SNAPSHOTS OF CHARACTER: HORACE BRAZELTON AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY IDENTITY IN JIM CROW CHATTANOOGA

By

Stefanie Morgan Haire

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Doctoral Committee:

Dr. Carroll Van West
Dr. Andrew Fialka
Dr. Lisa Pruitt
Dr. Torren Gatson

The following work is dedicated to Horace and Hettie Brazelton, for it is their story.
And to Lucille, Leon, Jr., Johnnie Mae, and Dorothy – you were there, too.

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To me, this is not just a dissertation. It is truly the beginning of my life's work and I acknowledge every person and organization who compelled me to keep going when all I wanted to do was stop. Never stop appreciating those who came before us.

ABSTRACT

SNAPSHOTS OF CHARACTER: HORACE BRAZELTON AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY IDENTITY IN JIM CROW CHATTANOOGA

Horace Maynard Brazelton (1878-1956) was the first professional African American photographer in Chattanooga, Tennessee. His work offered a service to the African American community long denied them or otherwise unobtainable due to Jim Crow policies, including *de jure* and *de facto* segregation. Photographs are treated as material culture in this dissertation, contributing to positive self-representation and identity expression for African Americans. Image and reputation were immensely important to growing middle classes regardless of race, so photography served as a tool of Black agency in the pursuit of equality before the Civil Rights Movement. What is more, Horace and his wife Hettie Brazelton (1876-1957) were public pillars of their community. They were directly involved with generating social and cultural capital in the "Big Nine" district in Chattanooga, through entrepreneurial enterprises, public and religious activities, participation in national competitions, and their resistance to the status quo. This dissertation therefore seeks to explore the lives of these two remarkable individuals and place them among the historical framework of this mid-size southern city.

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INTRODUCTION

> We must begin to talk about the significance of black image production in daily life prior to racial integration. When we concentrate on photography, we make it possible to see the walls of photographs in black homes as a critical intervention, a disruption of white control over black images.[1]
>
> -bell hooks, from a book chapter titled *In Our Glory: Photography and Black Life*

Despite the documented legal, political, and physical violence directed at people of color in the post-Civil War South, these communities persevered to establish thriving neighborhoods from the Reconstruction era through the Jim Crow period. They quickly became self-sufficient by coalescing into prosperous business districts with a developing Black middle class, mere decades after Emancipation. The story of Black empowerment shaped postwar Chattanooga, Tennessee – where one such successful businessman named Horace Maynard Brazelton contributed to a growing city as an affluent Black photographer during the early twentieth century. Recently rediscovered, he is now considered to be one of the most prominent photographers for African Americans in Chattanooga, as he operated his portrait studio for some fifty years. His photography studio was located on East Ninth Street in the "Big Nine" district area, renamed Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in the early 1980s.[2] This thoroughfare was comparable to Beale Street in Memphis, for its lively jazz and vibrant Black culture. However, this

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[1] bell hooks, *Art on My Mind: Visual Politics* (New York, NY: New Press, 1998), 59.

[2] Derek H. Alderman, "Naming Streets after Martin Luther King, Jr.: No Easy Road," in *Landscape and Race in the United States*, ed. Richard Schein (London, United Kingdom: Routledge Press, 2006): 216.

section of town was not limited to this one street or music alone, as is generally implied by some of the most recent articles on the subject.[3]

This public history dissertation examines the lives and legacy of Horace and his wife Hettie Brazelton, framed as a biographical inquiry into an influential family who directly impacted the expansion of their community. It also explores their roles in the development of the Black middle class in Chattanooga and identifies places from this period which are still extant. Public history theory will shape a biographical sketch of Horace Brazelton and his role in the larger community, and public history practice then translates the scholarship into a museum exhibit and a freely accessible database of Black-owned businesses over a sixty-year timespan. This research will also inform the basis of a future Geographic Information Systems (GIS) project, detailing Jim Crow Chattanooga during Brazelton's lifetime using interactive visual media. Using the aforementioned database of business listings, this mapping project will prove that the Black business district sprawled much further than Ninth Street alone.

Unfortunately, urban renewal programs have threatened the historically Black neighborhoods in Chattanooga since the middle of the twentieth century, with the Westside Urban Renewal Program of the late 1950s and more recent gentrification of

[3] Lynda Edwards, "Chattanooga's Black History Sites Are Slowly Disappearing or Forgotten," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, February 9, 2015, https://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2015/feb/09/vanishing-history/; Charles Moss, "Discover the History of Tennessee's Forgotten Music Empire," *National Geographic*, February 23, 2022, https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/discover-the-history-of-tennessees-forgotten-music-empire.

the 2010s.[4] Further, photos created by the Brazelton Studio are now difficult to find, and his story is largely unknown in Chattanooga. Forfeitures like these can culminate in larger losses of cultural capital, since photographs can be used as artifacts detailing family and community history. As such, this dissertation is also a story of Black agency – from the perspective of an individual preserving memory in a community during a fever pitch of racial tension expressed through segregation and aggression.

Black Photographers – Artists and Entrepreneurs

Horace Maynard Brazelton was the first African American photographer known to operate a public portrait studio in Chattanooga, Tennessee. His practice during Jim Crow's segregationist policies and racism provided one of the only opportunities for the city's Black communities to be photographed as the more prevalent, White-owned studios often refused to offer their services to African Americans. This phenomenon was not exclusive to Chattanooga, though. Like so many other cities in the country, especially in the southeast, Chattanooga was divided along a Black and White line.

Photographers of this era were the first generation to really go out into the streets to capture the life and work of a local community, and Brazelton himself created

[4] "West Side Houses to Go at Auction," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, July 16, 1959; Ken Chilton, rep., *The Unfinished Agenda: Segregation & Exclusion in Chattanooga, TN and The Road Towards Inclusion* (Chattanooga NAACP, 2015); Mark Kennedy, "Remember When, Chattanooga? Westside Businesses Were Sacrificed for Urban Renewal," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, June 25, 2021, https://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2021/jun/25/remember-when-westside/; Brenda Washington, "Black Flight: The Impact of Market-Based Urban Renewal in Chattanooga - and Response," Chattanoogan.com, January 10, 2022, https://www.chattanoogan.com/2022/1/10/441274/Black-Flight-The-Impact-Of.aspx. This federally sponsored program was also known as the Golden Gateway project.

hundreds of primary visual sources of significant information about his community. By the time he opened his studio, when photography was no longer a novel idea, society quickly began moving towards the ever incessant need to document one's life. If American photography began with formal portraits, not wholly unlike aristocratic paintings, it quickly evolved into a technology easily within reach of the masses. So, events like parties, annual conventions, graduations, church gatherings, company picnics, and others were swiftly captured on film. We can observe a similar desire to capture precious moments in time to this day, with phones that can store thousands of images yet still fit in our pockets.

No matter the time period, if not for the camera and the photographer who artfully operates the thing, then so many of these moments would be lost. Even if photographic technology was theoretically available to the public during Brazelton's lifetime, though, it was still largely inaccessible to many. Initial costs and ongoing maintenance acted as a financial barrier, preventing many people from using the medium. In response, businessmen opened portrait studios where they invested in modern equipment and provided their expertise to a large clientele. Other impediments to the technology were social in nature, as segregation often excluded Black people from photography, if and when White photographers refused them service.

Preserving memory, especially when offered as a service to a whole community, is then a powerful tool in generating cultural capital and preventing generational trauma. For instance, even decades after Emancipation, White mainstream society aggressively told people of color what they were, how to dress, what to do, and what to

pass down to their children. They attempted to hold this standard through segregation, subjugation, and dissemination of crudely racist visual materials on a national level. Alternatively, African American photographers offered not only the service of image making, but the gift of creating family heirlooms – passing stories to descendants since photos often provide the most tangible possible connection to lost loved ones.[5]

Horace Brazelton's life is but one story, part of the Black professionals who lived extraordinary lives and created a new future for their families. But it is a rich tale that details a man who worked tirelessly to capture important moments in his community. A son of a formerly enslaved man turned USCT soldier, Horace moved to a larger southern city in search of greater opportunity. He found such occasion in Chattanooga, Tennessee, despite the social and racial challenges which followed him and his wife. Their work in portrait photography symbolizes the importance of entrepreneurialism, as related to the development of a Black middle class in this southern city. There has also not yet been a comprehensive study or public history project completed on the development of the Black middle class in Chattanooga. This dissertation will attempt, or at least begin, to fill an unacceptable void.

Despite social struggles due to race, Brazelton's Photo Studio was open from 1904 to 1953, first appearing in Chattanooga city directories by 1906.[6] Therefore, the

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[5] Joeri Januarius and Nelleke Teughels, "History Meets Archaeology: The Historical Use of Images. A Survey," *Revue Belge De Philologie Et Dhistoire* 87, no. 3 (2009); Stephanie M. Woody-Groshelle, "Southern African American Communities: The Portrait Photography of Florestine Perrault Collins and Richard Samuel Roberts" (thesis, Lindenwood University, 2022); Leigh Raiford, "Photography and the Practices of Critical Black Memory," *History and Theory* 48, no. 4 (2009).

[6] Chattanooga, Tennessee City Directories, 1899-1960.

scope of this project is limited to Brazelton's professional life in Chattanooga during this timeframe. Even though he moved studio locations at least twelve times, he remained on the same street each time (East Ninth), an area known as the "Big Nine" of Chattanooga. This area was comparable to Beale Street in Memphis, for the lively jazz clubs and African American culture which thrived there, along with the successful Black business district of Chattanooga, including Brazelton's Studio.[7] Although it was a successful section of the city, the district was still segregated by race.

Historiographical Contribution

Professional African American photographers are understudied for their impact of Jim Crow on American culture and the rise of the Black middle class. This dissertation therefore attempts to place Horace Maynard Brazelton within the associated literature of American photography, Black identity, and self-representation of a marginalized community, specifically within the context of segregationist urban planning during Jim Crow.

The body of scholarship informing this research is rich and varied, albeit incomplete. That historiography is discussed in more depth in Chapter one. As of the time of this writing, no scholarly work has been completed on the lives and careers of Horace and Hettie Brazelton either, aside from a brief mention of Horace's photography

[7] Carey O'Neil, "MLK: Once, the Boulevard Bustled. Today the Thrill Is Gone. But Dreams of Revival Live On," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, June 10, 2012.

work in W. Brian Piper's 2016 dissertation from the College of William and Mary.[8] He was also not mentioned in either of the major art histories of Tennessee prepared after the celebration of the state's bicentennial in the early 2000s.[9]

Tonnia L. Anderson's "Photographing the Race: The Cultural Politics of Race, Memory, and Meaning in the Photography of Richard S. Roberts, 1920-1936" helped shape the methodology which informed this dissertation, as she was focused on the photographic work of Richard Samuel Roberts (1880-1936) in Columbus, South Carolina. The publication guided me through similar research questions in my own work involving Horace M. Brazelton, of Chattanooga. However, Tonnia L. Anderson's dissertation does critique another author, Nicholas Natanson, who characterized those photographs as "images of the elite" as a way to prove that Blacks were simply assimilating to White middle-class values and aesthetic.[10] Anderson disagrees with Natanson's statement, as do I, as it robs the photographer and the subject of their agency and authenticity. [11] Indeed, Brazelton portrayed Chattanooga's Black middle class community *as they were*, not as they wished to be.[12] These were professionals, entrepreneurs, and educated people who would not allow the dominant White culture to falsely portray them as

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[8] W. Brian Piper, "Cameras at Work: African American Studio Photographers and the Business of Everyday Life, 1900-1970," Dissertation, Paper 1477068187, The College of William and Mary, 2016.

[9] Carroll Van West and Margaret Duncan Binnicker, *A History of Tennessee Arts: Creating Traditions, Expanding Horizons* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2004); Benjamin Hubbard Caldwell, Robert Hicks, and Mark Scala, *Art of Tennessee* (Nashville, TN: Frist Center for the Visual Arts, 2003).

[10] Nicholas Natanson, *The Black Image in the New Deal: The Politics of FSA Photography* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1992).

[11] Tonnia L. Anderson, "Photographing the Race: The Cultural Politics of Race, Memory, and Meaning in the Photography of Richard S. Roberts, 1920-1936" (dissertation, 2006), 5.

[12] I will note that Horace Brazelton did not spend a great deal of time or energy on photographing poorer communities, but still captured a huge swath of Chattanooga.

anything else. This tenacious personality of what I term as the Reconstruction Generation built a legacy for the next generations to tackle civil rights issues.

Jeffrey John Fearing's 2005 dissertation from Howard University further provides an in-depth scholarly view on another successful Black photographer named Addison Scurlock, of Washington, D.C. Aside from some mentions in works by Deborah Willis, Jane Levey's article in *Washington History*, and George Sullivan's *Black Artists in Photography, 1840-1940*, even Scurlock has not yet received proper recognition for the importance of his work.[13] This dissertation about Horace and Hettie Brazelton will therefore add to this growing body of literature associated with American photography, while offering a ground-level perspective on the historical development of Chattanooga's Black business district.

Many scholars have explored the interconnections of photography and representation or identity, as I also used as the foundation of this dissertation, including Deborah Willis Thomas, bell hooks, and Tonnia Anderson. But this project does examine that preexisting scholarship by using overlooked and unfamiliar sources. It offers a fresh perspective and confirms that hideous racism and segregation undoubtedly affected every community in the United States. More importantly, I was able to draft a biography for two great people who deserve to be remembered.

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[13] Jeffrey John Fearing, "African-American Image, History, and Identity, in Twentieth-Century Washington, D.C., as Chronicled through the Art and Social Realism Photography of Addison N. Scurlock and the Scurlock Studios, 1904-1994" (Ph.D. dissertation, Howard University, 2005).

This study in no way assumes or attempts to produce the assumption that southern Black communities were a homogenous group during Jim Crow, nor are they homogenous today. However, their experiences were similar to one another as African Americans living under southern Jim Crow rule. Black communities were and always will be a pluralistic group, as with any other racial, ethnic, religious, political, cultural, or social community.

Dissertation Structure

Horace M. Brazelton and his contemporaries in Chattanooga (and beyond) represented a new hope in the post-Reconstruction generation as successful entrepreneurs who were most likely the children of previously enslaved parents. In the midst of institutional racism, they created the "Big Nine" as the lively center of the African American community in Chattanooga for decades.[14]

Brazelton's work is now collected among institutions like the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress, the Bessie Smith Cultural Center, Picnooga (Chattanooga Historical Society), and countless private households. The challenge is to identify additional photographs created by his studio, and to further reach new audiences and inspire all those who learn about his work.

[14] Carey O'Neil, "MLK: Once, the Boulevard Bustled. Today the Thrill Is Gone. But Dreams of Revival Live on.," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, June 10, 2012.

Media pervades culture on a national level, but it is perhaps most directly 'felt' locally. Battling those false stereotypes perpetuated by most forms of media was especially difficult during a moment in American history when Black communities were also fighting to socially, financially, and artistically prevail over a Jim Crow system deliberately designed against them. Capturing the tenacity, grit, motivation, and talents of the Reconstruction generation is my main objective through the following chapters.

Chapter one discusses a broad scope and review of relevant literature I used as foundational scholarship in the documentation and analysis of Brazelton's life and legacy. I intend to provide necessary context through this review of associated research by considering ideas of self-representation, community identity, agency, and memory through the perspective of photography.

This project is centered around the life and legacy of Horace Maynard Brazelton, and as such, chapter two serves as the first scholarly source of biographical information on the Brazelton family. Beginning with Horace himself, I searched for genealogical data, professional training, published mentions, and earned accolades. The resulting family tree thus "begins" with Anderson Brazelton and Lee Anna (Fain) Brazelton, the parents of Horace who were previously enslaved under the auspices of Old Southern rule in rural Knox and Jefferson Counties. I then examined thousands of primary sources to create a small window into the lives of this couple and their six children, including Horace, who was the youngest of the family. Historical breadcrumbs then take our audience with Horace as he moves to Chattanooga in Hamilton County and marries a woman named Hettie Hodge while opening a photography studio, all within a five-year

timespan. Horace's entrepreneurial spirit speaks loudly through surviving newspaper articles, national conferences, and even a speech given to the 1917 meeting of the National Negro Business League, as he continuously helped develop a thriving Black business district in Chattanooga. The rest of Horace and Hettie's lives are filled with triumphs and tragedies, as most people should be able to relate to – after all, this biographical chapter is just a manifestation of *one story* among thousands.

Chapter three follows up on the previous biographical section and attempts to provide an analysis of the progression of photography from the Brazelton Photo Studio. This examination of Brazelton's physical work focuses on his compositions, including the subjects, props, clothing, backdrops, furniture, lighting, etc., that he captured.

The next chapter details a primary source transcription project based on thousands of Black-owned business listings in the Chattanooga City Directory from approximately 1899 to 1960. This section of the dissertation also explores the development of the thriving Black business district in Chattanooga, and any direct effects Horace might have had on that development, namely in his role as an entrepreneur and in real estate dealings.

Federal Urban Renewal programs damaged African American neighborhoods across the country beginning in the 1950s. Similar programs devastated Chattanooga at the end of Horace and Hettie's lives, culminating with the Federal Highway Act of 1956 which prompted the Westside Urban Renewal Program – a sanctioned takeover of approximately 435 acres, the fourth largest urban renewal project in the United States

in terms of its vast scale.[15] Chapter five thus provides relevant context for how such a project was initiated and acts as the second bookend of the Brazelton's story, since they both passed away just a few years before the City of Chattanooga razed buildings like their beloved Leonard Street Presbyterian Church as part of related infrastructure development in the area. It also attempts to describe Chattanooga, Tennessee as the Brazeltons and other mid-century Black professionals experienced the city during the Jim Crow period.

The Brazelton story also impacted a major public history project which began as my residency. As required by MTSU's History Department, doctoral students must complete a professional project during a residency year to demonstrate competency in merging scholarship and theory with practice. I opted to use my research on the Brazelton family to partner with Picnooga (Chattanooga Historical Society) and the MTSU Center for Historic Preservation, in creating a museum-quality traveling exhibit that is currently hosted at its third venue. "Through the Lens: The Life and Legacy of Horace Brazelton" was first presented at Ruby Falls in 2023, a major tourist destination located on Lookout Mountain, just adjacent to Chattanooga. Some 185,000 people visited the property while the exhibit was on display from June 7th to September 15th –

[15] Courtney Elizabeth Knapp, *Constructing the Dynamo of Dixie: Race, Urban Planning, and Cosmopolitanism in Chattanooga, Tennessee* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 3.

and I worked in tandem with the Ruby Falls marketing team in promoting the story for public awareness during that time.[16]

The second venue to have the exhibit on display is called RISE Chattanooga, a Black-led nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering communities through the arts.[17] I installed the Brazelton exhibit in December 2023 at their historic church building at 2901 Taylor Street, adaptively reused as a community center in the heart of East Chattanooga. We later celebrated the exhibit's time at RISE with a community dinner just before Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 2024.

"Through the Lens: The Life and Legacy of Horace Brazelton" was then installed on the third floor at the downtown branch of the Chattanooga Public Library and was freely accessible to the public from February 17 to May 15, 2024. This newest partnership with a local government entity demonstrates a continued interest in the Brazelton story and speaks to the significance of sharing that legacy. Four modern Black photographers also joined in the exhibition at the library, showing pieces of their work that showcases modern Chattanooga. It is my goal to continue traveling the exhibit to other places, in order to share this remarkable story with more people.

This dissertation project therefore attempts to find interconnections between the emergence of African American identity in the postwar south and the development

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[16] Ray Bassett, "'Through The Lens' of Horace Brazelton At Ruby Falls," broadcast, *Scenic Roots*, June 28, 2023; Mark Kennedy, "Black Portrait Photographer Featured at Ruby Falls," Times Free Press, July 9, 2023, https://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2023/jul/09/kennedy-black-portrait-photographer-featured-at/; John Shearer, "Ruby Falls Exhibit by Stefanie Haire Uncovers Forgotten Local Black Photographer," Chattanoogan.com, September 8, 2023, https://www.chattanoogan.com/2023/9/8/474552/John-Shearer-Ruby-Falls-Exhibit-By.aspx.

[17] R.I.S.E. (Responsive Initiatives for Social Empowerment).

of a thriving Black business district in Chattanooga, Tennessee amidst Jim Crow segregation. Horace Brazelton's role in that growth and his impact on American photography are both rich aspects to this historiography, as he was not only a pioneer for photography, but also a pioneer for Black Chattanooga and beyond. His work continues to inspire photographers and provides invaluable insights into who lived through and prevailed over Jim Crow atrocities. His story and legacy have not yet been detailed, and the following study addresses that distasteful void.

CHAPTER I: PHOTOGRAPHY AS A BUSINESS

> When the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, there were some 4,000,000 of us black folk stranded and bewildered upon the land which we had tilled under compulsion... Sundered suddenly from the only relationship with Western civilization we had been allowed to form since our captivity, our personalities blighted by two hundred and fifty years of servitude.[1]
>
> -Richard Wright, *12 Million Black Voices*

The Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 signaled the beginning of the end of the American Civil War, freeing enslaved persons in the United States. Such an effort was critical for efforts in progressing towards social equality but did not wholly relieve black communities. How could it? Even after gaining their well-deserved freedom, new questions soon arrived for African Americans about identity and how they wanted to be represented in a world catered to whites. The Jim Crow era, defined here loosely as from the 1880s to the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement, was a strategic effort to continuously displace, disenfranchise, and demean people of color. But throughout this period, African Americans also persevered to create their own self-sustaining communities, sealing a legacy that can be traced using interdisciplinary methods. For example, photography creates tangible artifacts of material culture that can be used as historical primary sources in correcting preconceived notions about large communities. Using this approach, the study of photography can offer unique insights into the people who had their pictures taken and from those who created the images.

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[1] Richard Wright, *12 Million Black Voices: A Folk History of the Negro in the United States* (New York, NY: Viking Press, 1941), 35.

Once U.S. troops occupied Chattanooga by the fall of 1863, African Americans also "self-emancipated" themselves by flocking to U.S. lines as a safe haven. In Chattanooga, the first such encampment was known as Hill City.[2] Specifically, "Emancipation, ending the personal sovereignty of master over slave, made all Americans equally subject to the authority of the national state."[3] The new legislation also allowed all Black men to serve in the U.S. Army, though Tennessee was interestingly the first state in the country to draft *free* Black men into military service.[4] After Emancipation, United States Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.) units formed in Chattanooga by 1864. In this southern railroad city, the U.S. army remained in control for the remainder of the war, allowing for the eventual policies known as Reconstruction to begin months earlier than April 1865. As such, it marked the beginning of the end of the Civil War. By the time the war finally concluded, parts of the south were decimated, and American citizens were ready to rebuild. The subsequent period of reintegrating secessionist states into the Union is widely known as *Reconstruction*.

Tennessee was the first state readmitted into the Union after ratifying the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution, and the Tennessee General Assembly

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[2] Jennifer Crutchfield, *Chattanooga Landmarks: Exploring the History of the Scenic City* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2010); Alex McKeel, "Chattanooga's Contraband Camp," Chattanoogan.com, May 9, 2020, https://www.chattanoogan.com/2020/5/9/408833/Chattanooga-s-Contraband-Camp.aspx; Hill City in North Chattanooga began as a contraband camp during the Civil War and flourished afterward as Chattanooga's first Black neighborhood.

[3] Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: Americas Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York, NY: Perennial Classics, 2014), 23.

[4] Bobby L. Lovett, "The Negro's Civil War in Tennessee, 1861-1865," *The Journal of Negro History* 61, no. 1 (1976):36.

abolished slavery in the state before the war ended.[5] Additionally, Tennessee granted suffrage to Black men in February 1867.[6] Tennessee's early start in Reconstruction did not lead to results any different than the other former Confederate states, though. Railroad segregation, an important issue in Chattanooga, came soon after passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1875. "Within a month of the act's passage, the state legislature enacted its own law abolishing the state common law right of equal access to public accommodations and transportation."[7] By the 1890s, the 46th Tennessee General Assembly began working toward the suppression of Black voters, after Democrats took control in the 1888 state election.[8] Once political control shifted in this way, Reconstruction gave way to Jim Crow.[9]

Reconstruction: Unattainable Success

Reconstruction as a term implies a *building back together,* as it once was. In a literal sense, the United States was incapable of rebuilding as it once was, because that manifestation of the nation led to civil war. No, Reconstruction had to be a *rebirth* of the nation. So, even the term itself is setting the period up for failure, as mutually exclusive

[5] Eugene G. Feistman, "Radical Disfranchisement and the Restoration of Tennessee, 1865-1866," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (June 1953), 149.

[6] John Cimprich, "The Beginning of the Black Suffrage Movement in Tennessee, 1864-65," *The Journal of Negro History* 65, no. 3 (1980), 193. From the General Assembly Bill Collection at the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Tennessee General Assembly.

[7] Kenneth W. Mack, "Law, Society, Identity, and the Making of the Jim Crow South: Travel and Segregation on Tennessee Railroads, 1875-1905," *Law & Social Inquiry* 24, no. 2 (1999), 384.

[8] Frank B. Williams, "The Poll Tax as a Suffrage Requirement in the South, 1870-1901," *The Journal of Southern History* 18, no. 4 (November 1952), 479.

[9] Tim Ezzell, *Chattanooga, 1865-1900: A City Set down in Dixie* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2013),

questions needed answers. There is no doubt that slavery was one of the most important economic and labor systems in the U.S. prior to the war. After that system was abolished though, the states and federal government had to pivot in order to survive.

Similarly, W.E.B. Du Bois reflected, "The whole development of Reconstruction was primarily an economic development, but no economic history or proper material for it has been written. It has been regarded as a purely political matter, and of politics most naturally divorced from industry." His work, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), was a powerful response to popular histories of the time, going as far as specifying that slavery was indeed the cause of the Civil War. Confederate sympathizers had already started "Lost Cause" mythology campaigns.[10]

Reconstruction was also an unfinished *revolution*, as Eric Foner argues – which only brushed against the idea of hope for a very brief moment.[11] A giant within Reconstruction historiography, Foner takes inspiration from W.E.B. DuBois, who called on Americans to look at the postwar years as a counterpoint to the Jim Crow Era in his seminal work, *Black Reconstruction*. This book is essentially a response to the segregationist society forced on African Americans after several political victories in the

[10] W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York, NY: The Free Press, Original Date 1935, Reprint 1992), 721-722. Among other things, the book responds to an extremely racist yet popular history text that was published in 1929, called *The Tragic Era* by Claude Bowers. Du Bois also offered new lines of thought that were directly tied to Reconstruction, such as class strife comparisons, labor history, and the active participation and agency of Black communities.

[11] Foner, 524-553.

Reconstruction Era.[12] The systematic suppression of efforts built an interracial democracy, but was simply a prelude to lynching murders, disenfranchisement, and segregation. DuBois was also responding to contemporary publications, including *The Tragic Era* by Claude Bowers (published in 1929, extremely racist and false, yet was a popular history text at the time). As such, *Black Reconstruction* addresses the *actual* role that African Americans played during the postwar years, from the perspective of an African American scholar. DuBois further criticizes historians who conceal truths for their own gain as it is absolutely necessary to "make clear the facts with utter disregard to his own wish and desire and belief."[13] Without history's recognition of the facts as they were, he warns that we will make the same mistakes time and time again.

Reconstruction marked a significant period of change in the United States, as the country struggled to rebuild itself after the resulting devastation of the Civil War. During this time, the federal government implemented a series of policies aimed at reintegrating the Southern states into the Union, through the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. During the 1860s and 1870s, several Black Tennesseans even rose to state office and served in the Tennessee

[12] Judy Bussell LeForge, "State Colored Conventions of Tennessee, 1865-1866," *Tennessee Historical Society* 65, no. 3 (2006): 230-253. The article recounts how educated black men convened and gained favor from Republican Governor Brownlow. Their efforts resulted in many civil rights gained, and hope reigned for a brief moment in the late 1860s and 1870s. However, after a shift in state political leadership (prompted by Brownlow's bid and election to the U.S. Senate), conservative Democrats quickly chipped away at those well-earned rights. One act that this General Assembly passed, though, was favorable to Black communities. "An Act to Provide for the Children and their Descendants of Colored Persons to Inherit the Estate, Real and Personal, of their deceased parents" was passed on January 24, 1870.

[13] Du Bois, xxvi.

General Assembly. This glimmer of hope during Reconstruction was repeated elsewhere, but gave unique optimism to Tennessee, as it allowed the state to avoid the Military Reconstruction Program imposed in 1867.[14]

While radical Republicans fought for Black male suffrage, nationally resulting in two Black Senators, sixteen Black Representatives, and hundreds in local offices, constituting a biracial democracy, the nation was by no means uniting under true equality. Republicans eventually retreated from social equality issues in the south, as the Supreme Court was chipping away at civil rights at the same time White male supremacy was socially, politically, and economically challenged (as well as an economic depression in the mid-1870s). Democrats took control of the south and quickly codified Jim Crow laws, allowing White violence and fear to dominate the southern landscape.

Other limited aspects of Reconstruction were successful in that they severed the rights to citizenship from the concept of race. For example, the Civil Rights Act of 1866 – passed over Andrew Johnson's veto – later formed the base for the Fourteenth Amendment, which recognized birthright citizenship. The 1866 Act also afforded other rights (to own property, to sue, to be sued, to sign contracts, etc.) as Dylan Penningroth explores.[15] But note how these rights were granted as rights of free labor (rights that are necessary to compete in the free market). Previously enslaved people did not obtain equal rights simply for *being* a person. They did not receive recognition for any

[14] Cimprich, 193; From the General Assembly Bill Collection at the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Tennessee General Assembly, 1867 House Bill 805 § (1867).

[15] Dylan C. Penningroth, *The Claims of Kinfolk: African American Property and Community in the Nineteenth-Century South* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

birthright as American citizens. Instead, they were granted *some* rights in order to rejoin the labor market. State economies and the national labor market struggled after the war, and four million laborers were effectively lost after emancipation.

Also, the Reconstruction Act of 1867 gave Black men the right to vote in the south (in opposition to the Black Codes) and formed the base of the Fifteenth Amendment (1870). But even these limited rights were later largely eroded and did nothing to address social equality. Southern states chipped away at what they could in terms of implementing poll tax requirements, requiring agricultural work contracts, and allowing white mob violence to control African American communities. Historian Joseph Cartwright argues that in Tennessee, this was accomplished through a series of strategic political moves, including: a statewide poll tax, selective voter registration, the Myers Law (requiring individuals to register twenty days in advance of elections), the Lea Law (separate ballot boxes for state and federal elections), and the Dortch Law (secret ballot). While Reconstruction inspired hope, Cartwright's *The Triumph of Jim Crow* documented the reality African Americans faced after the Republican party started distancing themselves from these social causes.

As such, the Reconstruction Acts were meant to address leftover questions of race relations after the Civil War, and for a brief moment, that legislation did produce both Black voters and elected officials.[16] However, as Rayford W. Logan emphasized in his classic study *The Betrayal of the Negro* (1965), "the new civil war within the

[16] Joseph H. Cartwright, *The Triumph of Jim Crow: Tennessee Race Relations in the 1880s* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1976).

Southern states stemmed from an adamant determination to restore white supremacy."[17] It was the racist and false notion of *Black inferiority* which decided the course of the next one hundred years. Even still, the Reconstruction Generation and their families worked together to build homes, start businesses, and generally become self-sufficient within the confines of the growing tensions behind Jim Crow policies. In the long Reconstruction period, and then in the Jim Crow era of the 1890s to the Civil Rights Movement, African American professionals prevailed against pervasive racism in a myriad of ways.

The temporal guidelines of Reconstruction, specific to Chattanooga, Tennessee, are thus defined in this dissertation as beginning in 1863 with the Emancipation Proclamation and Union Army occupation of said city.[18] The era then extends to the passage of the aforementioned restrictive Jim Crow laws passed by the Tennessee General Assembly in the late-nineteenth century. However, the entrenched racism predating these obstructive laws continues to shape the United States today, as the issues and policies of this period, such as voting rights, land ownership, and racial discrimination, remain central to the ongoing struggle for civil rights and social justice.[19]

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[17] Rayford Whittingham Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro, from Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* (New York, NY: Da Capo Press, Original 1965, Reprint 1997), 21.

[18] Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, "Chattanooga Under Military Occupation, 1863-1865," *The Journal of Southern History* 17, no. 1 (February 1951): 23–47; C. Stuart McGehee, "Military Origins of the New South: The Army of the Cumberland and Chattanooga's Freedmen," *Civil War History* 34, no. 4 (1988): 323–43.

[19] Generational trauma and disproportionate police brutality towards people of color are just two examples of how we continue to see the manifestations of this period pay out.

Rise of "Jim Crow"

Although the Thirteenth Amendment, ratified in 1865, structured the United States as a country where whites could no longer own fellow human beings, the ideologies behind the previous system did not cease. "The so-called Jim Crow era was, in fact, a combination of the de facto second-class citizenship and racial separation that emerged in 1877 at the end of Reconstruction, and the de jure arsenal of laws and official regulations that came to fruition in the 1890s."[20] After Reconstruction failed, White society continued forcing false inferiority on African Americans in regard to their cleanliness, morality, and even their character on streetcars.[21]

In fact, Tennessee was the first state to segregated rail and street cars by 1881, reflecting longstanding societal standards of how different races "should" interact with one another. In fact, Tennessee subsequently enacted some twenty "Jim Crow" laws between 1866 to 1955, even after beginning Reconstruction under a somewhat progressive Republican government.[22]

The growing popularity of rail travel in the 1870s and 1880s prompted additional debates in White society about the race-based subservience they desired. They sought their answers through *de jure* segregation. How could elite Whites unquestionably judge a person's moral character if newly freed Black people were afforded the same basic

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[20] William H. Chafe, Raymond Gavins, and Robert Korstad, eds., *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Tell about Life in the Segregated South* (New York, NY: New Press, 2001), xxiv.

[21] Jason L. Bates, "Consolidating Support for a Law 'Incapable of Enforcement': Segregation on Tennessee Streetcars, 1900–1930," *Journal of Southern History* 82, no. 1 (2016): 97-126.

[22] "Map of Jim Crow America," Florida Atlantic University, n.d., https://www.fau.edu/artsandletters/pjhr/chhre/pdf/sjc-map-jim-crow-america.pdf.

rights? Rail cars were segregated by gender first, but race soon followed. Conductors were the usual gatekeepers for the ladies' cars or first-class cars, thus putting the power of determining moral character into the hands of a single individual who was most likely racist.[23] While not explicitly endorsed under the law, it was socially acceptable and, in many cases, expected. For example, in 1899 and 1901, the Tennessee General Assembly actually rejected streetcar segregation laws before passing one specifically for Shelby County (the largest black population in the state, at the time) in 1903. The Tennessee Supreme Court struck this law down on procedural grounds, but a nearly identical law passed with statewide application in 1905.[24]

Segregated service meant that many Black people refused to accept such second-class treatment; often the streetcars and later buses rarely traveled into African American neighborhoods. Communities across the state voiced their discontent with the laws, and in Chattanooga, Black workers organized street carmen's strikes in 1899, 1911, 1916, and 1917. These protests culminated after growing tensions collided with labor problems, such as low pay, hazardous work conditions, and rampant racism.[25] In response to the 1905 streetcar law, Black businessmen in Nashville and Chattanooga also began their own transportation companies, Union Transportation Company, and the Transfer Omnibus Motor Car Company, respectively. Unfortunately, public and police harassment, and operational challenges in both cities, led the companies to their

[23] Mack, 383.

[24] Bates, 107.

[25] James B. Jones, "Class Consciousness and Worker Solidarity in Urban Tennessee: The Chattanooga Carmen's Strikes of 1899-1917," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (1993): 98–112.

demise. But their creation and the associated boycott of White-owned companies "succeeded in registering black Tennesseans' dissatisfaction with Jim Crow."[26]

Another Chattanooga businessman, Randolph Miller, was a formally enslaved man who founded *The Weekly Blade* newspaper in 1869.[27] After the 1905 segregation law, Miller led a three-week-long boycott of Chattanooga streetcars that gained temporary success as one of the first protests against segregated transportation, some fifty years before the Montgomery Bus Boycott. The boycott did not produce lasting change though, as segregation remained the rule in Chattanooga until the 1960s.[28]

Jim Crow laws were neither the cause of or the simple byproduct of necessary social change after Emancipation – but were rather part of the complex intersection of law, politics, and accepted social customs based on *fear*. Railroad segregation customs, as an example, required Black middle-class passengers to act in a respectable-enough manner to gain admittance to certain train cars, but if they were *too respectable*, their status then threatened the surrounding Whites, and their presence might then be a problem.[29] Social expectations of Black submissiveness were ever-present.

In order for any racially biased state law or policy to work, though, engrained tenets of "Black inferiority" was required. For example, Kenneth Mack explores railroad

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[26] Bates, 116.

[27] Jerry R. Desmond, "Miller, Randolph," *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, March 1, 2018, https://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entries/randolph-miller/.

[28] Blair L. M. Kelley, *Right to Ride: Streetcar Boycotts and African American Citizenship in the Era of Plessy v. Ferguson* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, "Negro Boycotts of Jim Crow Streetcars in Tennessee," *American Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (Winter 1969): 755–63.

[29] Mack, 390.

and streetcar de jure segregation in Tennessee – and quickly infers that if White people had simply stood up in opposition, progressive change was possible. Black nurses and members of the new Black middle class *had previously been* permitted to ride in ladies' cars and in first class, *until* it was a problem for Whites.[30]

Author Heather Cox Richardson**,** on the other hand, dives into Northern attitudes on Reconstruction from the perspective of labor history. She focuses on *why* northern Republicans essentially abandoned Black freedpeople in the south after the Civil War. She takes inspiration from Booker T. Washington and does not wholly blame the concept of racism for Reconstruction's failure. Instead, she shifts to the Black role within the labor system, and how Whites' fear and anxiety was somehow separate from racism. Whites were anxious that if Black people were equal before the law, then jobs, political opportunities, and even White women could forever be lost to African Americans. This fear was inherently racist and based on that false notion of Black inferiority.[31]

Black identity after Emancipation was no doubt in question – would the first born-free children become educated middle-class citizens, thereby proving their agency? What were the potentials for their social development and upward mobility? Who would perform the manual labor required in a growing industrious nation? Did educated Black communities preclude a respect for manual labor and agricultural work?

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[30] Ibid., 400.

[31] Sarah Richardson, "As American as Jim Crow," *American History* 53, no. 1 (April 2018).

Agriculture reigned supreme in Tennessee and across the south before and after the end of the Civil War. But debates on new land and labor arrangements complicated social, economic, and political life in the postwar era. Formerly enslaved people were freed by the Thirteenth Amendment and further recognized under birthright citizenship in the Fourteenth Amendment.[32] But those changes meant that the U.S. lost four million unpaid workers – in most cases agricultural workers. While the Freedmen's Bureau attempted to help in the transition from enslaved labor to a free labor market, it was far from perfect. As a result, plantation owners soon exploited Black laborers through work contracts, debt peonage, and indentured servitude. Author James Michael Martinez explains, "When a black man was denied an opportunity to secure a well-paying job because of his skin color, or an educational institution refused to admit his children… the remnants of slavery were reinvigorated."[33] Simply put, it was slavery by a different name.

Jim Crow Propaganda

Jim Crow refers to a period in American history dominated by racism that manifested as legal and systematic segregation. The term refers to a fake character in minstrel shows displaying false stereotypes, dating to 1836 when Thomas Dartmouth Rice began making "Jim Crow" the face of American minstrelsy by including exaggerated

[32] Laura F. Edwards, "The Reconstruction of Rights: The Fourteenth Amendment and Popular Conceptions of Governance," *Journal of Supreme Court History* 41, no. 3 (October 24, 2016): 310–28.

[33] James Michael Martinez, *A Long Dark Night: Race in America from Jim Crow to World War II* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 59.

features and movements for African Americans. The term was equated to the equally false assumption that Black Americans were incapable of taking care of themselves or participating as equal citizens.

As African Americans seized opportunities during Reconstruction, Whites in positions of power reacted by spreading misinformation about Black communities in order to enact legal, political, and economic change which only served to depress whole communities.[34] Fearing that large segments of the population were conspiring to achieve social equality, many Whites used the "justice" system for their sole benefit. Resulting policies like racial segregation are hardly just about the simple separation of races, then, but rather the *forced control* of one race over the other. In fact, every aspect of this time was deliberately crafted to subdue African Americans, even down to the term *Jim Crow*, which "originated from a popular character featured in antebellum minstrel shows in which Negroes, stereotyped as buffoons, engaged in all sorts of silly shenanigans"[35] (**see Figure 1**). Thomas D. Rice's popular caricature "Jim Crow" is an early example of this branding, as he was the face of American minstrelsy by exaggerating character features and movements based on fabricated stereotypes.[36] White mainstream society then forced this representation on Black citizens by flooding the national market with visual and written media portraying negative and false stereotypes.

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[34] Brenna Greer, *Represented: The Black Imagemakers Who Reimagined African American Citizenship* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

[35] Martinez, 51.

[36] Richardson, 52–59.

Figure 1: Wood Etching with Ink, "Jim Crow" (ca. 1830-1850). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

In *The Betrayal of the Negro* (1965), Rayford Whittingham Logan further tracked the public image of African Americans through five publications (*Harper's New Monthly Magazine, Scribner's* (*Century* after 1881), *Atlantic Monthly*, *North American Review*, and *Forum* (1886). "The largest number of derogatory stereotypes appeared in *Harper's*, *Scribner's*, and *Century*, partly because they contained drawings and cartoons that vividly depicted the antics of Negroes and more short stories in dialect that did the

Atlantic."[37] By asking questions of how popular literature represented African Americans in their publications, Logan was one of the first authors to relate that public presentation and perception of African Americans to the nadir of race relations.

All of these efforts were to validate senseless claims that emancipated African Americans could not learn to govern themselves under social standards of the time. From the moment visual media became popular, then, it was used as a weapon against those who could not access it. The Black body was therefore denied and refuted based on antiquated White notions of the inability for African Americans to have manners, be educated, or practice Christian morality. As Tonnia Anderson explains, "These institutions established a set of power relations through the dominion of the body that inscribed black racial identity."[38] Individuals in power further used the Jim Crow era as a time to commodify Black bodies through selective representation: as enslaved people, laborers, and performers.

As effectively theorized by Gaines Foster, there was never a single point of reconciliation for the nation after the Civil War. He contends that "Lost Cause" mythology of the Confederacy was an important tool that southerners used in a transitory period of social change. Quite literally, Lost Cause rhetoric and propaganda *soothed the wounds* of southerners, in the wake of defeat. Focusing on bravery, heroism, and honor in this Confederate tradition, they were able to accept their defeat and slowly reintegrate into the Union. It was a cultural movement later used to

[37] Logan, 242.
[38] Anderson, 129.

perpetuate the false ideas of white supremacy and led to racially based violence across the country.[39]

These loud and highly visible Confederate traditions allowed for an opportunity for both southern and northern veterans to acknowledge each other's skillset, integrity, and perseverance. It was a way for Confederate veterans to die with some idea of honor and for the New South generation to save face in the wake of defeat. The resulting visual materials associated with those Confederate traditions bolstered the "Lost Cause" mythology, which in turn contributed to declining race relations during the Jim Crow Era. Aside from social or cultural concerns though, African Americans were also forced to reckon with extra judicial violence, as well as unequal access to economic and legal systems.

White society at large constantly reminded African Americans that even in the wake of Reconstruction and freedom, White supremacy still ruled the landscape. Whites not only enacted systematic tactics of oppression such as disenfranchisement and segregation, but they also erected monuments on the landscape to serve as physical and visual mementos of the "southern Lost Cause mythology."[40] They also segregated access to basic services, including portrait photography. If White photographers documented Black communities at all, they often did so with a negative lens or helped perpetuate negative views about those people (**see Figures 2, 3, and 4**).

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[39] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[40] Martinez, 47.

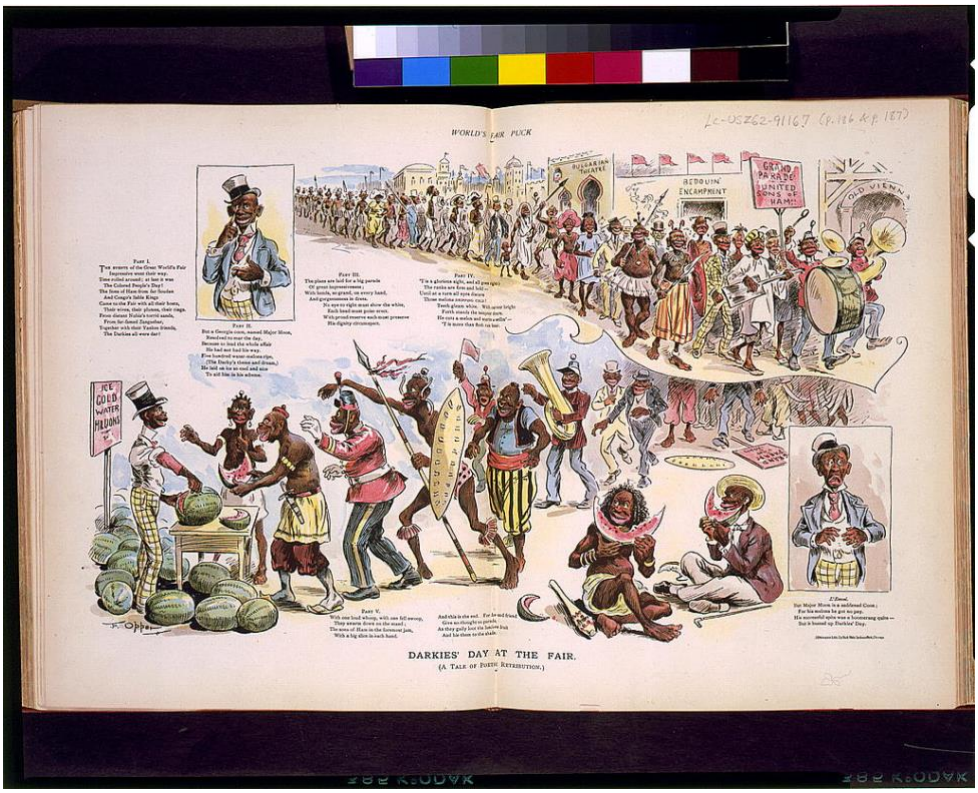

Figure 2: "Darkies' Day at the Fair" by illustrator Frederick Burr Opper (ca. 1893). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

William H. Stokes (1866-1922) was a prominent photographer in Chattanooga for several decades. Among many other photos, he created a specific image of interest featuring a group of six African American children, all presumably male (**see Figure 3**). Stokes later hand-colored the photo to accentuate certain details, as was popular at the time, to create a post card (**see Figure 4**). Stokes titled the image, "In the Good Old Summer Times" by the photographers. However, the post card is distinctive as it seems to perpetuate stereotypes about Black communities living simple lives out of a means of necessity with a patronizing undertone.

Figure 3: William H. Stokes Image (circa 1920). Courtesy of Picnooga (Chattanooga Historical Society).

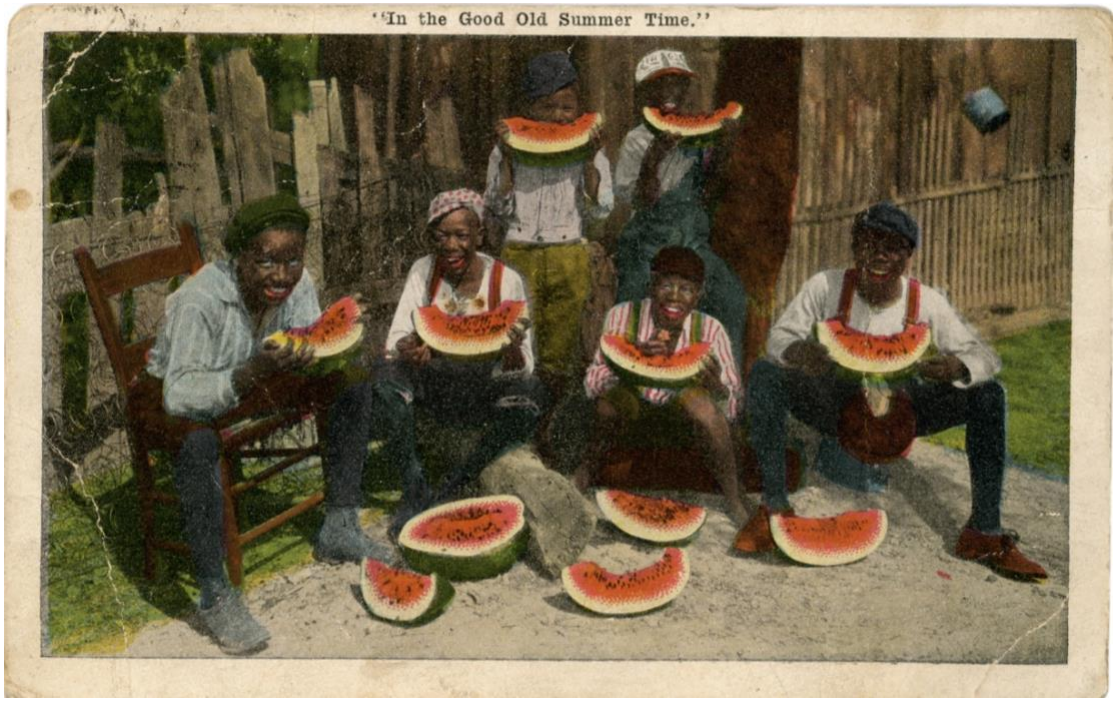

Figure 4: William H. Stokes Image, Hand Colored Photo Postcard, "In the Good Old Summer Time" (circa 1920). Courtesy of Picnooga (Chattanooga Historical Society).

Intersectional Approach

On the other hand, Black photographers worked hard to dismantle those harmful stereotypes and to instead spotlight positive community endeavors. Using interdisciplinary methods to trace history through photography, historians can and should argue for the increased use of photographic images as artifacts or material culture. Historians Joeri Januarius and Nelleke Teughels describe material culture in this context as "an integral part of cultural processes, through which cultures give meanings to artifacts. Moreover, the meanings of material culture play an active part in the way people perceive and understand the world around them."[41] Using this definition, photographs are classified as visual, artistic, and political artifacts based on identity and self-representation. They were also used as objects of *memory*, a powerful concept for African Americans as they were so long denied stable kinship ties under the institution of slavery. As such, these artifacts can be used to deduce what the photographic processes were used for at the time of image creation, especially with regard to social change among Black communities.

Further, photography is centered in this study around "ideas of truth, accuracy, inscription, and statement, and… an intense awareness of the past and its potential loss."[42] Photos are then useful as physical evidence of realistic likeness during life and as

[41] Joeri Januarius and Nelleke Teughels, "History Meets Archaeology: The Historical Use of Images. A Survey," *Revue Belge De Philologie Et Dhistoire* 87, no. 3 (2009): 676; Colin Renfrew and Paul G. Bahn, *Archaeology: Theories, Methods, and Practice* (New York, NY: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 42.

[42] Elizabeth Edwards, "Photography and the Material Performance of the Past," *History and Theory* 48, no. 4 (2009): 131.

a way to remember the dead, much like archaeological artifacts.[43] Photographs can then show the material and historical world but are also a part of it. One way to approach this type of study then, is through visual and interpretative archaeology, or "understanding the past through the analysis of images, as a method for teaching historical context."[44] Matthew Johnson adds that while the analysis of iconography is legitimate, associated work must remain empirically grounded, that is, based on observation and not theory alone.[45] Photos are also a great way to study history because contrary to what one might think, they are not static. Indeed, photography derives some of its power not in its subject matter, but in what the viewer thinks about when looking at the image. Perception changes over time, of course, and creates a vivid and dynamic experience when tracing history through photography.

Photographs representing thousands of moments sit in attics, albums, archives, libraries, or hang on the walls of family homes. Although they may initially be thought of as humble household artifacts, photographs were once part of a visual political movement, used as a tool against *damnatio memoriae,* Latin for "condemnation of memory," or the purposeful erasure of a person's existence in the historical record. Representation matters even today. It was imperative for African Americans living in the Jim Crow south to create images of themselves for their descendants and to represent

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[43] Samuel B. Fee and Tara R. Fee, "Visual Archaeology: Cultural Change Reflected by the Covers of Uncle Tom's Cabin," *Journal of Visual Literacy* 31, no. 2 (2012): 46.

[44] Fee and Fee, 35.

[45] Matthew Johnson, *Archaeological Theory: An Introduction* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 1999), 90.

the freedom of choice and potential that was finally available to these communities after Emancipation. This generation was tasked with the near-impossible chore of surviving in a world built *by them* and their ancestors but not *for them*. They wanted to finally be remembered. Author bell hooks describes that visual political movement as, "Cameras gave to black folks, irrespective of class, a means by which we could participate fully in the production of images. Hence it is essential that any theoretical discussion of the relationship of Black life to the visual, to art making, make photography central."[46]

The use of photography in Black communities quickly became a way to resist White supremacy that permeated most aspects of life. Studying images of and by African Americans is therefore a critical way to examine the arc of social change during the Jim Crow era, especially since scholars have historically paid such little attention to the subject. For example, Carla Williams noted that "fewer than ten photography books appeared by or about black photographers prior to 1970… [Even] in the midst of the civil rights and Black Arts movements, photography was the perfect medium of self-representation, poised to capture those defining historical moments."[47]

The resulting lack of true Black representation within social, cultural, and artistic services like photography can be directly linked to racist attempts to subdue minorities. Even when White artists historically included the Black body in their work, it was often expressed in a negative way. "The racial opposition of black and white derives from the

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[46] bell hooks, *Art on My Mind: Visual Politics* (New York, NY: New Press, 1998), 57.
[47] Carla Williams, "The Black Photographers Annual," *Aperture* 223 (2016): 31.

color scale; the famous *chiaroscuro*, or light and dark polarity, is intimately associated with the religious dualism of Good and Evil; and the compositional isolation of figures or inanimate motifs that is so central to the semiotics of Western art becomes decoded as exclusionary in the political sense."[48] White was seen as good, and Black was seen as bad – in art, in politics, and in life. White mainstream society further used caricatures like "Jim Crow" to force a negative representation on Black citizens, depressing their social status even further.[49] Those caricatures then served as a way to substantiate fabricated views claiming that freed African Americans could not possibly learn to govern themselves in the same way that Whites could after the Civil War. The Black body was therefore denied and refuted based on antiquated and false White notions of the inability for African Americans to have manners, be educated, or to practice Christian morality.

Photography's Role in Culture and Racial Identity

The role of photography within culture has both possibilities and limitations. By sitting for a portrait, a person would end up with visual evidence of themselves as an individual. They could display that likeness to their friends and families, securing their place in the memory of the larger community. However, photography is also subjective and easily manipulated. Lighting, exposure, prop usage, and other technical elements

[48] Albert Boime, *The Art of Exclusion: Representing Blacks in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 2.

[49] Martinez, 51.

can change the outcome of the end product, thus distorting memory. As previously stated, whites used photography in an attempt to perpetuate racial stereotypes and to justify segregation. They used photographs as a tool to reinforce the southern mythology about African Americans, including visual and ideological perceptions. Tonnia Anderson explores that hegemony through four separate forms of Black racial identity: "blacks as labor, blacks as the depraved poor, blacks as objects of southern mythology, and finally – the exceptional black."[50] By forcing such identities on African Americans, Whites effectively deprived them of their individual agency and humanity. Anderson's mention of the *exceptional Black* is particularly interesting, as prominent African American leaders such as Sojurner Truth, Frederick Douglas, Booker T. Washington, and W.E.B. Du Bois were often among the most represented Black individuals in early portrait photography for much of the nineteenth century, at least on a national stage. However, images of field hands, sharecroppers, or unskilled laborers were mostly only included among a group (if they were included at all), thereby purposely excluding any allusion of individuality. Illustrated caricatures, political cartoons, and motion pictures like D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* further strengthened false stereotypes and enforced degradation (**see Figure 5**). Griffin's 1915 movie featured harmful and false African American stereotypes. After a White House showing, President Woodrow Wilson endorsed the film, thus reinforcing those crude representations of African American people to the nation at large.

[50] Anderson, 4.

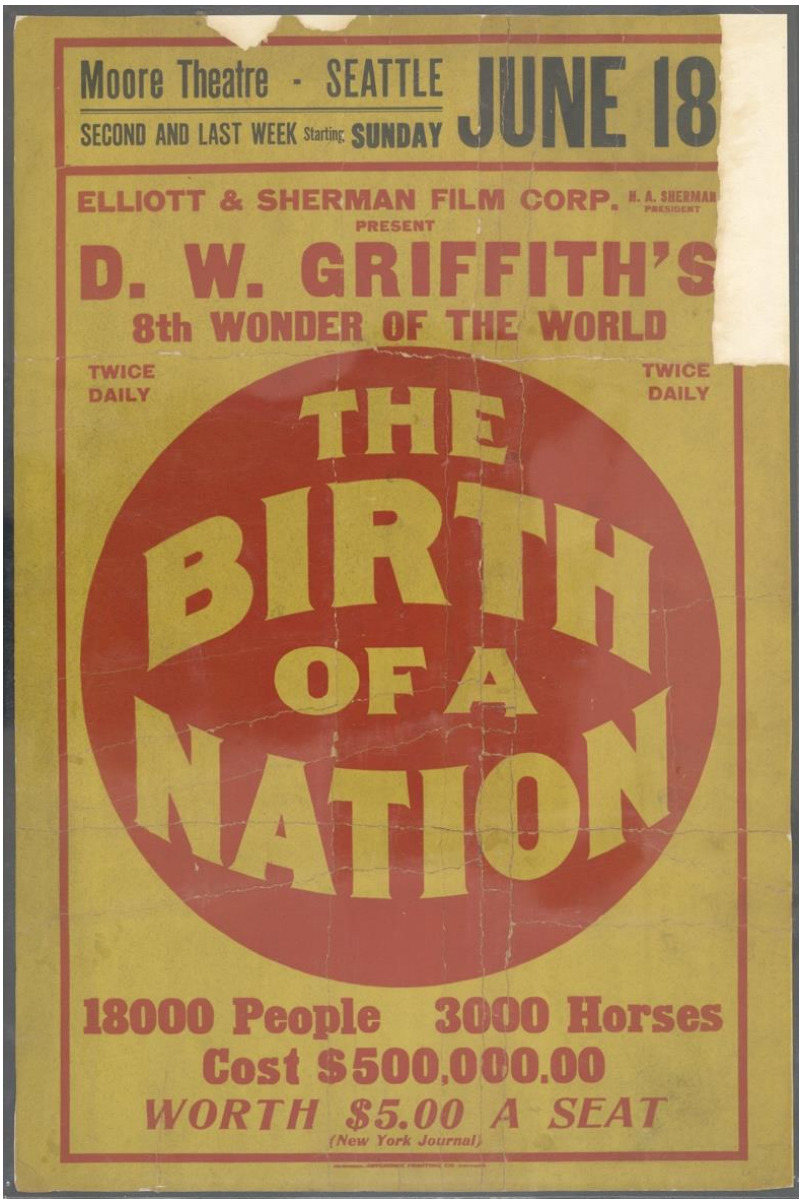

Figure 5: Movie Poster, D.W. Griffith's "A Birth of a Nation" (1915). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Conversely, Black communities used photography as a way to truthfully represent their friends and family as middle-class citizens, community leaders, students, or otherwise notable people with extraordinary life potential. Historian and professor Dr. Earnestine Jenkins writes, "When African Americans began to visit portrait studios

after the Civil War, they were participating in social-cultural behavior already established as part of nineteenth-century middle class American culture."[51] As such, Black portrait photography fulfilled a myriad of purposes: as a tool to achieve both social and aesthetic goals; as a means of socialization and understanding self-worth; to document and resist segregation; as a way to show the existence of a Black middle class, and to *uplift* their community through visual theory, a concept formulated during the early twentieth century and championed by leaders like W.E.B. Du Bois.[52]

This last point also specifically references "New Negro rhetoric, pushed by key political figures such as Booker T. Washington, advocated to whites in power that blacks, especially in the middle class, were fit for citizenship and social equality."[53] Historian Kevin Gaines similarly explores the concept of racial uplift, and defines it as "the struggle for a positive black identity in a deeply racist society, turning the pejorative designation of race into a source of dignity and self-affirmation through an ideology of class differentiation, self-help, and interdependence."[54] It is worth noting that *class status* was another way to disempower various populations, irrespective of race.

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[51] Earnestine Jenkins, "Elite Colored Women: The Material Culture of Photography & Victorian Era Womanhood in Reconstruction Era Memphis," *Slavery & Abolition* 41, no. 1 (2020): 30.

[52] Shawn Michelle Smith, *Photography on the Color Line: W.E.B. Du Bois, Race, and Visual Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 25 and 147; Stephanie M. Woody-Groshelle, "Southern African American Communities: The Portrait Photography of Florestine Perrault Collins and Richard Samuel Roberts," thesis, Lindenwood University, 2022.

[53] Christopher Freeburg, *Black Aesthetics and the Interior Life* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2017), 12.

[54] Kevin K. Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 3.

Figure 6: "Coons and Melons" (circa 1895), unknown subjects and photographer. Note the state of clothing and lack of shoes. Courtesy of the National Museum of African American History & Culture.

Additional racist iconography like Jim Crow segregation signs, stereocards, or other materials were also pervasive throughout the south (**see Figure 6**) and Elizabeth Abel's *Signs of the Times* explores the visual politics and material history of forced segregation during the Jim Crow Era, especially as related to segregation signs on businesses, government offices, water fountains, bathrooms, and other public spaces. However, Abel does not solely focus on the manipulation of space and mobility based on race. She also expertly recalls Black agency through the delicate negotiations and

resistance employed against visual and political objects. The book is organized chronologically, by the life cycles of the signs themselves: from their role as Jim Crow propaganda and items of cruel segregation, through their use and decline during the Civil Rights Movement, to their current status as collectors' objects or museum artifacts. Visual propaganda is especially important when considering the community where Horace Brazelton lived, in a southern state with a dominant culture of conservatism.

According to Abel, "The signage lagged several decades behind the actual practices of segregation which originated as attempts to regulate the expanded opportunities for interracial contact afforded by urban life in the North as well as the South."[55] Much like the monuments erected by pro-Confederate groups in places like courthouses and throughout cities, these signs served as a way to empower whites and dissuade African Americans from even thinking about social equality. Anthropologist James Haywood Rolling points out:

> Hegemony colonizes representations, co-opting all action and agency from the colonized; the colonized are forced by the dynamics of subordination to perform as though perpetually acted on, without agency, without license, without access to meaningful representation . . . even that of self-representation.[56]

In this way, the material culture was a direct link to social meanings behind the objects. Author Gabriel A. Briggs separately argues of this period that while many historians view the idea of the "New Negro" through a distinctly-twentieth century northern lens, the

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[55] Elizabeth Abel, *Signs of the times the Visual Politics of Jim Crow* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010), 4.

[56] James Haywood Rolling, "Visual Culture Archaeology: A Criti/Politi/cal Methodology of Image and Identity," *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 7, no. 1 (2007): 7.

concept was actually formulated in the south as early as the decades immediately following the Civil War. Her study *The New Negro in the Old South* focuses on Nashville and offers a simple change in perspective to the historiography, but one that makes sense considering newly freedpeople were finally able to create their own versions of community, self-representation, and identity. Why then would historians ignore those crucial transitionary years of Reconstruction when considering the idea of the so-called "New Negro"? The Great Migration to the north was crucial, but many African Americans stayed in the south. Their agency and resistance laid the foundation for future endurance of the Jim Crow Era and experience to take with them into the Civil Rights Movement.[57] Without that southern Black agency, the later Civil Rights Movement might have looked very different, the Harlem Renaissance would have lost some of its influence, and African American southern educational institutions would have produced very different results.

Consider also the difference between "agency" and "memory" – in that agency was part of the process of transitioning out of slavery, but *memory* took over after that. For example, it took both agency and memory to build identity for black communities after the war, but memory is what generated the cultural and social capital (and legacies) which serves those communities even today, as argued by historian Deborah Willis Thomas. Going from enslaved status to free, especially when staying in the south,

[57] Gabriel A. Briggs, *The New Negro in the Old South* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015).

required some "growing pains" but resulted in rich and vibrant African American communities.[58]

There is perhaps no other author who has studied and published work on the subject of African American photographers than Deborah Willis Thomas. Her books *Black Photographers, 1840-1940: A Bio-Bibliography, An Illustrated Bio-Bibliography of Black Photographers, 1940-1988,* and *Reflections in Black: A History of Black Photographers, 1840 to the Present* are complementary to one another and offer rich illustrated examples of Black photographic work that has added so much to the field of American photography.[59] Other books include *African American Vernacular Photography, VanDerZee: Photographer,* and *Picturing Us: African American Identity in Photography,* each of which have influenced my research questions in this work. Still, Horace Brazelton was not mentioned in any of these outstanding publications, and this dissertation offers one contribution towards that gap.

At the same time, Black communities were forced to *carefully* construct representations of themselves, especially within a national environment focused on Social Darwinism, eugenics, and reinforced racism in social and legal systems. For example, many pro-slavery southerners and even some northerners argued that African

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[58] Deborah Willis, *The Black Civil War Soldier: A Visual History of Conflict and Citizenship* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2021).

[59] Deborah Willis, ed., *Picturing Us: African American Identity in Photography* (New York, NY: The New Press, 1994), Deborah Willis, *The Black Civil War Soldier: A Visual History of Conflict and Citizenship* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2021), Deborah Willis-Thomas, *Early Black Photographers, 1840-1940: A Bio-Bibliography* (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1985).

Americans would simply not survive emancipation.[60] Historian Leslie A. Schwalm goes on to reiterate this statement, pointing out the immense cost of wartime emancipation as opposed to the same policy occurring during a time of peace. Because slavery ended as a forced consequence of war, the country had to unexpectedly take on hundreds of thousands of refugees.[61] However, by the 1870 census, it was apparent that Black populations were *increasing*, not dying out.[62] Subsequent decades of census data also proved that life expectancy for Black males and females increased, as well.[63] George Fredrickson includes one stark example of White rhetoric upon those realizations, "Senator John T. Morgan of Alabama argued that an increase in Black wealth, intelligence, and capacity for industrial, commercial, and political activity was inevitable but potentially disastrous, because it could lead only to an increasingly bitter competition with whites."[64] It was clear – if Black communities wanted to see improvements in their lives, they could not stifle or surpass White progress along the way.

Yet members of these communities still emerged into a successful Black middle class, due to industrialization, urbanization, increased education, and an "occupational

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[60] Enola G. Aird, "Toward a Renaissance for the African-American Family: Confronting the Lie of Black Inferiority," *Emory Law Journal* 58 (October 1, 2008): 7–21; James M. McPherson, *The Negro's Civil War; How American Negroes Felt and Acted during the War for the Union* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, Original 1965, Reprint 2003), 101-112.

[61] Leslie A. Schwalm, "Surviving Wartime Emancipation: African Americans and the Cost of Civil War," *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 39, no. 1 (March 15, 2011): 21–27.

[62] George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914* (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1971), 240.

[63] Ansley J. Coale and Norfleet W. Rives, "A Statistical Reconstruction of the Black Population of the United States 1880-1970: Estimates of True Numbers by Age and Sex, Birth Rates, and Total Fertility," *Population Index* 39, no. 1 (1973): 7-8.

[64] Fredrickson, 228.

differentiation [which] created opportunities for blacks in skilled, semi-skilled, and professional positions in the labor force."[65] One such example of a professional trade open to African American communities during this time was photography.

Black Studio Photography

"Not too long after photography's grand debut in 1839, physician and inventor Oliver Wendell Holmes described the new technology as a 'mirror with a memory.' What might this phrase mean for the question of African Americans and their relationship to the vicissitudes of photography and the vagaries of memory in particular?"[66] Well, while some Whites attempted to discriminate against Black communities based on racist visual materials, African Americans worked harder to dismantle them. bell hooks emphasized, "Before racial integration there was a constant struggle on the part of black folks to create a counterhegemonic world of images that would stand as visual resistance, challenging racist images."[67] One powerful tool in this struggle was photography.

Portraits created specifically by Black photographers conveyed the truths that African Americans were dignified, well-dressed, and respectable. Those efforts built on the ideas espoused by Booker T. Washington, including the importance of education,

[65] Thomas J. Durant and Joyce S. Louden, "The Black Middle Class in America: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives," *Phylon* 47, no. 4 (1986), 254.

[66] Leigh Raiford, "Photography and the Practices of Critical Black Memory," *History and Theory* 48, no. 4 (2009): 112.

[67] hooks, 57.

business, and notions of piety while also exerting racial pride through professional training and an entrepreneurial spirit.[68] However, it is important to note here that many unskilled laborers or uneducated segments of the population were markedly left out of the quest for documenting any "progress" of Black communities after Emancipation. Without those workers, though, the rest of society would not have been nearly as successful, as these professions formed the backbone of agriculture and other service-oriented industries.

Furthermore, with images of African Americans which happened to be signed or stamped by the photographer, for example, the notion of propriety increased with the existence of that literacy. Anne Elizabeth Carroll reaffirms this point, "Such representations of African Americans as intelligent and literate vividly contradict assumptions that African Americans were ignorant and uneducable."[69] White society thus used visual mediums to humiliate the idea of a positive Black racial identity, to insinuate some truth behind racial hierarchy (**see Figure 7**). But African Americans also used photography as a way to "refute negrophobic caricatures"[70] by presenting their social advancements, as discussed in the rest of this dissertation. These efforts accomplished at least two things: building confidence of the Black community and

[68] W. Manning Marable, "Booker T. Washington and African Nationalism," *Phylon* 35, no. 4 (1974): 404; W. Brian Piper, "'To Develop Our Business": Addison Scurlock, Photography, and the National Negro Business League, 1900–1920," *The Journal of African American History* 101, no. 4 (2016): 437.

[69] Anne Elizabeth Carroll, *Word, Image, and the New Negro: Representation and Identity in the Harlem Renaissance* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 8.

[70] Gaines, 68.

changing White perspectives about what African Americans could accomplish, even during the repressive Jim Crow era.

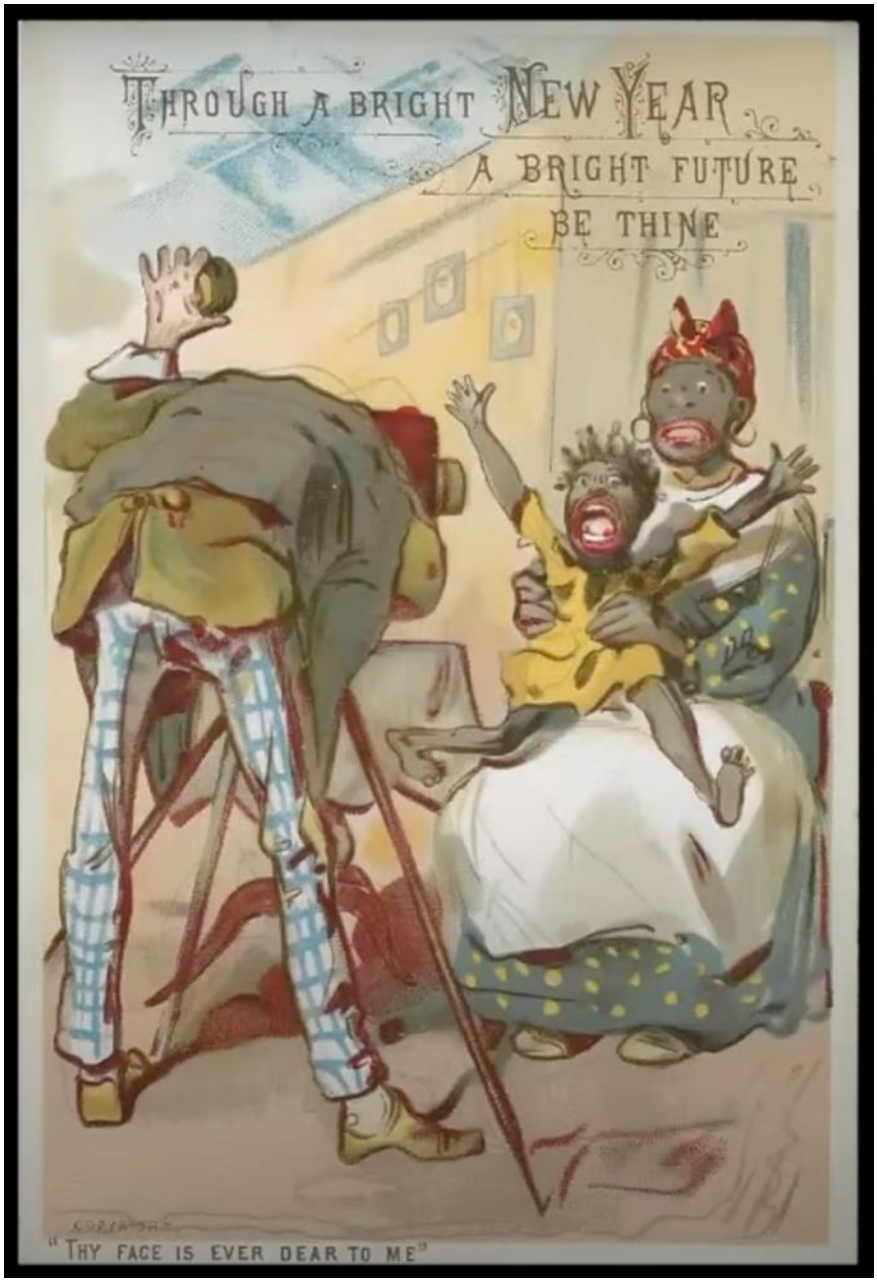

Figure 7: "Thy Faces is Ever Dear to Me" (circa 1890). Reproduced in "Booker T. Washington and the Art of Self-Representation" by Michael Bieze Note the exaggerated facial features; the unruly behavior of the child further suggests a lack of manners.

Tonnia Anderson expands on this last point in her dissertation, "This position disregards the existence and value of black studio photography as a vehicle for constructing black memories – of how photography functioned within the private (and segregated) realm of the black community."[71] This idea of memory points back to the desire to remember the past – to validate the people who are no longer here – and to place the self in society.[72] Black photographers and subjects were both primarily concerned with creating a true likeness of their images, which could then be used to combat false and racist stereotypes as presented in popular culture through minstrel shows and caricatures. They were also used as objects of *memory*, a powerful concept for African Americans as they were so long denied stable kinship ties under the institution of slavery. bell hooks offers a similar perspective, "The camera offered African-Americans, disempowered in white culture, a way to empower ourselves through representation… Had the camera been there when slavery ended, it could have provided images that would have helped folks searching for lost kin and loved ones. It would have been a powerful tool of cultural recovery."[73] Photography, then, is a formidable political tool in the pursuit to accumulate cultural capital.

African American photographers worked in portrait studios to give their clients a precise representation of themselves, while dressed in their finest clothes and jewelry, surrounded by fine furniture and props. But even if the portrait portrayed the subject

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[71] Anderson, 7.

[72] Maurice O. Wallace and Shawn Michelle Smith, *Pictures and Progress: Early Photography and the Making of African American Identity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 18-22.

[73] hooks, 60.

with complete technical accuracy, there is always some degree of a posed idealization in a portrait shoot. African American photographers, then, worked in opposition to many White photographers, who either deliberately or subconsciously tended to portray Black subjects in other, often negative, ways. Racist iconography was broadly disseminated through popular visual media, yes, but rigid medical photography also stripped humanity from the subjects. White photographers also did not always have the wherewithal to know how to properly capture skin tones with African American subjects, using lighting technology in early photography.

Nevertheless, "As representations of society, images must be extensively contextualized, with an eye for details, and preferably placed in a large series, which would enhance the reliability of research."[74] In the case of Black studio photography, researchers can easily glean that the Jim Crow era was disproportionately imbalanced in favor of White communities. Systematic standards were created to degrade African Americans, including societal norms and oppressive laws. That inequity is precisely one of the reasons why the work created by Black photographers during the early to mid-twentieth century should be found, identified, studied, preserved, and exhibited to the public.[75] But in order to substantiate any contemporary interpretations of their work from a social perspective, historians should have a large sample from different photographers to survey appropriately. It is not enough to state that photography was

[74] Januarius and Teughels, 669; Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London, United Kingdom: Reaktion Books, 2001), 13-14.

[75] Henry Glassie and Barbara Truesdell, "A Life in the Field: Henry Glassie and the Study of Material Culture," *The Public Historian* 30, no. 4 (2008): 85.

important to Black communities after the end of the Civil War. Historians must also actively work towards uncovering those forgotten or unknown images of Black communities during a truly divisive time in American history: segregation and Jim Crow.

While African Americans explored self-autonomy, then, they did so within the confines of segregated Black communities. Black portrait photography was largely used as a *restrained* way to slowly change social structures in the south through representation of identity. Such a seemingly small thing was actually able to affect the way African Americans were noticed, starting with their own self-perception. Further, bell hooks describes, "The walls in Southern black homes were sites of resistance. The constituted private, black-owned and -operated gallery space where images could be displayed, shown to friends and strangers. These walls were a space where, in the midst of segregation, the hardship of apartheid, dehumanization could be countered."[76] The very existence of the Black middle class so soon after Emancipation did suggest that dramatic social, economic, and political changes were occurring during Jim Crow segregation. Those changes could actually fuel those communities to empower themselves in a self-sufficient manner, though, whether Whites wanted to acknowledge that fortitude or not.

As Anne Carroll explains, continued White discrimination "led to redoubled efforts to create more and better publications, for many African Americans assumed that white Americans would change their ideas about African Americans and their

[76] hooks, 59.

treatment of them once they were made aware of [their] accomplishments."[77] Black communities were therefore stockpiling *cultural capital*, or social elements of humanity which can then be incorporated into the community for posterity.[78] For example, Anderson argues:

> The value of black studio photography, like all other forms of cultural production operating with the black expressive tradition, may be best understood as cultural capital.. As physical documents, photographs are a means of transmitting information via the presented image. On another level, photographs can and often do elicit orality – storytelling.[79]

Photography is especially significant in passing down familial traditions, oral histories, memories of ancestors, and creating shared identity among a larger community. Black portraiture was also used as a way to connect ties of kinship, or to remember ancestors and lost community members, which could in turn be used in the battle of incredible losses from slavery.[80] Indeed, community representation helped to reinforce family histories and bolster ideas of who Black individuals were and what they were capable of, through visual evidence that could not be denied or easily forgotten. Another example of the importance of Black photography comes from bell hooks once again,

> The history of black liberation movements in the United States could be characterized as a struggle over images as much as it has also been a struggle for rights, for equal access. To many reformist black civil rights activists, who believed that desegregation would offer the humanizing context that would challenge and change white supremacy, the issue of representation – control over images – was never as important as equal access. As time has progressed and the face of white supremacy has not

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[77] Carroll, 12.

[78] Pierre Bourdieu, "Pierre Bourdieu: The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. G. Richardson (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1986), 247.

[79] Anderson, 212-213.

[80] hooks, 62.

> changed, reformist and radical blacks would likely agree that the field of representation remains a crucial realm of struggle, as important as the question of equal access, if not more important.[81]

The idea of *representation* here is presented through photography, and consequently transcends integration of access, partly because of the importance of telling stories about the people in the image. That oral history can last through multiple generations, therefore confirming true individuality and a sense of belonging to a larger group, even as mainstream society determined that "the ideals represented through photographic portraiture were inaccessible to blacks even if they visually approach these ideals through self-representation."[82] In short, social acceptance by the dominant White culture was never intended to be within reach for African Americans, because the system was never designed for equal inclusion.

The very act of sitting for a portrait also helped to distance newly freed African Americans from the old agrarian south and align them with new progressive industrial ideals. Black photographers who assumed the role of representing their communities for posterity, whether they understood the immense significance of their work or not, also exemplifies those developing ideals. Black photographers were not only artists, but also entrepreneurs, providing a valuable social service to the Black community during Jim Crow segregation. Moreover, as Marsha Havens points out, Black photographers

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[81] hooks, 57-58.
[82] Anderson, 143.

"portrayed their subjects in a solemn and dignified manner that imparts a feeling of racial pride and self-worth."[83]

Photos created from within the Black community were normal for those in the group yet could actually be *surprising* to outsiders who saw them later. For instance, Anderson argues that "Constructions of racial oppression and degradation not only act as signifiers of black identity, but also define black normalcy within mainstream culture because of their prevalence."[84] Whites could not see the Black middle class as "conventional" – even when their portraits portrayed them as such. Hence, Black photographers played an active role in spreading confidence through accurate depictions of what it meant to be African American. It was not a shameful thing as often portrayed by outside photographers – but beautiful and deserving, "distinctive and productive" – and Black photographers captured it.[85] Photographers and subjects alike were primarily concerned with creating an accurate likeness of themselves, of a true moment in time, which could then be used to combat false, racist stereotypes presented through caricatures in minstrel shows and other popular media.[86] They were also used as objects of *memory*, a powerful concept for African Americans as they were so long denied stable kinship ties under the institution of slavery.

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[83] Marsha A. Havens, "The Art of Black Photographers," *The Historian* 53, no. 4 (1991), 649.

[84] Ibid., 78.

[85] Deborah Willis, ed., *Picturing Us: African American Identity in Photography* (New York, NY: The New Press, 1994), 10-17.

[86] Earnestine Jenkins, 30.

Preserving Memory

W.E.B. Du Bois recognized the importance of photography in visualizing the American Black experience. Combined with some sixty data visualizations, or infographics based on census data, he curated 363 photographs of southern Black life at the Paris Exposition of 1900, meant to focus on lived experiences in Georgia, specifically.[87] Historian Shawn Michelle Smith explores how the Paris Exposition demonstrated an inherent importance of Black people chose to represent themselves on an international stage. For instance, she argues that Du Bois's "American Negro" exhibit purposely displayed the images of Black Americans in a way meant to remind the audience of a mugshot. However, the subjects were also finely dressed and clean, meaning "Du Bois was well aware that challenging the discourses and images of "negro criminality" was a particularly important political necessity for African Americans."[88] The choice to present the subjects in this way directly ties back into the need and desire for Black people to represent their communities in a more accurate way. In getting ahead of the idea of "Black criminality," Du Bois was able to turn that idea back on its head, in front of several international governments. It was an act of resistance showing agency, much like those portraits created by Black photographers.

Portrait photography also plays into an old concept of remembrance, especially within the Black communities who pride themselves on recalling stories about late loved

[87] Whitney Battle-Baptiste and Britt Rusert, eds., *W.E.B Du Bois's Data Portraits: Visualizing Black America* (Amherst, MA: The W.E.B. Du Bois Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2018).

[88] Shawn Michelle Smith, "'looking at One's Self through the Eyes of Others': W.E.B. Du Bois's Photographs for the 1900 Paris Exposition," *African American Review* 34, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 581–99.

ones while looking at their photos. Perhaps bell hooks sums up *memory* best, "The word *remember* evokes the coming together of severed parts, fragments becoming a whole. Photography has been, and is, central to that aspect of decolonialization that calls us back to the past and offers a way to reclaim and renew life-affirming bonds."[89] Black studio photography not only produced cultural artifacts that we can still view with new perspectives, but it has helped to change the dominant perceptions of Black racial identities.[90] To reiterate, the value of using methods derived from the intersection of art history, archaeology, and traditional history allow researchers to disseminate new ideas to the public. Photography is just one such example of a medium which demonstrates the significance of those interdisciplinary approaches.[91]

Photos, particularly Black portraits from the early twentieth century, are significant cultural artifacts – not just static or ephemeral documents. Black culture was in flux during a time of intense racism and segregation, and photography helped to capture that change while challenging false notions of White superiority.[92] However, this work is still not complete, as Black bodies are simultaneously underrepresented and exploited by contemporary mainstream society.[93] As with many other histories, we have come a long way but still have far to go.

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[89] hooks, 64.

[90] Rolling, 17.

[91] Januarius and Teughels, 677.

[92] Jenkins, 30; David Pilgrim and Henry Louis Gates, *Understanding Jim Crow: Using Racist Memorabilia to Teach Tolerance and Promote Social Justice* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2015).

[93] Anderson, 4.

CHAPTER II: THE BRAZELTON FAMILY

> Photography has been such a pleasure to me that the work has never seemed hard; night after night I have worked at my profession until the wee hours of morning, then catching a few hours of sleep, a bite to eat and ready to go at it again. There is so much to always learn, so much to always do, much to achieve – your course is never finished.[1]
>
> -Horace M. Brazelton, 1917 Speech titled *"Photography as a Business"*

Before coming to Chattanooga and flourishing in his professional life, Horace Brazelton grew up in New Market, Jefferson County, Tennessee. This rural part of the state, located outside Knoxville, traces some of its earliest American roots back to several White families who owned large swaths of agricultural land in the area. On the eve of the Civil War, one White man named William Brazelton enslaved at least forty-eight people in 1850, and fifty-six by 1860, including Horace's father.[2] Further, Horace's formally enslaved mother named Leanah carried the maiden surname *Fain*, matching that of William's business partner, John Fain, another planter family in Jefferson County. These unfortunate connections to forced labor aid in understanding their roles in the Civil War and beyond, as the couple raised their children to be strong members of the Reconstruction Generation. Their fortitude lived on in their six children, including Horace, who accomplished a multitude of endeavors during his lifetime.

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[1] Horace Brazelton, "Photography as a Business," in *National Negro Business League, Report of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Annual Sessions Held at Chattanooga, Tenn., and Atlantic City, N.J.,* 1917.

[2] Ancestry.com, *1850 U.S. Federal Census - Slave Schedules* [database online], Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004; Black in Appalachia, "Slave Schedule, Jefferson County, Tennessee: 1860," *Black in Appalachia: Community History Digital Archive*, https://blackinappalachia.omeka.net/items/show/2135.

Rural Beginnings

New Market is a rural town located in Jefferson County, Tennessee. In Eastin Morris' *Tennessee Gazetteer*, a guidebook originally published in 1834 and released again in 1972, the town was described as such:

> A post town in Jefferson county, 15 miles from Dandridge, and 24 east from Knoxville. This village has sprung up within the last eight years. It is situated in a beautiful valley, about four miles west of Mossy creek, on which there are a number of mills. –The town is watered by Lost creek, and contains almost 250 inhabitants, and a number of stores, taverns, workshops, &c. The inhabitants are moral and industrious, and the Methodist Episcopal church have here a manual labor school, styled the Holston Seminary, which is a promising institution. A newspaper called the Newmarket Telegraph is published at this place.[3]

Such a positive review of the town suggests that it was a prosperous place, due in large part to enslaved labor.

General William Brazelton III (1792-1877) was a merchant, Superintendent of the East Tennessee & Virginia Railway, member of the Agricultural Bureau at Nashville, and enslaver of people prior to the American Civil War. He made his fortune through a series of professional partnerships, beginning first with a man named John Fain by establishing a store at Mossy Creek.[4] He later settled in New Market by 1822, running his business there until the outbreak of the Civil War.

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[3] Eastin Morris and Matthew Rhea, *Eastin Morris' Tennessee Gazetteer, 1834, and Matthew Rhea's Map of the State of Tennessee, 1832*, ed. Robert M. McBride and Owen Meredith (Nashville, TN: The Gazetteer Press, 1971), p. 224.

[4] *Goodspeed's History of Tennessee: Containing Historical and Biographical Sketches of Thirty East Tennessee Counties: Anderson, Blount, Bradley, Campbell, Carter, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Greene, Hamblen, Hamilton, Hancock, Hawkins, James, Jefferson, Johnson, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Polk, Rhea, Roane, Sevier, Sullivan, Unicoi, Union, Washington* (Nashville, TN: Charles and Randy Elder Bookseller, 1972). General William Brazelton used a formal title due to his service in leading the East Tennessee Militia but is often misrepresented as an American Revolutionary War hero.

Once he moved to New Market, William Brazelton commissioned a home nicknamed the Brazelton Mansion, to be constructed on a property with some 1000 acres of farmland (**see Figure 1**). An article from the August 4, 1936, issue of *The Knoxville News-Sentinel* reported, "General Brazelton owned a hundred slaves and their quarters were back of his house and in slave houses adjoining the nearby brook."[5] The Federal-style Brazelton home was built in 1832 and subsequently demolished in 1949 to make room for highway U.S. Route 11W. While the local community rallied to try and save the home through relocation, the contractor, F. H. Allen Company of Knoxville, determined the building could not be moved due to poor condition.[6]

Figure 1: The Brazelton Mansion in New Market, Jefferson County, Tennessee.

[5] "Ante-Bellum Brazelton Place at New Market Has Appearance of Old English Manor House," *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, August 4, 1936.

[6] Lee Davis, "Earlier Inspection Might Have Saved Doomed Brazelton Home," *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, January 12, 1949.

While it is currently unclear whether or not the Brazelton Photo Studio created the image in **Figure 1**, in comparing this photograph with **Figure 3-9**, several similarities do become apparent. The images are similar in tone and composition, and the handwriting also matches that of the New Market church homecoming image, both in color and style (including the backwards "z" in the Brazelton name).

American Civil War

One of the many people enslaved by the Brazelton family was a man named Anderson. Born around the year 1843, Anderson was counted as a *mulatto* man with a father of foreign birth on the 1870 U.S. Census.[7] Perhaps Anderson was the son of an enslaved mother and a White father, since none of the 172 free people of color listed in 1860 Jefferson County had a surname Brazelton.[8] Anderson enlisted in Company L of the 1st USCT Heavy Artillery in Knoxville on August 11, 1864, most likely after fleeing his conditions of forced servitude. His enlistment records report that he was born in Jefferson County and his occupation was a "farmer" before the war, in the same area where the aforementioned White Brazelton family owned or controlled most of the agricultural land.[9] Further, several White enslavers living in Jefferson County with the

[7] Ancestry.com, *1870 United States Federal Census*, Year: 1870; Census Place: District 8, Jefferson, Tennessee; Roll: M593_1540; Page: 423A [database online], Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009.

[8] Black in Appalachia, "Free People of Color, Jefferson County, Tennessee: 1860," *Black in Appalachia: Community History Digital Archive*, https://blackinappalachia.omeka.net/items/show/2134.

[9] Ancestry.com, *1850 U.S. Federal Census - Slave Schedules* [database online], Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004.

surname “Brazelton” reported numerous young, enslaved men as “Fugitives” on the 1860 United State Slave Schedule.[10]

According to Historian Bobby Lovett, “The black artillery units organized in Tennessee were both heavy and light units. The 1st United States (Colored) Heavy Artillery was organized in February [20] 1864 in the Knoxville and East Tennessee area.”[11] General Davis Tillson, Chief of Artillery, Department of Ohio commanded defenses in Knoxville, Loudon, and Kingston, including the 1st USCT Heavy Artillery. Under General Order No. 6, enlistments for the regiment began January 6 with the first muster on February 20, 1864. Anderson Brazelton enlisted as a private for a term of three years in Company L of the regiment in Knoxville on August 11, 1864, when he was 21 years old.[12] Interestingly, six other men with the last name “Brazzleton” also enlisted on the same day as Anderson (**see Table 1**).[13] It is currently unknown if Anderson was biologically related to these men, but all but one did enlist together in the same company on the same day.

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[10] Black in Appalachia, “Slave Schedule, Jefferson County, Tennessee: 1860,” *Black in Appalachia: Community History Digital Archive*, https://blackinappalachia.omeka.net/items/show/2135.

[11] Bobby L. Lovett, “The Negro's Civil War in Tennessee, 1861-1865,” *The Journal of Negro History* 61, no. 1 (1976): 41.

[12] Also spelled as “Brazzleton” in associated military records.

[13] Fold3.com, “US, Compiled Military Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served with the United States Colored Troops: Artillery Organizations, 1861-1865,” The National Archives, fold3.com, 2010.

Table 1: "Brazzleton" Surname List, from USCT rolls available on Fold3.com.

First Name	Surname	Company	Enlisted Rank	Highest Rank
Alfred	Brazzleton	I	Private	Private
Anderson	Brazzleton	L	Private	Sergeant
Cyrus	Brazzleton	L	Private	Private
Frank	Brazzleton	L	Private	Corporal
Isaac	Brazzleton	L	Private	Sergeant
John	Brazzleton	L	Private	Sergeant
John	Brazzleton	L	Private	Corporal

By September 26, 1864, Lieutenant Colonel Shannon ordered Anderson a promotion to the rank of Sergeant. He subsequently detailed out to the Pioneer Corps in March 1865, serving in that role until he mustered out of service in Chattanooga on March 31, 1866.[14]

Family is the Foundation

The postwar period offered some hope for the war veteran, as Anderson Brazelton and Leanah Fain (also spelled Leanna and Leannah Faine) had a son named William in 1865 and subsequently married in Jefferson County on May 6, 1867.[15] Leanah was from nearby Knox County, and it is currently unclear how she met Anderson. The pair owned a small family farm in the New Market area by 1870, where Anderson

[14] Fold3.com, *Compiled Military Service Records of Volunteer Union Soldiers Who Served with the United States Colored Troops: Artillery Organizations, 1890-1912* [database online, pages 1-17], The National Archives, Fold3.com, 2010.

[15] Ancestry.com, *Tennessee, U.S. Marriage Records, 1780-2002* [database on-line], (Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2008); *Tennessee State Marriages, 1780-2002*, Microfilm (Nashville, TN, USA: Tennessee State Library and Archives). Image 368 includes the record of marriage between Anderson Brazelton and Leanah Fain.

applied his war-earned skills as a railroad laborer while Leanah stayed home with the children.[16] Over the next several years, they raised six children including their oldest son William L. Brazelton (1865-1915), and his siblings Joseph A. Brazelton (1869-1910), Belle Brazelton (1870-unknown), Florence Brazelton (1873-1916), James Henry Augustus Brazelton (1875-1920), and Horace Maynard Brazelton (1877-1956).

According to Leanah's application for an Army Widow's pension on July 28, 1880, along with records from the Cemetery Branch of the Office of the Quartermaster General, Anderson Brazelton passed away on April 8, 1879. The same documents reveal records of a War Department-created tombstone for the veteran located in New Market Cemetery.[17] After this tragic and sudden loss, Leanah Brazelton continued to raise their six children, subsisting off a family farm while supplementing their income with a small widow's pension from her husband's service. The Brazelton family matriarch subsequently passed away on January 11, 1928, in her longtime home of New Market.[18]

James Henry Augustus Brazelton

Even after Anderson's death in 1879, Leanah pushed for formal education in her children, no doubt shaping the thinking and lives of multiple children in the Brazelton

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[16] Ancestry.com, *1870 United States Federal Census* [database on-line], (Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009); *1870 U.S. Census, Population Schedules*, NARA microfilm publication M593, 1,761 rolls (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.). The census record states that Anderson Brazelton owned forty-seven (47) dollars in value of real estate.

[17] The National Archives at Washington, D.C.; Washington, D.C.; Record Group: *Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; Record Group Number: 92; Series Number: M1845.*

[18] US, Veterans Administration Pension Payment Cards, 1907-1933. Army Widow Pension Card. The National Archives, Catalog ID 2600763, Record Group 15. [database online]. Provo, UT: Fold3.com, 2016.

family. For example, her son James Henry Augustus Brazelton (1875-1920) was an education professional in Oklahoma City while staying active in church and a fraternal organization. Among a multitude of accomplishments, he wrote a book titled *Self-Determination: The Salvation of the Race* in which he fondly recalls a time he saw Frederick Douglass with his family,

> However, I shall not forget the picture sold to my mother at that time – which contained such well-known characters as Senators Revels and Bruce of Mississippi, Governor Pinchback of Louisiana, and Robert Small of South Carolina. Oh! How my heart swelled and my spirit went out to be like those great characters of my race-variety who, born slaves, were made by the vote of the people the highest officers in the gift of their state.[19]

Frederick Douglass visited Knoxville, Tennessee in November 1881 when Horace was around five years old. There is almost no doubt that James Henry Augustus Brazelton's words about this event reflected a shared sentiment within the entire family, which Horace conceivably brought with him to Chattanooga.

James H. A. Brazelton began his studies at Maryville College in 1894 in the Classical Course of the Preparatory Department.[20] Through several years, he completed the Junior Class in 1896, Middle Class in 1897, Senior Class in 1898, the Freshman Class in the Classical Course of the College Department in 1899 and Sophomore Class of the Classical Course in 1900. By the next school year, he rose to the Junior Class in the

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[19] James Henry Augustus Brazelton, ed., *Self-Determination: The Salvation of the Race* (Oklahoma City, OK: The Educator, 1918), 117.

[20] Maryville College was founded in 1819 by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians in order to expand their ministries. The American Civil War suspended operations for five years, but the school was reopened in 1866.

College Department. Unfortunately, (the Tennessee General Assembly) voted to segregate schools and universities at the conclusion of the school year in 1901, barring him from graduation. In the February 1901 issue of the *Maryville College Monthly*, a newsletter published at the school, officials observed:

> The passage of the Murphy Bill by the Legislature of Tennessee, which punishes, with fine and imprisonment of six months, any teacher who shall, after September, 1901, instruct white and colored students in the same classroom or building, seems rather an unfavorable beginning for the twentieth century's interpretation of the brotherhood of man.[21]

Although it is evident that the school did not wholly agree with this decision, they still complied under the new law.

James Henry Augustus Brazelton was nearly finished with his coursework when this contemptable decision came down. Forced to transfer to Knoxville College, he graduated in 1902 with a Bachelor of Arts degree.[22] Maryville College later conferred his degree, but only after he moved to Oklahoma City – perhaps as a response to the segregation he faced in his home state. However, he did briefly attend college with Attorney Edgar Sullins Vaught, who was also a prominent educator in Oklahoma City.[23] They both worked in the Oklahoma City school system until Vaught was admitted to the Oklahoma Territorial Bar and started a private practice in 1905. James Brazelton himself served his community in many professional positions, including as principal of the

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[21] "The Synodical Petition," *Maryville College Monthly* III, no. 5 (February 1901): 86–87.

[22] *Knoxville College Bulletin: Catalogue Number For 1905-6 and Announcements For 1906-7* (Knoxville, TN: Printing Department, Knoxville College, 1906), p. 50.

[23] Von R. Creel, "Vaught, Edgar Sullins," The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture, January 15, 2010, https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry?entry=VA006.

segregated Black schools of Oklahoma City, editor of the *Oklahoma Educator,* and Superintendent of Public Welfare until his death on August 1, 1920.[24]

Victoria Brazelton and their daughters Bethel and Maysell accompanied his remains to Tennessee, where they met Horace in Memphis for the rest of the journey. After interring James at New Market, they returned to their adopted home state, continuing to celebrate numerous advancements in Oklahoma's public schools, thanks in part to his work.

Horace Maynard Brazelton

Horace M. Brazelton was the last child born to Anderson and Leanah Brazelton. His parents named him after Horace Maynard (1814-1882), a prominent White East Tennessee Unionist Congressman who served as a postmaster general after the war.[25] His lifetime roughly extends from the end of Reconstruction through to the beginnings of devastating Urban Renewal Programs that coincided with significant national and local Civil Rights victories. This time in American history, like so many others, was full of racial tension and violence, yet certain figures prevailed over a system that was designed to make them fail, including Mr. Brazelton (**see Figure 2**). The motivation to benefit his community led him through a lifetime of success, begetting the respect of people on a national stage.

[24] "Pioneer Educator Passes Away," *The Black Dispatch*, December 24, 1920.

[25] Kathleen R. Zebley, "Horace Maynard," Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture, March 1, 2018, https://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entries/horace-maynard/.

Horace Brazelton was the first African American photographer known to operate a public portrait studio in Chattanooga, Tennessee. His practice during Jim Crow racism and segregationist policies provided one of the only opportunities for the city's Black communities to be photographed as the more prevalent, White-owned studios often refused to offer their services to African Americans. This phenomenon was not exclusive to Chattanooga. Like so many other cities in the country, especially in the southeast, Chattanooga was divided along a Black and White line.

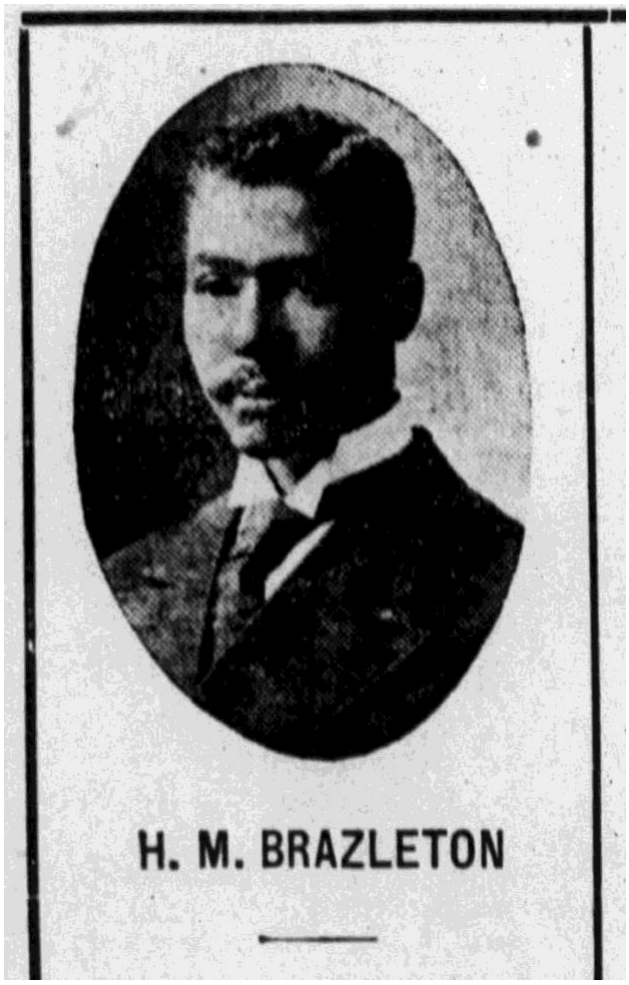

Figure 2: Horace Maynard Brazelton, photo printed in the Chattanooga Daily Times (1909)

The youngest of the six Brazelton children, Horace was born on November 24, 1877, in New Market. Few records exist which might detail his childhood, though Horace and his brother James Henry Augustus Brazelton were both listed as Junior Class students in the Classical Course of the Preparatory Department at Maryville College during the 1895-1896 school year.[26] Academic life didn't seem to affect Horace in the same way it did with James, though, as this is currently the only information currently known about his formative education. United States Census Records do record that Horace and Hettie both attended grade school, and they were both literate.[27]

Brazelton moved to Chattanooga around 1897 after he was arrested for striking a White train brakeman on the head with a brick (**see Figure 3**).[28] There was another young man in the area named Horace Brazelton who passed away in September 1898, but this event provides some compelling context for *why* the photographer might have moved to Chattanooga in the first place.[29] Horace later married Hettie Mary Hodge in Knox County, Tennessee on February 14, 1900.[30] After moving to Chattanooga, they lived at 634 Leonard Street as boarders in Mr. William S. Rivers' home while Hettie was a dressmaker and Horace worked as a waiter.

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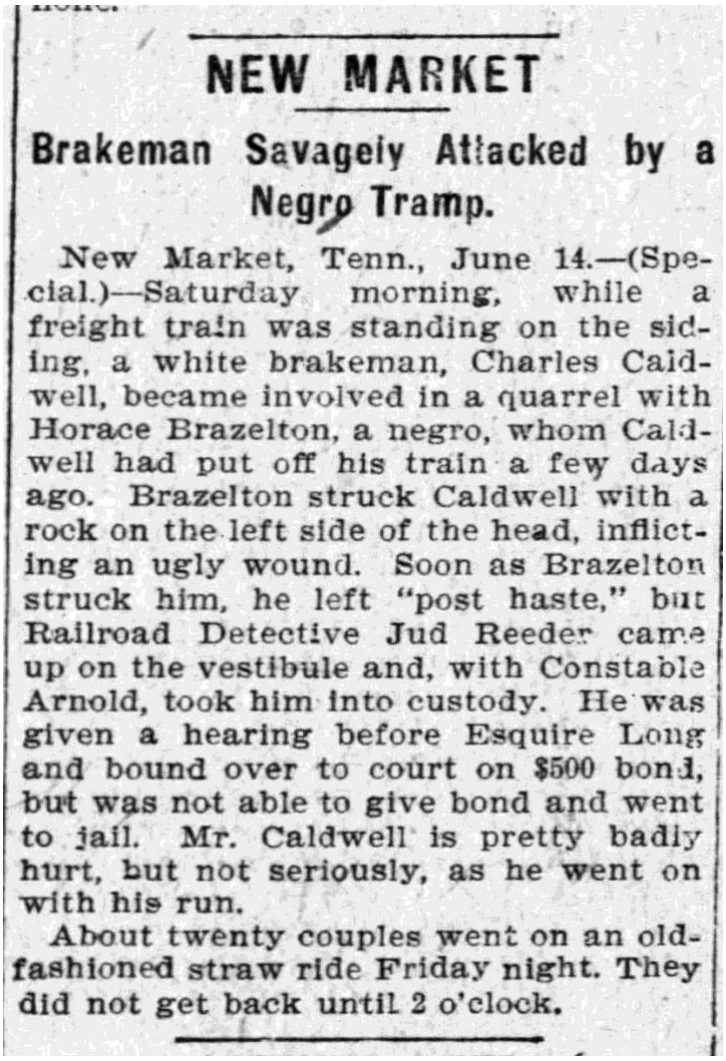
[26] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Maryville College, Tennessee for the Year 1895-96* (Philadelphia, PA: MacCalla & Company Inc., 1896).

[27] This was noted in each Census taken during their lives.

[28] "New Market: Brakeman Savagely Attacked by a Negro Tramp," *The Journal and Tribune* (Knoxville, Tennessee), (June 15, 1987).

[29] The newspaper *The Journal and Tribune*, printed out of Knoxville, reported on September 23, 1898, that "Horace Brazelton, a negro coal miner, was killed by falling slate at Briceville."

[30] "Tennessee, County Marriages, 1790-1950," database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: 21 December 2016), "Horace Maynard Brazelton and Hettie Mary Hodge," Knox County Marriage licenses, 1899-1901, image 250 of 692; citing Tennessee State Library and Archives.



NEW MARKET

Brakeman Savagely Attacked by a Negro Tramp.

New Market, Tenn., June 14.—(Special.)—Saturday morning, while a freight train was standing on the siding, a white brakeman, Charles Caldwell, became involved in a quarrel with Horace Brazelton, a negro, whom Caldwell had put off his train a few days ago. Brazelton struck Caldwell with a rock on the left side of the head, inflicting an ugly wound. Soon as Brazelton struck him, he left "post haste," but Railroad Detective Jud Reeder came up on the vestibule and, with Constable Arnold, took him into custody. He was given a hearing before Esquire Long and bound over to court on $500 bond, but was not able to give bond and went to jail. Mr. Caldwell is pretty badly hurt, but not seriously, as he went on with his run.

About twenty couples went on an old-fashioned straw ride Friday night. They did not get back until 2 o'clock.

Figure 3: Article from The Journal and Tribune, Knoxville, Tennessee (June 15, 1897).

An Entrepreneurial Artist

As the first Black photographer in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Horace Brazelton remained in business from the earliest years of the twentieth century until his death in 1956, spanning most of the Jim Crow era in the city.[31] However, he was not immediately

[31] W. Brian Piper, "'To Develop Our Business': Addison Scurlock, Photography, and the National Negro Business League, 1900–1920," *The Journal of African American History* 101, no. 4 (2016): 447.

attracted to the photographic profession after moving from his hometown. Initially working as a waiter, by 1903 he set his sights on business management himself and opened a grocery store at 1 Grove in Chattanooga with a partner named Robert H. Hannum.[32] That business partnership failed after a year, for unspecified reasons, though Horace and Hannum continued doing business together through real estate transfers afterward.[33] Soon after, Horace and Hettie rented a home at 514 East Ninth Street, where Horace opened his photography studio after training for ten months by an unnamed German photographer.[34]

Chattanooga was a bustling city when Horace Brazelton moved there around the turn of the century. However, Chattanooga was segregated by race like many other cities in the United States, especially in the South. Physical segregation and intense racism meant that Black communities were often excluded from social services, though, including photography. For example, the holiday edition of *The Chattanooga News*, published on December 25, 1918, included a studio special reading, "Wanted – Every person (white only) in Chattanooga and vicinity to have their photo made free at 1233 Market Street."[35] This blatant display exclusion signals a gap in social services available

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Horace Brazelton's physical studio opened in 1904. It is not yet clear whether he was doing business before this storefront was opened, though.

[32] Ancestry.com, *U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995* [database online], Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1903, (Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011), p. 880.

[33] "Real Estate Transfers: R. H. Hannum and Wife to Horace Brazelton," *The Chattanooga News*, June 26, 1907.

[34] Current research suggests that M. E. Schmedling is a likely candidate. According to city directories, he operated a photography studio in Chattanooga in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His studio was listed on the second floor of 828 Market Street in 1890. Mr. Schmedling was the only listed photographer with an obvious German surname.

[35] "Wanted - Photo Studio Special," *The Chattanooga News*, December 25, 1918.

to Black Chattanoogans during the early twentieth century. Horace Brazelton recognized that gap just a few years after his arrival to the city, prompting a large potential for entrepreneurial success. He achieved that goal in part because of the lack of studios available to Black communities, but also because he was an incredibly talented artist.

Jamestown Ter-Centennial Exposition

President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed that an international celebration of American culture should be inaugurated in Virginia beginning May 13 and lasting until November 1, 1907.[36] Actually lasting from April 26 to November 30, 1907, the Jamestown Exposition in Norfolk, "near the waters of Hampton Roads," showcased art, inventions, and other works from across the country.[37] The commemorative celebration recognized the three hundredth anniversary of the founding of Jamestown and culminated with "A Military, Naval, Marine and Historic Exhibition." While themes of white supremacy dominated this event, the Negro Development and Exposition Company did exhibit thousands of African American accomplishments to demonstrate their professionalism and creativity, albeit in a separate building. This section of the event included all mediums of art (painting, weaving, sculpting, photography, etc.), newspapers, literature, invention, architecture, performing groups, and more.[38]

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[36] Congress passed an Act on March 3, 1903, authorizing the event and later approved a date change on February 9, 1907.

[37] Byron S. Adams, *See! See! See! Guide to Jamestown Exposition, Historic Virginia, and Washington* (Washington, D. C.: Byron S. Adams, 1907), p. 33.

[38] Bryan Patrick Bennett, "Displaying Race at the Jamestown Ter-Centennial Exposition." Thesis, (Old Dominion University, 2016), 74-87.

Referenced later by Giles Beecher Jackson and Daniel Webster Davis, remarks on behalf of the segregated Black section of the exhibition were both complimentary and condescending, "The Negro exhibit at the Jamestown Exposition is surprisingly large and varied, and in many ways full of significance. Practically every section of the country is represented by exhibits; and their variety is highly illustrative of the increasing diversity of interests of the colored people."[39] Even though these men sounded surprised at the vibrancy of the African American exhibit, they were able to recognize those objects of material culture as important social symbols with intrinsic meaning.

The "Negro Building" was located on Pocahontas Street on the South Side of the exhibition, "going west from Jeffreys Street" and featuring "Paintings by negro artists [and] Models of patents by negroes."[40] During this event Horace Brazelton presented some of his own photographic works within this space, earning a silver medal with his name mentioned alongside other prominent African American photographers, as was reported on later by Jackson and Davis:

> The photographers' exhibit… was exceedingly large and interesting. Most of the work was of high grade. The subjects chosen by the exhibitors added greatly to the interest of the exhibit without detracting from the excellence of the photographers' work. Pictures of distinguished colored men and of the homes of many of the more successful colored people in the various cities of the country made up a large part of this exhibit. A.N. Scurlock, of Washington, D.C.; A.P. Bedou, of New Orleans, La.; H.M. Brazelton, of Chattanooga, Tenn.; and A.L. Macbeth, of Charleston, S.C.,

[39] Jackson and Davis, 192. The Negro Exhibit was housed in a separate building from the rest of the fair, and some eighteen thousand people visited on September 13th alone.

[40] Byron Adams, p. 18.

stood out as the most successful of these exhibitors.[41]

During the early twentieth century, these men became affluent African American photographers and served their communities as middle-class businessmen and service providers.[42] Multiple suggestions that White spectators were actually *surprised* by the obvious talents of these Black men further illustrate the prejudices that Black photographers faced as artists and businessmen. However, Horace Brazelton persevered despite White attitudes and used his recognition at the Jamestown Exposition in his business advertising (**see Figure 4**).

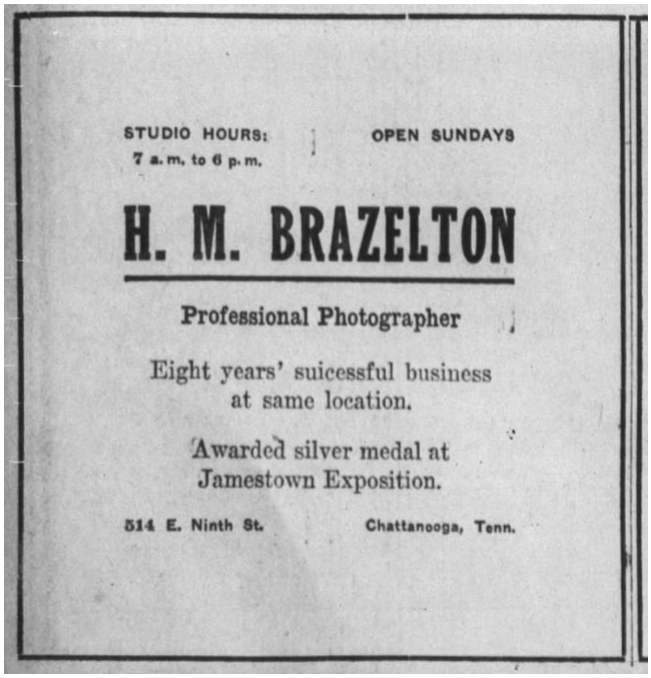

Figure 4: Brazelton Photo Studio Advert from the article, "Chattanooga's Colored Population is Making Progress," The Chattanooga News, (October 21, 1912).

[41] "Final Report of the Jamestown Ter-Centennial Commission," 60th Congress, 2nd Session, Document No. 735 § (Washington: Government Printing Office: 1909): 151.

[42] Jeffrey Aaron Snyder, *Making Black History: The Color Line, Culture, and Race in the Age of Jim Crow* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2018), 47.

However, Horace Brazelton also held membership in the Photographers' Association of America, a national organization featuring both White and Black professionals, including in 1916 when his name was listed as a member, as printed in the *Association News*, a nationally circulated "journal devoted to the interests of the photographers of America."[43] This recognition helps in substantiating that he was at least somewhat respected amongst his colleagues within at least one arts organization.

The Photographers' Association of America (PPA) was originally founded in 1868 as the National Photographic Association. By 1880, the group reorganized as the PPA before a final name change in 1957.[44]

National Conservation Exposition

The 1913 National Conservation Exposition in Knoxville, Tennessee was a two-month long celebration intended to showcase modern southern developments in a positive light, on a national stage.[45] Brazelton also experimented with hand-coloring, winning "Best Photograph" and "Best Watercolor" at this exposition alongside his wife.[46] The event was segregated, with the "Negro Building" located on the northern end of the grounds, "representing the progress of the race in the industrial and

[43] Photographers' Association of America, *Association News* 3, Issue 8 (1916): 334.

[44] Anthony Aretz, "The History of Professional Photographers of America, PPA: 150 Years of Dedication to Photographers: Professional Photographers of America," Professional Photographers of America, PPA, 2024, https://www.ppa.com/about/history.

[45] The National Conversation Exposition was open in Knoxville, Tennessee from September 1 to November 1, 1913.

[46] Horace Brazelton, "Photography as a Business," in *National Negro Business League, Report of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Annual Sessions Held at Chattanooga, Tenn., and Atlantic City, N.J.,* 1917.

domestic arts, and professionally and commercially."[47] Brazelton's involvement in the exposition speaks to a similar desire to exhibit talent and entrepreneurial success, as well as to demonstrate his understanding the business.

The Journal and Tribune reported, "A Chattanooga day for the colored people at the exposition is now an assured fact, for the negroes of that city have written asking that a day be set aside for them and promising a big attendance not only from Chattanooga, but also from cities between Knoxville and Chattanooga."[48] This national exposure signaled great interest in what the people in a smaller southern city were doing, especially during the "jubilee year of Emancipation" as mentioned by the *Knoxville Sentinel* in their issue on September 2, 1913. In light of the celebrations, the entire first floor of the segregated building was devoted to exhibits from Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute for the remainder of the exposition. When a delegation from Nashville accompanied J.C. Napier, former registrar of the United States Treasury, and visited the "Negro Building," the *Knoxville Sentinel* reported it was "where some of the most creditable exhibits of the exposition are on display." This high praise was reflective of the high-quality work shown at the exposition, and Horace Brazelton contributed greatly to the event, especially in winning two awards with Hettie.

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[47] "Great Progress of Negro Race: Truthfully Reflected in Display in Building," *The Journal and Tribune*, September 2, 1913.

[48] "Overhauling Negro Building: Great Store Is Set in Booker T. Washington Day, Which Will Be About September 19th," *The Journal and Tribune*, August 10, 1913. The planned date was originally set for October but was later reported as changed to October 14 in the September 16, 1913, issue of the *Knoxville Sentinel*.

National Negro Business League

In 1900, Booker T. Washington founded the National Negro Business League (NNBL), aimed at organizing Black entrepreneurs and business professionals across the country. Such efforts were vital in expanding a national professional network, affording people the opportunity to share ideas and build upon successes in individual cities. The first annual meeting, held in Boston, Massachusetts, drew crowds from across the country, signaling a widespread desire in continuing those efforts in the future.[49] Subsequent meetings were also held in other large cities, showcasing its members dressed in fine clothing and allowing them the opportunity to share their business accomplishments with both Black and White spectators.

Horace Brazelton's appeal to audiences at expositions and conferences are well-documented, further suggesting that his talents were recognized far beyond his community. Moreover, Chattanooga hosted the National Negro Business League (NNBL) for their eighteenth annual meeting in August 1917, the second meeting after Booker T. Washington's death in 1915.[50] G. W. Franklin was a prominent figure in the city at this time, as President of the local chapter of the NNBL and founder of the National Negro Funeral Directors' Association while managing a successful undertaking operation on Chestnut Street.[51] He was also chairman of the local committee on arrangements for the

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[49] Booker T. Washington, *The National Negro Business League: Some Interesting Facts about the Commercial and Industrial Ride of the Negro as Shown by the Recent Meeting at Richmond, Virginia*, vol. 4 (New York, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1902).

[50] "Warm Words of Welcome Spoken: Governor Rye and Mayor Littleton Extend Greetings to National Negro Business League," *The Chattanooga News*, August 15, 1917.

[51] "Chattanooga's Colored Population is Making Progress: G.W. Franklin, Jr.," *The Chattanooga News*, (October 21, 1912).

gathering in Chattanooga, choosing a spot called Umbrella Rock on Lookout Mountain for one session of the meeting.[52] Mr. Franklin knew Horace Brazelton well and invited him to deliver a presentation at this session.[53] Brazelton accepted, using the opportunity to call on local youths looking for work in his speech entitled "Photography as a Business":

> I would like right here to make a special appeal to young men, who are honest workers, who are undecided what field of profession or business to enter, that the Photographic field offers excellent opportunities. It is the one field that the crust is hardly broken, a scientific and magnetic profession with quick returns on your money, and expansion as big as the man.[54]

This speech gives several clues to Horace Brazelton's thoughts on himself on both a photographer and an employer, as he also claimed thriving work which kept himself, his wife, and at least four employees busy. In this appearance, Brazelton also seemed to portray himself as an entrepreneur before an artist with extraordinary talent. Of course, Black photographers often did not have the luxury or privilege to advocate for themselves as an artist alone. No, they were entrepreneurs who consistently had to advertise the business instead of just

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[52] "Big Crowd Is Expected at Negro Business League," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, July 13, 1917.

[53] H. Bracey and August Meier, eds., Records of the National Negro Business League: Part 1, *Annual Conference Proceedings and Organizational Records, 1900-1919* (Bethesda, MD: University Publications of America, 1995): 19. This spot is particularly significant since it was the general location of the Battle of Lookout Mountain. Occurring on November 24, 1863, this engagement allowed U.S. troops to capture a vital strategic location near Chattanooga – eventually leading to the end of the Confederate siege of the city.

[54] Brazelton, "Photography as a Business."

themselves.[55] Horace Brazelton was mostly focused on studio-based portraiture but also created images in the field with group portraits, events, and city landscape photography. Brazelton also used watercolor in his work and won national competitions in recognition of that talent.

Community Engagement

Aside from providing photographic services to their community, Horace and his wife Hettie Brazelton also participated in communal activities as respected members of various groups. For example, they judged county fair exhibits and presented awards to local schoolchildren, and Hettie acted as a volunteer in a myriad of social causes, even presiding over Emancipation Day celebrations.[56] Hettie also served on the Hospitality and Health Education Committees at the Phillis Wheatley YWCA for a number of years, a building which still stands on Eighth Street in Chattanooga.[57]

Moreover, Horace Brazelton and other local businessmen understood the importance of his neighbors owning land, and what that meant for building a community over several generations. The Pioneer Realty Company was the first Black-organized real estate company in Chattanooga. The investors included O.W. James; L.P.

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[55] Jeffrey John Fearing, "African-American Image, History, and Identity, in Twentieth-Century Washington, D.C., as Chronicled through the Art and Social Realism Photography of Addison N. Scurlock and the Scurlock Studios, 1904-1994" (Dissertation, Howard University, 2005). p. 21.

[56] "2 Honored for Aid in Polio Campaign: Workers in Negro Division Get Pins Recognizing Five Years' Service," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, January 24, 1952; "Exhibit of Negroes to Be Fair Feature," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, September 13, 1927; "Fair Officials Move to Park to Handle Exhibits: Rush of Applications Indicates Will Be 'Bigger and Better,'" *The Chattanooga News*, September 13, 1927; "Music Memory Contest in Colored Schools," *The Chattanooga News*, May 12, 1924.

[57] "4 Named to Board for Wheatley 'Y,'" *Chattanooga Daily Times*, October 2, 1952.

Berry; M.R. Carson; R.W. Allen; G.W. Turner; and H.M. Brazelton. These prominent men came together in 1909 to incorporate Chattanooga's first Black-owned realty company, with a capital stock of $10,000.[58] By 1912, the officers for the company were President Dr. O.W. James; Vice President H.M. Brazelton; Treasurer J.A. Henry; and Secretary L.W. Henderson. These four men also made up the executive committee, alongside W.C. Hixson and Manson Flowers. Over the course of their lives, Horace and Hettie bought and sold countless plots of land to other Black Chattanoogans, though they themselves rented their home while living above the photography studio for a number of years.[59]

By 1910, census entries listed Horace Brazelton as a self-employed photographer, and Hettie assisted him, even though she was officially listed as having no occupation.[60] This trend continued throughout the years, until the United State Census of 1950, which was the last one before their deaths in 1956 and 1957. The Brazelton Photo Studio was reportedly successful from the earliest days of business, as stated in *The Chattanooga News* on October 21, 1912:

> H. M. Brazelton, Artistic Photographer is in business at 514 East Ninth street. He started his career in the photographic profession over seven years ago at his present location. He has been a close student of the profession attested by his studio proving successful from an art and financial standpoint from the beginning. He has been compelled to enlarge and remodel his studio to keep abreast with increased patronage.

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[58] "Pioneer Realty Company," *The Tennessean* (Nashville, Tennessee), (December 9, 1909).

[59] Ancestry.com, *1940 United States Federal Census,* Year: 1940; Census Place: Chattanooga, Hamilton, Tennessee; Roll: m-t0627-03952; Page: 2A; Enumeration District: 96-31A [database online], Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012. The Brazelton family most often lived in or above their studio at 515 ½ East Ninth Street, a building which is no longer extant. They lived at 820 Palmetto Street at the time of their deaths.

[60] Ancestry.com, *1910 United States Federal Census,* Year: 1910; Census Place: Chattanooga Ward 7, Hamilton, Tennessee; Roll: T624_1503; Page: 10A; Enumeration District: 0064; FHL microfilm: 1375516 [database online], Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2006.

> By reason of close application to his work and his courteous treatment of all with whom he comes in contact, Mr. Brazelton has won the patronage and the support of his people. He has also won by the excellence of his work medal awards of excellence from the Jamestown exposition at Norfolk, Va., and also the Appalachian exposition at Knoxville. He is enjoying a growing and satisfactory patronage.[61]

A few years later, Brazelton signed a petition for an African American candidate for justice of the peace, named J.W. Hines. Coverage from *The Chattanooga News* reported on its small impact, "The only sop thrown to colored voters so far is a solitary name of a negro drawn for the jury, and it was explained that this was an accident."[62] Despite his extensive community engagements, news stories such as this one frequently held a patronizing tone in their reporting of such organization on behalf of prominent Black people in the city.

Brazelton also dealt with police harassment, stemming back from an early age with the aforementioned incident with a White train brakeman in New Market, Tennessee. Yet another incident involved Sid Robinson, a White policeman assigned to traffic duty in 1918 on the corner of Georgia Avenue and Eighth (8th) Street in Chattanooga. Horace Brazelton reportedly, and accidentally, bumped into his silk bell flag while driving. Robinson promptly arrested the "colored photographer on Ninth street" – where later in court, he was sentenced to replace the flag after Robinson insisted on needing a new one of silk (though the White judge did not specify what material the replacement needed to be). The *Chattanooga Daily Times* later reported

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[61] "H.M. Brazelton, Artistic Photographer," *The Chattanooga News*, October 21, 1912.
[62] "Hines or Fine for Justice Job," *The Chattanooga News*, (April 7, 1915).

that “the colored man took Sid’s hint literally and purchased one of pure silk. “Ain’t she a dandy,” said the policeman yesterday, but he would not tell how he got it.”[63]

These occurrences indicate an inherent pride and confidence in himself, though he still had to cope with rampant racism and “privileges” of being White. Additionally, Horace and Hettie moved studio locations at least twelve times, for currently unknown reasons (**see Table 2**). These studio location changes are further outlined in a timeline of Brazelton’s life (**see Appendix A**). Perhaps these moves were beneficial to the business, as they might have needed more space to meet increasing demand. However, it is also possible that the location changes were necessitated because of harassment, as evidenced by a desire to repeatedly return to 515 ½ East Ninth Street.

*Table 2: Address Changes for the Brazelton Photo Studio, by year, according to Chattanooga City Directory Data. *It is not clear whether this was a typo for 515 ½ East 9th Street.*

1906	514 East 9th Street	1929	432 ½ East 9th Street
1908	514 ½ East 9th Street	1930	110 East 9th Street
1916	511 ½ East 9th Street	1931	224 ½ East 9th Street
1918	513 ½ East 9th Street	1933	515 ½ East 9th Street
1921	515 ½ East 9th Street	1940	551 ½ East 9th Street*
1926	218 ½ East 9th Street	1942	515 ½ East 9th Street
1927	224 ½ East 9th Street		

[63] “Sid Robinson’s New Flag, Negro Violator Buys Silk One as a Penalty,” *Chattanooga Daily Times*, July 2, 1918.

Expanding Family

Sometime in 1920, they took in their 16-year-old nephew named Walter Towns, who was listed on the census with them.[64] On July 27, 1920, a baby girl named Lucille was born to parents James Hodge and Hattie Simpson.[65] She was later listed as their daughter in the 1930 census, when she was eleven years old.[66] Just two years prior, little Lucille sent a Santa letter into the newspaper the *Chattanooga Daily Times,* in which she mentions her sick mother.[67] Could she have been referencing her birth mother?

Lucille later married Leon Jones, Sr. and subsequently had a son named Leon Jones, Jr. on July 19, 1938. Unfortunately, she passed away soon afterward on March 16, 1939, when Leon was only eight months old. She was treated at Walden Hospital, one of two private hospitals in the Black community, after contracting influenza type A and pneumonia.[68] The 1940 census then reports baby Leon as living with his grandparents, while they were still running their photography studio.[69] Willie Lee Paul, Hettie's sister,

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[64] Ancestry.com, *1920 United States Federal Census,* Year: 1920; Census Place: Chattanooga Ward 7, Hamilton, Tennessee; Roll: T625_1743; Page: 15B; Enumeration District: 181 [database online], Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

[65] State of Tennessee Department of Public Health and Division of Vital Statistics, State File Number 5265, *Lucille Brazelton Jones Certificate of Death*, Informant Leon Jones (husband), (filed March 22, 1939).

[66] Ancestry.com, *1930 United States Federal Census,* Year: 1930; Census Place: Chattanooga, Hamilton, Tennessee; Page: 1B; Enumeration District: 0018; FHL microfilm: 2341984 [database online], Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2002.

[67] Lucille Brazelton, "Dear Santa Letter," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, December 22, 1928.

[68] Leon Jones, Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Brazelton, and Leon Jones, Jr., "Card of Thanks," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 22, 1939. Lucille was treated by Dr. G. H. Moores of Walden Hospital during her brief battle with influenza and pneumonia. That privately-owned hospital was the first of its kind for Chattanooga's Black communities. It was originally founded by Dr. Emma Wheeler, a female physician, on July 30, 1915.

[69] Ancestry.com, *1940 United States Federal Census,* Year: 1940; Census Place: Chattanooga, Hamilton, Tennessee; Roll: m-t0627-03952; Page: 2A; Enumeration District: 96-31A [database online], Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012.

was also listed in the household on this census. One can safely assume that it was "all hands-on deck" when taking care of a young child. Horace continued serving as the most prominent African American photographer in Chattanooga, even after this tragic loss.

Through the course of this dissertation research, the author received a phone call from a woman named Jacquelyn Edwyna Harris (1953-living), one of seven biological grandchildren of Horace Brazelton. Her family's oral history has always maintained that Johnnie Mae Edwards Caldwell (1913-1968), her grandmother, knew the Brazelton family from a young age because they were all heavily involved at Leonard Street Presbyterian Church. In 1928, Johnnie Mae was only 15 years old when she gave birth to Dorothy Louise Edwards Harris (1928-2018), when Horace was around 51 years old. Jacquelyn is the fourth of Dorothy's seven children, her siblings being twins Ronald Edwards Harris (1949-living) and Donald Edwin Harris (1949-living), Willie Harris, Jr. (1951-living), Jacquelyn, Winifred Ann Harris (1956-living), and twins Kim Allessandria Harris (1967) and Mia Romina Harris Hicks (1967). The family grew up telling stories about Mr. Brazelton as a beloved but absent family figure (**see Figure 5**). Horace Brazelton is located in the center of the portrait photo but takes up quite a bit of space in the composition. He sits in a relaxed pose, leaning against a table with an intricate doily cover He is slightly smirking at the camera with a tilted head that matches the tilt in a black top hat he holds in his hands, propped up at a slight oblique angle to display the item. Brazelton's hair and moustache are neatly groomed, and his suit is freshly pressed. There is also a slight shine on one of his hands – perhaps indicative of a wedding band.

The new information about a biological descendant connection was shocking, because although this kind of age-gap relationship was not uncommon at the time, it is still a significant gap. Looking at this information from the lens of a twenty-first century eye further ostracizes Horace Brazelton as a complicated if not outright problematic figure. Yet his myriad of accomplishments has not changed.

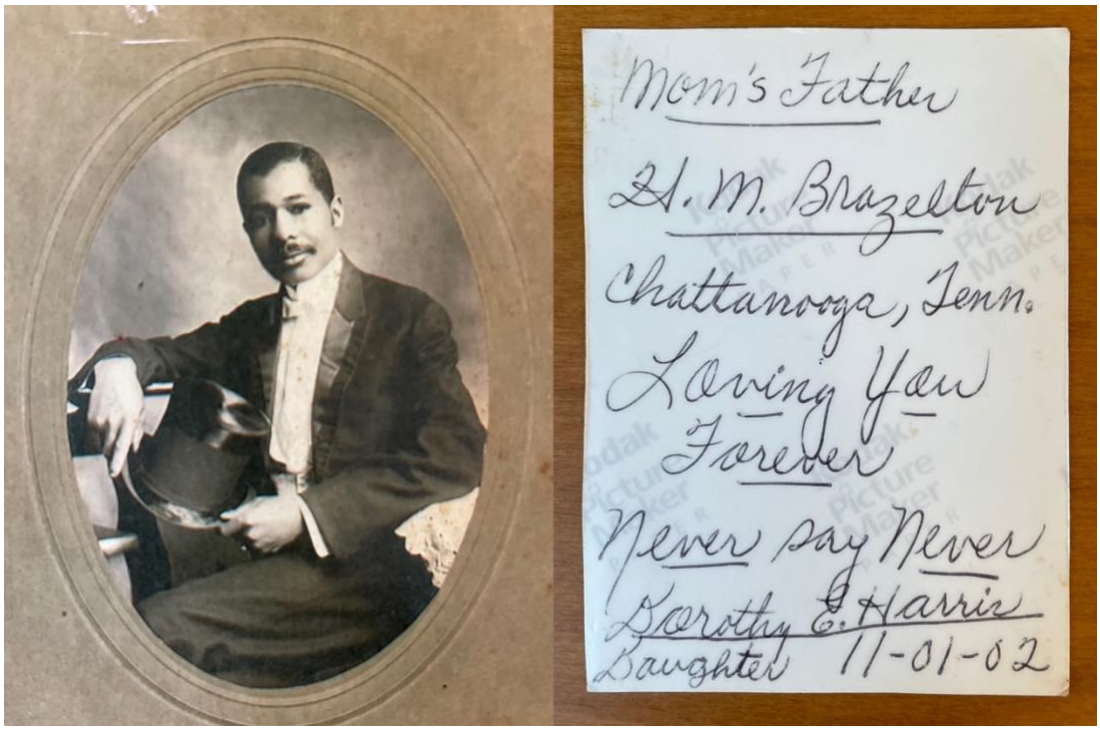

Figure 5: Horace Brazelton, circa 1920s. Photograph copy provided by Jacquelyn Harris, his granddaughter. Note inscription on back of photo.

Misfortune struck the family once again on March 17, 1947, when a fire broke out in the photography studio and almost destroyed the interior of that business, plus the upstairs sleeping quarters and P&G Club that was located on the ground level. The brick building was luckily saved, although repairs to the P&G Club totaled at least

$500.[70] The Brazelton Photo Studio reopened by July 25, 1947, though, as advertised in the *Chattanooga Observer* (**see Figure 6**).

Figure 6: Brazelton Photo Studio Advertisement, detailing the reopening of the studio after the fire on March 17, 1947, Chattanooga Observer (July 25, 1947).

Final Years

Horace Maynard Brazelton died at his home at 820 Palmetto Street after a brief illness on May 13, 1956 – and was pronounced deceased by Newell Hospital.[71] His

[70] "Legal Records: Building Permits," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, May 13, 1947; 1. "Photo Studio Burns: Fire Put Out Before It Can Destroy Whole Building," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 18, 1947.

[71] Ancestry.com, *Tennessee Death Records, 1908-1958* [database online], (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011), Microfilm, *Tennessee Death Records, 1908-1965,* Tennessee State Library and Archives; Nashville, Tennessee; State of Tennessee Department of Public Health and Division of Vital Statistics, Death no. 56-10559, *Horace M. Brazelton Certificate of Death*, Informant Hettie M. Brazelton (wife), (filed May 17, 1956).

obituary read in part, “Funeral today 3:30 pm instead of 3 pm as previously announced at Leonard Street Presbyterian Church with Rev. W.T. Byrd officiating. Interment Pleasant Garden Cemetery. The body will lie in state at the church from 1 pm until funeral house and will not be viewed following service.”[72] Hettie Mary Brazelton passed away on July 5, 1957, at Carver Memorial Hospital. She was interred next to her husband on July 9, 1957.[73] Their grandson, Leon Jones, Jr. moved to New York sometime afterward and stayed there until his own death on February 19, 2019. He is survived by his daughter Princess Yolanda Jones and sons Darryle Brown and William Jones.

[72] "Brazelton, H.M. Obituary," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, (May 18, 1956).

[73] "Brazelton, Mrs. Hettie M. Obituary," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, (July 8, 1957); State of Tennessee Department of Public Health and Division of Vital Statistics, Death no. 57-16560, *Hettie M. Brazelton Certificate of Death*, Informant Walter L. Hodge (relation unknown), (filed July 12, 1957).

Figure 7: Headstone for Horace and Hettie Brazelton at Pleasant Garden Cemetery, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Photograph provided by the author.

Segregation – From Cradle to Grave

Horace and Hettie are interred at Pleasant Garden Cemetery on Missionary Ridge in Chattanooga (**see Figure 7**), the largest segregated burial ground in the region.[74] Systemic policies, social practices, and actual legislation during the Jim Crow Era in the United States fostered continued racism and harmful segregation for multiple generations. Almost every aspect of life was separated by race, including but not limited

[74] "Find a Grave", online database (https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/154215119/horace-m_-brazelton), memorial page for Horace M. Brazelton (1878-1956), Find A Grave Memorial no. 154215119; citing Pleasant Gardens Cemetery, Ridgeside, Hamilton County, Tennessee, USA; the accompanying photograph by Ann Couillard.

to accessible services, permitted residential areas, restaurants, movie theaters, hospitals, schools, and cemeteries. Even death was not enough to end segregationist policies and attitudes which plagued minority communities during life, especially African Americans in the southeastern region of the country. These communities were forced to either lay their loved ones to rest in a segregated place which was not often maintained by white landowners, or they had to purchase land of their own for burial grounds.

Initially established on April 22, 1890, and officially opened on March 10, 1891, Pleasant Garden Cemetery is located on Missionary Ridge, a steep geographic feature known for its ties to the Civil War with the 1863 Battle of Missionary Ridge. A group of fourteen Black Chattanoogans, organized by R.L. Cleage, stood behind the efforts to charter "the first cemetery in the South that is owned exclusively by colored people."[75] The original 12 acres eventually grew to its current size of approximately 22 acres, reflecting an increasing need for burial spaces for African American communities in Chattanooga during a segregated world. Some of the most notable African American residents are buried here, including Ed Johnson, a lynching victim murdered by a mob in 1906.[76]

Horace and Hettie's shared grave plot has an orientation roughly following the typical Christian burial tradition of an east/west axis, with the head laid to the west. The stone itself is likely Tennessee pink marble, originating in East Tennessee as a premier

[75] "Formally Opened: Interesting Exercises Yesterday at the New Pleasant Garden Cemetery," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, (May 2, 1891).

[76] Donivan Brown et al., eds., The Ed Johnson Project, 2021, https://www.edjohnsonproject.com.

choice for both architecture and burial markers. The identification type is fairly evident by the presence of glistening crystals, pink flecks of color, and pure calcite that is noticeable on the marker after treating the surface with D/2 Biological Solution. This stone type is not a true marble but shares sedimentary characteristics with limestone with different minerals present coloring the appearance. However, geological metamorphosis also occurs to a high degree much like marble, leading to the social construction of the term Tennessee marble.[77] This particular stone is fairly unique among the other markers in Pleasant Garden, both for its composition and its decoration and inscription. Hand-carved lettering and a floral design signifies a talented carver, although no details about the craftsman exist as of yet. The text itself is simple, denoting the last name "Brazelton" in large letters above "Horace M." and "Hettie M." along with their birth dates. Horace's name is listed on the left-hand side, as is his death date. Hettie's name, on the right-hand side, does not include her death date. This might be due to a lack of family members in the area to ensure that the carving was completed upon her death, or perhaps the craftsman was no longer available.

Aside from the lettering, hand-carved floral motifs reminiscent of traditional needlework are also present on the tombstone. Such motif decorations, as with other forms of decorative art, "drew inspiration from a common vocabulary of popular motifs and themes circulating at the time."[78] There are three vertical spacers on the front of

[77] Susan Williams Knowles, "Of Structure and Society: Tennessee Marble in Civic Architecture," (PhD diss., Middle Tennessee State University, 2011), 17-18.

[78] Laurel K. Gable, "A Common Thread: Needlework Samplers and American Gravestones," *The Journal of the Association for Gravestone Studies* 19 (2002): 19. Laurel Gable was specifically referencing

the stone, possibly ferns or some other leaf motif. In addition to those, there is a central flower carved at the top of the stone, immediately above the last name. This flower includes nine petals and looks like a daisy, possibly signifying gentleness or innocence. The back of the tombstone features two other flowers, both with five petals each. This could be representative of a poppy flower symbolizing death and eternal sleep, a geranium for happiness, or perhaps a rose to denote love. Without finer details or color, though, it is near-impossible to identify the exact flower species on either the front or the back of the stone. The material, craftsmanship, and style of the Brazelton tombstone is unique, and indicative of the exceptional position that these two held in the community during their lifetimes.

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early American gravestones in New England, but the observation can easily be applied to southern cemeteries, as needlework was an integral part of southeastern folk art and domestic labor.

CHAPTER III: LESSONS IN PHOTOGRAPHY, A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF BRAZELTON'S WORK

> The family is the fountainhead of all mental and moral influence. And the presence there [of photos], of the miniature forms and faces of our loved ones, whether separated from us by time and space, or by the silent continents of eternity, must act powerfully upon the minds of all. They bring to mind all that is amiable and good in the departed, and strengthen the same qualities [in the living].[1]
>
> -Frederick Douglass, December 3, 1861, "Lecture on Pictures"

Early twentieth century Black photographers offer a unique perspective on the world of visual media and bring diversity to the field. Their work highlights the true experiences of Black communities, raising both an awareness and understanding of these perceptions among a wider audience. Their accomplished careers documented and preserved the culture and history of African Americans during a time when mainstream media often perpetuated negative stereotypes and ignored their positive contributions. Additionally, their presence in the field served as an inspiration for other aspiring Black photographers.

Professionals like Horace Brazelton captured and represented the perspectives of Black communities in an authentic way, true to the lived experiences of those marginalized people. Those efforts are particularly important for members of these groups who lacked proper representation, thereby strengthening the myth of White superiority during Jim Crow. Furthermore, the ability to self-represent, or to control the

[1] Frederick Douglass, *Frederick Douglass Papers: Speech, Article, and Book File, -1894; Speeches and Articles by Douglass, -1894; 1861*, "Lecture on Pictures," 1861, Manuscript/Mixed Material, https://www.loc.gov/item/mss1187900394/.

way one is seen and perceived by others, is an empowering act and a key aspect of agency.

Limiting access to things like content creation is not only detrimental to oneself, but also reflective of a loss in cultural capital, expressed through self-representation and community identity. If a group of people face barriers to even basic services like photography, then they also face potential loss of memory over several generations. Similar losses occurred during slavery when enslavers separated families in the name of profit.[2] Oral histories could potentially keep the spirit of a person alive for descendants, but the visual proof of their humanity was either lost or never existed. The ability to remember someone based on their likeness is therefore a powerful tool in the healing of generational trauma.

Photography helps create tangible objects that are representative of memory, an inherent part of African American communities especially during the Reconstruction Era. The content of the actual image in a photograph is significant, from immortalizing peoples' choices in backdrops, props, and lighting, to their clothing, hair, makeup, and posture. The process of image creation consequently involves an intricate relationship between the photographer as creator, and the client as subject. But the physical product (the photograph) itself is also a piece of material culture, speaking to a complex range of broader historical and social patterns.[3] Consider the differences in post cards

[2] When enslavers purposely broke families apart, by selling individual members to other enslavers, they stripped them the option of familial connection and inflicted generational trauma.

[3] Elizabeth Edwards, "Photography and the Material Performance of the Past," *History and Theory* 48, no. 4 (2009): 130–50.

and cabinet cards – even if both feature a portrait, they still serve separate functions since one was intended to be mailed and one was not.

Photography as a profession was relatively accessible to African Americans, as it did not always require large amounts of capital or specialized education to start. Horace Brazelton himself expounded on this point in his speech at the 1917 annual meeting for the National Negro Business League, stating of his beginnings, "I wanted a business that would not be stocked with credit or cramped with ethics and after carefully looking over several fields, I decided on Photography. At the beginning I did not have extensive means, but I have seen the business grow from a small beginning to large proportion, keeping busy four employees and myself."[4]

Horace Brazelton was not the only Black photographer working to provide access to the medium, thereby helping his community to use their agency to express identity. Indeed, other talented artists include Addison Scurlock, Arthur P. Bedou, and Richard Samuel Roberts.[5] However, Brazelton was the first Black photographer who operated a professional studio in Chattanooga, Tennessee (**see Figure 1**). He was also a prominent businessman in his community, segregated by race during Jim Crow. Even though the Brazelton Photo Studio was open for almost fifty years, examples of his work are now primarily held in private collections or are otherwise difficult to locate. Several libraries and archival repositories across the United States do hold *some* Brazelton photos, but

[4] Brazelton, "Photography as a Business."

[5] Other notable examples of Black photographers include Gordon Parks, James Van Der Zee, Addison Scurlock, Arthur Bedou, Carrie Mae Weems, Roy DeCarava, and many others.

for a business that was open for almost fifty years, the current collection of approximately one hundred known images is disproportionately small.

Figure 1: Brazelton Photo Studio Advertisement, The Chattanooga Star (August 24, 1907).

History of Photography

The photographic technologies discussed in this dissertation are reflective of more modern advances in the field. But the idea of capturing a person's likeness is not necessarily innovative and was not a new concept during the lifetime of Horace Brazelton. The idea of the camera obscura began thousands of years ago, though its exact origins are not clearly known. Michael Potter argues that the "earliest recorded

mention of a pinhole camera was as early as the fifth century BC, by the Mohist philosopher Mozi."[6] Regardless of the exact date for the idea of capturing a moment in time, it was clear that humanity was ready to begin the next phase of recorded history, even soon after written history began.

In 1839, Henry Fox Tallbot and Louis Daguerre demonstrated the application of this technological knowledge when they simultaneously invented reproducible and permanent images.[7] The subsequent development of light-sensitive materials paved the way for the creation of the first permanent photographic images. Fox Tallbot's process was called the calotype, first producing a photographic negative which could then be used to create a positive image. Daguerre introduced the daguerreotype at the same time, a process which allowed for the capture of photographic positives as detailed and realistic images on silver-plated copper. Their advancements marked the birth of photography as a medium for visual expression.

The technology quickly evolved, with innovations such as the calotype and wet plate processes expanding its accessibility. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries witnessed the transition from cumbersome equipment to more portable cameras, making photography more accessible to a broader audience. Horace Brazelton participated in that development, offering his talents to others and broadening access to the developing technology. This democratization of image-making fostered a sense of

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[6] Michael Potter, "Pinhole Cameras: Positives and Negatives," *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics (Art & Design)*, no. 11 (November 2015): 50.

[7] Sarah Kate Gillespie, *The Early American Daguerreotype: Cross Current in Art and Technology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2016), 16-20.

connection and identity, highlighting the importance of photography in shaping both personal and collective histories.

Photographic Process Identification

Horace Brazelton primarily worked in portrait photography with gelatin silver prints, which were popular at the time. The process for gelatin silver developing out paper (DOP) dominated commercial photography in the early to mid-twentieth century. "Silver gelatin DOP is based on the light sensitivity of silver halides, which are suspended in a gelatin binder on a baryta paper support."[8] Every photographer had their own process for mixing the emulsion of silver nitrate with a halide (usually some combination of bromide and chloride, although silver iodide could be used as well), which affected the final look of the photograph. They could also choose to tone their prints using gold or other metals. A photographer not only had to be precise with the lighting while shooting, but also had to be careful in the developing process to ensure that their work came out as intended. It is currently unclear what Brazelton's process included, though this information could potentially be obtained through a chemical and observational analysis of his photos.

To help his clients feel comfortable about the way they were represented in photographic form, Horace Brazelton also took great care in posing, choosing props, and capturing lighting in all of his work. He chose props such as decorative chairs, wicker

[8] Image Permanence Institute, "Silver Gelatin DOP Identification," Graphics Atlas, n.d., http://www.graphicsatlas.org/identification/?process_id=266).

baskets with flowers, and in one case, a kitten (**see Figure 7**). His choices and artistic talents were part of what made Brazelton so successful, as were his techniques for processing the silver salts in gelatin. He was especially careful with his use of lighting, as this decision affected the exposure of the final image. As such, Brazelton usually did not rely on hand coloring to enhance his work, although he did experiment with this method at times. Horace Brazelton's gelatin silver DOP photographs are usually mounted on postcards, or sometimes a cabinet card. This thicker stock of paper also contributes to a longer life for the images. There are a few examples of hand-colored photos from the 1930s or 1940s, suggesting that Brazelton was experimenting with his process after establishing himself as a community figure.

Historian W. Brian Piper wrote in reference to Brazelton's efforts to learn how to control color in photography, that "His customers regularly expressed preference in the representation of their skin tone and appreciated Brazelton's ability to control their appearance on film."[9] From his limited study of Brazelton, Piper also concluded that Brazelton understood the Black desire for a high level of representational control, and his clients preferred a Black photographer who understood those preferences. Consumers were more comfortable expressing those concerns to a photographer of their race.[10]

In April 2021, I presented my preliminary research about the Brazelton story as an online lecture for Picnooga, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to collecting

[9] Piper, 447.
[10] Ibid., 34.

Chattanooga's pictorial history. After posting the lecture video to the internet, the response prompted several people to come forward with new examples of Brazelton's work. One of these new photos was of an adult woman, seated alone for a portrait in the Brazelton Studio (**see Figure 2**). The chosen backdrop reminds the audience of someone's home, as it is printed as a wall with windows featuring decorative curtains. The subject bears a serious and focused demeanor, seated in a fine wooden chair while wearing a pleated dress and laced boots. She holds a single flower matching those in a prop vase on a wooden end table where her arm rests. The scene almost appears as if the viewer has candidly stumbled across a woman enjoying a moment in her own home.

Figure 2: Unnamed Relative of Artist Jack Walls, Brazelton Photo Studio (undated). Courtesy of Jack Walls.

Figure 3: Unidentified man, Brazelton Photo Studio (circa 1915). Courtesy of UTC Special Collections, Chattanooga History Collections.

Compared to Brazelton's earlier works (**see Figures 3, 4, and 5**), the photo of Jack Walls' ancestor also demonstrates a sort of progression in his style, based in part on new backdrop elements and props available to him. For example, it is not just a simple backdrop, but features physical items to accompany the three-dimensional backdrop, like wooden window frames and real curtains. Other elements also speak to a similar sentiment, including the furniture he used over the years. In the beginning, he utilized wooden furniture of simple design or even none at all. For example, **Figure 3** features a single subject, presumably male, standing at center of the image with no props or furniture. Perhaps the transition to adding more props and design into his work was a sign that he could simply afford it, or could signal a progression of his personal style, or even an ever-changing demand of his clientele.

Figures 4 and 5 provide additional examples of Horace Brazelton's earlier photographic style. Both images feature a single subject, each presumably female, sitting in front of a backdrop with floral designs. The first photo's subject is propping her head on one hand, with that hand bent at the elbow and resting on the back of a chair. She is wearing a white dress while holding a white crocheted bag with her free hand. A pendant necklace and silver bracelet are both clearly visible, and she is looking at the camera directly. The second photo mimics this same style and composition, though the woman in this image sits at an oblique angle, while glancing at the camera in a natural position. A prominent white hate complements her white dress, as she holds a pair of white gloves in her crossed hands. Both examples are cabinet card style photos, with the same "Brazelton / Chattanooga, Tenn." stamp at the bottom righthand corner.

Figure 4: Portrait of a woman, Brazelton Photo Studio (circa 1910s). Courtesy of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, Dr Charles S. Boyd Photograph Collection.

Figure 5: Portrait of Grace Allen Mcehy, Brazelton Photo Studio (circa 1910s). Courtesy of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, Dr Charles S. Boyd Photograph Collection.

Figure 6: Portrait of a group, Brazelton Photo Studio (circa 1920s). Courtesy of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, Dr Charles S. Boyd Photograph Collection.

During his long career, Brazelton also captured several group portraits, both inside studio spaces and in landscape-based shoots. **Figure 6** features one such group of nine people, one male and eight females, as part of a family portrait. The group is standing in front of a studio backdrop with a window to the lefthand side of the image, with a column and arch making up the remainder of the background. The subjects in this photo are identified, a rarer feat in the current collection of Brazelton Photo Studio images, and are as follows: Back row, left to right: Dr. William Valentine, Ms. Hattie A.

Boyer, Mrs. Sarah V. Allen, Ms. Mary Valentine, Mrs. Minnie Bronner (wife of Rev. Bronner), and Mrs. Emma V. Sharp. Front row, left to right: Ms. Maggie Valentine (wife of Dr. Valentine), Beunetta Allen and Grace Allen (daughters of Mrs. Sarah V. Allen). Only four of the subjects are looking at the camera, with the other five looking either out the window or just to the side of the camera.

The Brazelton Photo Studio also created the photograph titled, “Edward, Walter, and Kathleen Mitchell holding a kitten," around the year 1920 (**see Figure 7**). The image presents a group of three small children, two boys and one girl, with one of the boys holding a kitten at center. The kitten is the only subject looking directly at the camera. The boys are both seated on wooden stools, dressed in matching white shorts and long-sleeved white shirts with a red ribbon ascot around their collars. The girl is standing at the far right of the composition, dressed in a white short-sleeve dress with a white ribbon tied around the brow of her head.

The object itself is an example of a silver gelatin photograph, hand-colored to bring out details in the children’s clothing, like their brown shoes and red ribbon ascots on the boys. The backdrop is also familiar, featuring a prominent white column atop a series of steps – in fact, Brazelton used the same one multiple times (**see Figures 10 & 16**). The photograph is also worn – each of the corners are torn slightly and there is a slight yellowing tint, indicating its age and deterioration that is common to this photographic process.

Figure 7: "Photograph of Edward, Walter, and Kathleen Mitchell holding a kitten," Brazelton Photo Studio (circa 1920). Courtesy of the National Museum of African American History & Culture.

Dr. Earnestine Jenkins, of the University of Memphis, provided the next photograph (**see Figure 8**), taken on the streets of Chattanooga. This image is different than those already discussed, in that it is not taken *inside* the Brazelton Photo Studio. Instead, it is a street-based group portrait photo of three adult men in front of a business or storefront. Each subject is wearing a suit and hat, with shined shoes looking directly at the camera with focused expressions on their faces. However, the man at middle carries a different demeanor, evident by his body language as compared to the other two men. A bright light bulb is hanging just above the man at center, who has one hand in his pocket and his other arm is not visible. The other two men stand on either side of him, both of their arms relaxed at their sides.

A sign with the phrase "Your Credit is Good" is visible in the upper lefthand side of the storefront bay and seems to be repeated on the opposite side. The business name and location are currently unknown, as are the three men's' identities. The reverse side of the photo post card includes handwriting in ink, simply reading "1918 / Lester Powell." In the 1918 Chattanooga City Directory, Mr. Powell was listed as a Driver for Close Furniture Company. Subsequent city directories list him as a driver for G.O. Sanders Furniture Company, suggesting that both Black men could have been drivers for Sanders, standing at center.

Figure 8: Group of three unidentified men, Brazelton Photo Studio (1918). Courtesy of Dr. Earnestine Jenkins.

The following two photographs are both in the Hallie Q. Brown Community Archive (HQBCA) collection, based in St. Paul, Minnesota. Both photos are undated, but one features the imprint stamp bearing the words “Brazelton Studio” – a marking method that Horace Brazelton used for several decades in the middle of his career. There is an inherent importance in posing for a portrait at any point in a person’s life, but especially for milestone events like a wedding day (**see Figure 9**). The adult female in this example is standing at center, one arm relaxed at her side and the other arm is bent, holding a bouquet of flowers. The subject is posed to highlight her hand holding the flowers, with a probable wedding ring shining brightly. She is wearing a floor-length, lacy, white gown, with a matching white tulle headpiece highlighting her updo hairstyle. She is also wearing a shiny metal bracelet on her left wrist and a black necklace with three decorative stones. Her left foot is slightly extended outward, showing a white slipper with a flower on the toe. A wooden end table sits to her left, featuring a floral arrangement matching her bouquet. The backdrop is of a simple interior space, with a long window frame behind the subject and another window frame to her left, bordered by white curtains.

The next Brazelton photograph from the HQBCA collection features two young children, both presumably female (**see Figure 10**). They are wearing matching white dresses and ankle-high black boots. The child on the left is visibly younger, seated, and holding something in their hands. The other child is taller, appearing to be several years older than her counterpart, and has a large bow in her hair. She is standing, with her left arm resting at her side. The younger child is smiling brightly and looking at something

off camera, while the older child looks directly at the lens with a more serious look on her face. The backdrop in this photo matches that of other photos**.** The imprinted stamp bearing “BRAZELTON / CHATTANOOGA” is located in the lower lefthand corner of the photograph.

Figure 9: Wedding portrait of unnamed woman, Brazelton Photo Studio (undated). Courtesy of the Hallie Q. Brown Community Archive.

Figure 10: Photo of two unidentified children, Brazelton Photo Studio (undated). Courtesy of the Hallie Q. Brown Community Archive.

The Brazelton Photo Studio was not limited to the confines of a physical business front. Indeed, several images produced by the studio include landscape-based group portraits. The Pan-Tennessee Dental Association elected to hold their fifteenth annual assembly in Chattanooga in 1948. A group of thirty-two male subjects attended that

meeting and posed for an outdoor photograph to commemorate the event, which Brazelton captured in a black and white style (**see Figure 11**). The men are all dressed in business to business-casual attire, some wearing jackets which others simply sport button-down shirts. The Read House is visible in the background.

Situated just below the composition of the group portrait, Horace Brazelton hand wrote the following note in white ink: “Chattanooga Tenn / ’48 / Fifteenth Annual Session / Pan-Tennessee Dental Association / Photo Brazelton.” Longer notes such as these are not necessarily rare in his body of work but do offer a richer firsthand commentary on his subjects as he perceived them, or how they identified themselves.

Figure 11: “Fifteenth Annual Session Pan-Tennessee Dental Association,” Brazelton Photo Studio (1948). Courtesy of the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Horace Brazelton also created photos outside Chattanooga, including in Knoxville (**Figures 4, 5, 6, and 14**) and his hometown of New Market, Tennessee (**see Figure 12)**. This photograph features a landscape-based group portrait of a church homecoming social event, from one of two African American churches in the town, as reported by the *Daily Press Herald*.[11] The image was mounted on a cabinet card. It includes the handwritten notes, "Brazelton's Studio / Church Home-Coming / New Market, Tenn. / Aug 13-22" but does not include a year. It features a large group of people posed in front of a church building, with a parsonage house located to the left. The group includes women, men, and children of all ages. They are dressed in fine clothing, some wearing hats and others with suspenders or ties.

The church is of modest architectural design, featuring a two-story square tower flowing into a gable-end roof line and clapboard siding. The tower features a diamond-shaped cut out, most likely for a church bell, just below the eaves. A 4/4 pane window sits on the ground level of the tower. Two matching windows sit as a pair to the right, centered under the gable point. The parsonage is a two-story, minimal traditional style building featuring an L-shaped plan. The porch includes an overhang roof, supported by three simple post columns, and the house roof is of gable-end construction. An interior brick chimney sits at the center of the building, just obscured by the leaves of a tree in the composition's foreground.

[11] "The Methodist Central University: The Locating Committee Visit New Market," *Daily Press and Herald*, May 9, 1873.

Figure 12: Landscape portrait of church group in New Market, Tennessee (undated). Courtesy of the Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection.

Figure 13 is part of the same collection as the previous photograph and features a single female subject standing at center and looking directly at the camera. She is wearing a dark dress with a white lace shawl, with one arm bent at the elbow and resting just behind her back. The other arm features a hand with a wedding band, that is also holding a book titled “Thy Kingdom Come” up on top of a small circular table covered in a thick textile. Such a prop indicates her probable literacy, a skill she was undoubtably proud of based on her strong body language and prominent demeanor. The majority of the image background includes a fabric curtain with a repeated pattern, covering what seems to be a photo backdrop imitating an interior space with a column. The photo is nested in a cabinet card support, with a blue ink stamp at the bottom center reading “Brazelton” – most likely also including “Chattanooga, Tenn.” but the text is cut off from full view.

Figure 13: Photo of Young African American Woman, Brazelton Photo Studio (undated). Courtesy of the Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection.

The next image is also part of the same collection as the previous two photographs, created by the Brazelton Photo Studio, most likely in the 1920s or 1920s (**see Figure 14**). It features a single female subject standing just off-center with foliage on either side of her. She is looking off camera while standing at an oblique angle. She is wearing a white dress and holding a rolled piece of paper presumed to be a diploma of

some kind. This choice of prop signifies her status as an educated woman, much like the subject in the previous image. The photo is nested in a cabinet card, with a handwritten note reading, “F.D. Fagg / Knoxville, Tenn.” at the bottom lefthand side of the object. A light backdrop extends above her head, although the image also captures the top of the rolled fabric.

Figure 14: Photo of Young Woman, L.D. Fagg, Brazelton Photo Studio (undated). Courtesy of the Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection.

The next landscape group portrait is part of a larger collection at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Special Collections, along with **Figures 4, 5, and 6**. Dr. C. S. Boyd, a dentist who maintained a successful office in Knoxville at this time, is fifth from the left in this group portrait which also show his place of residence (**see Figure 15**). His name and occupation are handwritten in black ink on a white strip of paper or tape, affixed to the physical photograph. It is a cabinet card photograph, with the composition featuring a group of seventeen people posed on one side of a covered wraparound porch, with six of those subjects standing on the sidewalk in the foreground. The group is situated about center of the photo. Six of the people in the group are seemingly female, with the other ten presenting as male. They are all dressed in finely pressed clothing, either dresses or suits and ties, with at least two of the men dressed in what seems to be military uniforms. Some of the subjects are looking directly at the camera, while others are posed with their heads turned to the left or right. The house is a Victorian style, and although the composition only shows one section of the porch, it is most likely a Stick Victorian, with characteristics of both Queen Anne and Gothic Revival architecture. What is visible is a running trim sitting atop turned spandrils, outlining the curvature of the porch with decorative columns and a simple wooden handrail. The lighting in the photo is sepia in color, though even across the subject's faces even though they are outside. A reverse-imprinted stamp bearing the words "BRAZELTON / CHATTANOOGA" is located in the lower lefthand corner of the photograph.

Figure 15: Group portrait, Brazelton Photo Studio (circa 1900-1910). Courtesy of the Dr. Charles S. Boyd Photograph Collection at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The remaining five photographs in this chapter are all part of the Picnooga (Chattanooga Historical Society) collections. The first features an individual man, seated on a metal wire chair while leaning on an accent table (**see Figure 115**). The dark wood table features a round top, with a weighty design feel and four straight support legs. The subject is looking directly at the camera while holding a candlestick telephone that is sitting on the table, posed with both hands as if he is using it. The subject is also dressed in a dark pinstripe suit with his pant legs cuffed, revealing white socks and shined shoes with tidy laces. His button-up shirt is also white, with a tie neatly fastened under the

collar. The photo backdrop mimics an interior space, featuring a wall with decorative wainscotting and a carved stone staircase leading up to something off screen. The floor below the subject is dark, allowing the background to further stand out. A column is present in the upper lefthand corner of the backdrop, just above the stone stairs. A reverse-imprinted stamp bearing the words “BRAZELTON / CHATTANOOGA” is located in the lower lefthand corner of the photograph.

Figure 16: Unnamed man, Brazelton Photo Studio (undated). Courtesy of Picnooga/Chattanooga Historical Society.

Figure 17: "Lucille Brazelton Jones and Leon Brazelton Jones, Jr.," Brazelton Photo Studio (circa 1939). Courtesy of Picnooga/Chattanooga Historical Society.

The next two photos (**see Figures 11 & 12**) feature Horace Brazelton's adopted daughter and grandson, named Lucille Brazelton Jones and Leon Brazelton Jones, Jr., respectively. The first image is a sepia-colored photo of a young woman, identified as Lucille by her descendants, sitting on top of a rectangular box that is covered in dark fabric. She is not looking at the camera, but rather down at the floor while she holds on to a young male child with one arm. Her other arm is neatly placed across her lap, and she is wearing a black dress sitting at knee length, with puffy sleeves. She holds a slight smile on her face, with straightened dark hair.

The young boy is also not looking directly at the camera but stands next to his mother with one arm holding on to her shoulder and the other hanging at his side. He is wearing a white shorts romper set with a collar and short sleeves, as well as white shoes. His mouth is slightly open, and he is also not looking directly at the camera. The background of the photo is simple, with what seems to be white curtains hanging in front of a dark photo backdrop.

Figure 18: "Leon Brazelton Jones, Jr.," Brazelton Photo Studio (circa 1939). Courtesy of Picnooga/Chattanooga Historical Society.

Figure 18 features the same little boy in the previous image, with his name, Leon Jones, Jr., handwritten in white ink on the lefthand side of the composition. The righthand side includes the name "Brazelton," also handwritten in his signature white

ink. The boy stands alone in this photo, perhaps because Lucille passed away around the same time. Leon Jr. was around eight months old when he lost his mother, and Horace and Hettie promptly took him in as their own. Regardless, he stands looking directly at the camera in a dark wool snow suit, complete with a pointed hood, buttons, and belt. He wears dark shoes, shining in the light of the studio. He appears to be holding something shiny, as well, although it is not apparent to what the object might be. A small rug sits behind him, draped over the back of a bench of sorts.

Figure 19: "South Chattanooga Baptist Pastor's Union," Brazelton Photo Studio (January 1941). Courtesy of Picnooga/Chattanooga Historical Society.

The next photograph is another group-based composition, black and white in color with slight yellowing (**see Figure 13**). It includes nine male subjects, inside what seems to be a residential living room space. There is decorative wallpaper and two windows with curtains behind the group. A handwritten note in white ink sits about center of the photo, asserting the scene is of the "South Chattanooga Baptist Pastors Union / Jan 1941." To the right of this inscription is another handwritten part of the caption reading, "Photo / Brazelton." Interestingly, one of the subjects was obviously not present on the day the photograph was originally created, as the figure on the far lefthand side of the photo was of a separate photo that was cut and pasted into the composition at a later date. This early version of complete photo editing is one of the only such examples in Horace Brazelton's catalog raisonné and is quite a fascinating piece. Including this figure, seven of the men are standing, with two men sitting in chairs around a small table at center. The table includes a woven basket, with florals inside. One of the sitting men is looking at the camera while holding a pen in hand above a piece of paper. Two men standing behind him are resting one hand each on either one of his shoulders. In total six of the subjects are looking directly into the camera while three look off to the side. The men are all dress in dark suits, complete with ties and neatly pressed white dress shirts.

Figure 20: "Roscoe Battle's Birthday Party," Brazelton Photo Studio (November 9, 1946). Courtesy of Picnooga/Chattanooga Historical Society.

The next photograph is another group-based portrait, this time set inside a residential apartment hallway, or perhaps a house (**see Figure 14**). It is a large group of at least twenty-two people, at a joyous occasion sitting around a long row of tables with plates, floral arrangements, and candlesticks all posed on top. The handwritten inscription on this piece is also of white ink, reading, "BRAZELTON PHOTO STUDIO / ROSCOE BATTLE BIRTHDAY PARTY / NOV. 9, 1946." Some of the subjects are holding cigarettes, beer, or wine, while others look on with smiling faces or otherwise curious

looks. The hallway features wallpaper, stretching from floor to ceiling, with dark floorboards below. There are light fixtures on both the ceiling and wall, as well as one window with curtains. One subject in the foreground, sitting to the left, is slightly out of focus, but the rest of the group are clearly presented with even lighting, despite the dimly lit interior.

Figure 21: Photo postcard of unidentified child, Brazelton Photo Studio (circa 1950s). Courtesy of the author's private collection.

The final photograph in this chapter features a young child, presumably female, sitting atop a rectangular box covered in a dark fabric and patterned textile. She is dressed in a black dress, with long white socks and shined black shoes. A white bow is

fixed to her hair, just off-center with a side part. The subject is not looking directly at the camera, but off to the side of the lens with a small smile. The image is damaged, with fabric tape holding two small tears in the object. The reverse of the object shows that it is a photo postcard, with a blue ink stamp reading "BRAZELTON PHOTO STUDIO / CHATTANOOGA (3) TENN." A partial address is visible in the stamp, but the ink is no longer clear (although it begins with a 5, suggesting it is 515 ½ East 9th Street or perhaps 513 1/2 East 9th Street).

Through the course of research associated with the Brazelton Photo Studio, I identified some one hundred different photos attributed to Horace Brazelton. He used a variety of different photographic processes, ranging from gelatin glass plate negatives, photo post cards, cabinet cards, silver gelatin negatives, and matte collodion prints. Each of the photos discussed in this chapter represent some variation of the different styles of portraiture created by his studio, but of course are not representative of his entire body of work. While they differ in size, scope, and theme, each of them do feature expertly captured moments in time that were no doubt important to the subjects in the compositions.

CHAPTER IV: CHATTANOOGA, A CASE STUDY OF SPATIAL SEGREGATION IN A DEVELOPING URBAN CENTER

> Two hundred fifty years of slavery. Ninety years of Jim Crow. Sixty years of separate but equal. Thirty-five years of racist housing policy. Until we reckon with our compounding moral debts, America will never be whole.
>
> – Ta-Nehisi Coates

Horace Brazelton's story serves as an effective case study detailing identity and self-representation, as well as the history of Black-owned businesses during the height of segregation in Jim Crow Chattanooga. This research can be further developed with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) used as a spatial tool to visualize Homeowners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) redlining policies as they affected Brazelton and his community.[1] Chattanooga was a thriving center for economic growth in the years immediately following the Civil War, as many diverse groups came to the "Dynamo of Dixie" for safety and opportunity. This southern city was a hub of economic and social prospects, and African Americans attempted to seize those opportunities. Unfortunately, the many families who came to Chattanooga looking for that potential were also met with systematic racism. Courtney Knapp once again explains, "To whites, who viewed development and economic expansion in zero-sum terms, enlarging the field of opportunity was akin to forfeiting one's own fair share of the wealth. Racial integration was a direct threat to the structures of white property and privilege."[2] So

[1] Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W. W. Norton & Company, 2017).

[2] Knapp, 55.

even if Black communities stayed in their segregated neighborhoods, they were still prone to racial violence for simply existing.

Despite the social struggles due to race, Brazelton's professional photo studio was open from around 1904 to 1953, according to Chattanooga city directories, newspapers, and the United States Census. Therefore, the scope of this project is limited to Brazelton's professional life in Chattanooga during this timeframe. Interestingly, he moved studio locations at least twelve times, but remained on the same street each time (East Ninth Street). Horace Brazelton may represent only one individual story, but that narrative fits among the countless other struggles in this city.

In order to understand why Horace Brazelton decided to move to Chattanooga, and to further appreciate how his success helped define African American identity within his community, contextual information about the city during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is required. Even before the Civil War concluded, many Union soldiers, African American families, and northern businessmen set their eyes on Chattanooga, Tennessee for its useful geographic location. Situated on Moccasin Bend of the Tennessee River and at the convergence of several railroad lines, this mid-sized southern city was primed for economic and industrial potential, especially in the postwar period. The Battles of Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, and Missionary Ridge in 1863 forced surviving Confederates to leave and allowed the U.S. Army to occupy the city under the control of the Federal Quartermaster Corps (**see Figure 1**).[3] Once this

[3] Tim Ezzell, *Chattanooga, 1865-1900: A City Set down in Dixie* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2013); C. Stuart McGehee, "E.O. Tade, Freedmen's Education, and the Failure of

transition occurred, Chattanoogans began rebuilding. As a developing urban center, several thousand free Black migrants, United States Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.) veterans and their families, as well as other formerly enslaved people also found hope for employment opportunities.[4] Congregating in greater numbers for security, these new arrivals quickly formed Camp Contraband, located just north across the river from the main downtown center while the Union Army still occupied the city.[5] This area later became known as Hill City, one of the first Black neighborhoods in Chattanooga.

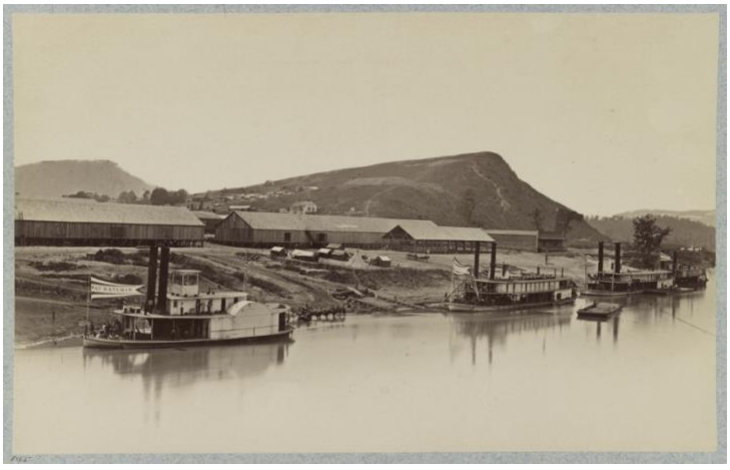

Figure 1: Quartermaster's Landing and Storehouses, Chattanooga, Tennessee (Photographed between 1861 and 1865; Printed between 1880 and 1889). Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Reconstruction in Tennessee," essay, in *Emancipation and the Fight for Freedom: Tennessee African Americans, 1860-1900*, ed. Crystal A. deGregory and Carroll Van West, vol. 6 (Nashville, Tennessee: The Tennessee Historical Society, 2013), 158–71.

[4] Loren Schweninger, "Black-Owned Businesses in the South, 1790–1880," *Business History Review*, Entrepreneurs in Business History, 63, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 22–60; Michelle R. Scott, "Beyond the Contraband Camps: Black Chattanooga from the Civil War to 1880," essay, in *Blues Empress in Black Chattanooga: Bessie Smith and the Emerging Urban South* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 11-12. Some 3,893 people lived in this community by November 1864.

[5] Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, "Chattanooga Under Military Occupation, 1863-1865," *The Journal of Southern History* 17, no. 1 (February 1951): 23–47. Dr. Milo Smith relinquished the mayor's office to Federal control on September 9, 1963. This occupation extended until the summer of 1865, when the Union Army left the city. The Freedman's Bureau subsequently ended most of their work in the city by 1868.

Black communities often achieved a sort of upward economic mobility through both education and developing business districts. For example, the Chattanooga Freedmen's Bureau established the Howard School in 1865 under the leadership of Reverend Ewing O. Tade, the first free public school in the city for either White or Black students, and parents quickly enrolled their children. He was subsequently named city school commissioner by the Unionist local government in May 1867, and even rose to the role of Hamilton County's first Superintendent of Education by January 1868.[6] And by 1877, the public school system in Chattanooga featured some 1,538 White and 883 Black students.[7]

In her work *African Americans of Chattanooga,* author Rita Lorraine Hubbard further states that by 1880, four men on the ten-man police force were Black. By 1881, that number increased to seven of the twelve-man police force.[8] African Americans also actively participated in the political process, even serving on the city's board of aldermen.[9] However, by the 1890s, this improving status declined as Republicans abandoned freedpeople in the South, ushering in the Jim Crow era. Professor Tim Ezzell explores the birth of Jim Crow policies in his work *Chattanooga, 1865-1900: A City Set*

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[6] McGehee, 161-166. However, E.O. Tade faced immense struggles as former Confederates began making their way back into legal and political power. By 1871, the Howard School was forced to relocate from their first campus location (on confiscated Confederate land), and the Chattanooga office of his National Freedman's Savings Bank closed. He subsequently left the state by 1877, never returning to the south before his death in 1919.

[7] Courtney Elizabeth Knapp, "Planners as Supporters and Enablers of Diasporic Placemaking: Lessons from Chattanooga, Tennessee," Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 2014, 119-120.

[8] Rita L. Hubbard, *African Americans of Chattanooga: A History of Unsung Heroes* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2007), 24.

[9] Chattanooga African American Museum, *Black America Series: Chattanooga* (Chattanooga, TN: Chattanooga African American Museum, 2005), 113. Hyram Tyree was one of these aldermen, elected for the 4th Ward and chairman of the Republican Executive Committee in 1898.

down in Dixie, stating "These efforts culminated in 1911, when local Democrats, acting with the consent of reform-minded businessmen and professionals, secured a new city charter that effectively disenfranchised Chattanooga's Black population."[10] This observation is in reference to the state legislature's passage of a new city charter, which created a commission-type of government meant to overthrow old standing corruption. In reality, it changed the legislative representatives away from district-based aldermen to commissioners elected by the entire city, meant to represent the whole of Chattanooga. This change reduced the governing body of city officials from twenty-seven members to four, with greater individual political power influenced by personal bias and indoctrinated racism against the local Black community.[11] Once they lost government representation through this *de facto* disenfranchisement, African Americans continued to succeed in their own communities, but were no longer able to politically or legally combat intensifying Jim Crow pressures.

For a brief time in the 1870s and 1880s then, Chattanooga became a symbol of the kind of social and economic growth that was possible during Reconstruction. In fact, thousands of families came to Hamilton County after the Civil War, primarily settling down in the urban city core. For reference, the African American community in the city grew almost 1,000% between 1860 and 1890, from 1,611 people in 1860 to 17,717

[10] Ezzell, 377.

[11] Nancy J. Potts, "Unfilled Expectations: The Erosion of Black Political Power in Chattanooga, 1865-1911," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (Summer 1990): 112–28.

people a mere three decades later.[12] These newcomers settled into neighborhoods in Hill City and around a major thoroughfare called Ninth Street, running along an east/west axis through the center of the city. Over time, this road became known as the "Big Nine," eventually including hundreds of businesses, including the Brazelton Photo Studio. In fact, this street and others surrounding it were comprised of all manner of amenities and services, including established schools, churches, banks, social organizations, law firms, doctor and dentist offices, insurance companies, factories, and more. Brazelton himself helped in the development of this district, through his own work as an entrepreneur but also through real estate transfers, both private and in his role as Vice President of the city's first Black-owned realty company. According to Hamilton County deed book entries, at least thirty real estate transfers included Horace Brazelton's name as a grantee between 1902 and 1929, alone.[13]

The racially contested landscape of Chattanooga from 1900 to 1960 helps to explain why Horace Brazelton moved his studio at least twelve times. He was a successful professional, but success did not guarantee stability in Jim Crow Chattanooga. Thus, to understand the difficult urban environment for early twentieth century Blacks in Chattanooga, it is important to identify boundaries, limitations, and opportunities. To

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[12] Courtney Elizabeth Knapp, *Constructing the Dynamo of Dixie: Race, Urban Planning, and Cosmopolitanism in Chattanooga, Tennessee* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 42-43.

[13] *General Index to Real Estate Conveyances: Grantees Bo-Bz, Hamilton County, Tenn. to July 25, 1928*, *Family Search* (Salt Lake City, UT: The Genealogical Society of Utah, n.d.), https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSTF-MS21-3?i=2&cat=689253; "Real Estate Transfers: R. H. Hannum and Wife to Horace Brazelton, land in First district, $500," *The Chattanooga News*, June 26, 1907; "Eleventh Street Real Estate Sold: Other Substantial Transactions Placed on Record - Market More Active," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, November 2, 1929.

start, African Americans faced significant discrimination and limited access to financial capital, making it difficult to start or grow successful ventures.[14] In fact, accurate data on the number of Black-owned businesses in the city during the Jim Crow era is difficult to ascertain, as many were not recorded in official statistics due to discrimination and segregation.[15] However, one way business owners could efficiently advertise their ventures at this time was to pay for a listing in the City Directory, an annual publication including essential information like addresses, phone numbers, and business owner names. The following chapter thus explores the development of a thriving Black business district in Chattanooga, thereby giving way to a growing middle class in the city. Such a task is endeavored in part by examining the role of successful entrepreneurs like Horace M. Brazelton, as well as through a discussion on Black-owned business listings in the *Chattanooga City Directories*. By tracing the progression of active businesses during Jim Crow, one may be able to understand the roles in which individual entrepreneurs supported their communities, and to discover more about Horace Brazelton and his professional world.

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[14] J. H. Harmon, Jr., "The Negro as a Local Business Man," *The Journal of Negro History* 14, no. 2 (April 1929): 116–55; Harding B. Young, "Negro Participation in American Business," *The Journal of Negro Education* 32, no. 4 (Autumn 1963): 390–401.

[15] There is no publicly accessible database for information about Black-owned businesses in Chattanooga. This study attempts to fill that void through the *Chattanooga City Directory* project discussed in this chapter.

Research Considerations

The following chapter explores approximately sixty years of *Chattanooga City Directory* data, specific to Black-owned business listings during Jim Crow (Microsoft Excel database).[16] Therefore, the temporal scope of the entire *Chattanooga City Directory* transcription project extends from 1899-1960 but features this data here in a somewhat limited way. In the interest of time and feasibility, I chose to highlight the city directory data in five-year intervals for the narrative portion of this dissertation (including 1899 and 1902 since data for 1900 is unavailable). These intervals do represent a general trend of the business listing data, though. The project also only includes Black-owned business listings, so the proportion of those listings to the number of White-owned businesses active at the same time is currently unknown. Race is evident in census records as it was a collected data point, and in city directories as the moniker "(c)" beside African American names. The entries in the following dataset also do not imply that the listed people owned the building itself, but rather the business operating within. For example, rental units were prevalent, as were shared offices. These kinds of business decisions cut costs over time, especially for certain professional types like dentists, doctors, insurance companies, and lawyers. Additionally, the business types of "Apartments" or "Apartment Buildings" (name dependent upon year) are mentioned in the project since they were included in the Business Directory,

[16] The *Chattanooga City Directory* denoted a person's race by the inclusion of a "(c)" notation beside each name or business listing, representing the word "colored." This project includes a transcription of each of those listings, from 1899 to 1960.

although it is not apparent whether the buildings were owned by Black or White landlords.

Aside from producing a database that will be freely accessible for public research, I also organized the data as according to requirements of Geographic Information System (GIS) standards, specific for Esri ArcMap software. My future intent is to create an interactive map, based on interdisciplinary methods like using humanities or historical primary sources in the field of GIS. The database is structured in such a way that it will be mapped according to historic addresses geo-referenced and overlayed on a modern map in order to ascertain the actual spatial boundaries of the Black business district in Chattanooga. At present, the "Big Nine" name for the area mostly represents East and West Ninth Street, although the district spanned a much larger geographic footprint than that alone. The collected *City Directory* data will also serve as corresponding attribute table information for each geographic point, allowing for even more expansive analysis.

Certain questions also guided me through the *Chattanooga City Directory* transcription project – not all of which can be answered at this time. What all occupational opportunities existed for Black communities during this time? Which businesses were they completely excluded from offering? By looking at city directory data, I found 23 unique African American-owned business types in 1899 and a high of 72 unique types in 1940, before that number contracted to 59 unique types by 1955 (**see Table 1**). Of course, continual business and opportunity growth is logical and not surprising, but this data can perhaps be used to also postulate why some businesses

were open to Chattanooga's Black communities and why others were not. The dataset also raises other specific questions, like why were there Black-owned meat markets included in the 1902 directory, but not in 1925 (**see Appendix B** for similar notes)? Was this a true representation of that business type in the city, or were certain ones excluded? Or perhaps they simply chose to not advertise in the directory?

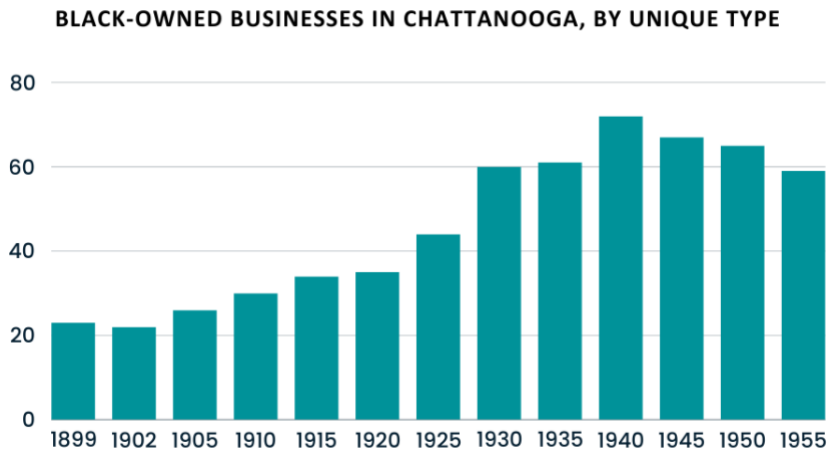

Table 3: Number of Unique Black-Owned Business Types in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Data provided by the author.

In order to properly visualize the life and work of Horace Brazelton (as is the case study in this dissertation), my first avenue of spatial research will then be to demonstrate where he lived and worked in the shifting racial boundaries of Chattanooga. Later research, outside of this dissertation, may focus on map types for the entirety of the Black business district, including every individual year from 1899-1960. The current project data spans approximately sixty-two (62) years' worth of Chattanooga City Directories, analyzed in this chapter in roughly five-year-intervals.

Using information based primarily on transcriptions from city directories and census records, this dissertation demonstrates that Brazelton was a successful Black businessman in a growing southern city, despite Jim Crow segregation.

Black Business Districts

Chattanooga has long occupied an important role in the economic vitality of the southern region as an industrial hub, and it provides an especially interesting case study. White leaders in the city took control politically and economically in the first decade of the new century, reshaping the city. That type of coup d'état happened elsewhere, as well, and Horace Brazelton opened his photography studio in that same decade. Moreover, a mob murdered the final known lynching victim from the Walnut Street Bridge in Chattanooga on March 19, 1906, just two years after Brazelton started his business.[17] The victim, a man named Ed Johnson, was mob-lynched after the United States Supreme Court awarded the first stay of execution granted to an African American man to him. A White woman falsely accused Johnson of rape, although his successful defense was won by Chattanooga-based attorneys Noah Parden and Styles Hutchens, both African American themselves. Despite this momentous legal victory, Johnson was brutally killed by a local mob. The County Court later found Hamilton County Sheriff Joseph Shipp and five co-defendants guilty of Contempt of Court for not enforcing the stay of execution, but only sentenced them to brief prison terms of ninety

[17] Donivan Brown et al., eds., The Ed Johnson Project, 2021, https://www.edjohnsonproject.com.

days, although they each received credit for good behavior. However, the *US v Shipp* case did set a landmark precedent for federal oversight regarding local civil rights issues, as the United States Supreme Court ruled against a racially motivated killing in the name of mob justice.[18]

In *Constructing the Dynamo of Dixie,* author Courtney Elizabeth Knapp expertly reveals how Chattanooga renegotiated its national image after the Civil War and its lynching history through *urban cosmopolitanism*, or the planned placemaking as cities improved their social persona by seemingly enhancing quality of life for residents and tourists.[19] However, this style of urban planning can also be used to attempt concealment of racism and segregation, which is particularly interesting in the case of Chattanooga. For example, Chattanooga leaders published travel guides and other promotional material to attract both northern investment and White European immigrants as early as the turn of the twentieth century.[20] Actions like these increased competition for the jobs available to many African Americans, and urban planning policies, time and time again, ignored marginalized communities or actively made their situations worse, which is particularly interesting in the case of Chattanooga.[21]

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[18] Mark Curriden and Leroy Phillips, *Contempt of Court: The Turn-of-the-Century Lynching That Launched a Hundred Years of Federalism* (New York, NY: Faber and Faber, Inc., 1999), p. 329-336.

[19] Knapp, 1-11.

[20] Michelle R. Scott, "'The Freest Town on the Map' Black Migration to New South Chattanooga," in *Blues Empress in Black Chattanooga: Bessie Smith and the Emerging Urban South* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 41.

[21] Ken Chilton, "The Unfinished Agenda: Segregation & Exclusion in Chattanooga, TN and The Road Towards Inclusion" (NAACP, 2015), 1-23; James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York, NY: The New Press, 2005), 25.

However, African American entrepreneurs opened all sorts of businesses after the Civil War, from grocery stores and billiard halls to barbershops and photography studios. By doing so, they enhanced their self-sufficient communities and needed little to no intervention from outside White elites. Continued economic success allowed more Black professionals to pursue education and make a living while supporting their communities, feeding upward momentum in spite of the Jim Crow period. Then, events like World War II spread ideological tensions as Black professionals struggled to find a place for themselves, giving "way to a determination to end Jim Crow."[22] Additionally, African American social organizations provided other outlets for the working and professional classes, including the Young Women's Christian Association and the National Negro Business League (NNBL), of which Hettie and Horace Brazelton were both active. All told, the opportunities available to African Americans allowed for insular Black business districts, full of professional and working classes and a healthy social community. Omnipresent exclusions designed by Jim Crow, however, did more than slow economic and community development. Segregation also planted ideological seeds for future mobilization against the system during the Civil Rights Movement. By the 1940s, a contraction in Black-owned business listings can be observed in Chattanooga,

[22] Hine, 1293. In essence, segregationist policies heralded the trope of "separate but equal" while not actually providing equal treatment or opportunities, even after Black men volunteered to fight in national conflicts. As Black communities continued developing their professional class through education, social work, and training, they also developed new ideals of freedom which eventually founded the Civil Rights Movement.

aside from a small anomalous spike in 1950, based on *City Directory* listings (**see Table 2**).

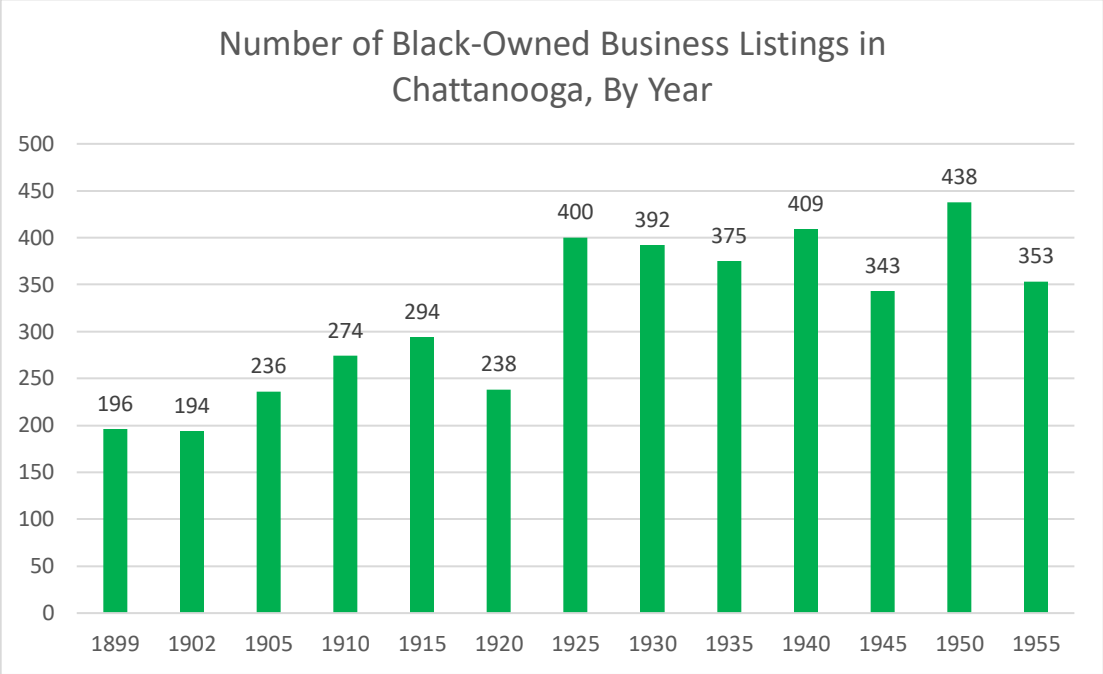

Table 2: Number of Black-Owned Business Listings in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Data provided by the author.

Segregationist policies and laws did not always succeed in limiting or depressing African American communities, though. Historian John N. Ingham explores some surprising effects of racial segregation patterns in the south, as they related to the *enrichment* of thriving Black business districts, as they sometimes "had the unintended result of stimulating African American businesses, whose establishment helped to

solidify the newly formed black neighborhoods."[23] For example, once White patrons stopped frequenting Black service-oriented businesses like barbers, shoe shiners, and tailors (as violent Jim Crow stresses intensified), those businesses often failed or succeeded depending on the size of the Black neighborhoods nearby. If a southern city had more concentrated Black communities, those patrons could feasibly constitute the base for most businesses in their segregated neighborhoods. Horace Brazelton himself spoke on this point in his 1917 speech for the NNBL, detailing "I have been told that there is no business in the city of Chattanooga operated by a Negro, that receives a large part of the entire patronage as the Brazelton studio."[24] In short, Black business owners may have been forced to rely on mostly fellow marginalized clientele, but this was not necessarily a weakness.

Thriving Black business districts across the south were comparable in that way and also similarly included anchor firms (like insurance companies or banks, for example), professionals (lawyers, doctors, etc.), and social organizations (religious institutions, fraternal organizations, etc.). Even more interesting, though, is Ingham's observations on business types. For example, he notes that around the turn of the century, "Many blacks were forced out of traditional businesses catering to whites, such as barbering, and relocated in large African American neighborhoods."[25] Once those

[23] John N. Ingham, "Building Businesses, Creating Communities: Residential Segregation and the Growth of African American Business in Southern Cities, 1880–1915," *Business History Review* 77, no. 4 (2003), 641.

[24] Brazelton, "Photography as a Business."

[25] Ingham, 656.

traditional ties to service-centered business types severed, Black entrepreneurs enjoyed a certain degree of freedom to open any number of different kinds of ventures, albeit not without racial tension.

The "Big Nine" in Chattanooga, Tennessee

In spite of its smaller size (when compared to nearby metropolitan areas like Nashville or Atlanta), Chattanooga has occupied an important role in the economic vitality of the American South since before the Civil War. As previously discussed in Chapter 1, W.E.B. Du Bois curated the "American Negro Exhibit" for the Exposition Universal (Paris Exposition) of 1900, mostly focused on the lived experiences of Black communities in Georgia.[26] However, he also visited Chattanooga in preparation for the event, perhaps because it was considered to be the "Gateway of the South" and it is located so close to the Georgia border. During this trip, he collected photos of Black-owned homes on the Westside of the city, as well as a few prominent businesses. Two of which included G.W. Turner's Groceries at 29 West Montgomery Avenue and G.W. Franklin's Undertaker Parlor at 728 Chestnut (**see Figures 2 & 3**).[27]

[26] Whitney Battle-Baptiste and Britt Rusert, eds., *W.E.B Du Bois's Data Portraits: Visualizing Black America* (Amherst, MA: The W.E.B. Du Bois Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2018).

[27] Addresses listed in the 1899 *Chattanooga City Directory*; data collected by the author.

Figure 2: G.W. Turner's Groceries at 29 West Montgomery Avenue (1900). Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

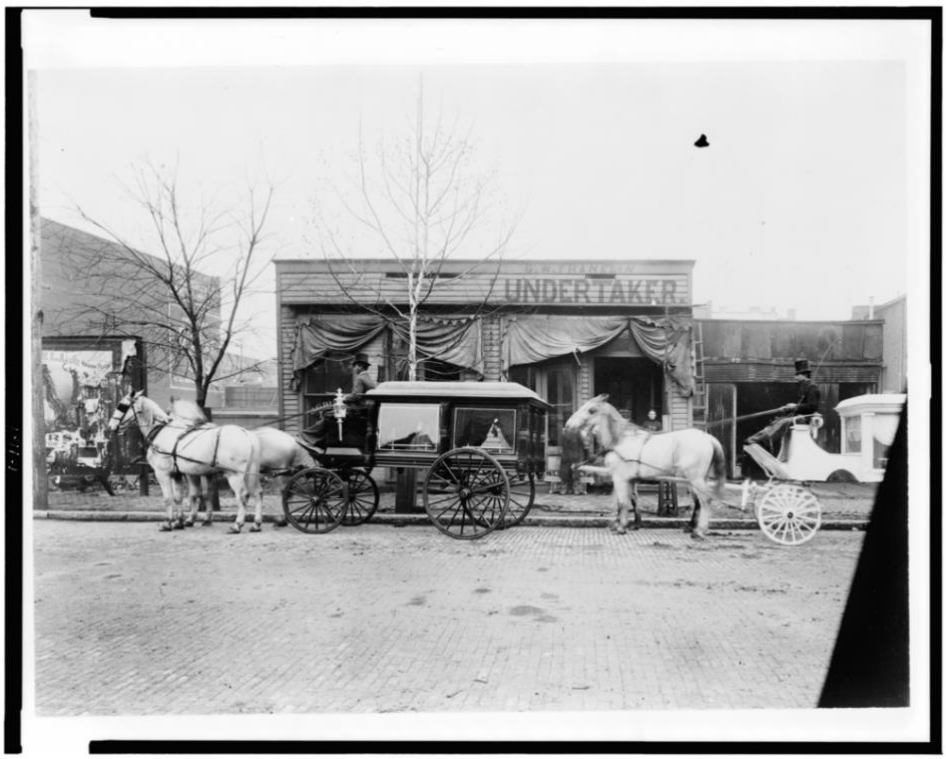

Figure 3: G.W. Franklin's Undertaker Parlor at 728 Chestnut (1900). Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

These examples highlight the development of diverse Black-owned businesses at the turn of the twentieth century, mere decades after emancipation. G.W. Franklin in particular went on to serve as president for the local chapter of the National Negro Business League and stayed in the undertaking field until his own passing in 1928. Additionally, W.E.B. Du Bois recognized the importance of photography in visualizing the American Black experience. In so doing, he also captured several photos of Black-owned homes in Chattanooga, pointing to the progress of the community in buying or building such fine residential units across the city during the Paris Exposition (**see Figures 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8**).

Figure 4: Home of C.H. Trusty, Chattanooga, Tennessee (1900). Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Figure 5: Home of A. Malden, Chattanooga, Tennessee (1900). Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Figure 6: Home of Mr. Causler, Chattanooga, Tennessee (1900). Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Figure 7: Home of N.E. Singleton, Chattanooga, Tennessee (1900). Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Figure 8: Home of W.E. Munn, Chattanooga, Tennessee (1900). Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Nadir of Race Relations

Jim Crow neighborhoods were segregated through *de facto* and *de jure* policies, and even remain largely segregated today through political policies such as gerrymandering.[28] Indeed, scholars like Ken Chilton and Richard Rothstein examine the effects of *redlining* on African American communities, in which the Homeowners Loan Corporation (HOLC) created maps in the 1930s that graded neighborhoods on levels of perceived risk in mortgage investments.[29] The HOLC program was a New Deal innovation, designed to prevent homeowners from defaulting on their mortgages. However, because the program utilized low interest rates, the HOLC needed a way to assess the ability of borrowers to regularly make their payments. In assessing risk, the HOLC assessed conditions of "houses in the neighborhood to see whether the property would likely maintain its value… [real estate] agents were required by their national ethics code to maintain segregation, [so] it's not surprising that in gauging risk HOLC considered the racial composition of neighborhoods."[30] Additionally, a graded system was used on the HOLC maps themselves, "The areas highlighted in red were considered the most risky areas of investment. Redlining deprived these communities of reinvestment, creating concentrated enclaves of poverty and isolation."[31]

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[28] Janice Gassam Asare, "3 Ways Intergenerational Trauma Still Impacts the Black Community Today," *Forbes*, October 12, 2022, https://www.forbes.com/sites/janicegassam/2022/02/14/3-ways-intergenerational-trauma-still-impacts-the-black-community-today/?sh=78ad4b243cf6.

[29] Chilton, 1-3; Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W. W. Norton & Company, 2017).

[30] Rothstein, 64.

[31] Chilton, 1.

Unsurprisingly, the map surveyors often graded African American communities at lower levels, thereby excluding many Black families from homeownership opportunities. This included Chattanooga, as most Black neighborhoods in the city were graded as a "C" or "D" – meaning banks would not extend home loans to African Americans, or the loans were overtly predatory in their terms. However, Chattanooga's Black communities did their best to take care of one another, taking the initiative to open realty and insurance companies as a contained avenue for better professional opportunities.[32] Once again, Horace Brazelton can be observed as the Vice President of the first Black-owned realty company in the city in 1909, called the Pioneer Realty Company. The mission of this venture was to buy and sell residential plots to fellow community members, who would otherwise be excluded from the homebuying process. By this time, Black communities in Chattanooga knew they had to take care of themselves. The Big Nine district eventually included all manner of goods and services, acting as a self-contained community with unique material culture. With little to no competition from White entrepreneurs and patrons, many southern Black enterprises were free to serve their neighborhoods.[33] In places like Chattanooga, these businesses, service organizations, and neighborhoods coalesced into an entire business districts that effectively contributed to social and cultural capital. In tracing that shift, the

[32] C. G. Woodson, "Insurance Business among Negroes," *The Journal of Negro History* 14, no. 2 (April 1929): 202–26. With the rise is associated professional business ventures, African Americans also began establishing fraternal organizations, which in turn strengthened businesses like insurance companies.

[33] Ingham, 639-642.

Chattanooga City Directory project confirms the changing developments of available business types, as well as the need for certain resources like *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, a publication detailing safe places for Black travelers to eat or rest.[34]

An excerpt from the project *Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America* includes Chattanooga Homeowners Loan Corporation (HOLC) maps, describes the area where Horace Brazelton lived and operated his business in a patronizing tone (**see Figures 9 and 10**).[35] The verbal description of the "D5" boundary is permeated with racial discrimination, despite the fact that the White press lauded the same housing just twenty-seven years prior. For instance, on October 21, 1912, *The Chattanooga News* ran a multipage spread titled "Chattanooga's Colored Population is Making Progress." Horace Brazelton is specifically mentioned for his role as Vice President in the founding of the Pioneer Realty Company,

> The Pioneer Realty company, with a capital of $10,000, is the outcome of a longfelt need for an incorporated business organization among the colored people of Chattanooga and vicinity. It has the distinction of being the first incorporated real estate company organized by colored men in this city. The chief purpose of the Pioneer is to invest in real estate and to aid and encourage our people to buy homes. The company is inspired by the principle that ownership of land gibes stability to a people and begets the respect of the other race. The houses built by the company are models of neatness and arrangement, modern in every respect and designed to build up and maintain the health of their inmates. What

[34] Digital versions are available through the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library. Published from roughly 1947 to 1960, automotive services, hotels, liquor stores, restaurants, and tourist homes in Chattanooga were frequently listed as it was a transportation hub in the south.

[35] Robert K. Nelson, LaDale Winling, Richard Marciano, Nathan Connolly, et al., "Mapping Inequality," *American Panorama*, ed. Robert K. Nelson and Edward L. Ayers, accessed December 9, 2020, https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=12/35.058/-85.372&city=chattanooga-tn&area=D5&adimage=2/56.365/-155.391

> nobler purpose could animate a corporation in this age of soulless corporations?[36]

Brazelton was also mentioned further on in this same editorial for his successful photography business. But then the area where he lived and worked was graded as a "D" – the lowest HOLC grade.

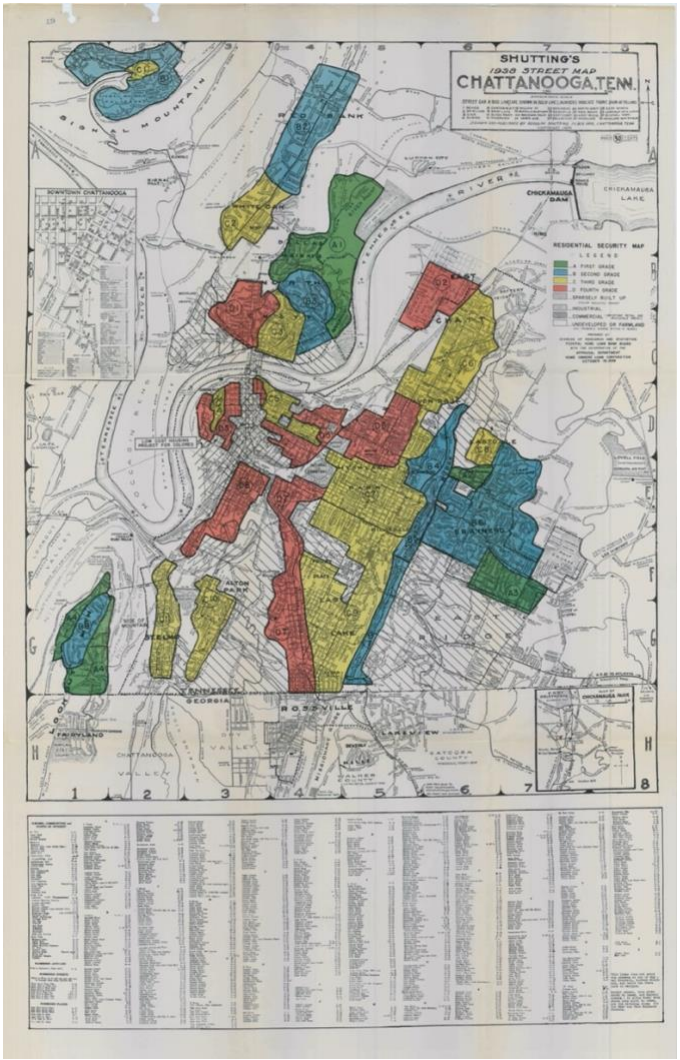
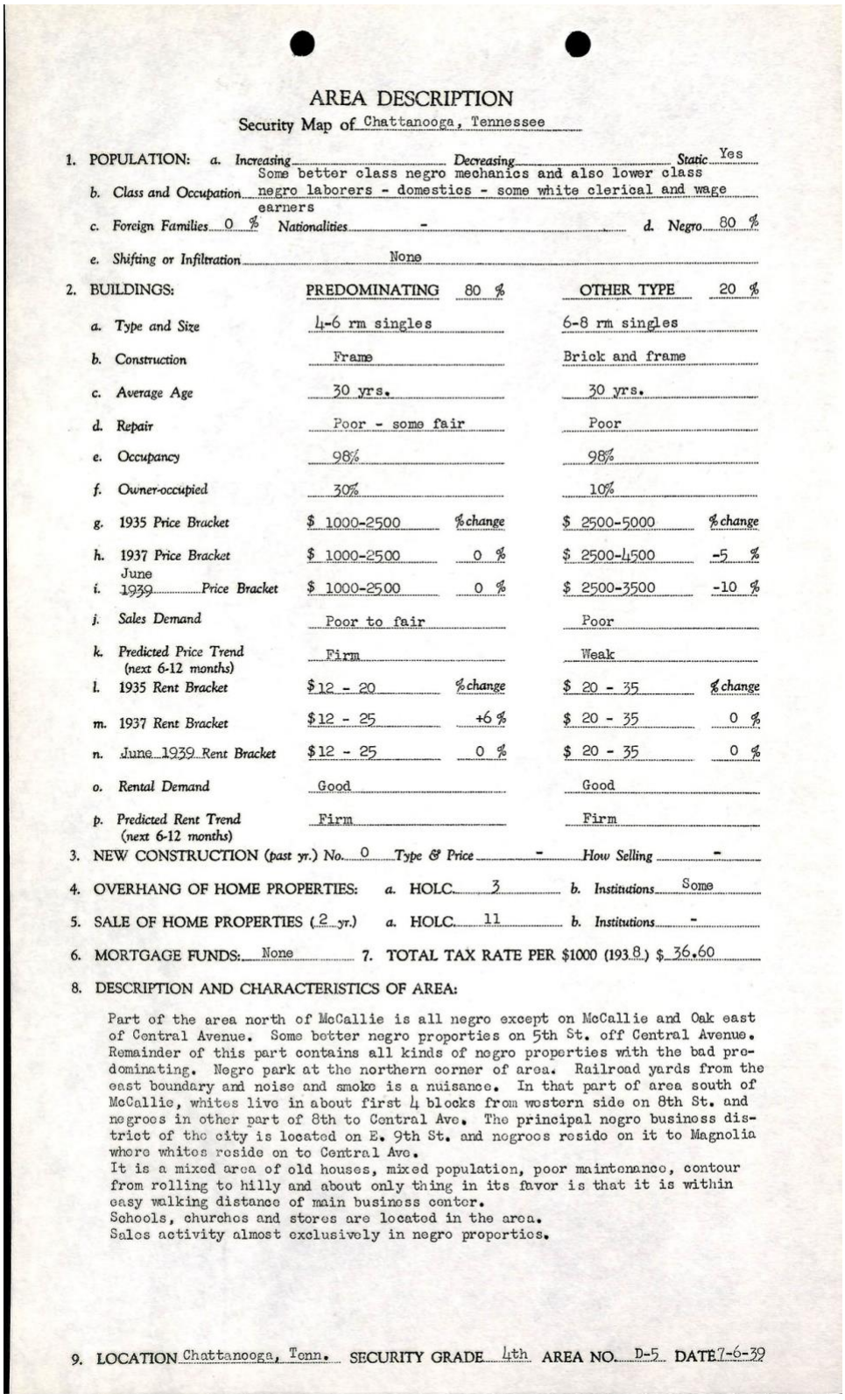


Figure 9: Overview of Chattanooga HOLC Map. Courtesy of "Mapping Inequality" project.

[36] A. J. Henry, "Chattanooga's Colored Population Is Making Progress," *The Chattanooga News*, October 21, 1912).



AREA DESCRIPTION

Security Map of Chattanooga, Tennessee

1. POPULATION: a. Increasing ____ Decreasing ____ Static Yes
   b. Class and Occupation Some better class negro mechanics and also lower class negro laborers - domestics - some white clerical and wage earners
   c. Foreign Families 0 % Nationalities - d. Negro 80 %
   e. Shifting or Infiltration None

2. BUILDINGS:	PREDOMINATING 80 %		OTHER TYPE 20 %	
a. Type and Size	4-6 rm singles		6-8 rm singles	
b. Construction	Frame		Brick and frame	
c. Average Age	30 yrs.		30 yrs.	
d. Repair	Poor - some fair		Poor	
e. Occupancy	98%		98%	
f. Owner-occupied	30%		10%	
g. 1935 Price Bracket	$ 1000-2500	% change	$ 2500-5000	% change
h. 1937 Price Bracket	$ 1000-2500	0 %	$ 2500-4500	-5 %
i. June 1939 Price Bracket	$ 1000-2500	0 %	$ 2500-3500	-10 %
j. Sales Demand	Poor to fair		Poor	
k. Predicted Price Trend (next 6-12 months)	Firm		Weak	
l. 1935 Rent Bracket	$12 - 20	% change	$ 20 - 35	% change
m. 1937 Rent Bracket	$12 - 25	+6 %	$ 20 - 35	0 %
n. June 1939 Rent Bracket	$12 - 25	0 %	$ 20 - 35	0 %
o. Rental Demand	Good		Good	
p. Predicted Rent Trend (next 6-12 months)	Firm		Firm	

3. NEW CONSTRUCTION (past yr.) No. 0 Type & Price - How Selling -
4. OVERHANG OF HOME PROPERTIES: a. HOLC 3 b. Institutions Some
5. SALE OF HOME PROPERTIES (2 yr.) a. HOLC 11 b. Institutions -
6. MORTGAGE FUNDS: None 7. TOTAL TAX RATE PER $1000 (193 8) $ 36.60
8. DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF AREA:

Part of the area north of McCallie is all negro except on McCallie and Oak east of Central Avenue. Some better negro properties on 5th St. off Central Avenue. Remainder of this part contains all kinds of negro properties with the bad predominating. Negro park at the northern corner of area. Railroad yards from the east boundary and noise and smoke is a nuisance. In that part of area south of McCallie, whites live in about first 4 blocks from western side on 8th St. and negroes in other part of 8th to Central Ave. The principal negro business district of the city is located on E. 9th St. and negroes reside on it to Magnolia where whites reside on to Central Ave.
It is a mixed area of old houses, mixed population, poor maintenance, contour from rolling to hilly and about only thing in its favor is that it is within easy walking distance of main business center.
Schools, churches and stores are located in the area.
Sales activity almost exclusively in negro properties.

9. LOCATION Chattanooga, Tenn. SECURITY GRADE 4th AREA NO. D-5 DATE 7-6-39

Figure 10: Detail of "D5" Area Description. Courtesy of "Mapping Inequality" project.

Concluding Thoughts

African American professional life in Chattanooga flourished in many ways during the first half of the twentieth century, despite Jim Crow policies from local, state, and federal governments, and the daily occurrences of racism and segregation. Working classes, artisans, professionals, and creatives all had a home on the Big Nine alongside schools, churches, music venues, restaurants, barber shops, and more. Unfortunately, the Westside Urban Renewal Program (also known as the Golden Gateway project) represents another recurring civic development across the country in the mid-twentieth century (discussed further in Chapter 5). As Courtney Knapp describes, it was "a housing authority-managed initiative that bulldozed 435 acres of working-class black homes and businesses on the city's Westside."[37] The Westside Urban Renewal Project did not completely eradicate Chattanooga's black communities or its inherent culture, but it did destroy many homes, churches, schools, and businesses with longstanding consequences up to the present. As such, Horace Brazelton's lifetime is roughly bookended by Reconstruction at his birth, and federally sanctioned gentrification at his death. His career is Chattanooga is further bounded by the mob lynching of Ed Johnson in 1906, and the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954. Brazelton was s

[37] Knapp, 3; 144-146.

CHAPTER V: END OF AN ERA: URBAN RENEWAL COMES TO CHATTANOOGA

> The expansion of suburbia and migration from the South have worsened big-city segregation. The suburbs are white nooses around the black necks of the cities. Housing deteriorates in central cities; urban renewal has been Negro removal and has benefited big merchants and real estate interests; and suburbs expand with little regard for what happens to the rest of America.
>
> – Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 1956, the United States Congress passed the Federal Aid Highway Act in order to create the Interstate Highway System. Consequently, many African American neighborhoods across the United States were disproportionately affected in a negative way. In Chattanooga, the Golden Gateway Project, otherwise known as the Westside Urban Renewal Project, ultimately culminated with the construction of Highway 27. The project meant to create efficient access to surrounding communities, and to replace "substandard housing" with all new amenities.[1] But in reality, the undertaking bisected the city, separating the Westside from the urban center (and the core of the Black business district). Once self-sufficient and flourishing neighborhoods on the Westside were suddenly slated for demolition to make room for a "modern" highway. Historian Courtney Knapp explores the harmful impacts of the project, by examining United States Census Bureau information, detailing a sharp decrease in the Black population in Chattanooga in the decades following the completion of the project. Specifically, the number of African Americans living in the urban core of the city stood around 39,460 in

[1] "Citizens Support Plans for West Side: Urban Renewal, Brightest Hope for Chattanooga, Has Strong Influence on All Phases of City Problems," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, September 29, 1957.

1950 before dropping to 25,982 residents in 2010.[2] The reasons for this steady decline vary but begin with the Golden Gateway, reshaping the entire Westside and ultimately linking East Ninth Street to Riverfront Parkway (**see Figure 1**).[3]

Figure 1: Informal ceremony opening 9th Street link to Riverfront Parkway (1963). Photo courtesy of the Paul A. Hiener collection, Chattanooga Public Library.

[2] Courtney Elizabeth Knapp, *Constructing the Dynamo of Dixie: Race, Urban Planning, and Cosmopolitanism in Chattanooga, Tennessee* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 9

[3] For example, African American residents are often priced out of historically Black neighborhoods after conveniences bring new migrants to cities, and the U.S. Civil Rights Movement also gave way to hundreds of families moving out of the city, into the surrounding suburbs. Chattanooga was also an industrial hotspot in the latter half of the twentieth century, with increased air pollution which also contributed to many families leaving their former homes.

To justify these atrocities, city officials declared these Westside communities as "slums and blight," calling for the destruction of hundreds of beautiful buildings and community resources like schools and churches, as well as the removal of families, homes, and local businesses.[4] At a time when integration seemed imminent, hundreds of African American homes, businesses, schools, and churches were razed in the name of economic and community development. This was in direct opposition to protests organized by the city's Black neighborhoods on the Westside.[5] In fact, over a 435-acre area, an estimated 1,221 homes were demolished, and at least 1,484 families were displaced.[6] Some 67% of which were families of color, as the *Chattanooga Daily Times* reported in 1957.[7] Spearheaded by the Chattanooga City Commission and Mayor Olgiatti, it was the fourth-largest project in terms of scale nationwide and was the twelfth largest in terms of total development costs at the time.[8]

Chattanooga was not the only city which followed a similar pattern. Hundreds of African American communities flourished across the country leading up to urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s. The psychological, economic, and social effects of those programs were devastating to the people living and working in affected areas. The destruction of homes, churches, schools, and businesses had longstanding

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[4] Mark Kennedy, "Remember When, Chattanooga? Westside Businesses Were Sacrificed for Urban Renewal: Chattanooga Times Free Press," Times Free Press, June 25, 2021, https://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2021/jun/25/remember-when-westside/.

[5] "Home Sites Few, Negroes Protest," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, November 4, 1958.

[6] "West Side Setup Is Given Praise: Urban Renewal Director Tells Building Code Body Plan One of Best," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, November 3, 1959.

[7] "Plans for West Side Get Backing; Approval by Commission Is Seen," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, June 21, 1957.

[8] Knapp, 61-62 and 88-89.

consequences that continue to be felt to this day.[9] Even Horace and Hettie Brazelton's beloved Leonard Street Presbyterian Church, of which they had been members for almost fifty years, was demolished in the project.[10]

Few records about the church survive at the Presbyterian Historical Society, located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Those that are extant detail some of Horace and Hettie's involvement, including his role as Bishop and her superior position as Elder.[11] The surviving congregation was never able to rebuild in a new location. Despite this, the Westside Urban Renewal Project did not completely eradicate Chattanooga's Black communities or its inherent culture.

Community Commemoration

Although memory and legacy can inspire thoughts of eternal posterity, these conceptions are never assured. Even the most successful or thriving communities can end up silenced and forgotten, if not for many people striving to preserve and disseminate their stories. However, some individuals are remembered, not necessarily because their contributions outweighed those of others, but simply due to happenstance. For example, Addison Scurlock is one example of a well-known Black photographer, who has been remembered through scholarship and public history.[12] He

[9] Deborah N. Archer, "'White Men's Roads Through Black Men's Homes': Advancing Racial Equity Through Highway Reconstruction," *Vanderbilt Law Review* 73, no. 5 (October 2020): 1259–1330.

[10] "Newton Center Tea Will Benefit Church," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 26, 1960.

[11] Leonard Street Presbyterian Church Session Minutes, Presbyterian Historical Society Records.

[12] Jeffrey John Fearing, "African-American Image, History, and Identity, in Twentieth-Century Washington, D.C., as Chronicled through the Art and Social Realism Photography of Addison N. Scurlock and the Scurlock Studios, 1904-1994" (Ph.D. dissertation, Howard University, 2005); W. Brian Piper, "'To

founded his photography studio in 1904, the same year that Horace Brazelton opened his own studio in Chattanooga, and yet the latter has not experienced the same recognition until now.

Perhaps the Brazelton Photo Studio would have carried a similar legacy if tragedy had not struck the family. Brazelton's life and story were largely forgotten, not for lack of his success or respect thereof, but through a series of personal occurrences and systematic policies which shaped life for all African Americans in Chattanooga. While Lucille's young son survived her death and Horace and Hettie raised him as their own, Leon Brazelton Jones, Jr. was only eighteen years old when his grandfather passed away.[13] His grandmother passed the next year, leaving Leon to strike out on his own in his father's adopted city of New York before he enlisted in the United States Military.[14] When Hettie died, no one insured that her shared tombstone with Horace would be inscribed with her death date. The fate of any photographic supplies or negatives from the Brazelton Photo Studio is also currently unknown.

Develop Our Business': Addison Scurlock, Photography, and the National Negro Business League, 1900–1920," *The Journal of African American History* 101, no. 4 (September 1, 2016): 436–68; "Visions of the Promised Land: The Scurlock Studio Kept the Eyes of Black Washingtonians on the Prize," *American History* 44, no. 3 (August 2009): 42–49.

[13] Ancestry.com, Horace M. Brazelton Death Certificate, *Tennessee Death Records, 1908-1958* (database online: Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011), Microfilm. Tennessee Death Records, 1908-1965. Tennessee State Library and Archives; Nashville, Tennessee.

[14] Ancestry.com, Hettie M. Brazelton Death Certificate, *Tennessee Death Records, 1908-1958* (database online: Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011), Microfilm. Tennessee Death Records, 1908-1965. Tennessee State Library and Archives; Nashville, Tennessee; Conversation with Darryle Brown in September 2023, son of Leon Jones, Jr.

Urban renewal projects and modern gentrification have since decimated the historic Black neighborhoods in Chattanooga.[15] For example, "In the communities in and around the downtown core, the number of whites increased from 2,402 in 1990 to 4,880 in 2013 (103 percent). Simultaneously, the number of African Americans in these neighborhoods decreased from 3,720 to 2,358 (-36 percent)."[16] It is therefore important to understand previous manifestations of racial prejudice and discrimination, in order to recognize the implications that it had on historic and modern Black communities. If we are to properly remember their success and struggles, then we must uncover more of their stories. Honoring those who came before us is a deep-seeded goal of many historians, genealogists, or anyone with a respect of past events and people. But who and what gets to be remembered? How can we ensure those stories are told, and more importantly, how they are treated and commemorated by the public?

Memorialization of the Brazelton family legacy was complicated by the Westside Urban Renewal Project. Still, Brazelton's Studio was always located on Chattanooga's East Ninth Street, or on the "Big Nine," though most of the buildings are no longer standing or are in disrepair (**see Figures 2, 3, and 4**). Even the site of his home on Palmetto Street is currently vacant, although it is not clear when the Brazelton home was demolished (**see Figure 5**).

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[15] Carey O'Neil, "MLK: Once, the Boulevard Bustled. Today the Thrill Is Gone. But Dreams of Revival Live On.," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, June 10, 2012.

[16] Ken Chilton, rep., *The Unfinished Agenda: Segregation & Exclusion in Chattanooga, TN and The Road Towards Inclusion* (Chattanooga, TN: NAACP, 2015), 3.

Figure 2: Building standing at 517 MLK Boulevard (formally East 9th Street). Brazelton's Photo Studio once stood to the left of this construction, not extant. Photo provided by the author.

Figure 3: Detail photo of wall shared by the Brazelton Photo Studio, not extant. Building standing at 517 MLK Boulevard (formally East 9th Street). Photo provided by the author.

Figure 4: Building standing at 432 MLK Boulevard (formally East 9th Street). Brazelton's Photo Studio was once located inside this three-story construction, along with attorneys, dentist, doctors, and a dance hall on the top floor. Photo provided by the author.

Figure 5: Site of Brazelton home at 820 Palmetto Street. Photo provided by the author.

Aside from the Westside Urban Renewal Project in the 1950s and 1960s, the City of Chattanooga pushed another "revitalization" plan in the 1980s, razing many buildings across the urban core. Black history in the city suffered greatly as a result. In the aftermath, one prevalent effort in commemorating diverse Black history in Chattanooga is the placement of historic markers, meant to educate the public by specifying important locations. Each one of these signs marks the places on the landscape which he was intrinsically a part of, or to celebrate the people who Horace Brazelton knew during his lifetime.

Survey of Historical Markers

The Historical Markers Program is a subset of the Tennessee Historical Commission (THC), one of the longest-running programs of the agency. It officially started in the late 1940s, though its origins began with memorializing World War I.[17] As of 2024, the program includes some 2000 publicly visible markers across the state. Any member of the public, professional historians, or other interested individuals may submit potential sign narratives – although they are later revised in conjunction with guidance from the staff at the THC. These are not wholly objective pieces of scholarship, but rather include the biases of each person who takes time to contribute something to the process of their creation. The signs are therefore varied in scope, commemorating significant people, places, and events in Tennessee's history. As such, they are a compelling resource to explore in tracing important themes.

Erected by the Tennessee Historical Commission, the following metal sign markers are all located in Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Tennessee – each commemorating African American history in various ways:

Carver Memorial Hospital (THC Marker 2A 94) opened on June 18, 1947, just five years before Walden Hospital closed. While the building is no longer extant, the facility originally served as the Old West Ellis Hospital, marking a fifteen year-long success in the venture until the Golden Gateway Project (**see Figure 6**). Once the building was demolished in the name of urban renewal, Chattanooga's Black communities were left

[17] Rebecca Schmitt, "From 'Make Others Know Your State' to 'Just Representation': State Historical Markers, Public Policy, and Public History" (dissertation, 2023), 23-29.

without an adequate healthcare facility, as the White-owned Erlanger Hospital (extant) was not yet finished with their planned "Negro Wing." However, the Civil Right Act of 1964 effectively prohibited segregation in hospitals receiving federal funds, so Chattanooga healthcare finally opened to all citizens afterwards.[18]

Figure 6: Carver Memorial Hospital (2A 94) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

[18] Phoebe Pollitt, "Carver Hospital, Chattanooga, 1947-1962," KGH School of Nursing, May 21, 2021, https://kgh.knoxcotn.org/carver-hospital-chattanooga-1947-1962/.

Born in Quitman, Georgia, G.W. Franklin – 1865-1928 (THC Marker 2A 96) started his entrepreneurial life as a blacksmith. Eventually moving to Chattanooga on December 7, 1894, he was prosperous in four distinct businesses: blacksmithing, a hack line, a wood and coal yard, and a longstanding undertaking establishment.[19] Franklin also served as local chapter President of the National Negro Business League, as a favor to his good friend, Booker T. Washington. Additionally, he was the original owner of both East View and Pleasant Garden Cemeteries in Chattanooga.[20] A THC Historical Marker commemorating this remarkable individual now stands along Chestnut Street in the City Center, near West 6th Street (**see Figure 7**).

Figure 7: G.W. Franklin – 1865-1928 (2A 96) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

[19] "G.W. Franklin, Jr. Undertaker." *The Nashville Globe*, June 24, 1910.

[20] J. Bliss White, *1904 Biography and Achievements of the Colored Citizens of Chattanooga* (Signal Mountain, TN: Mountain Press, 2004), 9.

William “Uncle Bill” Lewis – 1810-1896 (THC Marker 2A 84) was originally from Winchester, Franklin County, Tennessee. He moved to the Chattanooga area in 1837 when it was still known as Ross’ Landing, a namesake from Chief John Ross of the Cherokee Nation. A successful blacksmith, Lewis was eventually able to purchase not only his own freedom from slavery, but also that of his wife, mother, brother, and sister. A THC Historical Marker memorializing him stands at the corner of Market and 7th Street in Chattanooga (**see Figure 8**).

Figure 8: William “Uncle Bill” Lewis – 1810-1896 (2A 84) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

Mary Walker – 1848-1969 (THC Marker 2A 73) was a trailblazing woman, born into slavery in Union Spring, Alabama but who rose above her forced circumstances after Emancipation to raise a family. After outliving her husband and three children, Walker learned to read, write, add, and subtract when she was around 116 years old.[21] This accomplishment earned her the titled of the oldest student in the nation, declared by the United State Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. A THC Historical Marker commemorates her achievements, standing at the intersection of Greenwood Drive and Wilcox Boulevard in Chattanooga (**see Figure 9**).

Figure 9: Mary Walker – 1848-1969 (2A 73) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

[21] Brianna Williams, "The Life of Mary Walker: The Nation's Oldest Student," NOOGAtoday, February 1, 2022, https://noogatoday.6amcity.com/life-mary-walker-nation-oldest-student-chattanooga-tn. Some sources cite her age as 117 years old when she learned literacy.

Figure 10: Bessie Smith – 1894-1937 (2A 75) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

Bessie Smith – 1894-1937 (THC Marker 2A 75) was known as the "Empress of the Blues" for her thriving music career which started on the streets of Chattanooga. She was once the highest paid Black entertainer during the 1920s and 1930s, known for her powerful impact on blues music culture. Unfortunately, she tragically lost her life in an automobile accident at the age of forty-three.[22] A THC Historical Marker dedicated to her stands in a park off MLK Boulevard, next to Olivet Baptist Church in Chattanooga (**see Figure 10**).

The Martin Hotel – 1924-1985 (THC Marker 2A 89) was originally opened in 1924 as the largest Black-owned hotel in the southeast region of the United States. Named for its founder Robert Martin, it boasted fifty rooms and hosted numerous celebrities, including Ella Fitzgerald, The Ink Spots, Fats Domino, Nat "King" Cole, Willie Mays, and the Harlem Globetrotters. A frequent listing in the Negro Motorist Green Book, it closed on November 30, 1985. The Bessie Smith Cultural Center (formerly known as the Chattanooga African American Museum) now stands on the property. A THC Historical Marker marking the site was erected off MLK Boulevard, between Lindsey and Houston Street (**see Figure 11**).

[22] Alona Sagee, "Bessie Smith: 'Down Hearted Blues' and 'Gulf Coast Blues' Revisited," *Popular Music*, Special Issue on the Blues in Honour of Paul Oliver, 26, no. 1 (January 2007): 117–127; Donna Streaty, "Empress of the Blues: Bessie Smith," *Negro History Bulletin* 44, no. 1 (1981): 22.

Figure 11: Martin Hotel – 1924-1985 (2A 89) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

Walden Hospital (THC Marker 2A 82), located at Douglas and Eighth Street, was the original healthcare facility which served the African American population in Chattanooga (**see Figure 12**). Founded by Emma Wheeler in 1915, the private hospital

grew over the next decade to include a nursing school and nursing plan.[23] Lucille Brazelton Jones actually passed away at Walden Hospital in 1939, after a brief battle with influenza and pneumonia. With a capacity of thirty beds, the hospital could not keep pace with population growth in the Black community, though, and it closed in 1952. The building still stands, now serving as shared student housing for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. A THC Historical Marker is present within the fenced area in front of the building's façade, summarizing the history of the place (**see Figure 13**).

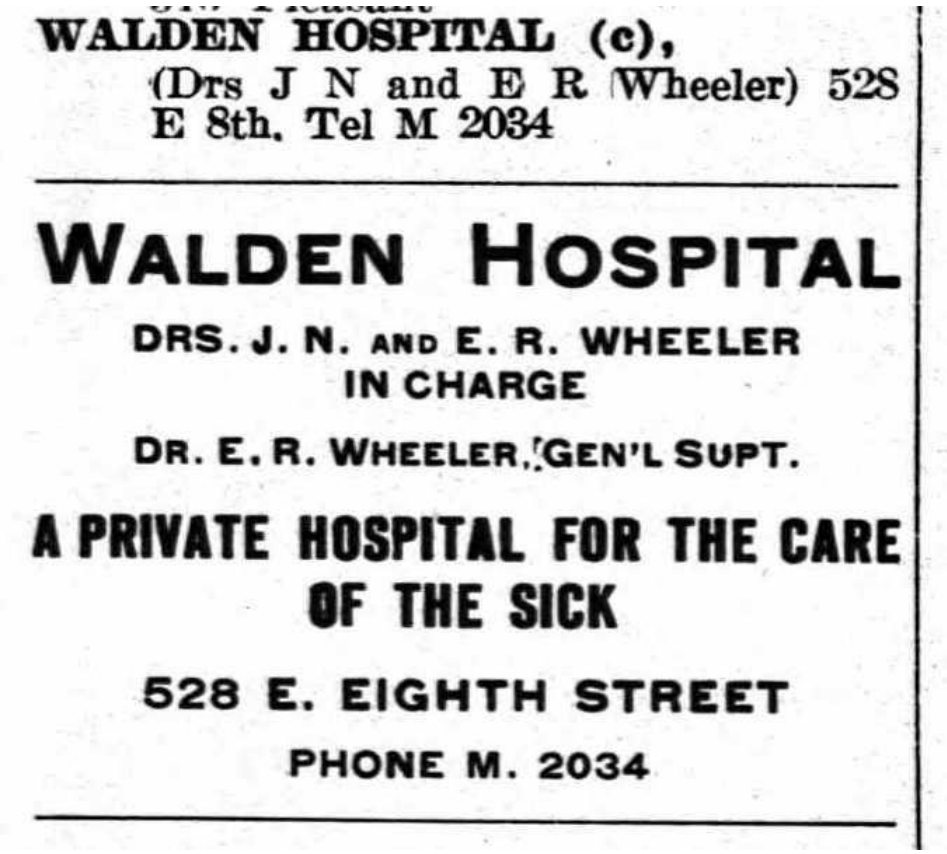

Figure 12: Walden Hospital Advertisement, 1918 Chattanooga City Directory, page 812.

[23] Phoebe Pollitt, "Carver Hospital, Chattanooga, 1947-1962," KGH School of Nursing, May 21, 2021, https://kgh.knoxcotn.org/carver-hospital-chattanooga-1947-1962/.

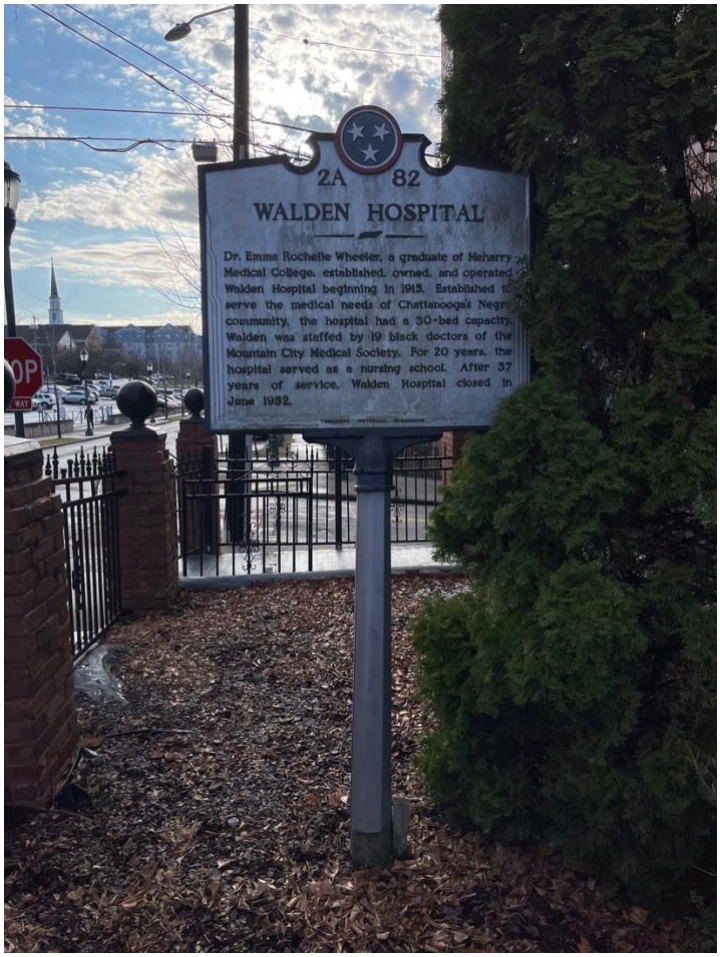

Figure 13: Walden Hospital (2A 82) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

Chattanooga Howard School (THC Marker 2A 83) was established in 1865, the first-ever public school in Hamilton County (for either Black or White students). It was named after Civil War General Oliver O. Howard, who also served the Freedmen's Bureau during Reconstruction. This school is significant for many reasons, including through prestigious alumni and its role in developing successful Black neighborhoods across the city. The current building is the fifth campus location for the institution and was constructed between 1953 and 1954.

One example of motivations and fortitude of the school can be traced back to the Class of 1960. On February 19th of that year, some thirty students walked into segregated spaces and took their rightful seats at lunch counters. These sit-ins (and similar ones across the country) were formative demonstrations which contributed to the Civil Rights Movement. Today, there are approximately 1700 high school students who attend the Howard School. It continues to be an anchor in Chattanooga, with a foundational pride that generates prominent young minds. A THC Historical Marker stands in front of the school off Market Street (**see Figure 14**).

Figure 14: Chattanooga Howard School (2A 83) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

Figure 15: Sallie A. Crenshaw – 1900-1986 (2A 86) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

Sallie Alford Crenshaw – 1900-1986 (THC Marker 2A 86) was born LaGrange, Georgia before moving to Chattanooga, where she graduated from city schools. She was the first Black woman afforded the opportunity to attend Tennessee Wesleyan College. She went on to participate in travel ministering across the south after she was ordained as the first Black female minister in the East Tennessee Methodist Conference in 1936. Establishing the St. Elmo Mission in order to provide daycare, food, and religious education to local children, she provided care to hundreds of children during the rest of

her life.[24] She passed away on December 12, 1986, and is buried in Forest Hills Cemetery in Chattanooga, among a section for orphaned children. A THC Historical Marker briefly commemorating her life stands in front of the Salle Crenshaw Bethlehem Center in Alton Park, named in her honor in 1986 (**see Figure 15**).

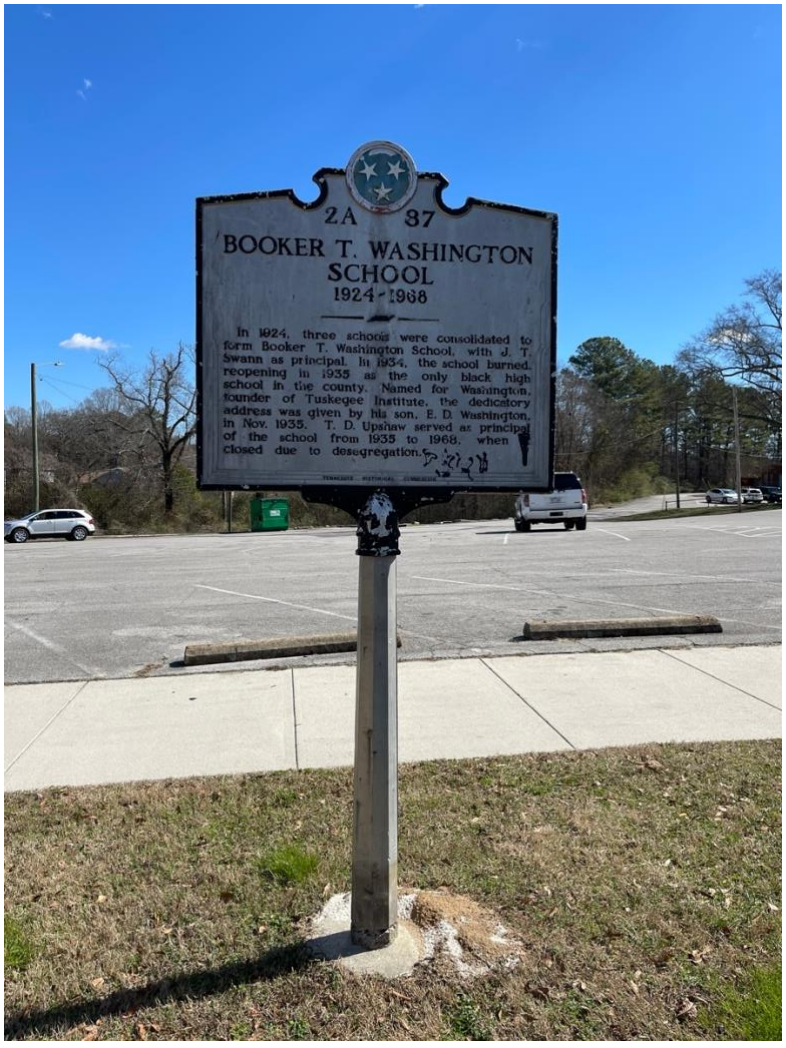

Figure 16: Booker T. Washington School – 1924-1968 (2A 87) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

[24] Gay Moore, "Moore: Rev. Sallie Crenshaw Was a Woman Ahead of Her Time," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, April 16, 2016, https://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2016/apr/17/moore-rev-sallie-crenshaw-8211-womahead-her-t/.

The Booker T. Washington School – 1924-1968 (THC Marker 2A 87) in Chattanooga was formed from three separate schools, consolidated in 1924 with J.T. Swann as Principal. It served as Hamilton County's only high school dedicated solely to Black students until desegregation, when it closed in 1968. A THC Historical Marker memorializing the school is located in the Washington Hills neighborhood, near a public picnic pavilion off Oakwood Drive (**see Figure 16**).

Figure 17: Roland Hayes – 1887-1977 (2A 85) THC Historical Marker. Photo provided by the author.

Roland Hayes – 1887-1977 (THC Marker 2A 85) was a soloist with the Fisk Jubilee Singers, of Fisk University. The group first organized in 1871 as a school fundraiser, but quickly became a public sensation, popular for their gospel music and traditional spirituals. Hayes later joined the traveling group, becoming the first Black classical singer to perform at Carnegie Hall, and to earn international fame for his tenor talent. A THC Historical Marker is dedicated to him in the Woodmore neighborhood, in front of New Monumental Baptist Church (**see Figure 17**).

Figure 18: Beck Knob Cemetery Historical Marker, sponsored by the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area. Photo provided by the author.

A historic marker commemorating Beck Knob Cemetery is the most recent addition to the list of metal signs with a theme of Black history in Chattanooga (**see Figure 18**). While not a part of the Tennessee Historical Commission marker program, it was erected in 2024 using funds from the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area. The sign stands just adjacent to the cemetery and includes continuing text on the front and back. As the first burial ground meant for African Americans in the city, Beck Knob Cemetery started around the time of the Civil War for deceased persons from Camp Contraband. Aside from erecting a historic marker alone, other public history efforts are underway to honor this special site. For example, the African American Cemetery Preservation Fund is a local volunteer group I have often worked with, by cleaning both Beck Knob and Pleasant Garden Cemeteries. We also host headstone cleaning workshops as a way to educate the public about best preservation practices at burial ground sites, as well as to garner more attention to their stories.

“Through the Lens” Exhibit

For context, I am the Historic Preservation Planner with the Southeast Tennessee Development District (SETD). This work allows me to assist communities and meet a variety of people, building a network that is valuable to all aspects of public history. Through this position, I met with the Marketing Director of Ruby Falls in November 2022 about an unrelated project memorializing Ed Johnson. This project specifically aims to pay respect to one of Hamilton County's lynching victims in a practical way, as Ruby Falls is financially supporting certain preservation and interpretive projects at the cemetery

where Mr. Johnson is buried, including the removal of dead trees and repointing masonry walls and entrance pillars. I am serving as a consultant on this work as a part of my position at SETD. During our first conversation, I mentioned I was working on an exhibit about Horace Brazelton, who is also buried at Pleasant Garden Cemetery. Lara Caughman, the Marketing Director, was immediately enthralled by the idea of supporting another aspect of African American history in Chattanooga. I then visited Ruby Falls to assess if their castle building would work as a venue. This is a sheltered space holding the elevators where thousands of tourists enter to begin their cave tour experience, and also includes a gift shop, small café, and offices. Ruby Falls was interested in developing something that visitors could read while they wait on their timed tour to begin, and Ms. Caughman offered to let me display my residency project in a small space of this building for a short time.

When I visited the building with her in January 2023, she asked if I would be open to keeping the exhibit on display for the entire summer. She also offered additional floor space and further support from the Ruby Falls Board. This immediately changed the scope of my project but in a very positive way. Since then, I have partnered with several organizations to curate a meaningful exhibit about the Brazelton story, that is different from a historic marker. The MTSU Center for Historic Preservation sponsored the information panels, Walden's Ridge Civic Center donated a photo enlarger, and both Picnooga (Chattanooga Historical Society) and the Bessie Smith Cultural Center donated Brazelton photos for use in the installation. During the opening reception at Ruby Falls, Mayor Tim Kelly of Chattanooga also presented a Proclamation for Horace Brazelton

Day (lasting from June 7 through September 15, 2023) to me, further solidifying the significance of this story.

During an intensely successful summer at Ruby Falls, some 185,000 people saw the exhibit. I participated in many media interviews for local news outlets and newspapers and was blown away by the support shown to the Brazelton story. Another local nonprofit, RISE Chattanooga, subsequently borrowed the exhibit for the winter of 2023/2024. The exhibit is currently on view at the downtown branch of the Chattanooga Public Library (**see Figures 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25**), after city officials requested a continued partnership because of the success of this public history project. Not only did I get to travel the Brazelton exhibit, but I also partnered with four modern Black photographers to show their work, as well. Descendants of Horace Brazelton also attended the latest opening reception, where I was honored to present copies of the Horace Brazelton Day Proclamation to each of them (**see Figure 26**).

Figure 19: Dionne Jenkins, chair of the Chattanooga Public Library Board of Directors, addresses a crowd for "Through the Lens: The Life and Legacy of Horace Brazelton" (March 16, 2024). Photo provided by the author.

Figure 20: Detail of an interactive element for the exhibit. Photo provided by the author.

Figure 21: Introduction wall for the exhibit "Through the Lens: The Life and Legacy of Horace Brazelton" installed at the Chattanooga Public Library. Photo provided by the author.

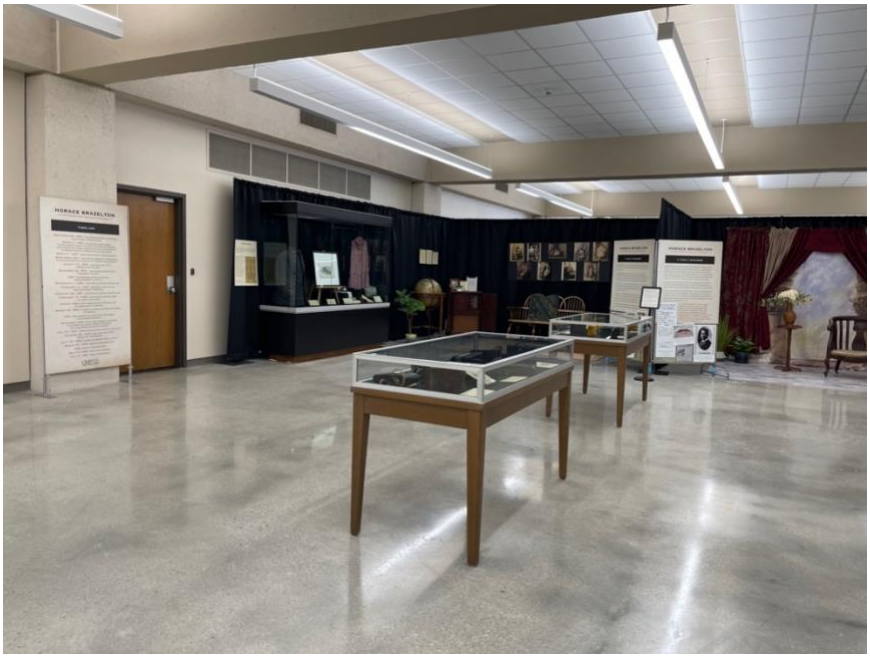

Figure 22: "Through the Lens: The Life and Legacy of Horace Brazelton" exhibit installed at the Chattanooga Public Library. Photo provided by the author.

Figure 23: "Through the Lens: The Life and Legacy of Horace Brazelton" exhibit installed at the Chattanooga Public Library. Recreated photo backdrop in background of image. Photo provided by the author.

Figure 24: Recreated living room space at the exhibit installed at the Chattanooga Public Library. Circa 1930s radio plays a modern-recorded version of Brazelton's speech given at the 1917 National Negro Business League meeting. Photo provided by the author.

Figure 25: Selected works from four modern Black photographers, including Shelley King, Jr., Cecilia King, Herman Prater, Jr., and Herman Prater, Sr. Photo provided by the author.

Figure 26: Descendants of Horace Brazelton, attending the opening reception for "Through the Lens: The Life and Legacy of Horace Brazelton" (March 16, 2024). Photo provided by the author.

"End" of Ninth Street

As an aside, the "Big Nine" is now known as Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, and the name change for this roadway came only after an intense social battle between the African American community in Chattanooga and city leaders. The City of Chattanooga finally acquiesced to a request from Reverend M.T. Billingsley (Mount Zion Baptist Church) to change the name of the road in honor of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in July 1981, after "some 300 black residents took to Ninth Street in April 1981 to protest local business and city leaders who refused to rename the downtown thoroughfare after King."[25] The initial pressure campaign set forth by those city leaders included T.A. Lupton, a well-known White real estate developer. The official name change was effective as of January 1982.[26] Years after the end of Jim Crow, entrenched racism could not prevent the community from renaming this area as they wished. In fact, the Black community directly supported one another to effect change, and continues to do so – from churches to schools and businesses, as evidenced by advertisements in Black-owned newspapers, city directories, church programs, social media and event advertisements.

[25] Megan Boehnke, "Road to Equality: History of MLK-Named Streets Offer Community Insight," (*Knoxville News Sentinel*, January 21, 2013).

[26] Derek H. Alderman, "Naming Streets after Martin Luther King, Jr.: No Easy Road," in *Landscape and Race in the United States*, ed. Richard Schein (London, United Kingdom: Routledge Press, 2006): 216.

Appendix A – Horace Maynard Brazelton – Timeline of Life

- **1864, September 26:** Anderson Brazelton mustered into service
  - 1st Regiment Heavy Artillery
- **1867, May 8:** Marriage of Anderson and Leannah (Fain) Brazelton[1]
- **1877, November 24**: Birth of Horace Maynard Brazelton
  - New Market, Jefferson County, Tennessee
- **1879, April 8:** Death of Anderson Brazelton[2]
- **1880 Census**:[3]
  - Jefferson County, Tennessee
    - District 8
    - Enumerated on June 8, 1880
  - Anderson Brazelton (Father) – not listed in the 1880 census
  - Lee Anna Fain (Mother – 32) – listed with married name "Brazelton" in the 1880 census
    - "Keeping House"
  - Horace listed as 2 years old at home
    - Brother – Joseph (11)
    - Sister – Belle (9)
    - Sister – Florence (7)
    - Brother – James (4)
  - Entire family was listed as "Black"
- **1890 Census:**
  - (most rolls – including TN) were destroyed by a fire in the Commerce Department Building in January 1921[4]
- **1895-1896**
  - Listed in the Junior Class of the Classical Course at Maryville College[5]
- **1897, June 12 Newspaper Mention:[6]**

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[1] "Tennessee, U.S., Marriages Records, 1780-2002," database with images, *Ancestry* (https://ancestry.com), "Anderson Brazelton and Leannah Brazelton," Jefferson County Marriage Licenses, image 368 of 592; citing Tennessee State Library and Archives.

[2] The National Archives at Washington, D.C.; Washington, D.C.; Record Group: *Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General; Record Group Number: 92; Series Number: M1845.*

[3] 1880 United States Census, Jefferson County, New Market, Tennessee, "Horace Brazelton." *Ancestry.com*.

[4] "Tennessee Census Records: Descriptions of Census Records 1790 - 1940," Tennessee Secretary of State, Tennessee State Library and Archives, https://sos.tn.gov/products/tsla/tennessee-census-records).

[5] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Maryville College, Tennessee 1895-'96* (Philadelphia, PA: MacCalla & Company Inc., Printers, 1896).

[6] "New Market: Brakeman Savagely Attacked by a Negro Tramp," *The Journal and Tribune* (Knoxville, Tennessee), (June 15, 1987).

  - Horace Brazelton was arrested in New Market, Tennessee for striking Charles Caldwell in the head with a rock
    - Taken into custody by Railroad Detective Jud Reeder and Constable Arnold; Hearing before Esquire Long (bound over to court on $500 bond and could not pay, went to jail)
  - *The Journal and Tribune* (Knoxville, Tennessee), June 15, 1897 article
- **1899-1900 City Directory**[7]
  - First time Horace Brazelton appears in the Chattanooga City Directory
    - "lab Bukofzer & Co." (R. 817 Chestnut)
      - This company was listed under "Confections and Fruits" and "Restaurants" on 101 West 9th Street in the 1899 City Directory (not "colored") *Pages _ and 768
      - Also listed under "Cigars & Tobacco" in the 1902 Directory, page 831
- **1900, February 14**[8]
  - Horace Maynard Brazelton married Hettie Mary Hodge in Knox County
- **1900 Census**:[9]
  - Hamilton County, Tennessee
    - District 14, Chattanooga Ward 04 (District 0061)
    - Enumerated on June 2, 1900
    - 634 Leonard Street
  - Horace and Hettie (Wife) Brazelton were boarders (5 boarders at house – 5 members of main Rivers/Kennedy family)
    - William S. Rivers (Head) – owned the home
    - Rivers' wife
    - Daughter
    - Son
    - Rivers' mother – Jestine Kennedy
  - Horace and Hettie were both listed as 23 years old
  - Horace was listed as a waiter
  - Hettie was listed as a dress maker
  - Both listed as "Black"
- **1903**

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[7] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1899-1900* (Chattanooga, TN: 1899), page 132, entry for "Brazelton Horace (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[8] "Tennessee, County Marriages, 1790-1950," database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org: 21 December 2016), "Horace Maynard Brazelton and Hettie Mary Hodge," Knox County Marriage licenses, 1899-1901, image 250 of 692; citing Tennessee State Library and Archives.

[9] 1900 United States Census, Enumeration District 14, Ward 4 of Hamilton County, Chattanooga, Tennessee, "Horace Brazelton." *Ancestry.com.*

  - Robert H. Hannum and Horace Brazelton listed as grocers at "Hannum and Brazelton", located at 1 Grove[10]
- **1904:** Opens studio?
  - *The Chattanooga News* article from 1912 specifies "Eight years successful business at same location"[11]
- **1906 City Directory**:[12]
  - First time Horace Brazelton is listed as a photographer
  - 514 East Ninth Street (second floor)
- **1907 Jamestown Exposition[13]**
  - Horace Brazelton won a silver medal for photography
- **1908 City Directory:[14]**
  - 514 ½ East Ninth Street
- **1909 Newspaper:[15]**
  - Incorporated "Pioneer Realty Company"
  - Capital stock of $10,000
  - Incorporators:
    - O.W. James; L.P. Berry; M.R. Carson; R.W. Allen; G.W. Turner; H.M. Brazelton
  - *The Tennessean,* December 9, 1909
- **1910 Census**:[16]
  - Hamilton County, Tennessee
    - Civil District 1
    - Chattanooga Ward 07 (District 0064)
    - Enumerated on April 20, 1910
    - 514 East Ninth Street
  - Horace (32) and Hettie (33) were renters
  - Horace was listed as a "Photographer" at his "Own Office"
    - Employed by "Own Account"
  - Hettie's occupation was listed as "none"
  - Both listed as "Mulatto"

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[10] 1903 Chattanooga City Directory, p. 880

[11] "H.M. Brazelton, Artistic Photographer," *The Chattanooga News*, (October 21, 1912).

[12] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1906* (Chattanooga, TN: 1906), page 701, entry for "Brazelton, H M (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[13] "Final Report of the Jamestown Ter-Centennial Commission," 60th Congress, 2nd Session, Document No. 735 § (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office: 1909).

[14] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1908* (Chattanooga, TN: 1908), page 122, entry for "Brazelton, Horace M (c)," digital image, U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[15] "Pioneer Realty Company," *The Tennessean* (Nashville, Tennessee), (December 9, 1909).

[16] 1910 United States Census, Civil District 1, Ward 7 (District 0064) of Hamilton County, Chattanooga, Tennessee, "Horace Brazelton," *Ancestry.com.*

- **1912 Newspaper:**[17]
  - Listed as the Vice President of Pioneer Realty Company
  - Also listed separately:
    - "H.M. Brazelton, Artistic Photographer / is in business at 514 East Ninth street. He started his career in the photographic profession over seven years ago at his present location. He has been a close student of the profession attested by his studio proving successful from an art and financial standpoint from the beginning. He has been compelled to enlarge and remodel his studio to keep abreast with increased patronage. By reason of close application to his work and his courteous treatment of all with whom he comes in contact, Mr. Brazelton has won the patronage and the support of his people. He has also won by the excellence of his work medal awards of excellence at Norfolk, Va., and also the Appalachian exposition at Knoxville. He is enjoying a growing and satisfactory patronage."
    - *The Chattanooga News,* October 21, 1912
- **1913, September-October**
  - National Conservation Exposition in Knoxville, Tennessee
  - Brazelton won best photograph and watercolor
- **1915 Newspaper:**[18]
  - Brazelton signed petition for an African American candidate for justice of the peace, J.W. Hines
  - "The only sop thrown to colored voters so far is a solitary name of a negro drawn for the jury, and it was explained that this was an accident."
  - *The Chattanooga News,* April 7, 1915
- **1916 City Directory:**[19]
  - 511 ½ East Ninth Street
- **1917, August 16**
  - Horace delivered a speech titled, "Photography as a Business" for the Eighteenth Annual Session of the National Negro Business League at Umbrella Rock[20]

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[17] A. J. Henry, "Chattanooga's Colored Population Is Making Progress," The Chattanooga News, October 21, 1912).

[18] "Hines or Fine for Justice Job," *The Chattanooga News*, (April 7, 1915).

[19] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1916* (Chattanooga, TN: 1916), page 995, entry for "Brazelton, H M (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[20] Horace Brazelton, "Photography as a Business," in *National Negro Business League, Report of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Annual Sessions Held at Chattanooga, Tenn., and Atlantic City, N.J.,* 1917.

- **1918 City Directory:**[21]
  - 513 ½ East Ninth Street
- **1918, July: Newspaper**[22]
  - Brazelton arrested by Sid Robinson for accidental destruction of a flag
  - *Chattanooga Daily Times,* July 2, 1918
- **1920 Census**:[23]
  - Hamilton County, Tennessee
    - Civil District 1
    - Chattanooga Ward 07 (District 0181)
    - Enumerated on January 17, 1920
    - 105 Magnolia Street
  - Horace (42)
    - "Eddie" (Hettie) (43)
    - Walter Towns (Nephew – 16)
  - Horace "Photographer" - Employed by "Own Account"
  - Hettie "Housework"
  - Walter "None" (attending school)
  - Horace and Hettie are listed as able to read/write, but neither finished school
  - All three listed as "Black"
- **1920, July 27** – Birth of adopted daughter Lucille
  - Hattie Simpson
  - James (Jim) Hodge
- **1921 City Directory:**[24]
  - 515 ½ East Ninth Street
- **1926 City Directory:**[25]
  - 218 ½ East Ninth Street
- **1927 City Directory:**[26]

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[21] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1918* (Chattanooga, TN: 1918), page 967, entry for "Brazelton, H M (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[22] "Sid Robinson's New Flag," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, (July 2, 1918).

[23] 1920 United States Census, Civil District 1, Ward 7 (District 0181) of Hamilton County, Chattanooga, Tennessee, "Horace Brazelton," *Ancestry.com.*

[24] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1921* (Chattanooga, TN: 1921), page 1438, entry for "Brazelton, H M (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[25] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1926* (Chattanooga, TN: 1926), page 2064, entry for "Brazelton, H M (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[26] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1927* (Chattanooga, TN: 1927), page 2225, entry for "Brazelton Photo Studio (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

  - 224 ½ East Ninth Street
- **1929 City Directory:**[27]
  - 432 ½ East Ninth Street (second floor)
- **1928**
  - Birth of biological daughter
- **1930 Census**:[28]
  - Hamilton County, Tennessee
    - Chattanooga Ward 6 (District 0018)
    - Enumerated on April 5-6, 1930
    - 110 East Ninth Street (rented for $50 per month)
  - Horace (52)
    - Hettie (53)
    - Lucile (Daughter – 11)
  - Horace "Photographer" at "Studio" by "Own Account" (worker code 5094)
  - Hettie "Photographic" at "Studio" (worker code 5094)
  - Lucile (in school)
  - Horace: not a veteran
  - All three listed as "Negro"
- **1930 City Directory:**[29]
  - 110 East Ninth Street
- **1931 City Directory:**[30]
  - 224 ½ East Ninth Street
- **1933 City Directory:**[31]
  - 515 ½ East Ninth Street
- **1938, July 19** – Birth of grandson Leon Brazelton Jones, Jr.

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[27] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1929* (Chattanooga, TN: 1929), page 2055, entry for "Brazelton Studio (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[28] 1930 United States Census, Ward 6 (District 0018) of Hamilton County, Chattanooga, Tennessee, "Horace Brazelton," *Ancestry.com*

[29] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1930* (Chattanooga, TN: 1930), page 509, entry for "Brazelton Studio (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[30] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1931* (Chattanooga, TN: 1931), page 1926, entry for "Brazelton Studio (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[31] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1933* (Chattanooga, TN: 1933), page 1722, entry for "Brazelton H M (c)," digital image, "U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995," Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

- **1939, March 16** – Death of Lucille Brazelton Jones (daughter of Horace and Hettie)[32]
  - Treated at Walden Hospital (Influenza Pneumonia)
    - Eighth and Douglas
    - Dr. G. H. Moores
  - Service: Reverends J. B. Barber and C. A. Bell
  - West View Cemetery
    - Interred March 19, 1939
  - Morticians: Bailey & Davis (c)
    - W. B. Bailey & W. H. Davis
    - Funeral Directors, Embalmers and Ambulance Service
    - 515 E. 9th Street
  - Her death certificate lists the wrong parents (or was she adopted?)
    - James Hodge
    - Hattie Simpson
- **1940 Census**:[33]
  - Hamilton County, Tennessee
    - Civil District 1
    - Chattanooga Ward 07
    - Enumerated on April 3, 1940
    - 515 ½ East Ninth Street (rented for $20 per month)
  - Horace (62) and "Hattie" (Hettie – 63)
    - Leon Junin Jones (1) – grandson
    - Willie Lee Paul (56) – widowed sister-in-law
      - From Louisville, KY
      - "Maid" in a "Private Home" for $240 (salary)
  - Horace "Photographer" at "Own Studio" by "Own Account" (occupation code V66/89/4 for 52 weeks)
    - 60 hours per week
    - Income listed as "0"
    - Income from other sources? (Yes)
  - Hettie "Assistant" at "Husbands Studio" as "Unpaid Family Worker" (occupation code 486/89/5 for 52 weeks)
    - 60 hours per week
    - Income listed as "0"
    - Income from other sources? (No)
  - The three adults' education listed as "High School – 4th Year"

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[32] State of Tennessee Department of Public Health and Division of Vital Statistics, State File Number 5265, *Lucille Brazelton Jones Certificate of Death*, Informant Leon Jones (husband), (filed March 22, 1929).

[33] 1920 United States Census, Civil District 1, Ward 7 of Hamilton County, Chattanooga, Tennessee, "Horace Brazelton," *Ancestry.com.*

  - Residence in 1935 “Same House”
  - All listed as “Negro”
- **1940 City Directory:**[34]
  - 551 ½ East Ninth Street (typo?)
- **1942 City Directory:**[35]
  - 515 ½ East Ninth Street
- **1947, March 17 Newspaper:**[36]
  - Studio at 515 ½ East Ninth Street burned
  - Newspaper mentioned P-G Club (colored softball? African American Social Club?) and sleeping quarters upstairs.
  - Studio completely burned but building was saved.
  - *Chattanooga Daily Times,* March 18, 1947
- **1947, July Newspaper:**[37]
  - Studio at 515 ½ East Ninth Street (second floor) reopened after fire
- **1950 Census:**
  - Will be available in April 2022 (“72-Year Rule”)
- **1952 Newspaper:**[38]
  - Hettie Brazelton Volunteer Service for *Mothers' March Polio Campaign*
- **1952-1953?** Studio closed
  - 1952 – Studio listed in directory[39]
  - 1953 – Studio not listed[40]
- **1956, May 13**: Death of Horace Maynard Brazelton[41]
  - “Dead on arrival – no external evidence of injury” at Newell Hospital in Chattanooga, Tennessee
  - “Length of stay in this place” listed as 50 years

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[34] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1940* (Chattanooga, TN: 1940), page 2204, entry for "Brazelton Studio (c)," digital image, “U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995,” Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[35] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1942* (Chattanooga, TN: 1942), page 646, entry for "Brazelton Studio (c)," digital image, “U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995,” Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[36] "Photo Studio Burns." *Chattanooga Daily Times*, March 18, 1947.

[37] "Brazelton Photo Studio Is Now Open," Advertisement, *Chattanooga Observer*, (July 25, 1947).

[38] "2 Honored for Aid in Polio Campaign," *Chattanooga Daily Times*, (January 24, 1952).

[39] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1952* (Chattanooga, TN: 1952), page 2588, entry for "Brazelton’s Photo Studio (c)," digital image, “U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995,” Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[40] *Chattanooga, Tennessee, City Directory, 1953* (Chattanooga, TN: 1953), page 820, entry for "Brazelton Horace M (c)," digital image, “U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995,” Ancestry.com (http://www.ancestry.com), (accessed 30 June 2020).

[41] State of Tennessee Department of Public Health and Division of Vital Statistics, Death no. 56-10559, *Horace M. Brazelton Certificate of Death*, Informant Hettie M. Brazelton (wife), (filed May 17, 1956).

  - Death certificate has the wrong date of birth on it – listed as November 24, 1883
  - Residence: 820 Palmetto Street
- **1957, July 5:** Death of Hettie Mary Brazelton[42]
  - Carver Memorial Hospital
  - Informant – Walter L. Hodge (maternal relative?)
  - Residence: 820 Palmetto Street

[42] State of Tennessee Department of Public Health and Division of Vital Statistics, Death no. 57-16560, *Hettie M. Brazelton Certificate of Death*, Informant Walter L. Hodge (relation unknown), (filed July 12, 1957).

Appendix B – Chattanooga City Directory Notes

Chattanooga City Directory Transcription Project Notes

Project Introduction

Despite building a thriving business district, developing a self-contained community, and excelling in every possible aspect of sociality during Jim Crow, African Americans still endured all manner of racism, violence, threats, and segregation. This is not to negate their successes, but to outline the objective struggles they faced while building a better life for their children.

Difference between White society ignoring the Black communities, who were free to prosper, versus the dominant White culture perpetuating violence against the Black communities. Analogy – it is easier to float down a river with some things touching you than it is to fight an upstream current with rocks being thrown at you.

(musing): The "c" sits prominently beside the names of accomplished individuals. It's a marker used to denote their race and stands as a deterrent to racist Whites.

Research Considerations

The temporal scope of the *Chattanooga City Directory* transcription project is 1899-1960, but this dissertation will feature this data in a limited way. In the interest of time and feasibility, I chose to highlight the city directory data in five-year intervals. This will also provide an effective foundation for later grant applications I plan to draft, on behalf of hosting the database and associated interactive maps on a website. The five-year intervals represent the general trend of the listing data.

The following project only includes Black-owned business listings, so the proportion of those listings to White-owned businesses is currently unknown. The listings in the following database also does not imply that the people owned the building itself, but rather the business operating within. For example, rental units were prevalent, as were shared offices.

As with many research projects, the following data is only as reliable as the originating sources (**methodology limitations**):

- Possible that some data was missing
  - Or that I could have missed a "c" notation somewhere
- Supposed White-owned businesses also operated in Black spaces
  - 200(ish) block of East 9th, for some examples

  - Were these owned by White people, or was the listing simply missing a "c"?
    - Questions about Black-operated versus Black-owned
    - Who paid for the listing in the directory?
- Communities/Neighborhoods:
  - B'town (Bushtown? – Knapp book)
  - R'town
  - R'dale (Ridgedale)
  - C'ville (Churchville)
  - Fort C (Fort Cheatham)
  - N C (North Chattanooga)
  - E C (East Chattanooga)
  - St E (St. Elmo)
  - A P (Alton Park)
  - E L (Eastlake)

Chattanooga City Directory Notes:

- **1899**
  - There are 196 total business listings with a "(c)" notation
- **1902**
  - There are 194 total business listings with a "(c)" notation
- **1905**
  - There are 236 total business listings with a "(c)" notation
  - "Grocers – Retail" includes at least two listings with no numbers in the address
  - Does "St E" mean St. Elmo?
  - Undertakers not segregated (what about funeral homes?)
  - "Market street, from the river to Montgomery Avenue, is the main thoroughfare, dividing all cross streets into East and West streets, to its termination. The intersection of Market with Ninth street, from its proximity to the Union Passenger Depot, is the recognized center of the city." (p. 1075)
- **1910**
  - There are 274 total business listings with a "(c)" notation
  - Brazelton not listed in the "Photographers" business listings section, but listed as a "Photog" in residential listings
  - "Undertakers" section not segregated – G W Franklin was listed alongside White undertakers
- **1915**

  - There are 294 total business listings with a “(c)” notation
  - No “colored” listings:
    - “Apartments” section (p. 835)
    - “Contractors and Builders”
    - “Dressmakers” section (p. 858)
    - “Dry Goods and Notions” section (p. 859)
    - “Liquor Stores” (p. 893)
    - “Trained Nurses” (p. 928)
  - First listing of “Coopers” (?)
    - Person trained to make wooden casks, barrels, vats, buckets, tubs, etc.
    - Heated and steamed to make the wood pliable (like with wagon conservation)
- **1920**
  - There are 238 total business listings with a “(c)” notation
  - No “colored” listings:
    - “Apartments” section (p. 1205)
    - “Attorneys at Law” (p. 1207) – were they listed under just lawyers?
    - “Dry Goods and Notions – Retail” (p. 1241)
    -
  - Keystone Hotel was listed in the “Hotels” section, but the Martin Hotel was not?
  - “Lunch Stands” section – “(See Eating Houses)” (p. 1291)
- **1925**
  - There are 400 total business listings with a “(c)” notation
  - “Connelly Directory Co.”
  - No “colored” listings:
    - “Bakeries” (p. 1701)
    - “Hotels” (p. 1763)
    - “Justices of the Peace” (p. 1785)
    - “Meat Markets” (p. 1794-1795)
    - “Notaries – Public” (p. 1801-1803)
    - “Restaurants” (p. 1818)
  - One Black-owned “Liberty Theatre” and one White-owned “Liberty Theatre”? (Two listings, same name but different addresses) (p. 1799)
- **1930**
  - There are 392 total business listings with a “(c)” notation
  - “Eating Houses” were listed with a note "(See also Restaurants and Tea Rooms)" (p. 2014)
  - No “colored” listings:
    - “Justices of the Peace” (p. 2081)

        - "Meats – Retail" (p. 2093)
        - "Morticians" (p. 2098)
        - **"**Restaurants" (p. 2122)
    - 515 East 9th Street listed as "Undertakers" (p. 2143)
- **1935**
    - There are 375 total business listings with a "(c)" notation
    - Ancestry.com does not actually have the 1935 *Chattanooga City Directory*. The link for this year provides 1939 data instead. I visited the Chattanooga Public Library to gather this data from their microfilm collections.
    - Manufacturing versus retail – can talk about differences in scale of businesses
        - "Confectioners – Manufacturing" (p. 1747)
    - Each of the eleven (11) businesses under the section "Shoe Shine Parlors" were listed with a "(c)" notation
- **1940**
    - There are 409 total business listings with a "(c)" notation
    - No black-owned "Boarding Houses" listed
        - Why?
    - Only one "Druggists – Retail" listed
    - Embalmers section – separated as "Embalmers" and "Embalmers-Colored"
        - Other professions were not separate like this, but designated with a "c"
        - Same with "Funeral Directors" and "Funeral Directors – Colored" sections
    - No "colored" listings in any of the electricity-related professions
    - No "Justices of the Peace" listings
    - No "Nurses-Graduate" listings
    - No "Restaurants and Lunch Rooms" listings with a "(c)" notation – only "Eating Houses"
    - All "Shoe Shiners" listings included a "(c)" notation
    - No Black-owned "Tourist Homes" were listed (Green Book only?)
- **1945**
    - There are 343 total business listings with a "(c)" notation
    - "Fortune Tellers" – new business type (p. 2754)
    - "Funeral Directors" section was split into "Funeral Directors" and "Funeral Directors – Colored" (p. 2756)
    - "Gibralter Fraternal Burial Service Club" (p. 2782)
        - New business and mention of a fraternal club
    - Only two "Justices of the Peace" listed (p. 2796)

  - "Rubyanna Picture Shoppe" (p. 2830) – second "colored" photographer
  - No "colored" listings:
    - "Meats – Retail" (p. 2813)
    - "Morticians" (p. 2818)
    - "Tailors" (p. 2884)
      - But several listings in a separate section titled "Tailors – Alterations" (p. 2884)
  - "Portrait Photographers" – all bold font, White owned listings (p. 2839)
    - Like Olan Mills
  - Pages 2892 and 2893 missing
- **1950**
  - There are 438 total business listings with a "(c)" notation
  - No "colored" listings:
    - "Attorneys-At-Law" (p. 2568)
    - "Meat Markets" (p. 2704)
    - "Restaurants" (p. 2741)
  - "Volunteer Garage Company Inc" at "Lindsay nw cor East 9th" is not listed as "colored"
    - But it was listed in the Green Book? (p. 2578)
  - "Costa Rica Beauty Shop" – was this African American-owned? Could the "(c)" represent all people of color? (p. 2583)
  - "Funeral Directors – Colored" (p. 2647)
  - "Undertakers – Colored" (p. 2771)
  - "Shoe Shiners" section was exclusively owned by people of color (p. 2755)
- **1955**
  - There are 353 total business listings with a "(c)" notation
  - No "colored" listings:
    - "Attorneys-At-Law" (p. 2115)
    - "Lawyers" (p. 2187-2188)
    - "Real Estate" (p. 2210-2211)
  - First "Coal – Retail" listing (p. 2137)
  - First "Golf Courses" listing (p. 2164)
  - "Hospital Photographers" new business type – no Black-owned listings, though (p. 2172)
    - No black-owned "Portrait Photographers" listings, either
    - "Wedding Photographers" new business type (p. 2237)
  - Horace Brazelton Studio not listed with other "Photographers" (p. 2201)
  - "Shoe Shiners" listings are exclusively Black owned

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