately; statewide, the vote for suffrage was 7,664 and against suffrage was 15,415.

²⁵⁵Richard N. Current, *The History of Wisconsin* (Madison: State Historical Society, 1976), 147-148.

²⁵⁶Vollmar, "The Negro in . . . Milwaukee," 9; David A. Gerber, *Black Ohio and the Color Line 1860-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 70-71.

²⁵⁷John W. Blassingame, *Slave Testimony* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 274; Loren Schweninger, "A Slave Family in the Ante Bellum South," in *Our American Sisters*, edited by Jean E. Friedman and William G. Shade (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1973), 168-170.

²⁵⁸John H. Russell, *The Free Negro in Virginia, 1619-1865* (reprint of 1913, New York: Negro (continued...))

especially in the District of Columbia where the activity of free African-Americans was more easily identified, the number of African-American barbers was already large as early as 1835. Of 141 heads-of-household in the District, nine were barbers. African-American barbers were well-patronized, and they served a useful and additional purpose of providing apprenticeships for younger African-Americans. As in many professions, apprenticeship often was an agency of care for orphans, as support for children of indigents, and as a way to train youth in a profitable trade.²³⁸

The record of African-American barbers in Ohio is well documented and is particularly helpful for understanding the character of the barbering trade in Wisconsin and in La Crosse. In Ohio, barbering became a profession passed from generation to generation and was African-American dominated until a flood of European immigrants overwhelmed it late in the nineteenth century. Until its demise, barbering attracted African-Americans for several reasons. Domestic and personal service to Whites had proven to be paths available to African-Americans, and barbering was one of those paths. Since banks tended to avoid providing loans to African-Americans, one of the principal attractions of barbering was the possibility of establishing a shop with little capital investment. In the early days, there was little stock to be concerned about, and for a few hundred dollars one could purchase second-hand equipment. Equipped with fixtures such as chairs, mirrors, razors, and scissors, a couple of barbers could open a shop. One of the most important aspects of barbering was "location positioning," an aspect that always helped to establish ranking among barbers. Barbers who ranked highest were those who operated near or within large hotels. Such shops generally required

large capital investments, however, and included the presence of bootblacks, several chairs in operation, and occasionally a doorman to regulate the flow of customers. At the bottom of the social ladder were barbers who catered to an African-American clientele. The greatest fear of an African-American barber on a frontier was the probability that, once he began to cut the hair of African-Americans, he would lose his White customers.²³⁹

It is probable that Ohio barbering patterns prevailed in Wisconsin as well. The 1850 census for Milwaukee, for example, demonstrated that African-Americans dominated the barber trade in that town.²⁴⁰ That barbering was controlled by African-Americans was well known and accepted, even among immigrants of that period. In 1853, for example, a publication, written in German and published in Leipzig, warned potential immigrants from Germany that German barbers would find Wisconsin particularly difficult because "that business in the cities is usually carried on by colored persons who are at the same time hair dressers. . . ."²⁴¹

This, then, was the milieu into which African-Americans moved when they came to Wisconsin and La Crosse. Thirty-six African-Americans lived in La Crosse before the beginning of the Civil War. The first to arrive was John Williams in 1852, only one year after the town had adopted its articles of organization. Williams was born a free person in Pennsylvania in 1832 and had married a native of the same state, Elizabeth Grisson, who was born in 1840. John Levy, a White settler who operated a general store on Front Street, brought Williams and his wife to La Crosse and opened a shop for him adjoining his own

²³⁸(...continued)

Universities Press, 1969), 151.

²³⁹Letitia Woods Brown, *Free Negroes in the District of Columbia, 1790-1846* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 134-135, 147.

²⁴⁰Gerber, *Black Ohio*, 71-73, 80-82.

²⁴¹Vollmar, "The Negro in . . . Milwaukee," 24; Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 147.

²⁴²Christian Traugott Ficker's Advice to Emigrants," translated by Joseph Schafer, *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, XXV (Sept. 1941-June 1942), 473.

business. One account indicated that Williams arrived by way of the Mississippi River, a likely circumstance since overland transportation was poorly developed in 1852.²⁶³ The Wisconsin Census for 1855 listed four African-Americans as living at Williams' residence, a confusing report since his children were not yet born.²⁶⁴ Three children were born to the Williamses during their nine years in La Crosse. Gertrude was born in 1857, Fanny in 1859, and Cane in 1860.²⁶⁵ In 1853, Williams built a house on North Fourth Street and operated a barber shop at what was then numbered 212 Main.²⁶⁶ Williams paid property taxes on this property between 1858 and 1861. He also owned property in the Cameron Addition, lots 1 and 2, block 19, both of which had houses on them, and in the Smith

Addition, lot 64, block 6.²⁶⁷ For whatever reason, Williams left La Crosse soon after 1861 for Marquette, Michigan, where he continued his trade as a barber.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of Williams' tenure at La Crosse, however, was his failure to engage in the large-scale land speculation in La Crosse as he had done in Winona, Minnesota. Official Minnesota records indicate that Williams made the first claim of land north of the slough in the upper prairie at Winona in 1851-52. This area was originally regarded as unfit for settlement but has since been incorporated into the city. Indeed, early land speculators in Winona were well represented by La Crosse financial interests.²⁶⁸ Williams' activities in La Crosse and Winona combined the logical trades available to an African-American and the inexpensive gamble of land investment. Title to land was open to all, regardless of color. What mattered in this instance was a title free of debt.

Joining Williams in the barbering trade in La Crosse was a person, presumably African-American, who appeared only once in the record and then without reference to race, P. D. Cromwell was listed in the 1853 businessmen's directory as a hair dresser.²⁶⁹ His name was absent from the 1855 state census, but the Cromwell name reappeared prominently in La Crosse a decade later. In 1864 Julia Ann Cromwell, born in New York state in 1820 and married to Abraham Holland, another African-American barber, arrived in La Crosse and a year later came Peter Alex. Cromwell, born in

²⁶³"The Barber Shops of Early Days," *The Morning Chronicle*, Sunday, April 3, 1898. See also *La Crosse Democrat*, August 6, 1853 "our gentlemanly barber, has built a dwelling house" on Fourth Street; *National Democrat*, July 25, 1854, "John Williams, Hair Dressing, and Shaving Saloon, first door south of Webster and Lake's Brick Store, Front Street, La Crosse," and *The Morning Chronicle*, October 17, 1883, "John M. Levy fitted him up a shop on Front Street." John Williams was born in Pennsylvania in c.1832, Elizabeth in c. 1840 in the same state.

²⁶⁴*Wisconsin State Census*, 1853. It is likely that the unnamed were apprentice barbers who worked in his shop. See Joseph Grisson, brother of Elizabeth Grisson Williams, who appeared in the 1860 Census.

²⁶⁵*US Census, 1860*. Gertrude - b.1857, Fanny - b.1859, and Cane - b.1860.

²⁶⁶*La Crosse Democrat*, September 6, 1853. Williams paid taxes on the property at 212 Main Street for both 1860 and 1861, see *City Tax List, 1860*, Original Plat, lot 1, block 20 G, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Area Research Center, La Crosse Series 33--hereafter cited as *City Tax List*. In "La Crosse Democrat, Sept. 27, 1853, Directories," list in pencil (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 4, Folder 14), only one barber is listed and identified as John Williams. The same account listed seven hotels, thirteen stores, four lawyers, five doctors, one teacher, three land agents, and one clergy.

²⁶⁷*City Tax List, 1858-1861*.

²⁶⁸W. H. Hill, *History of Winona County* (Chicago: H. H. Hill and Company, 1883), 190.

²⁶⁹*La Crosse Democrat*, Sept. 27, 1853; "The Wisconsin State Directory, 1857 and 8," typescript copy of material concerning La Crosse (La Crosse Public Library, Mss F, Albert H. Sanford Papers, Box 4, Folder 14) mentioned P. W. Cromwell as "Hair Dresser."

New York state in 1848, to open a barber shop.²⁷⁰ Whether there is a familial relationship between these individuals is not established in the sources.

Albert Burt, another native of Pennsylvania, moved to La Crosse in 1855, three years after Williams. Whether he and Williams were acquaintances is unclear and probably unlikely. As the principal path into the upper Midwest, the Mississippi River connected with Pennsylvania directly through the Ohio River, and large paddle wheelers regularly steamed upstream as far as Pittsburgh in the mid-century. Burt was born in 1833. Census records listed his occupation as "cook," but because of long and sporadic absences from La Crosse, it is reasonable to assume that he worked aboard one of the many paddle wheelers that frequented La Crosse. His wife, Elizabeth, also came from Pennsylvania.²⁷¹ It was Elizabeth, rather than Albert, who speculated in land development at La Crosse. In this regard, she followed in the footsteps of other African-American settlers.

Between 1855 and 1861, seven new barbers, all African-American, came to La Crosse. The reason for this flood of African-American barbers is unclear; however, the population of La Crosse had rapidly grown from 745 in 1853, to 1,637 in 1855, and to 3,860 by 1860. Not only would there have been greater demand for barbers, but there would also have been increased needs for skilled persons of all professions. The first of these new barbers was John W. Birney who came from Frankfurt, Kentucky. He was freeborn in 1834 and had learned his profession in the typical apprenticeship manner. Birney arrived in La Crosse in 1857, having come by steamboat from Louisville, Kentucky, with his wife Penelope and daughter

Mary Ellen. Birney carried the name of a famous Baltimore abolitionist, James G. Birney who was a principal supporter of the American Colonization Society and an advocate of the proposition to resettle free African-Americans in Liberia, on Africa's west coast. Birney's wife, Penelope, was freeborn in Louisiana in 1836; her maiden name was Williams. Their daughter Mary Ellen was born in Frankfurt, Kentucky, on September 23, 1856, less than a year before their move to La Crosse.²⁷² Soon after their arrival, Birney opened a barber shop on South Front (First) Street, across from the Levy Block. From there he moved next door to the Augusta House Hotel where he remained for several years. A daughter, Florence, was born to the Birneys in 1860.²⁷³

Two additional barbers joined the two already in La Crosse in 1857. Henderson Moss, a free African-American Virginian born in 1824, and his wife Lydia, born in 1828 in Virginia, arrived from Ohio where they had lived since before 1847, the year that their son Henry was born. Both Henderson and Lydia were practicing barbers, an unusual occurrence since African-American women generally were hair dressers rather than barbers. There is some evidence to suggest that Lydia practiced barbering only after the death of Henderson in 1864. By 1866, Lydia Moss was described as proprietress of a barber shop located on State Street between Second and Third streets.²⁷⁴

²⁷²*Republican and Leader*, obituary, December 19, 1878; *The Morning Chronicle*, April 3, 1898; *History of La Crosse County*, 440. John Birney - born 1834 in Kentucky; Penelope - born Louisiana in 1836; Mary Ellen Birney - born Frankfurt, Kentucky, September 23, 1856. There is no known relationship between Penelope Williams and John Williams. [Correction: Later research found that Penelope was born in Kentucky in October 1835.]

²⁷³*US Census*, 1870.

²⁷⁴*La Crosse Directory for 1866-67*, A. Bailey's (La Crosse: A. Bailey, 1866). Henderson Moss - 1824 in Virginia, Lydia Moss - born 1828 in Virginia.

²⁷⁰*The Morning Chronicle*, April 3, 1898; *History of La Crosse County, Wisconsin* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1881), 497; La Crosse, Wisconsin, County Marriage Record, December 12, 1864. Peter Cromwell was born in New York state in 1848.

²⁷¹*US Census*, 1860.

Two other members of the Moss family, although the relationship of the latter to the former is unclear, arrived two years later in 1859. Zacharias Louis Moss was freeborn in 1823 in Wheeling, Virginia, a city with a population of many free African-Americans. Zacharias married Mary L. Hunter who was born in 1846.²⁷⁵ It was this branch of the Moss family that produced the line that traces to the current Moss residents of La Crosse.²⁷⁶

The two remaining barbers in La Crosse when the US Census was taken in 1860 were Charles Carley and Joseph Grisson. Carley was born in 1835 in Mississippi and his wife, Caroline, was born in 1843 in Ohio. Carley was mentioned only

once in census records.²⁷⁷ Grisson, in contrast, lived in La Crosse for more than a decade. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1831 and was a brother of Elizabeth Williams, wife of John Williams, in whose house he boarded in 1860. Since he was listed as a barber in the census records, one would conclude that he worked in the shop operated by John Williams. Although Grisson was absent from the 1865 state census, he apparently remained in La Crosse throughout the Civil War years. He married Isabella, an Ohioan born in 1830. She, and presumably he, had a son named Lafayette, born in 1860 in Canada.²⁷⁸

Although the majority of African-American heads-of-household were engaged in the barbering profession, there were other occupations open to African-American settlers. As noted above, Albert Burt was a cook and apparently was in the employ of a river boat that used La Crosse as a port of call. Another head-of-household was Thomas McCollan who was listed in 1860 as a day laborer.²⁷⁹ McCollan was born in 1795 in Virginia and was married to Isabella, born in Ohio. Their son Charles was born in 1852 in Ohio. The McCollans lived with the Burt family in 1860. Another laborer in 1860 was Edwin White, born in 1807 in South Carolina. White appeared only once in census records.²⁸⁰ Matthew Schooley, born in 1818 in Pennsylvania, was listed in 1860 without a profession, although by 1870 he had established himself as a fisherman of some accomplishment.²⁸¹

Perhaps one of the most interesting of the pre-Civil War African-American settlers was John

²⁷⁵Death Record, La Crosse County Courthouse; *La Crosse Leader*, December 17, 1869. Zacharias Louis Moss - born 1823 in Wheeling (West) Virginia.

²⁷⁶This branch of the Moss family claims to have arrived in La Crosse in 1849. This date may in fact result from newspaper articles published in La Crosse in which the histories of Black barbers and the Moss family were discussed. See *The Morning Chronicle*, April 3, 1898 and *La Crosse Tribune*, Bicentennial Edition, July 4, 1976. Raymond Moss, family genealogist and third generation of Zacharias Louis, suggests that there may have been a wife different from Mary L. (Hunter) upon Zacharias' arrival in La Crosse. Local records may support this family tradition, noting both a Mary E. and a Mary L. (Hunter) as spouses. Zacharias' children were born in two groupings; Zacharias Henry in 1866 and Mary Ellen [Ella] in 1868 and Ernest Hunter in 1879 and Lula in c.1880. Family traditions also describe a possible New Orleans connection, considering the fact that Zacharias was a Catholic, and suggest that Zacharias had a brother in La Crosse [Henderson?] who was supposed to have gone on to California. Whether Zacharias Louis was slave-born is unclear in the sources. A *La Crosse Daily Press*, April 9, 1902, article lists him as slave-born. [Corrections: Later research was unable to document the reference to Lula above. It is doubtful that Zacharias Louis was a Roman Catholic. Henderson Moss moved to Battle Creek, Michigan, and not to California. Whether there was a second brother in La Crosse is unclear. Stuart Hale, "The Moss Family," Appendix (p.14), lists a fourth child - Anna Moss.]

²⁷⁷*US Census, 1860*. Charles Carley - born 1836 in Mississippi, Caroline Carley - born 1843 in Ohio.

²⁷⁸*US Census, 1870*. Joseph Grisson - born 1831 in Pennsylvania, Isabella - born 1830 in Ohio.

²⁷⁹*US Census, 1860*.

²⁸⁰*US Census, 1860*. Edwin White - born 1807 in South Carolina.

²⁸¹*US Census, 1860, 1870*. Matthew Schooley - born 1818 in Pennsylvania.

Carter. Carter, born in 1815 in Maryland, claimed to have arrived in La Crosse in 1857 with his wife Margaret, born in 1820 in Pennsylvania. The Carter family had begun its journey westward in Maryland where their son William was born in 1848 and daughter Ann was born in 1850. Along the path, in Illinois, a daughter Philisha J. was born in 1857. Two children were born to the Carters in La Crosse: Elisa M. in 1857 and Andrew in 1859. John Carter was listed as a laborer in the census of 1860; it is probable that he was a cook attached to the river trade in one way or another.²⁸² The Carter family would remain a major group in La Crosse history into the late 1880s.

In addition to barbering or other profitable trades, it was common for African-Americans to engage in land speculation and tract development as a sideline. From the moment of his arrival in La Crosse in 1857, John Birney branched into land speculation and development when he purchased lot 147 in block 17 of the Overbaugh & Burns Addition, numbered 1001 State Street until December 1997.²⁸³ This section in 1857 was only just surveyed, and the principal characteristics of the area were tumbleweed and prairie dogs. In the same year, Henderson Moss purchased lot number 150, close to Birney's property, and held it until 1861. In 1858, Birney purchased lot 148 next door and lot 9 in block 6 of the Clinton & Rublee Addition, now numbered 935 Division Street, and in 1859 paid taxes on four lots in the Overbaugh & Burns Addition.²⁸⁴ Property values attached to these lots on State Street indicate that four houses had been built by 1859, and a "bird's-eye" view of the

settlement produced in 1859 demonstrates that the house at 1001 State in 1859 remained until it was demolished in December 1997.²⁸⁵ In 1860, Birney added lots 152-155, for a total valuation in this addition of \$3,625.00.²⁸⁶ While the Birneys expanded their property interests in the Overbaugh and Burns addition, so also did Elizabeth Burt. In 1858 she purchased lot 169 in block 18, now numbered 1114 Vine Street, where she lived until 1882.²⁸⁷

Educational opportunities available to African-Americans in antebellum La Crosse generally were open to all, yet African-Americans did not participate as fully as did Whites. The Wisconsin state census of 1855 had listed 164 children of school age, with 109 then attending school. The US Census of 1860, however, noted only one African-American attending school in La Crosse. This was Henry Moss. Birney's children were still too young, as were those of John Williams. John Carter had two children of school age, William and Ann, but neither were listed as attending school. The only other African-American of school age was Charles McCollan, and he was not listed as attending school.²⁸⁸

Information about the affiliation of African-American settlers with La Crosse churches is sketchy, and church records for the pre-Civil War period contain no names of members identifiable as African-American. The fact that the First Baptist Church, founded in 1852, was of southern origins, may have predisposed African-Americans to be reluctant to attend established congregations. There is no evidence to suggest that African-Americans established a separate church during the antebellum

²⁸²*US Census, 1860, The History of La Crosse County*, 497, lists Carter as a barber and partner in the firm of Birney & Carter in 1861. John Carter - born 1815 in Maryland; Margaret - born 1820 in Pennsylvania; William Carter - born 1848 in Ohio; Ann - born 1850 in Ohio; Philisha - born 1857 in Illinois; Eliza M. - born 1857 in La Crosse; Andrew - born 1859 in La Crosse.

²⁸³*City Tax List, 1857*.

²⁸⁴*City Tax List, 1858, 1859*.

²⁸⁵Bird's-eye View, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1867 (Area Research Center, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, photo no. 42656).

²⁸⁶*City Tax List, 1859, 1860*.

²⁸⁷*City Tax List, 1858-1864*.

²⁸⁸*US Census, 1860*.

period.²⁸⁹

The avenues of African-American migration to La Crosse during the antebellum period are fairly clear. Until the railroad line was completed to La Crosse in 1858, the principal route remained the Mississippi River. Of the eleven heads-of-household who came to La Crosse during this period, ten came from states that bordered the Ohio River and were reachable by paddle wheelers. Except for Edwin White, who was born in South Carolina, all were born in border states between the North and the South and all, apparently, were born free. Two, Albert Burt and Matthew Schooley, were directly linked to river occupations, Burt as river boat cook and Schooley as fisherman. The McCollans were mentioned in Prairie du Chien records, verifying a northward migration path along the Mississippi River. Joseph Grisson, while a barber in 1860, would soon obtain employment as a steamship porter. The second, and an admittedly less-used path at this time, was overland by coach or by train from Chicago or Milwaukee. Some, such as the Mosses, may have come overland by way of African-American settlements at Chilton, Wisconsin, at Hillsboro in Vernon County, or at Pleasant Hill in Grant County, but the places of birth and time of migration suggest otherwise.²⁹⁰ In general, it is realistic to assume that most, if not all,

African-Americans of the antebellum period came by river and from states that bordered the Ohio River.

Part III: The War Years, 1861-1865

The Civil War period was an uneasy time for African-Americans in La Crosse. Already by the mid-1850s, the editor of the *La Crosse Democrat*, Mark M. Pomeroy, had become obsessed with the developing power of the Republican Party within Wisconsin and with unpleasant changes sweeping the nation. As debate over slavery intensified and as Republicans aligned themselves with abolitionists, Pomeroy joined the political struggle by transforming his paper into the best known and most outspoken anti-Republican newspaper in the nation. By 1864 his *Democrat* claimed to have a circulation of 50,000 copies and by 1868 of 100,000, a remarkable and perhaps exaggerated accomplishment considering the fact that the population of La Crosse in 1865 was only 5,037. Pomeroy accused Republicans of being Know-Nothings and Free-Soilers, opportunists who seized upon the slave issue to gain power and exploit the working classes.²⁹¹

In Wisconsin, Pomeroy found in the late 1850s a population that fed his ego and identified with his arguments. As Pomeroy explained it, the problem was simple, as was its solution. Republicans espoused a policy that, according to Pomeroy, was "pro-Black" and "anti-foreign." Pomeroy accused Republicans of advocating racial intermixing, especially among foreign-born immigrants, thus producing an amalgamated servile class to be used and exploited more easily by Yankee (New England) capital investors. In this way, Pomeroy played upon existing "Negro

²⁸⁹It was not uncommon for Blacks to hold church services in homes, at least until the Black population was large enough to support a building. See David Vassar Taylor, "The Blacks," in *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups*, edited by June Holmquist (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981), 73-91, *passim*. There is a reference to "Negro minstrels, [and] the Ethiopian quartet" for 1861, but there is no indication that these were other than visiting performers perhaps attached to a passenger ship. For the latter, see Mrs. John F. Doherty, "Music in Early La Crosse," *La Crosse County Historical Sketches*, I (La Crosse: Liesenfeld Press, 1931), 57.

²⁹⁰See Zachary Cooper, "Two Black Settlements in Rural Wisconsin," *Wisconsin Academy Review*, June 1981, 9-13, for more information about African-Americans in Vernon and Grant County.

²⁹¹*The Industries of La Crosse, Wis., 1888* (La Crosse: Spicer & Buschman [1888]), 15; Richard N. Current, *The History of Wisconsin* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wis., 1976), 264; Harry Frederick Bangsberg, "Mark M. Pomeroy: Copperhead Editor, A Study in Transition" (unpublished paper, Department of History, State University of Iowa, 1953), 89.

phobia" and socialist sympathies among the newly-arrived foreign-born, especially German settlers in the Milwaukee area. To Pomeroy, the Republican Party based its program on "N—ism" and class warfare/exploitation, and in consequence of such language he earned the enmity of most Republicans throughout the nation. In the state elections of 1857, "Negro phobia" among German voters was sufficient to elect Democratic candidates over Republican ones in most of the eastern part of Wisconsin.²⁹²

Between 1857 and 1861, however, the Republican party in Wisconsin attempted to recapture the foreign-born vote by shifting its position toward colonization/repatriation of African-Americans as an answer to America's "race" problem. The Tropics, so they said, was "the ultimate, permanent, natural and normal home of the African."²⁹³ For many Republicans, the answer involved not only abolition of slavery but also removal of African-Americans. Pomeroy and Democrats ridiculed Republicans for what they considered an opportunistic turn of tactic; such also, apparently, was the view of the immigrant press, especially after war broke out in 1861. In 1862, the Milwaukee *Seebote*, the "voice of German Catholics," interpreted Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of September 22, 1862, to mean that "Germans and Irish must be annihilated, to make

room for the Negro. . ." In effect, the war itself had become a conspiracy to kill off immigrants in warfare, thus opening new territory in the Midwest for African-American migration and settlement.²⁹⁴

Three circumstances in Wisconsin served to fuel such sentiments and indirectly impacted on African-Americans in La Crosse. One was the circumstance that African-Americans in Wisconsin, whether settlers or new immigrants, early in the war were permitted only to serve as noncombatants in the Union army. This meant that only Whites were liable for draft, to fight and die in the South. African-Americans' exempt status was particularly irksome to newly-arrived European immigrants, many of whom spoke no English and had little understanding of the complexities of American politics. Arguments of "states rights" or of historical antecedents to the "slavery question" were lost on many who saw African-Americans only as native-born competitors who spoke English, were familiar with the political process, were entrenched in certain occupations, and were remaining behind in Wisconsin while they, the newly-arrived, went South to fight a Republican

²⁹²*The Industries*, 15; Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 262-67. Frank Klement, "Briek" Pomeroy, Copperhead and Curmudgeon," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, XXXV (Winter, 1951), 110n. indicated that Pomeroy called Republicans, "robbers, insulters, cotton thieves, contract swindlers, grave robbers, hospital plunderers, n— lovers, whiteman-haters and Union separatists." Pomeroy also characterized the war as a "bond-holder's war" and President Lincoln as "Widow-maker." For a short biography of Pomeroy, see Bangsberg, "Mark M. Pomeroy," *passim*. For another Wisconsinite who vigorously opposed the war, see Alfons J. Beitzinger, *Edward G. Ryan: Lion of the Law* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1960), chapters 5 and 6.

²⁹³Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 283.

²⁹⁴Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 314-16, noted that anti-draft rioting occurred among immigrants and against Blacks who were blamed as the cause of a war that was not of the immigrants' making. For more on the anti-war press, see Larry Gara, *A Short History of Wisconsin* (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1962), 115-117; and H. Russell Austin, *The Wisconsin Story: The Building of a Vanguard State* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee Journal, 1948), 132-133. For anti-Black sentiment among immigrants, see Robert C. Nesbit, *Wisconsin A History*, revised and updated by William F. Thompson (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 159. German Lutherans also were entangled in the slavery controversy. Calvinist traditions adhered to the notion that slavery was condoned in the Bible and that "it was not a sin *per se* to own slaves." Nils Haugen, *Pioneer and Political Reminiscences* (Evanville, Wisconsin: Antes Press, 19307), 23-24, also noted that Norwegian Lutheran clergy in Wisconsin tended to defend slavery as Biblically allowable, whereas laymen tended to oppose it.

War. It is true that 363 African-Americans served in "Colored" regiments from Wisconsin (an interesting number since there were only 292 African-American males of draftable age listed in the Federal 1860 census), but none was enlisted before 1864, and all served with the Twenty-Ninth Regiment of U.S. Colored Troops. Of this number, ten enlisted from La Crosse in 1864, and another eight joined from La Crosse in 1865. None of these were residents of La Crosse, according to census or other official records.²⁹⁵

Equally distressing to White immigrants was a practice that allowed one to employ/hire another person to serve one's requirement in the military. In effect, this meant that those financially able, the Yankee migrants in particular, escaped service in the army. This practice particularly

irritated Pomeroy who interpreted it as a special privilege given to capital classes, and he, with this argument, found immigrants ready allies or at least sympathetic to his cause.²⁹⁶

And thirdly, with White immigrants marching off to war and leaving fields and wives unattended, an allegation that Republican/capital entrepreneurs were recruiting African-Americans to fill the labor shortfall created by the absence of White laborers gained popularity in Wisconsin. This rumor particularly troubled those who had been drafted. To be sure, some African-Americans had drifted into the state after their conditions had changed in a border area as a consequence of war. But others, reportedly, were imported by Republican entrepreneurs by the railroad carload. Seventy-five African-American workers, for example, were brought from Alabama to Fond du Lac. In 1863, a group of farmers in Trempealeau County announced a plan to import African-American agricultural workers. Another group in Arcadia advertised for African-American laborers to come to that area. Such occurrences, while uncoordinated and infrequent, were sufficient, however, to intensify anti-African-American attitudes, especially among those who considered African-Americans to be potential competitors for land and jobs once the war ended.²⁹⁷ To many, the choice was clear. One either voted for the Republican Party, that was dominated by "N-----lovers," New Englanders, Yankees, and Liberals, or one favored the Democrats, who represented White immigrants, Democratic-Socialists, the

²⁹⁵Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 330. *Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers: War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865*, Vol. II (Madison: Democrat, 1886). The roster for Company "F," Twenty-Ninth Regt. U.S. Colored Troops, unassigned recruits, mustered out November 16, 1865, listed (pp. 956-960): Frank Glaspy, date August 4, 1864; Jackson Hill, date August 2, 1864; Caleb Hudson, date August 2, 1864; Frank F. Kimbrel, date August 8, 1864; John Ron, date August 2, 1864; Shepard Sheldon, August 2, 1864; Edward Martin Van Buren, August 5, 1864; William White, August 3, 1864; Peter Williamson, July 28, 1864; Washington Wilson, August 1, 1864. In the "Unassigned Colored Troops:" Robert Edmunds, March 14, 1865; Robert Edwards, March 14, 1865; John Johnson, February 16, 1865; Samuel Johnson, March 14, 1865; Franke Konge, March 13, 1865; Henry Scott, August 4, 1864[?]; Anderson Snider, February 14, 1864; Samuel W. Thompson, February 19, 1865. An intriguing account in Henry Casson, *Wisconsin Census Enumeration, 1895: Names of Ex-soldiers and Sailors Residing in Wisconsin, June 20, 1895* (Madison: Democrat, 1896), 362, listed 45 veterans of "Colored" regiments as living in Wisconsin in 1895, and of this number, three lived in La Crosse. These were Geo. W. Buckner, Major, Co. I of 2nd Reg., West Va. Col. Regiment; Samuel A. Harrison, Lt. Col., 58th Reg. US Colored Troops; and J. J. Hershchiemer [sic], Q.M.S., 92nd Reg., USC. None of these were African-Americans, and all had served as officers in "Colored" regiments.

²⁹⁶Bangsberg, "Mark M. Pomeroy," 89ff. Austin, *The Wisconsin Story*, 133-134, noted that one could purchase an "exemption" from the draft for \$300 or one could avoid military service, if drafted, by hiring a substitute. According to Austin, approximately 11,500 were drafted in Wisconsin and served; a nearly equal number "skeddaddled" to Canada or elsewhere or claimed illness. Armed resistance to the draft spread through the southeastern part of the state late in November 1862, and that resistance was forcefully suppressed by the army.

²⁹⁷Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 389-391.

Germans and the Irish.²⁹⁸

To what extent La Crosse residents, and African-Americans in La Crosse, were affected by Pomeroy's rhetoric is unclear in the sources, but there are some indications that few La Crosse residents agreed with Pomeroy's sentiments.²⁹⁹ Four hundred twenty-eight Whites served in five military units recruited from La Crosse residents. These units were the Light Guard, Company I of the 8th Wisconsin Regiment; Company D of the 14th Wisconsin Regiment; Company F of the Wisconsin 25th Regiment; and Company B of the 2nd Cavalry, the latter commanded by General Cadwallader Washburn, a La Crosse native son and later Governor of Wisconsin.³⁰⁰ With a census enumeration of 3,860 persons in 1860, the large number of recruits at La Crosse amounted to more than ten percent of the total population, an unlikely circumstance. And although Pomeroy claimed to have a circulation of nearly 100,000 in 1868, such was hardly the case in 1864. His competitor in La Crosse, the *Republican*, claimed that he had 360 subscribers, and Pomeroy later exaggerated his own unpopularity at this low point with an even lower number of 70. In this setting, African-Americans in La Crosse found a welcome that, while perhaps not cordial, was nonetheless not indifferent either.³⁰¹

During these years, African-Americans in La

Crosse increased in number but no more so than did Whites. By 1865 the population of the city had risen from 3,860 in 1860 to 5,037, an increase of nearly 30 percent. Of this number, 33 in 1860 were African-Americans, and that number climbed to 50 by 1865. Among the newly-arrived were two children to the Albert Burt family: Arthur was born in 1863 and Mary E. in the same year. Another newcomer was Samuel August Thompson, an African-American barber who served with Company D of the 14th Wisconsin Regiment and who moved North when an unnamed friend from La Crosse was mustered out of the service in 1864. Later accounts indicate that Thompson was born a slave in Virginia in 1846 and that he had played pretty much the same role as barber in the 14th Wisconsin Regiment. Other accounts indicate that freed African-Americans often were attached to Wisconsin units and occasionally were treated as pets or mascots.³⁰² In any case, Thompson arrived in La Crosse in 1864 where he was employed as a barber and later as a musician. Thompson was married to Mary, born in 1848 in Michigan. To the Thompsons was born a son, Joseph, in 1864 in Minnesota.³⁰³ Early in 1865, Thompson volunteered for service in the 29th Regiment of Colored Troops. After serving for nearly a year, Thompson returned to La Crosse late in 1865 and became affiliated with Zacharias Moss in the barber trade.³⁰⁴

²⁹⁸Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 391, 572-73.

²⁹⁹Austin, *The Wisconsin Story*, 133, noted that Pomeroy's office in La Crosse was damaged several times by mob actions and that on one occasion a crowd was seen "carrying a rope," intending to lynch him.

³⁰⁰*History of La Crosse County, Wisconsin*, 426-430, 438-39; Robert M. Fortney, "The Participation of The Twenty-fifth Regiment Infantry Wisconsin Volunteers in the Civil War" (unpublished M. S. thesis, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, 1976), *passim*. La Crosse was the terminal of railroad expansion northward along the Mississippi River; a military training camp was also located at La Crosse during the war.

³⁰¹Klement, "Brick Pomeroy," 113, 157.

³⁰²Current, *The History of Wisconsin*, 358; Joyce Ann Richter, "Four Coulee Boys and the Civil War" (unpublished MS thesis, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, 1971), 35; Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Common Soldier in the Civil War; Book One: The Life of Billy Yank* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1951), 109, 116.

³⁰³See the Hirstheimer File, La Crosse Public Library Archive, "Orchestra Notes," for Thompson as proprietor of a "dance orchestra"; *US Census, 1870*. Mary Thompson - born 1848 in Michigan and Joseph Thompson - born 1864 in Minnesota.

³⁰⁴*Roster of Wisconsin Volunteers*, 1959, February 10, 1865; La Crosse City Directory, 1866-67. The Thompson & Moss shop was located on the

(continued...)

Another African-American barber arrived in La Crosse at about the same time. This was Abram H. Holland who was freeborn in Indiana in 1835 and who arrived in La Crosse in 1864. Holland married a White widow, Julia Ann Cromwell, on December 12, 1864, and was the father to a White step-daughter, Julia, born in Wisconsin in 1857.³⁰³

Two other African-Americans, both laborers, joined the La Crosse population during the early war years. One was Princes Milton Richardson, a blacksmith, who appeared only once in the official record and then as a marriage partner to Isabella McCollough on December 2, 1861.³⁰⁴ The second was William Rice, a boatman, who arrived in La Crosse in 1863. Rice married Elizabeth Cromwell, a White woman, in La Crosse on July 16, 1863.³⁰⁷ Rice remained in La Crosse until after the 1875 census, at which time the enumerators noted two African-American males and five African-American females at his

residence.³⁰⁸

In the final year of the war, and in time to be listed in the state census of 1865, eight African-Americans arrived in La Crosse, adding to nearly 50 African-American residents. Of these, five were mentioned only once in the sources and apparently were transitory to the city. These included Cyrus Brown (a cook) and his wife Rachael Brown from Ohio, and Henry Southall from Tennessee (steamboat cook) and his wife Agnes LaPoint who was listed as White.³⁰⁹ Zachariah and Mary Louisa [Price] Young from Kentucky also are mentioned only once in the records.³¹⁰ The only newcomers in 1865 to establish long-term residence were John Israel Vinegar, Kentucky-born in 1847, and Anna Eliza Pugsley, born in 1853 in New York state, who were married in La Crosse in 1865.³¹¹ Vinegar was a practicing barber in La Crosse until his retirement in 1906 after which he moved to Florida.

Reliance on census or other official records for this early period is precarious and unquestionably results in distortion of numbers of African-Americans, or Whites for that matter, who lived in La Crosse during the war years. Many people flowed through the settlement without being counted in any way, staying for a short time and moving on to greener pastures. A frontier generally attracted more unmarried males than unmarried

³⁰³(...continued)

southwest corner of State Street and Second Street; *La Crosse City Directory, 1866-67*.

³⁰⁴La Crosse, Wisconsin, County. Marriage Record, December 12, 1864. Register of Deeds, County Courthouse. See also *US Census, 1870*. There is a confusing account reported in the Hirschheimer file that indicated that, at Holland's death, an obituary in the *Democrat*, dated July 6, 1876, reported that Holland had lived in La Crosse for 20 years, or since c.1857. This would make Holland one of the oldest settlers in La Crosse. Holland was married in St. Luke's Methodist Church on December 12, 1864.

³⁰⁵La Crosse, Wisconsin, County. Marriage Record, December 2, 1861. Isabella McCollough may be the same as Isabella McCollan whose husband Thomas was a laborer in La Crosse in 1860.

³⁰⁷La Crosse, Wisconsin, County. Marriage Record, July 16, 1863; records do not indicate any relationship between Elizabeth Cromwell and other Cromwells in the community who were African-Americans.

³⁰⁸*Wisconsin Census, 1875*.

³⁰⁹La Crosse, Wisconsin, County. Marriage Record, Cyrus Brown and Rachael Lymus, September 12, 1865, and Henry Southall and Agnes LaPoint, December 11, 1865. Cyrus Brown was recorded as married in St. Luke's Methodist Church on September 11, 1865. Zach Young was married at St. Luke's Methodist Church on June 9, 1865.

³¹⁰La Crosse, Wisconsin, County. Marriage Record. Zachariah Young and Mary Louisa Price, June 9, 1865.

³¹¹La Crosse, Wisconsin, County. Marriage Record, John Israel Vinegar and Anna Eliza Pugsley, September 16, 1865. John Vinegar - born 1847 in Kentucky; Anna Eliza [Pugsley] Vinegar - born 1853 in New York state.

females and young businessmen with sponsors, or young families willing to speculate on an uncertain future. One measure of the vibrant and transitory nature of this population were marriages officially registered in the city. Five African-American males of marriageable status somehow found an equal number of African-American females in La Crosse between 1861 and 1865, a circumstance of some note.³¹² One assumes that other marriages were arranged without benefit of official notation. Or one might assume that La Crosse was remarkably available as a place where marriages could be conducted and officially recorded. That three marriages between African-American males and White females were recorded in 1865 alone may indicate a tolerance for interracial marriage unusual in the region.

No coverage of the effects of the Civil War and its immediate aftermath would be complete without at least a comment about African-Americans who arrived as a result of associations with soldiers from the La Crosse area. As noted above, Samuel Thompson, born in Virginia in 1846 and a barber with Company D of the 14th Wisconsin Regiment, had followed a friend to the La Crosse area in 1864, and a year later he volunteered at La Crosse and served with the 29th Regiment of Colored Troops. But perhaps the best known locally of such arriviers were Nathan Smith and his wife Sara, also known as Sarah or Sally. Nathan was born in Tennessee in 1820, received his "free papers" when Union troops passed through Tennessee, and served as valet and horse tender to General Washburn, commander of Company B of the 2nd Cavalry. Washburn was a La Crosse resident and had raised Company B from volunteers and draftees enrolled at La Crosse. Local lore claims that Smith and his wife returned to La Crosse with Washburn when the unit was decommissioned and that Washburn rewarded his

faithful servant with "free title" to 80 acres of farm land near West Salem.³¹³ The official record, however, is less generous to Washburn. In 1870, Smith maintained two residences, one in La Crosse in the 2nd Ward and one listed at his farm in West Salem, very likely indicating a continuing employment with Washburn in the city.³¹⁴ The warranty deed for the property near West Salem suggests that this was not a gift from Washburn. A Bond for Deed was signed between George W. and Lucinda L. Davis and Nathan Smith on September 22, 1866, agreeing to a sale price of \$700, with Davis paying all taxes until the title was turned over to Smith. The agreement required a down payment of \$200 and that may have been paid by Washburn, but there is no record of the transaction. Indeed, the final payment that satisfied this sale was made only on November 27, 1883.³¹⁵ In no instance was Washburn recorded as guarantor of the agreement. The greater significance of the story, however, was the locally accepted perception that one of La Crosse's leading citizens and hero in the war and La Crosse's only resident later to serve as Governor of the State of Wisconsin had sponsored an African-American newcomer to the city. If Smith were employed in the Washburn household, he also would have been the first of many African-American servants who came to be attached to the "swells," as the first families were known locally.

³¹²*La Crosse Tribune*, March 27, 1905. In 1979, Lucy Haack ("Lucy Haack Interview," transcript, by Howard Fredricks, Oral History Project, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Area Research Center, page 22) remembered that Smith had come to La Crosse from Canada rather than from the South. See Joseph Grisson, Part II of this series, who also apparently came to La Crosse from Canada, but after 1860.

³¹³*US Census, 1870*, 100, 268.

³¹⁴La Crosse, Wisconsin, County. Deeds of Record. Warranty Deeds, volumes 30-64, 31-56; and Mortgages, volume 27-250.

³¹⁵Princess Richardson (1861), John Vinegar (1865), Cyrus Brown (1865), Matthew Schooley (1865), and Zachariah Young (1865).

Conclusion

By 1865, La Crosse had changed its character from a trading village to a frontier boomtown. Part of that transition had occurred in consequence of partial removal of Native Americans and sale of large sections of land to settlers. But the Civil War added to that transition by stimulating development of timber milling, flour milling, and ship repair, all necessary to satisfy war needs. As a river town, La Crosse had easy and ready access to settlers moving north and westward, gaining for La Crosse the claim as "Gateway" to an ever expanding frontier. The coming of railroads and development of overland roads also made La Crosse a logical temporary destination for prairie schooners and new immigrants on their way to Minnesota and the Dakotas.³¹⁶ Some of the latter chose to stop and stay in La Crosse.

To be sure, Whites dominated in the commercial prosperity of this transition, some coming into the area with significant resources to engage in land speculation and development. But African-Americans also shared in this transition and success. The percentage of African-Americans in the total population remained fairly consistent, averaging between one and two percent. The numbers of transitory residents, whether African-American or White, probably mirrored each other, with a pattern of "leavers" already established. Within professions, African-Americans dominated

the barber trade, with 12 barbers recorded by 1865. The second most commonly listed occupation was cook, attached in one way or another to the river trade. And lastly were laborers who often became apprentices to barbers. Nathan Smith was the only mentioned valet or groom, and he came only at the end of the period.

Of African-American families who shared disproportionately in this transition were those of John Williams, barber and land speculator who left in 1861; John Birney, barber and land developer who remained until 1885; the Moss family, who engaged in barbering and remains in La Crosse until the present; John Carter, laborer and river trader until 1889; Abram Holland, barber until 1874; Samuel August Thompson, barber until 1885; Peter Cromwell, barber until 1885; John Vinegar, barber until 1906; and Nathan Smith, valet and farmer until 1905. Of these, John Birney was the exemplar in 1865 of an African-American entrepreneur who had achieved significant success on the frontier.

³¹⁶Several authors noted that, with the beginning of the Civil War, work on the railroad beyond La Crosse stopped and transportation on the Mississippi River south of the Ohio River junction also ceased. These actions transformed La Crosse into a major center of rail and river traffic. All westward-bound rail movement ended at La Crosse, where passengers and cargo went on board steamships bound further north and west. All goods and persons bound for the East, reversed this process. See Ellis Baker Usher, *Wisconsin: Its Story and Biography, 1848-1913*, II (Chicago: Lewis Publishing, 1914), 316-318; Haugen, "Pioneer," 24; Ruth Bristow, "Early Steamboat and Packet Lines," *La Crosse County Historical Sketches*, I (La Crosse: Liesenfeld Press, 1931), 31-34.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WISCONSIN LABOR ADVOCATE AND GEORGE EDWIN TAYLOR, ITS EDITOR

Note: An earlier version of this paper was read at the Wisconsin Labor History Conference, held at Turner Hall, Milwaukee, on 27 April 1985. The version reproduced below, without footnotes and with slight word changes, appeared in *Past, Present, & Future*, vol.20 3(May/June 1998):1, 3-7.

The only known paper copies of the *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* that exist are now housed at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Area Research Center which owns two photocopies of a complete run from August 20, 1886 to August 6, 1887. The originals are located at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison. Although no date can be fixed for the end of the paper, it is reasonable to believe that it lasted only until early in 1888. The probable reason for a copy of the paper to survive at all was the unlikely and perhaps prophetic fact that the editor apparently had a sense of humor—a copy of the paper (at least for a year) was sent to the Young Men's Library Association of La Crosse, the precursor to the present Public Library System in La Crosse. It is doubtful that anyone from this group of conservative gentlemen ever lowered himself to read such radical literature, for those copies of the paper that survive are nearly mint-quality, except, of course, for the fact that age has made them brittle and fragile. A lucky accident indeed!

The paper was modeled on a duplicate fold of four pages, or two pages (back to back). The actual size of the paper changed from 364 to 432 square inches on December 10, 1886, perhaps a consequence of a printing change or a paper supplier change. This change allowed the paper to

include more coverage and more advertisements. George Edwin Taylor & Co. was the sole owner for the entire run that exists. There is no indication here or in other papers that ownership changed, although there are references to patrons who subsidized the paper for personal reasons.

The paper followed a format that had become the proven formula for La Crosse newspapers. The front page was devoted to national and international news, although that changed over the year as Taylor became more Labor-conscious and as the state election of 1886 drew near. The second page contained Labor news, much of it state or regional in character (effectively serving as a review

the editor editorialized. Page three was devoted partly to local events and to what might be called "gossip," discussing everything from who visited with whom, to announcements of forthcoming visits and events. Most of page three, however, contained ads announcing the arrival of new goods or the availability of old services in the La Crosse area. Ads on pages two and three tended to be local in nature and, at least for a time, broad-based in the community. Hardware, furniture, and variety goods and groceries were the standard fare, but also included here were notices of photographers, cigar makers, insurance salesmen, tailors, blacksmiths,

physicians and lawyers. Here also was a railroad schedule and the ever-present advertisement for White Beaver's Cough Cream.

Page four contained human interest stories, a short story, and perhaps a poem or a song. This page also contained ads for a variety of painkillers, miracle cures, corsets, cures for drug addiction (perhaps gotten through another of the ads) and a book about Abraham Lincoln. The paper was usual for its time.

The *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* was not the only Labor newspaper in La Crosse. During the 1880s, La Crosse was a hotbed of Labor activity, and the *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* was at least the fourth Labor-linked paper to emerge on the scene after 1880. The first was *The Sunday News* (later called *The News*) which began publishing on May 25, 1884, and was edited by George M. Reed. *The News* claimed to be an organ for the Odd Fellows, at least until December 26, 1885, when it declared itself the official paper of the Knights of Labor that was then setting up assemblies in the La Crosse area. Two other papers, the *La Crosse Free Press* and the *La Crosse Evening Star* existed about the same time and both claimed to represent laboring classes.

The Labor movement in La Crosse began to emerge as an effective force during the mayoralty of Frank Powell during two terms, from 1882 to 1884, and again from 1886 to 1888, who became somewhat of a legend in La Crosse. Known as "White Beaver" by friend and enemy, Powell was one of the most flamboyant characters to come out of La Crosse. He was a physician, and he and his two brothers, George "Night Hawk" Powell and William "Blue-Eyed Bill" Powell, operated clinics both in St. Paul, Minnesota, and in La Crosse. Thursdays were "Indian days," during which time any Native American could come to the clinic and be treated without charge.

His first term as mayor presented a challenge to both the Republican and Democratic parties, a challenge sufficiently recognized to result in a

fusion ticket (a single ticket for the Republican/Democratic candidate) that defeated Powell in the 1884 election. Powell's challenge to the established parties came less from ideological differences than from an antiestablishment, almost Jacksonian, bias that opposed the aristocracy and bourgeoisie of the frontier and many of their pet public works projects (such as trolleys to the better residential areas at public expense). And as was common to the La Crosse area, newspapers joined to champion their choices. The *La Crosse Free Press* became the mouthpiece for Powell's policies during his first term as mayor. During the interim between his first and second term, the *La Crosse Free Press* folded, to be followed in kind and editorship by the *La Crosse Evening Star*, later shortened to *The Star*.

It was during this break between Powell's first and second term that the Knights of Labor came to La Crosse. Outside speakers, one of whom may have been C. A. Lincoln from Milwaukee, visited La Crosse beginning on December 21, 1885, and both *The News* and *The Evening Star* declared their support for the Knights of Labor soon thereafter. Although only one edition of *The Star* survives, and it does not come from this crucial period, it is clear that *The News* and *The Star* had established an unfriendly rivalry. *The News*, under the editorship of George M. Reed, was identified clearly as linked to the Knights of Labor movement as an "activist movement." *The Star*, in contrast, under the editorship of a Mr. White and a young African-American named George Edwin Taylor, was primarily interested in electing Frank Powell and sought strong Labor backing to secure that objective.

For the time being, however, both papers espoused the same Labor cause with the formation of a Labor ticket, the Workingmen's Party of La Crosse, with both Reed and Taylor as members of the party's central committee. Frank "White Beaver" Powell headed the ticket as the party's candidate for mayor of La Crosse. The *La Crosse Chronicle*, the establishment paper, labeled

Powell's supporters as "hoodlums, tramps, and dynamiters" and challenged the Republican Party to answer their "revolution" at the polls. In the April 1886 election, the Workingmen's Party won every office but one, including the offices of mayor, clerk, treasurer, tax commissioner, police justice, five out of six aldermen, every supervisor, every justice of the peace, and every constable. As Reed summed it up, "the ship and cargo's ours."

The falling out between newspapers and between Labor supporters in the La Crosse area and between northsiders and southsiders began immediately after the April 1886 election. Flush with victory at the city level and sensing that La Crosse might have captured leadership in the Labor movement from Milwaukee, Powell and his lieutenant Taylor asked the party's central committee to call for a convention of the statewide Workingmen's Party to meet in La Crosse on July 13, 1885. Reed warned that such a precipitous call might alienate Milwaukee leaders who had neither agreed to such a convention nor been consulted about one. Taylor and Powell, however, rallied local "Labor" behind the convention call and added two other ingredients before the convention began: Powell announced his intention to run for governor as an independent and asked for Labor's endorsement. Powell also changed the name of the La Crosse-based party from the Workingmen's Party to the Farmer and Workingmen's Party, a move designed to expand his base by appealing to another and more numerous class of voters. In the 1880s, farmers also were chaffing under the yoke of capital, primarily from the excesses of banks and the railroads.

None of these announcements pleased Reed nor hardliners within the Knights of Labor. By this point, *The News* was steering away from political activism at the local level and toward supporting the statewide Knights of Labor, with Reed now appointed as financial secretary of the Wisconsin Knights of Labor. The editor(s) of *The Star*, in contrast, was leaning clearly toward political action and away from Labor activism,

toward a Farmer and Workingmen's Party that would soon take the name of Union Labor. This party would soon champion Powell's gubernatorial attempt and would be led by George E. Taylor. To illustrate the end of one era and the beginning of a new one, in August 1886 *The Star* ceased publication and *The Wisconsin Labor Advocate*, under the editorship of George Taylor, began publication on August 20, 1886.

Beginning with the July 13 Convention of the Farmer and Workingmen's Party held in La Crosse, it was Taylor, rather than Powell, who experienced an inflation in recognition and ego. Reed had warned that the Convention would become a regional event and so it was the case, but that did not deter Taylor or Powell. Taylor became a member of the new party's central committee, with ready access to a statewide organization scheduled to meet in Neenah in September. At Neenah, the statewide party changed its name to the Wisconsin Union Labor Party. Powell had hoped to gain the Neenah Convention's and the party's endorsement for governor but that was not to be the case. Realizing his weak support in the state, Powell withdrew his name before the selection process actually began. The real La Crosse victor at Neenah was Taylor who became one of nine members of the party's central committee, as well as party State Secretary, with J. H. Heyer as Chairman and Theodore Fritz as Treasurer. In effect, the *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* had become the official organ of a political party, the Wisconsin Union Labor Party.

Between the Neenah Convention and the November election, Taylor filled the *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* with resolutions of the state party and with activities of its affiliate party organizations throughout the state. During the same period, the differences between Reed's *The News* and Taylor's *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* became clearly defined. Reed continued to represent the limited "work-related" goals of the Knights of Labor and a statewide Labor organization that he served as State Financial Secretary. Taylor

represented a political party, with Labor support, that was attempting to seize political power through the ballot box. This difference and Taylor's rise in recognition was resented by many in La Crosse and throughout much of the state.

It was at this time that the first reference to Taylor's color appeared in newspaper accounts. As an African-American, Taylor clearly was an anomaly in La Crosse and in Wisconsin political circles. Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1857, Taylor came to Wisconsin along an uncertain path but apparently had spent several years in southern Illinois before finally arriving in La Crosse. His father may have been Joe Taylor who worked as a typesetter for Brick Pomeroy's *National Democrat*, a paper that became famous nationally for its anti-Lincoln rhetoric during the Civil War. Whatever Taylor's roots, it is clear that he was raised in La Crosse by an African-American farmer known locally as "N-----" Nathan Smith who raised three other orphaned Black boys and one White boy. Smith was determined that his sons would receive the best education that a poor farmer from La Crosse County could buy. He sent one son to Gale College, in Galesville, Wisconsin. He sent two others, including Taylor, to Wayland Academy in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin.

In his early 20s, Taylor was first employed by the *La Crosse Free Press* and then by the *La Crosse Evening Star* when the *Free Press* folded. Taylor gradually improved his own position within the *Star* until he was characterized by *The [Republican] Chronicle*, as the "brains of the Star" and identified as campaign manager for Powell's 1886 race for Mayor of La Crosse. Knights of Labor members from Milwaukee, or so reported Reed of *The News*, had complained at the Neenah Convention that two of fifteen delegates from La Crosse had been African-Americans (Taylor and his adopted father Nathan Smith) and that this 2/15-ratio of African-Americans to Whites was not reflected in the composition of Labor in La Crosse. *The Chronicle* now termed Taylor "the colored representative of Labor" while Reed's *The [Knights of Labor] News*

less graciously called him "the n----- in the fence." Demeaning articles toward African-Americans appeared with increasing frequency in local papers, including *The News*.

What is most surprising about this new turn is the lack of an immediate effect upon Taylor or his actions. Despite the fact that Labor had lost massively across the state in 1886 (except for Milwaukee and La Crosse) and that Powell, who was attempting to win a state senate seat, even lost La Crosse County outside the city's limits, Taylor was undeterred and was resolved to fight on.

In a sense, the failure of the statewide ticket fueled Taylor's own aspirations to state or national politics. He blamed Labor's problems in La Crosse on Reed and *The News* (and indirectly upon the Knights of Labor) and on those local opportunists who had used the Labor cause for their own interests. As Taylor shifted his own editorial policy more toward state politics and away from local politics, he sought to change his readership as well. One is tempted to suggest that he was following the lead of Brick Pomeroy who successfully took the *National Democrat* from a locally-based to a national newspaper with a national readership in the 1860s. Taylor was now in correspondence with like-minded Labor papers throughout the nation (as illustrated by his newspaper notes) and increasingly with African-American-based papers that were both Labor and African-American in tone.

When the opportunity came for the Wisconsin party to participate in the first national convention of the Union Labor Party, scheduled to begin in Cincinnati on February 22, 1887, Taylor lobbied strongly that Wisconsin should send nine representatives to the convention. Taylor received appointment as chairman of the Wisconsin delegation and was one of four persons asked to address the national convention of more than 800 delegates. Henry George was the principal speaker at the convention—his topic, "The Value of a Single Tax." Although Taylor was disappointed that only three or four persons from Wisconsin attended the convention and he later confided that so few might

reflect the realities of Labor's weakness in Wisconsin, Taylor nevertheless returned from Cincinnati a rejuvenated man. His own writing becomes more strident in tone. "Landlords must go!" became a familiar slogan.

Within a month of his return, a shift of editorial policy is clearly discernable. Taylor began to abandon his La Crosse base and his local readers by addressing national rather than local or state issues, and by focusing on African-American problems in the South and in cities. Even when writing about Labor issues, these editorials took a decidedly African-American tone, for Labor's successes in Iowa appeared to focus in African-American settled areas. More attention was given to Minnesota, Kansas, Iowa, and Vermont than was given to La Crosse or Wisconsin.

By midsummer of 1887, the editorial tone of *The Wisconsin Labor Advocate* became decidedly defensive and, at the same time, argumentative. Taylor openly accused owners of capital in La Crosse of firing employees whom they suspected of having voted for Labor candidates in the 1886 election. This, he said, made it difficult for those friendly to Labor to show support to newspapers, such as his own. Taylor was also convinced that there was an anti-Taylor conspiracy afoot in La Crosse. Taylor was probably correct on this charge. Both the "establishment" press and *The News* were upset by Taylor's shifting tone, and both presses were unrestrained in their attacks against his ideas, and additionally against his race. The *Commercial Advertiser & Record*, for example, called him "a descendant of the cannibal race." Taylor complained often about hecklers who made it difficult for him to sleep at night and about the reluctance of the police department to respond to his requests for assistance. Finally, early in July 1887, his house and then his office were broken into, and he claimed that his list of subscribers was stolen.

Whatever the validity of that claim, Taylor ought not have reported it so openly in his newspaper. Doubtless, if employers were punishing

those who supported Labor's causes, the theft of his subscription list would have been a major blow to Taylor's continued success, for it would have revealed the names of those who continued to support him. The final blow to Taylor and his paper came in 1887 in consequence of a disagreement with Frank Powell who had been his principal benefactor and major supporter of his newspaper. Powell could clearly see that Taylor had become a political liability and that La Crosse, and politicians who hoped to make their base in La Crosse, were not evolving in Taylor's radical direction.

The last edition of the *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* that survives dates to August 6, 1887. How long the paper operated after that time is uncertain for no local paper noted its demise. But it is known that George Edwin Taylor soon left La Crosse for greener pastures elsewhere, to those African-American settlements in southeastern Iowa, at Buxton, Oskaloosa, and Ottumwa, where many unionists were employed as coal miners. For a time, Taylor worked for Labor causes within the Iowa Republican Party, but in 1892 he abandoned that party and joined the Labor movement full-time. From 1893 to 1900, he edited an African-American weekly published in Oskaloosa, called *The Negro Solicitor*, and built a nationwide constituency. This paper, of which only pieces remain, was clearly more radical and more African-American than the *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* had ever been.

Between 1900 and 1904, Taylor was a member of the radical fringe within the National Democratic Party, and tried to reform that party from within. Many African-Americans in that part left the Democratic camp during the 1904 St. Louis Convention of the party, however, and formed a new all African-American party that they called the National Liberty Party. From this base, Taylor accepted the nomination of the National Liberty Party as its candidate for the office of President of the United States. Taylor was the first candidate of a national African-American party for that office.

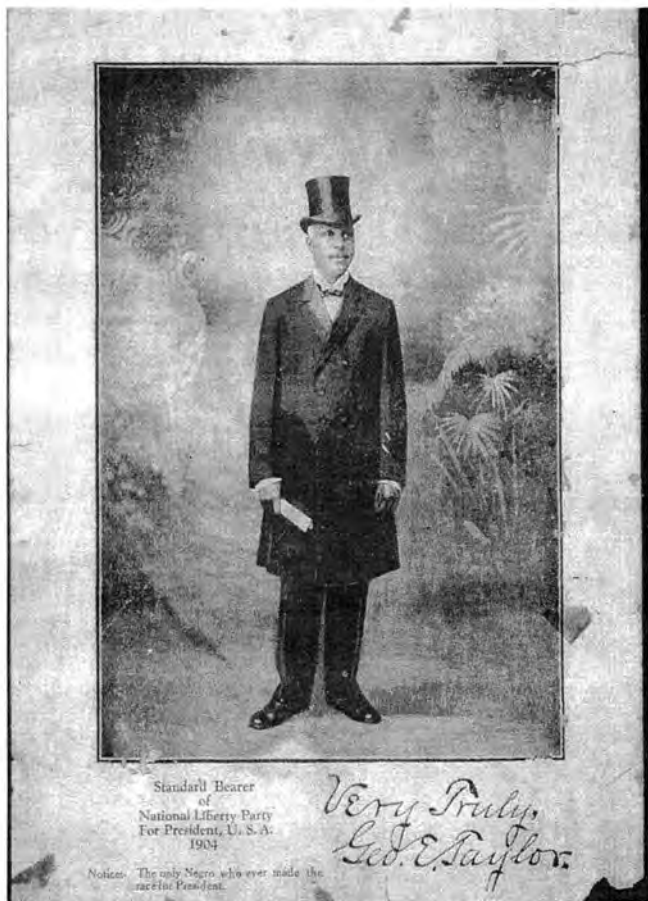


Figure 20. George Edwin Taylor, 1904: campaign poster/photo from 1904 Presidential Campaign, National Liberty Party and Taylor, its candidate for President of the U.S.A. Courtesy of Eartha White Collection, Thomas G. Carpenter Library, University of North Florida.

CHAPTER VIII.

GEORGE COLEMAN POAGE: HIS LA CROSSE YEARS, 1885-1904.

Note: An early version of this paper was presented at the Society of Sport History Annual Meeting, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, 25 May 1985, and was coauthored with Edwin L. Hill. The following version represents extensive changes and was published in *Past, Present, & Future*, 20 1 (January/February 1998): 1, 3-7.

"Poage Runs Third in Olympian Games: La Crosse Colored Athlete Tired Near Finish."

Placed on page seven of the *La Crosse Leader-Press* on 1 September 1904, the above small line and accompanying article of three paragraphs announced the first bronze medal to be awarded to an African-American athlete in a modern olympiad.³¹⁷ What is more interesting than the article's placement in the local newspaper or its seven lines devoted to Poage is the unwritten part of the story. Poage had grown up in La Crosse during the 1880s and 1890s, and his success in 1904 was the second of a series of national successes in that year for African-Americans who had spent their formative years in the La Crosse community. Two months earlier, George Edwin Taylor became the standard-bearer of the National Liberty Party and the first person to seek the office of the Presidency of the United States as the candidate of a nationally-based African-American

political party.³¹⁸ One might have expected La Crosse to revel in the success of its two "native sons." That was not (and still is not) the case, however.

But what precisely had happened in Saint Louis beginning in August 1904? Billed as the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Games, these games were connected to a world's fair then being hosted by Saint Louis. From its inception, the fair had been plagued with controversy swirling around distinctions drawn between White and nonwhite exhibits, with the latter, called "Colored," located separately and away from the others. Militant African-Americans nationally called for all African-Americans to boycott both the fair and the games, claiming that the separation of exhibits was matched by discrimination against nonwhite

³¹⁷Anon., "Poage Runs Third in Olympian Games," *La Crosse Leader-Press*, September 1, 1907, p. 7.

³¹⁸Anon., "Sketch of George Edwin Taylor: The Only Colored Man Ever Nominated for the Presidency," *Voice of the Negro* (Atlanta), October 1904, pp. 476-478, 491.

laborers at the fair's site.³¹⁹

George Poage rejected this call to boycott and was among several African-American athletes to do so. Running for the Milwaukee Athletic Club as its first nonwhite representative, Poage was among a very select group to compete at these games. Only 20,000 spectators attended the track and field events, and there were only 496 from eleven countries who actually competed at Saint Louis.³²⁰ Many American contestants represented competing athletic clubs, and these clubs dominated the 1904 games. Among the winners was Poage who won third place in two events – the 200-meter hurdles and the 400-meter hurdles. His was a remarkable success – the first medals to be won by an African-American in any recorded Olympic game.³²¹

Arriving in La Crosse in 1884, George Coleman Poage was a product of his time and his family, and of La Crosse, where he spent his formative years. Born in Hannibal, Missouri, Poage moved with his mother, sister and aunt to La Crosse in 1884. His father had moved earlier, obtaining employment as a tanner with the firm of A. W. Pettibone, one of the principal employers in the La Crosse area.³²² The Poage family numbered five at

the time: James Poage and his wife Annie Coleman Poage; James' sister Lulu Belle Poage who was born in Paris, Missouri, in 1867; a daughter Nellie born in 1879; and George.³²³ Annie Coleman Poage was a native Missourian who later claimed to carry freedom papers; she was born in 1853 in a state that permitted slavery.³²⁴ Soon after their arrival in La Crosse, the Porges had another son, Freddie Jansen Poage, who lived only three years.³²⁵

The circumstances that led to their migration to La Crosse are unclear, but there were events in and characteristics of La Crosse which would have attracted people such as themselves. La Crosse in the early 1880s was a vibrant and economically prosperous community that attracted settlers of all types. The population of the city, for instance, doubled from 11,012 in 1875 to 21,740 in 1885, and along with that growth had come jobs and

³²²(...continued)

are deposited in the Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. James Poage also is listed in Hannibal, Missouri, city directories for 1879-80 (Poag[sic]-mover), 1881-82 (cook), and 1885-86 (Poage[sic]-porter). This 1885-86 entry reflects an earlier directory compilation date and is in error; the Porges are documented as La Crosse residents in 1884. For this information on Hannibal, see letter, Susan Elliott to Edwin Hill, May 7, 1985, Poage biography file, Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. [Later research revealed that James Poage had been a coachman for Pettibone. See biographical sketch in Chapter 1.]

³¹⁹*Voice of the Negro* (Atlanta), August 1904, pp. 305-315, assorted articles.

³²⁰Pat Press, "First Over the Hurdles," *The Washington Post*, August 9, 1984.

³²¹Peter Bergman, *Chronological History of the Negro in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p.344; Charles J. P. Lucas, *The Olympic Games 1904* (St. Louis: Woodward & Tiernan, 1905), 24-26, 78-81, 95-96; Bill Mallon & Jan Buchanan, *Quest for Gold: The Encyclopedia of American Olympians* (New York: Leisure Press, 1984); Pat Dorn, "Alumni and the Olympics," *Wisconsin Alumni*, July/August 1988: 22-23; Pat Press, "First Over the Hurdles," *The Washington Post*, 9 August 1984.

³²²*La Crosse City Directory, Bunn & Philippi's* [1883], annotated by the United States Postal Service (n.p., n.d.), entry for James Poage. Annotated directories (continued...)

³²³Press, "First Over the Hurdles;" United States, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1900 Population*; La Crosse, Wisconsin, County: Marriage Record. Register of Deeds, La Crosse County Courthouse, vol. 3, p. 302; Oak Grove Cemetery Record of Burials, Oak Grove Cemetery, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

³²⁴Letter, Elliott to Hill, May 7, 1985; United States, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1900 Population*.

³²⁵La Crosse, Wisconsin, County: Death Record. Register of Deeds, La Crosse County Courthouse, vol. 1, p. 290; Oak Grove Cemetery Record of Burials, Oak Grove Cemetery, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

opportunities for those employed in service trades.³²⁶ In the first two post-Civil War decades, African-Americans in La Crosse were prominently listed as barbers, restaurateurs, and hotel personnel. When the Poages arrived in 1884, there were 29 African-American heads-of-household, with a total of 102 African-Americans in the community. Thirty-two percent of the total African-American male workforce were barbers. Porters, bootblacks, cooks, tanners, horse tenders, teamsters, tailors, fishermen, and day laborers made up the rest.³²⁷ This African-American work force was divided throughout the community, and it was highly service-oriented. It is certain that soon after the Poages arrived in La Crosse, Lulu Bell Poage, James' sister and George's aunt, married John W. Johnson, a long-term resident of La Crosse and then coachman for Jason Easton, wealthy lumber and railroad investor, who lived at 1305 Cass Street. For a short period in 1885, the Poages received mail at the Easton address.³²⁸

For such as the Poages, La Crosse perhaps represented a welcome change from circumstances in more racially-conscious Missouri. Indeed, La Crosse's affluent population was generally Yankee in origin and reflected an openness to African-Americans unusual or missing completely elsewhere along the Mississippi River.³²⁹ Work was available in the "Big Houses" of

lumber barons and industrialists who were attracted to the mystique of employing African-American barbers, African-American horse tenders, African-American maids, and African-American teachers, and who often had several African-Americans living in or near their own households. Educational opportunities available to Whites also were open to African-Americans located close by. The most important determinant for receiving an education at the turn of the century tended to be location of residence relative to a school and attitude of parents toward the value of an education.³³⁰ In general, La Crosse provided jobs and opportunities to anyone who wanted to take advantage of them, regardless of color (or at least minimally so).

The milieu of La Crosse in the middle to late 1880s included an excitement of politics and of "labor" and an expectation that African-Americans would participate. This was perhaps unique not only to Mississippi River towns but also to the nation. The most prominent of African-American political and labor activists was George Edwin Taylor who owned and edited a local newspaper in the mid-1880s and who became active in a local, statewide, and national Union Labor Party that offered a presidential candidate for the first time in 1888.³³¹ To many in La Crosse's more conservative community, Taylor played a too-prominent role in the "socialist" mayoralty of Frank "White Beaver"

³²⁶Albert H. Sanford and H. J. Hirschheimer, *A History of La Crosse, Wisconsin: 1841-1900* (La Crosse: La Crosse County Historical Society, 1951), p. 206.

³²⁷These data were constructed from information available in federal and state census records and in city directories. The results of this compilation have not been published.

³²⁸La Crosse, Wisconsin, County: Marriage Record. Register of Deeds, La Crosse County Courthouse, vol. 3, p. 302. See also *La Crosse City Directory [1885]* (n.d.) and *La Crosse City Directory, for the Years 1885-1886* (La Crosse: A. B. Lamborn, 1885) for James Poage and John W. Johnson.

³²⁹Donald John Berthrong, "La Crosse: A Case (continued...)"

³³⁰(...continued)

Study in Social History 1900-1910" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1948), p. 73. Open attitudes were perhaps reflected in "Riverman," an item in *The La Crosse Leader*, November 26, 1869, in which a White boatman, presumably from the South, had arrived in La Crosse and had made racist remarks. He spent the night in jail.

³³¹Schools were readily available to those who resided in the city center. Early available school records do not indicate race of student; however, a number of African-American children are identified by name as attending school in the 1880s and 1890s.

³³²See the *Wisconsin Labor Advocate* (La Crosse) that began publication on August 20, 1886.

Powell who served La Crosse for four terms, twice in the mid-1880s and twice again in the 1890s. What was important about Taylor, for the Poages and other African-Americans, was the fact that he proved that an African-American of humble birth and from La Crosse could become educated, could acquire stature within a White-dominated society, and could play a prominent role in state or national politics. Taylor also spoke their concerns in his paper. Indeed, Taylor later claimed that his was the first African-American-owned paper in the nation, with a predominantly White readership.³³² It is highly unlikely that that lesson would have been lost on Poage who was seven or eight years old at the time.

Taylor was not a lone example of a successful African-American in La Crosse either, for there also were others who served as role models for young African-Americans in the mid-1880s. Of the 37 African-American barbers who made La Crosse their work place before 1905, two stand out as demonstrating that African-Americans also could become economically successful in La Crosse. John Williams speculated in real estate in both Wisconsin and Minnesota and retired early with a small fortune.³³³ Another land-speculating barber was John W. Birney who bought and sold lots in the ten hundred and eleven hundred blocks of State Street, who built houses on some of these properties, and who represented the State of Wisconsin as the "Colored" Delegate at the New Orleans Cotton Exposition in 1885.³³⁴ Although

Taylor, Williams, and Birney were atypical of African-American success in La Crosse, their successes did confirm that La Crosse provided a political and economic openness unusual for the time.

If there were stability and opportunity for the Poages in La Crosse, there also were problems for their future. Foreign migration into the city was increasing steadily in the closing decades of the century, with 5,380 persons registered as foreign-born (9,125 native-born) in 1880 and 8,369 foreign-born (16,721 native-born) a decade later.³³⁵ Of these latter native-born, many were first generation Americans whose parents had recently arrived from the Old World. The largest number of immigrants came from Germany, with Norway a close runner-up. While many came with useable skills, many arrived as regular laborers and thus had to begin at the bottom of the economic ladder. Language barriers for these new immigrants were a problem, though these were usually rectified with time. In large part, these unskilled laborers were attracted to the low-paying and low-capital-investing occupations filled frequently by African-Americans. With a few hundred dollars, the newly-arrived could purchase used barbering equipment and open a shop.³³⁶ No one had actually closed these occupations to immigrants, even though most African-Americans and older White Yankees had become accustomed to thinking of these tasks as reserved for African-Americans.

³³²*Voice of the Negro* (Atlanta), October 1904, p. 478. See also Marlene Sokol, "Black Journalist Wrote and Politicked for Change," *The Florida Times-Union* (Jacksonville), February 27, 1984.

³³³*The Morning Chronicle* (La Crosse), October 17, 1883; "Barber Shops of Early Days," *The Morning Chronicle* (La Crosse), April 3, 1898.

³³⁴"Barber Shops of Early Days," *The Morning Chronicle* (La Crosse), April 3, 1898. For data on property ownership, see La Crosse, Wisconsin, City of: Property Tax Ledger (Area Research Center, Murphy (continued...))

³³⁵(...continued)

Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse), for 1858. Overbaugh & Burns Addition, lot 147, block 17; for 1859, lots 147-151, block 17; for 1860, lots 147-155; for 1861, lots 147-155, 172 and 173. Houses are noted on lots 147, 149, and 150. See also *The La Crosse News*, August 31, 1884.

³³⁶Sanford and Hirschheimer, *History of La Crosse*, p. 208.

³³⁷David A. Gerber, *Black Ohio and The Color Line 1860-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), pp. 62, 71, 80-81, 88.

Another problem facing a stable African-American population was the ease with which persons filling service occupations could move into or through a city such as La Crosse. Firstly, as "Black Yankees" or pioneer African-Americans, many African-Americans who came to La Crosse were not interested in sinking roots. Many, like their White counterparts, were more intrigued by the promise of an ever-expanding frontier and opportunities that appeared always brighter "just up the road a piece." While there were only 144 recorded African-American residents in Minneapolis in 1880, when 122 resided in La Crosse, those numbers changed rapidly by 1890. Minneapolis/Saint Paul increasingly acted as a magnet for African-Americans from small river towns and agricultural settlements alike.³³⁷

The attractions of a larger city and a growing African-American settlement was especially strong for single barbers and those with shallow roots who seemed to flow through small and increasingly immigrant-driven towns such as La Crosse. The river and the railroad made mobility easy and perhaps were dominant forces in shaping patterns of migration along this section of the river. In effect, service occupations such as barbering, whitewashing, and day laboring that demanded low or no capital investment were extremely mobile and particularly vulnerable to infiltration by newer immigrant populations.³³⁸

Adding to these disruptive tendencies that were characteristic of the whole African-American community, the Porges encountered other problems of a personal nature that undoubtedly influenced how they related to La Crosse. Lulu Belle Johnson, George's aunt, died in 1887 only three years after

her marriage. James Poage (the breadwinner) and Freddie (an infant of three or four years of age) died in 1888.³³⁹ This effectively forced Annie Coleman Poage into the work force and required her daughter Nellie to take employment as soon as possible. George Poage was barely eight years old at the time. Annie and her children soon moved to the Lucian and Mary Easton estate at 1317 Cass Street where Annie became the "stewardess," the person in charge of servants.³⁴⁰ This move provided George and Nellie with opportunities that few African-Americans or even many Whites would enjoy in the La Crosse community.

The 1890s were particularly difficult for an African-American population that, in La Crosse at least, tended to be mobile. For decades, lumbering had been the driving force in La Crosse's economy, and, as long as lumber prospered, so did everything else. Lumber milling peaked in the early 1890s and nearly vanished in the next decade. The pineries were depleted and would never be fully restored. Capital tends not to wait for an uncertain future. The first and obvious manifestation of economic change was a declining employment for loggers.³⁴¹ Depression in this industry quickly spread to service occupations such as barbering. Barbers saw greater opportunities elsewhere, and, if they were mobile, they packed their bags and left for Minneapolis/Saint Paul or points west.³⁴² The number of African-American households in La

³³⁷La Crosse, Wisconsin, County, Death Record, Register of Deeds, La Crosse County Courthouse, vol. 1, p. 290; *La Crosse Daily Republican and Leader*, November 2, 1888; Oak Grove Cemetery Record of Burials, Oak Grove Cemetery, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

³⁴⁰United States, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1900: Population*; *La Crosse City and County Directory, Philippi's* [1893], annotated by the United States Postal Service (La Crosse: Walter J. Boycott, 1893).

³⁴¹Sanford & Hirschheimer, *History of La Crosse*, p. 172; Berthrong, "La Crosse," pp. 145-146.

³⁴²Taylor, "The Blacks," p. 75, 77.

³³⁸For these terms, see Melvin E. Banner, *The Black Pioneer in Michigan* (Midland: Pendell, 1973). For Minnesota, see David Vassar Taylor, "The Blacks," in *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups*, edited by June Holmquist (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981), p. 74, 80, Table 4.1.

³³⁹See Gerber, *Black Ohio*.

Crosse declined steadily from 37 in 1887, to 30 in 1895, and to 23 in 1900. The number of single African-American persons in the population, however, nearly disappeared. Mobility appeared to be the key; if one could easily move, one did.

Other influences that affected African-American residence and longevity in La Crosse are less easily defined. As White capital generated by the lumber trade left for greener pastures, so did service jobs attached to their "Big Houses." As an established White Yankee native aristocracy lost ground to an economy dominated by immigrants, so did African-Americans.³⁴³ The answer for many was to move to greener pastures. For others, the answer was to stay attached to established and continuing families who were able to shift to the new realities of La Crosse. At least temporarily, the Eastons remained on Cass Street; so also remained the Poages. In 1900, Annie was listed as "stewardess" while Nellie was recorded as "teacher."³⁴⁴ By that same date, George had moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where he was a student in Philosophy at the University.

While George Coleman Poage's activities in La Crosse are less documented than is the record of opportunities available to African-Americans, it is clear that Poage achieved a degree of notable success, that was reported in the press, late in his high school years. Unfortunately, school records for these years no longer survive and school annuals documenting later classes had not yet begun in La Crosse. The available evidence suggests, however, that Poage was both a good student and a good athlete. He graduated second in his class at La Crosse High School on June 23, 1899. Graduation ceremonies in those years were times when valedictorians and salutatorians addressed their classmates and the public. The local press announced that Poage would present an oration at

graduation.³⁴⁵ In this instance, the class was composed of 18 women and seven men. Of this number, most tended to come from families of local business people, shopkeepers, and a few from professional ranks. None went on to become notable in other than a local sense, except for Poage.

The curriculum of study at La Crosse High School concentrated on courses designed to prepare proper youth for future study at the university level.³⁴⁶ Poage followed the Ancient Classical Course of study at the high school, scoring in the 86-plus percentile in each course. In addition to required courses that included Political and Physical Geography, American History, English Grammar and Composition, and a whole range of mathematics courses, Poage specialized in Ancient and English histories and in Latin and

³⁴³ *La Crosse Daily Republican and Leader*, June 23, 1899.

³⁴⁴ George Coleman Poage File, Recommendation for Admission, dated September 26, 1899, Registrar's Office, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin. The following courses were listed as completed at La Crosse High School:

Required for all courses	%age	# meetings per week	# weeks of study
Political Geography	80	5	40
Physical Geography	94	3	70
U. S. History	82	5	40
English Grammar/ composition	96	4	80
Arithmetic	97	4	70
Algebra	96	4	60
Plane Geometry	85	5	78
Solid Geometry	91	3	12
Ancient Classical Course			
Ancient History	91	3	28
English History	93	3	12
Latin, Elementary Book #6	86	5	40
Grammar			86 through course
Prose Composition/ 40 lessons	91	5	12
Cicero, 4 books	[91]	3	40
Cicero, 7 orations	90	5	38
Virgil, 6 books	90	5	40
Greek, Grammar			88 through course
Xenophon, 4 books	92	5	28
Homer, 3 books	86	5	16
Prose Composition, 40 lessons	90	5	8
Extra Studies			
Biology	92	5	24
Elementary Physics	89	5	28
Senior Physics	91	5	38
English Literature	86	4	40

³⁴³ Gerber, *Black Ohio*, p. 72, 80.

³⁴⁴ *United States, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1900. Population.*

Greek languages. Poage also followed the Ancient-Classical course of study as a Freshman at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Poage was also gifted with superior athletic abilities and perhaps with the lucky circumstance of a small class that tended, in these years, to be heavily represented by females. As one of seven males in his class, Poage could participate in sports in ways or to a degree that perhaps might not be available to one with similar talents today. His competitive skills, however, were superior by any measure. For example, as a member of the high school's track team in the spring 1899, he competed widely in several events. In a track meet with Winona, Minnesota, on May 29, 1899, he placed first in the 50-yard dash, the 100 yard dash, and the 220-yard dash and took off his shoes to win second place in the standing broad jump.³⁴⁷ In the reminiscences of local turn-of-the-century La Crosse, Poage and his mother and sister were described as people who accepted their station and place and were contrasted with other African-Americans who were not so highly regarded.³⁴⁸ Most of all, George Poage was remembered as a superb athlete. A La Crosse newspaper reference of 1913 described him as "one of the fastest men in [the] world at [the] time" and as "perhaps the greatest track athlete that was ever developed in this city."³⁴⁹

But perhaps more important than the obvious documented record of academic and athletic achievement is what might be considered more speculative and circumstantial evidence of support that came from his family and from the Eastons, his mother's employer. Lucian and Mary Easton, at whose residence the Poages lived at the turn of the

century, were established financiers in the La Crosse area whose family wealth had accumulated during the heyday of lumber milling and railroad construction. The Eastons were married in 1885, about the same time that the Poages arrived in La Crosse. Six children were born to the Eastons between 1886 and 1897, and of these six, three died during the period of Annie Poage's employment there. Lucian Easton served on the Board of Education for the city of La Crosse for 27 years and was active in many other public boards and committees. Mary Easton was the first president of the La Crosse Home for Friendless Women and Children and served on numerous boards and committees ranging from the Red Cross to hospital societies.³⁵⁰ Unfortunately, the record of Easton accounts is not available for research, and we may never know to what extent the Eastons assisted Poage once he left La Crosse for the University of Wisconsin in Madison. We do know that in the official records of the university, Poage registered the Easton home as his home.³⁵¹

In conclusion, circumstances that allowed an African-American person such as Poage to excel and achieve in the environment of La Crosse are well defined and identifiable. For a half century, African-Americans had achieved economic and journalistic success in La Crosse. The coincidence of a conveniently located school, of a high degree of native intelligence, of a superb athletic ability, of parents who must have fostered an alert and inquiring mind and supported an education at a time when other boys were joining the workforce, and of employers who were friendly to social causes and education combined to encourage his success in La Crosse and to facilitate his move to Madison where he continued his interest in track and field

³⁴⁷ *La Crosse Daily Republican and Leader*, May 24, 27, 29, 1899.

³⁴⁸ "Louise Sontag Interview", 1969, p. 248. Oral History Collection, Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

³⁴⁹ "Poage Awarded 'W' Earned Years Ago," *La Crosse Leader Press*, June 18, 1913.

³⁵⁰ "Family of Lucian and Mary Losey Easton," compiled by Edwin Hill, May 8, 1985, Poage biography file, Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

³⁵¹ Myer Katz, "The Easton House" (unpublished paper, 1978), Area Research Center, Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

competition. Had that step not been made, it is highly unlikely that the Milwaukee Athletic Club would have known about Poage or his abilities. The coincidence of a unique talent in a unique environment led Poage to Saint Louis in 1904 where he found his place in history as the first African-American to win an Olympic medal.



Figure 21. La Crosse High School Track Team, 1899. George Coleman Poage, second row, second from left. Courtesy of La Crosse County Historical Society.

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