



# African Americans in Burlington, Vermont, 1880–1900

*The history of black people in Burlington during the late nineteenth century developed within the wider context of other local ethnic groups, but also should be understood on its own terms. At the same time, Afro-Burlingtonians shared many similarities with the experience of black people in other small New England cities such as Bangor.*

By HARVEY AMANI WHITFIELD

**A**bial and Clara Anthony headed one of the more prominent and stable black families in late-nineteenth-century Burlington.<sup>1</sup> In 1880, Vermont native Abial Anthony's household consisted of five individuals. His wife, Clara, had migrated from South Carolina, and the couple had three children. It is unclear why Clara came to Burlington. Did she find out about this distant city through kinship and family networks or was she an adventurous spirit who wanted to travel north and by chance ended up in Burlington? In the Anthony household, Clara stayed at home, while the eldest child, eleven-year-old Nettie, attended school and Abial worked as a barber, one of the few avenues open to black males to improve their social standing in Burlington.<sup>2</sup> Ten years later, the family lived at 195 Elmwood Avenue and Abial Anthony no longer worked with African American barber

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George Williams, but had a shop at 102 Church Street.<sup>3</sup> Two years later, he employed an African American barber named Jacob Bland.<sup>4</sup> At the turn of the century, Abial owned his home at 195 Elmwood and continued to work as a barber on Church Street.<sup>5</sup>

The life of Abial Anthony demonstrates both the possibilities and limitations of primary source material for black history in Burlington. Although historians can trace the general contours of Abial and Clara's lives, we do not know whether they had a happy marriage, what they did for fun, their political inclinations, or if they enjoyed life in Burlington. However, what historians can glean from the historical records, fragmentary though they are, does allow us to recreate the lives of some African Americans in Burlington.<sup>6</sup>

This article explores the black community in Burlington during the late nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> It is divided into five sections, covering the census and city directories as sources for Afro-Burlingtonian history, the places of origin of local blacks in 1880 and 1900, occupational patterns, rates of persistence among Afro-Burlingtonians, and residential patterns.

Between 1865 and 1900, Burlington was transformed from a small town into the state's largest urban area. The city's growth resulted from the development of manufacturing industries and the timber trade. An important aspect of the city's development was the population growth of local ethnic groups such as the Irish, French Canadians, Jews, and Italians. These groups usually settled in ethnically segregated neighborhoods at first, developed various community institutions, gradually achieved some form of upward social and economic mobility, and eventually assimilated into the wider Burlington community.<sup>8</sup>

In some ways, the history of black people in Burlington followed a similar pattern, but it also differed in noteworthy ways. During the late nineteenth century, as the various populations of Burlington's ethnic groups increased, so did the numbers of African Americans. Between 1870 and 1880 the African American population in Burlington increased from 77 individuals to approximately 115 (Table 1). The population remained at this level throughout the remainder of the century.<sup>9</sup> Similar to other ethnic groups, Afro-Burlingtonians chose to live close to one another. In contrast to other ethnic groups, Afro-Burlingtonians did not develop a separate black church or any long-lasting social organizations. This is very significant because the hallmarks of African American communities in the post bellum United States were black churches and social organizations. It is extremely difficult to know why black people in Burlington did not have a black church when other New England cities at this time such as Newport, R.I., and Portsmouth, N.H., did. But the black community in Bangor, Maine, which had an African

TABLE 1 Total Population and Black Population in Burlington, 1830–1900<sup>10</sup>

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Burlington Black Population</i>
1830	3,526	53
1840	4,271	38
1850	7,585	62
1860	7,713	46
1870	13,596	77
1880	11,365	116 (115)
1890	14,590	115
1900	18,640	115 (116)

American populace similar in size to Burlington, did not maintain a separate black church either. Perhaps, as in Bangor, black people in Burlington came from a variety of religious backgrounds and found their needs served in the existing churches.<sup>11</sup> Local blacks might have had numerous informal social institutions including religious services in private homes.

During the late 1870s, Afro-Burlingtonians maintained one “colored” organization. Lodge No. 8 was part of the Independent Order of Good Templars (IOGT) and lasted until the mid-1880s. However, the information about this organization and its status is unclear. Although initially listed as a “colored” lodge in the 1879–81 city directory, it did not appear in 1881–83, by 1884–85 the directory no longer identified it as an exclusively black organization, and after 1886–87 Lodge No. 8 disappeared from the directory altogether. Throughout all of these transitions during the 1880s, however the contact person was African American barber George Williams.<sup>12</sup> These tantalizing details raise significant questions. Had Lodge No. 8 become an integrated or biracial society during the early 1880s? If so, why? Did Lodge No. 8 represent a broader attempt by the Afro-Burlingtonian community to integrate into the social mainstream? Perhaps the failure of the directory to identify the lodge as “colored” simply resulted from the fact that everyone in the town knew the society was for African Americans. Whatever the case, during the 1870s and 1880s the Good Templars experienced a schism between those who wanted to maintain a race-neutral policy of admission and those who favored segregating lodges by race. David Fahey’s *Temperance and Racism* demonstrates that African American Templars were not united over the issue of integrated or separate lodges. Some believed that separate lodges were offensive and only mollified the opinions of

Southern whites, while others wanted the opportunity to build separate societies that might uplift the race.<sup>13</sup> It is possible that Lodge No. 8 was influenced by this debate among the IOGT and refused to bow to segregationist impulses, instead opting for an integrated organization. Aside from the possibilities of Lodge No. 8, no other African American social or political organizations have yet turned up in the historical record. The lack of visible social institutions might reflect conscious attempts to integrate Burlington's social networks, but it could also simply show that the small size of the local black population made it difficult to develop formal organizations such as the French Canadian St. John Baptist Society or the Hebrew Charitable Association.

Unlike some ethnic groups in Burlington discussed in Elin Anderson's 1937 study *We Americans*, the vast majority of black people did not achieve upward social or economic mobility.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the history of black people in Burlington during the late nineteenth century developed within the wider context of other local ethnic groups, but also should be understood on its own terms. At the same time, Afro-Burlingtonians shared many similarities with the experience of black people in other small New England cities such as Bangor.

In her fine study, *Black Bangor*, Maureen Elgersman Lee explores the contours of the African American community by asking about place of birth, occupations, residential patterns, identity, and institutions. The present study of black people in Burlington also examines some of these important questions, especially for the years after 1880.<sup>15</sup> Preliminary answers to these questions can be explored through a close examination of the United States censuses and Burlington city directories.

#### CENSUS AND CITY DIRECTORIES AS HISTORICAL SOURCES

One consequence of the absence of an independent African American church or lasting community organizations is that few resources that would provide insights into the community's attitudes or actions such as church records or minutes of organizations are extant. Thus, as the work of historian Elise Guyette demonstrates, the United States censuses are important resources for Afro-Vermont history.<sup>16</sup> The censuses of the late nineteenth century are both helpful and problematic. They provide important information such as racial designation, age, family structure, occupation, school attendance, birthplace, and parents' place of birth, literacy, and home ownership. But they also have several inherent problems such as undercounting, missing individuals, counting some people more than once, and the absence of information in specific categories such as occupation or property ownership.<sup>17</sup>

These general problems are compounded by more specific problems.

For example, the “census of 1870 is agreed by most researchers to be one of the most inaccurate of all of the American censuses.”<sup>18</sup> This census greatly undercounted African Americans throughout the country. Despite these obstacles, Guyette has compiled a list of Afro-Vermonters from 1790 to 1870. This article builds on her research through a study of the 1880 and 1900 censuses, which are much more reliable than the 1870 census. Those interested in using the census for black history in the late nineteenth century are also hampered by the loss of the 1890 census, which was destroyed by a fire in Washington, D.C. Thus, in trying to understand rates of persistence, particularly for the two most reliable censuses (1880 and 1900), historians are faced with a twenty-year gap.

In the case of Burlington, city directories partially compensate for this gap. Beginning in the mid-1880s, the directories designated some individuals as “colored.” They also list residence and sometimes occupation. As there was population movement in and out of Burlington between census years the city directories offer glimpses of individual African Americans who were not enumerated in the census. This is particularly helpful for obtaining names of people who might have arrived after the 1880 census but left before the 1900 census. One example is Walter Stewart, who resided in the black neighborhood at 54 North Champlain Street and worked as a teamster in 1889/90.<sup>19</sup> He is not listed in either the 1880 or 1900 census and seems to have left Burlington in 1891.

The city directories, however, are not without problems. Some Afro-Burlingtonians are not listed as colored. For example, William Armstead, a mulatto barber from Virginia, was identified as colored in the 1886/87 city directory, but not listed as African American in the 1889/90 directory.<sup>20</sup> Used in combination, the census and local city directories are important sources for black history, but researchers must be aware of their inadequacies and attempt to work around the fragmentary nature of the information they provide.

#### PLACES OF ORIGIN

A diverse community of African American migrants made Burlington their home during the late nineteenth century. These settlers came as single men and women, nuclear families, and extended kinship networks, bringing various skills and work experiences with them. One example is John Moore, who was born in Maryland in 1824. He migrated to New York and married a native of that state named Mary. In 1862, Mary gave birth to their eldest daughter. Eventually, the family moved to Burlington, where John worked as a cook. By 1880 the Moore household included two more children and a pair of granddaughters who had

all been born in Vermont.<sup>21</sup> Mary Hazard, in contrast, moved to Vermont alone. She migrated from New York and worked as a servant in Burlington.<sup>22</sup> In 1880 Priscilla Johnson worked as a dressmaker. A single mother of two young children, she had left Massachusetts to settle in Burlington.<sup>23</sup> Originally from Tennessee, Henry Fitch married Virginia native Anna Fitch and both settled in Burlington.<sup>24</sup> In 1900 Frank States worked as a foreman in railroad construction after migrating to Burlington from Canada. During the same year, Laura Johnson, the niece of local barber Abial Anthony, left her native New York and migrated to Vermont to attend school.<sup>25</sup> Black migrants to Burlington, especially those from the southern United States and New York, were part of larger population shifts that partially defined the African American experience during the late nineteenth century.

One of the most definitive aspects of late-nineteenth-century North American history was the migration of various groups of people to and throughout the United States. European immigrants came to the U.S. after the Civil War in search of jobs that had become plentiful as a result of the rapidly industrializing economy. At the same time, as Canada's economy struggled, many of its citizens also sought work in the United States.<sup>26</sup> Many French Canadians found jobs in Burlington as the city industrialized.<sup>27</sup>

African Americans also hoped to find new lives outside of the post-Reconstruction South. Between 1880 and 1900, Southern blacks faced the destruction of their political rights, increased lynching, limited educational opportunities, and hostile race relations. The struggles associated with sharecropping or tenant farming made life in the Southern states difficult at best. As a result, many black Southerners looked for opportunities elsewhere. Tens of thousands of African Americans left the region for an uncertain future in Kansas; others went to urban areas and a few went to Africa.<sup>28</sup> Northern cities held out opportunities that hardly existed in the rural South. Large and small cities offered industrial work, better schools, decent wages, and exciting urban living in comparison to the boredom of rural life. The South suffered a net out-migration of 60,000 African Americans during the 1870s; this number jumped dramatically to 168,000 by the 1890s.<sup>29</sup> As a result of this out-migration, cities such as New York and Philadelphia experienced increases in their African American populations. Bangor, Boston, and Burlington were not major destinations of this migration, but as Lee notes, African Americans did resettle in New England.<sup>30</sup>

The migration of African Americans to Bangor, Boston, and Burlington suggests two questions: How did migrants know about these distant cities and why, especially in the case of Bangor and Burlington,

did they choose to settle in northern New England as opposed to Philadelphia or New York?

Black migration went beyond just a few major urban centers; it took place within a much wider context that constituted a “national network” of cities.<sup>31</sup> Bangor, Boston, and Burlington were part of this national network, but not highly desirable destinations among African American migrants. Historian Elizabeth Hafkin Pleck notes that even Boston was not popular among black migrants from the South. By the late nineteenth century, “most black Virginians went to New York, Pennsylvania, or New Jersey, and not to Massachusetts.”<sup>32</sup> But economic possibilities, she points out, resulted in some black Southerners seeking better opportunities in Boston.<sup>33</sup>

Burlington also offered several attractions to potential migrants from New York and the southeastern United States. First, as historian David Quigley demonstrates, extreme racial tensions in New York during the 1860s resulted in intensifying class differences that placed black Americans, especially those in poverty, at the lowest rung of society.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, increasing numbers of black migrants to New York City and the influx of European immigrants made competition for jobs fierce. Burlington, in contrast, had less overt racism, no legal discrimination, no racial restrictions on suffrage, and the possibility of better schools.<sup>35</sup>

Black people in New York or points further south probably found out about Burlington from family, kinship networks, and friends. Historians have emphasized the importance of family and friends in helping to encourage and organize black migration to various cities.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps the most important aspect of black family networking and organization was chain migration, a phenomenon common as well among white ethnic groups in the United States. According to John and Leatrice MacDonald, through chain migration “migrants learn of opportunities, are provided with transportation, and have initial accommodation and employment arranged by means of primary social relationships with previous migrants.”<sup>37</sup> These relationships were influential in the migration of black people to Boston. Pleck states that the decision of African Americans to migrate to that city “formed part of the history of the black family, insofar as family and friends, rather than recruiting agents, made it possible.” These family networks linked “the Tidewater to Wheeler Street,” and in the case of Afro-Burlington linked Intervale Avenue, North Champlain Street, and Elmwood Avenue with New York and Virginia.<sup>38</sup> Several black households in Burlington resulted from kinship networks. For example, in 1880, native New Yorker Eliza Anthony lived with her daughter and son-in-law. Her daughter, Nettie had moved to Burlington and married Vermont native George Williams.<sup>39</sup>

Twenty years later, the Williams household also included two elderly women from New York, one an aunt of George Williams and the other his mother-in-law.<sup>40</sup> Afro-Burlingtonians with relatives who stayed behind in Virginia or New York very likely maintained connections with them and were probably responsible for chain migration to Vermont.

The migration of southern- and northern-born blacks to Burlington connected this small community with the more substantial African American populations in Virginia and New York. In 1880, slightly more than half of Burlington's black population had been born inside the state.<sup>41</sup> The majority of those from outside of Vermont came from New York and Virginia. Other migrants came from Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, Tennessee, Connecticut, New Jersey, Louisiana, and Canada.<sup>42</sup> By 1900, Vermont-born black Burlingtonians had increased to more than two-thirds of the African American population. At the same time that the percentage of native born Vermonters increased among Burlington's black population, Vermont ranked last among New England states at the turn of the century in its ability to retain its native-born black population. Nearly 63 percent of Afro-Vermonters lived outside of the state in 1900.<sup>43</sup> But these migrants were part of a larger trend of general out-migration from Vermont during the late nineteenth century.<sup>44</sup> The black population in Burlington was highly mobile and relatively diverse. African Americans who had experienced slavery lived in the same Burlington neighborhoods and walked the same streets as free-born black people from Massachusetts; African Canadians also mixed with black people from the Caribbean.<sup>45</sup>

The migration of African Americans to Burlington can be better understood by comparing it to Bangor and Boston, which provides a broader picture of black migration to New England. Pleck has identified several trends among black migrants to Boston between 1870 and 1900 that also held true for African Americans who settled in Burlington. For example, many migrants to Boston were from Virginia and a high percentage of them were mulattoes.<sup>46</sup> Black Virginians also composed the vast majority of Southern migrants to Burlington and most of them were mulattoes.<sup>47</sup> The large number of mulatto migrants to Burlington was part of a broader trend of black migration into northern cities. Both Philadelphia and Boston attracted these lighter-skinned African Americans and this is significant because, as Pleck notes, "[u]nlike most black southerners, those in Boston were disproportionately urban, mulatto, literate, and from the Upper South." The same could be said for black Southerners in Burlington. These traits of black migrants "were also the attributes of the South's free blacks" and thus some blacks in Burlington and Boston may have been free even before the



conclusion of the Civil War. Also, it is not surprising that many of the skilled mulatto migrants from the South in Burlington brought specialized occupational knowledge to this city and obtained semiskilled and skilled jobs. In many Southern states mulattoes represented a separate class from African Americans and also enjoyed certain privileges that were not always extended to their darker brethren. Mulattoes were conscious of this difference and sometimes tried to find marriage partners of the same skin tone. In some ways, as historian James Oliver Horton points out, whites favored mulattoes and “sometimes” lighter African Americans separated themselves from darker African Americans. How these differences between darker and lighter African Americans played out in Burlington awaits a more sustained investigation than I can offer in this article.<sup>48</sup>

These migrants from Virginia to Burlington brought various work experiences, and migrated both with and without family members. For example, William Watkins, a mulatto, came to Burlington and found work as a janitor. His wife Lizzie had been born in New York.<sup>49</sup> John Stewart, another mulatto born in Virginia, migrated to Burlington and worked as a laborer as of 1880. Charles Short left Virginia and eventually found employment as a hotel waiter in Burlington.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps the best-known black Virginian migrant in Burlington during the late 1870s was George Washington Henderson. Born in Virginia in 1850, Henderson migrated north with a Vermont soldier whom he had worked for as a servant during the Civil War. After finishing secondary school, he attended the University of Vermont and graduated first in his class in 1877. Henderson earned an M.A. at the University of Vermont and took a Bachelors of Divinity at Yale in 1883. Henderson dedicated the rest of his life to education and taught at several secondary schools and colleges across the country.<sup>51</sup>

Despite the similarities among black migrants to New England, there were some significant differences. First, the majority of northern-born black migrants to Bangor were from Massachusetts,<sup>52</sup> and African Americans from Pennsylvania and New York were the two largest groups of black northerners in Boston (not including Massachusetts-born blacks who resided in Boston). In Burlington, Afro-New Yorkers made up the largest contingent and according to the census enumerators there was not one African American from Pennsylvania living in Burlington between 1880 and 1900.<sup>53</sup> Another significant difference between the African American populations in Burlington and Bangor and Boston was the presence of black people from Canada’s Maritime Provinces in the latter two cities. Lee notes that Canadians “comprised Black Bangor’s largest immigrant group.”<sup>54</sup> Also, Boston’s historic economic and social

connections along with its closeness by ship meant that some African Nova Scotians (and white Nova Scotians as well) sought employment in the bustling industrial market.<sup>55</sup> Burlington was close to Montreal, which did have a black community in the late nineteenth century, but Montreal had more industrial and other job opportunities than Halifax or any city in New Brunswick.

#### OCCUPATIONS

In many ways, the work patterns of African Americans in Bangor, Boston, and Burlington during the late nineteenth century had much in common with the struggles of free blacks in New England before the Civil War. In *Making a Living: The Work Experience of African-Americans in New England*, historians Robert Hall and Michael Harvey note that many blacks worked several different jobs to make ends meet.<sup>56</sup> The work that these African Americans found ranged from laboring in the dockyards to domestic service. Some black women worked outside of the home, took care of children, and performed other forms of household labor, as did women from other ethnic groups in Vermont.<sup>57</sup> Between 1790 and 1870, as Guyette notes, most Afro-Vermonters worked in menial employment and few achieved social mobility.<sup>58</sup> Although Guyette's work is about black people throughout Vermont, her conclusions about menial employment and limited economic mobility also hold true for black people in late-nineteenth-century Burlington.

After the Civil War, new opportunities for industrial jobs arose, but many black New Englanders were stuck in unskilled and sporadic employment that could be backbreaking and brutal. In Bangor, some black workers were "trapped in a makeshift economy that required them to piece together unskilled or service labor at different phases of their lives or from season to season."<sup>59</sup> In Boston, African Americans faced a discriminatory job market that "involved crowding black workers, especially newcomers, into low-wage labor."<sup>60</sup> More than 75 percent of black men in major northeastern cities including Boston, New York, and Philadelphia were employed in menial labor at the turn of the century.<sup>61</sup> This section explores the employment patterns of Afro-Burlingtonians in 1880, skilled employment, the work of women, and occupational changes by 1900.<sup>62</sup>

Despite Burlington's economic expansion, few African Americans found employment in the city's burgeoning industries and in most cases were relegated to unskilled jobs. Moreover, there were no black doctors, lawyers, ministers or teachers.<sup>63</sup> Still, Afro-Burlingtonians worked in various occupations ranging from barbers to domestic servants. The complexity of black Burlington's employment patterns mirrored broader

trends among the city's white population. As historian T.D. Seymour Bassett notes, "Burlingtonians were heterogeneous in occupations."<sup>64</sup> The 1880 and 1900 United States censuses offer a general profile for understanding the various tasks that black people in Burlington undertook to feed their families.

In 1880, nearly three-quarters of African American men and women in Burlington worked in menial or unskilled occupations. These jobs included cook, janitor, washerwoman, bakery worker, hotel waiter, and porter.<sup>65</sup> The majority of unskilled workers were listed by census takers as laborers or servants of one type or another.<sup>66</sup> These nondescript terms could have included the plying of numerous tasks from working on roads to picking up garbage to shoveling snow, depending on what was available during a given season. This type of labor was not exclusive to African Americans, as some white working people also found different jobs depending on the season.<sup>67</sup> Overall, in 1880, 68 percent of black men in Burlington were employed in unskilled jobs.<sup>68</sup> In comparison to French-Canadian workers in Burlington in 1870, Afro-Burlingtonians fared a bit better. In her study of the French-Canadian community, Betsey Beattie notes that 71.5 percent of men were employed in semi/unskilled labor (if we include factory and farm labor the percentage would be over 75), while approximately 21 percent worked in skilled jobs.<sup>69</sup>

Approximately one-third of Afro-Burlingtonian men held skilled positions in 1880. These occupations included carpenter, printer, barber, and shoemaker. Perhaps these men constituted Burlington's African American middle class. Most of the skilled black workers were mulattoes and the vast majority had obtained literacy. The majority of these men worked as barbers.<sup>70</sup> For example, in 1886–87, barber George Williams employed four black men including Abial Anthony, Jacob Bland, and William Davis, who were all listed as barbers in the 1880 census.<sup>71</sup> Also, George Williams and William Armstead were both listed in the business section of the city directory in 1889/90.<sup>72</sup> Four years later, Abial Anthony was listed in the business section.<sup>73</sup> For African Americans in Boston and Burlington, working as a barber was a middle-class occupation with a steady income and respectable clientele. The other skilled trades of Afro-Burlingtonians, such as shoemaking, also provided steady family income. As a result, most wives of skilled black male workers stayed at home.<sup>74</sup>

The employment patterns of black women in Burlington matched their counterparts in Boston and show many similarities to black females in Bangor as well. One of the dominant forms of work for African American women in Bangor was domestic service, while others worked as washerwomen. The vast majority of Afro-Burlingtonian women in

1880 who worked outside the home labored as domestic servants or washerwomen. Examples include Maria Moore and Rebecca Fields (domestics) and Martha James and Hattie Wyatt (washerwomen). It is possible that some washerwomen in Burlington and Bangor ran their own businesses. The one black female skilled worker identified in the 1880 census was a dressmaker.<sup>75</sup> The trend of black women working in domestic service can be found among women from other ethnic groups in Vermont. For example, Irish women in Northfield who worked outside of the home also generally labored as domestic servants.<sup>76</sup>

Although the vast majority of black women in Burlington did not formally work outside the home, it is possible that they participated in an informal economy, which could have included street vending, house-to-house sales of various items, or midwifery. One household consisted of three women, two fifty-year-old sisters and a daughter only nineteen, none of whom supposedly worked outside of the home.<sup>77</sup> But in order to survive, these women had to have some form of income. Whatever the case, the small number of women working outside of the home could have been the result of personal choice. The tendency of black women, especially married ones, to remain in the home was also similar to Irish women in Northfield. As historian Gene Sessions notes, "it was rare in Northfield for a married Irish woman to have a job of any kind away from her home, regardless of the family's economic condition."<sup>78</sup>

It is difficult to know definitively why most black women stayed home, but it is possible to offer some tentative explanations. Perhaps having African American women remain at home was an attempt to claim respectable middle-class ideals. Alternatively, black women may have found staying home and raising children more rewarding than facing a discriminatory job market.<sup>79</sup> There are many instances of women who chose not to work outside of the home in Burlington; the Kelley family presents one example. In 1880, the head of household, James Kelley, was a carpenter and, possibly due to his income, his wife Jane had been "keeping house." But four out of the couple's five sons, including the eleven year old, worked in various jobs. The census taker described the couple's niece, a twenty-year-old woman, as doing "nothing."<sup>80</sup> Stay-at-home African American women were also married to men who held unskilled jobs. For example, in 1880, twenty-one-year-old Henry Fitch worked as a laborer, while his wife stayed at home and took care of their young baby. Mary Moore stayed at home, and her husband worked as a cook. The couple's household also included three children and two grandchildren who were either at school or stayed home. Alfred Neil worked as a laborer, and his income was enough to support his wife and two daughters who went to school.<sup>81</sup>

By 1900, the occupational structure of Afro-Burlingtonians had changed for the worse. The percentage of laborers increased and African Americans participated in new forms of menial employment including bootblack, coachman, and peddler. The number of black barbers in Burlington also decreased between 1880 and 1900. Overall, the proportion of skilled workers among Afro-Burlingtonians decreased to only 17 percent by the turn of the century.<sup>82</sup> The increases in unskilled occupations among Afro-Burlingtonians are even more disquieting if we compare them with the Irish in Northfield. In 1900, only 25 percent of Irish men in this small town worked in “unskilled” occupations, which marked a substantial decrease from the 50 percent of Irish male workers employed in menial jobs twenty years earlier.<sup>83</sup> Yet, this difference between Afro-Burlingtonians and the Irish in Northfield mirrored patterns in Boston, where Stephan Thernstrom and Pleck note the differences in occupational mobility between African Americans and Irish Americans. There are several possible explanations for these disparities ranging from racial discrimination to the longevity of certain residents in Boston.<sup>84</sup>

It is difficult to account for the increase in unskilled laboring jobs among Afro-Burlingtonians. Competition from new migrants may have pushed African Americans out of certain jobs or perhaps racial discrimination relegated local blacks to the most menial and sporadic forms of employment. Most historians agree that the nadir of race relations in the post bellum United States was around the turn of the century, and this might be reflected in the changes to black occupations in Burlington.

#### RATES OF PERSISTENCE

The issue of persistence is one of the most significant questions historians can ask about the black community in Burlington. Very few individuals who had lived in Burlington in 1880 remained in the city by the time of the 1900 census. But the trend of migration into and out of Burlington occurred among various groups, not just Afro-Burlingtonians. For example, Bassett states that “[n]early half of the almost five thousand [French Canadians in Burlington] in 1870 had left by 1880.”<sup>85</sup> It is important to acknowledge that census enumerators could have missed certain individuals, and some black residents of Burlington in 1880 could have died before the 1900 census.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, examining rates of persistence can be challenging primarily because of name changes. For example, George Williams’s wife is listed as Nettie in the 1880 census, while the enumerator listed her as Hattie in the 1900 census. It is clear that these two names are actually the same person because of age (30 in 1880 and 49 in 1900), place of birth, and parents’ place of birth (all New York). Another fascinating example is Eliza Anthony. Between 1880

and 1900, Eliza changed her surname to Mingo, possibly because of the death of her husband or due to another marriage, but this is unlikely because she was in her early sixties in 1880. The mother-in-law of George Williams, she lived in the Williams household in 1880 and 1900. Despite the name change, Eliza's age, place of birth, and parents' place of birth make it clear that Eliza Anthony and Eliza Mingo were the same person.<sup>87</sup>

The data about black people abandoning Burlington and arriving between 1880 and 1900 is astonishing. Although the population of black Burlington remained approximately the same in 1880 and 1900 (about 115 people), only 18 individuals listed in the earlier census can be found in the 1900 census.<sup>88</sup> This section considers who stayed, who left, and why. Also, the city directories for 1889/90, 1895, and 1899 are examined to check rates of persistence over shorter time periods.

Several factors seem to have been important in determining who decided to stay in Burlington including nativity, occupational status, and family connections. The persisters represented about 16 percent of the black population who had been included in the 1880 census. These 18 individuals included eight men, six women, and four children (age 16 and under in 1880).<sup>89</sup> The majority were native Vermonters, but probably more indicative of those who stayed is occupational stability and sometimes economic mobility. For example, as discussed earlier, Abial Anthony and George Williams had both been successful barbers during the late nineteenth century. Williams remained in Burlington along with his wife, son, daughter, mother-in-law, and aunt; while in 1900 Anthony lived with his wife, one daughter, and a niece.<sup>90</sup> Another barber, Jacob Bland, also remained in Burlington. Two janitors from Virginia, William Watkins and Madison Paxton, also stayed in Burlington. John Jones, who had worked as a laborer in 1880, became a fireman by 1900. The rate of persistence among children was also very small. Only four children listed in the 1880 census remained in Burlington by 1900.<sup>91</sup> These children, three females and one male, included the daughters of George Williams and Abial Anthony. At the turn of the century, Victoria Williams did not work outside of the home, while Grace Anthony found employment as a nurse. Gertrude Freeman, a niece of George Williams, was only sixteen years old in 1880. Before the turn of the century, she had married a man by the last name of Kelley and had two children. Unfortunately, her husband died and she moved into the home of her mother, Rachel, who had also stayed in Vermont in this decade and worked as a cook.<sup>92</sup>

The black people who left Burlington represented a much larger group than those who stayed and it is difficult to draw many conclu-

sions from this group because it was so much larger. However, a few tentative points can be made. Nearly 84 percent of black people in Burlington in 1880 did not reside in the city by 1900.<sup>93</sup> Those who migrated to other places included men, women, children, native Vermonters, and non-natives. Not surprisingly, both single people and entire families left Burlington. Some children of parents who stayed in Burlington made a decision to leave. For example, one of Abial Anthony's children, Albert (age eight in 1880), was not listed in the 1900 census. Albert did remain in Burlington for a few years during the 1890s and worked as a carpet layer, but probably left before the turn of the century.<sup>94</sup> Also, the eight-year-old daughter of George Williams in 1880 did not reside in Burlington by 1900. Benjamin Paxton and Emma Watkins, the young children of Madison and William respectively, both had left Burlington by 1900. These children who left Burlington were native Vermonters, from economically stable families, but still seem to have left their city of birth and perhaps the state. In some cases, entire families left Burlington and some of these people had many children under sixteen as of 1880. It is unlikely that all the children died. In fact, they probably left Burlington to seek opportunities elsewhere. For example, James and Hattie Wyatt had three children under age sixteen in 1880. But by 1900 the Wyatt children were gone. John Wyatt, the son of James and Hattie, left Burlington in 1892 and migrated to New York. Catherine and Mary Neil, the daughters of two Virginian parents who had settled in Burlington, were both born in Vermont. During the 1880s, they attended school in Burlington, but by 1900 they no longer resided in the city. The majority of children of Afro-Burlingtonians in 1880 did not reside there by the turn of the century. Perhaps, despite being raised in Burlington, they did not want to stay because their opportunities for social and economic improvement seemed limited.<sup>95</sup>

The Burlington city directories during the late nineteenth century occasionally recorded that certain individuals had left the city and also mentioned where they relocated. Although this information is fragmentary, it does offer a glimpse into the various places that Afro-Burlingtonians migrated. Some of this out-migration was local. For example, during the 1890s Annie Fitch moved to Essex Junction, while Louis Johnson "removed to St. Albans."<sup>96</sup> Others left Burlington for more distant locations. Charles Johnson went to Atlanta in 1898, and Alfred Davis moved to New York City one year later.<sup>97</sup> It is not always clear why these people left Burlington, but the personal story of James Wyatt seems to be one of frustration. In 1894, he had completed his secondary schooling and was enrolled as a student at the University of Vermont. But the following year he worked as a porter at 91 Church Street. In 1896,

the city directory did not list him as employed anywhere. In 1898, Wyatt left Burlington for New York City.<sup>98</sup>

The high rate of desertion of Afro-Burlingtonians over the last twenty years of the nineteenth century must be understood in the context of the destroyed 1890 census. In an effort to remedy this and take a different snapshot of the community, I have compared the 1889/90 and 1895 city directories to track rates of persistence over a much shorter time period. It must be noted that the city directories were hardly comprehensive listings of black people in Burlington. Instead, they identified heads of household and sometimes others within a particular household. The 1889/90 directory identified 45 African Americans, while the 1895 city directory edition listed 50 individuals. The rates of persistence for this five-year period are much higher in comparison to the persistence of black people between the 1880 and 1900 censuses. Of the 45 people listed in 1889/90, 25 still lived in Burlington in 1895.<sup>99</sup> In other words, about 56 percent of blacks listed in the earlier city directory remained in Burlington five years later.

However, comparing the city directories for 1889/90 and 1899 produces another picture of persistence. The 1899 directory listed only thirty-two African Americans, a drop of thirteen individuals (29 percent) from the beginning of the decade. However because the total population remained stable during the 1890s, at around 115 according to the census returns, it is unlikely that this decrease registered in the city directories actually reflects any serious loss of black people. It is more likely that this decline was the result of the city directory simply missing or failing to record certain black families. Whatever the case, 20 African Americans (44 percent) in the 1889/90 city directory still resided in Burlington as of 1899.<sup>100</sup> The rates of persistence among African Americans in Burlington were higher in a ten-year period of city directories than in the twenty-year period inbetween the two most reliable censuses of the late nineteenth century. But the city directories did not include young children so it is impossible to assess the rate of persistence among children. Overall, the rate of persistence among African Americans in Burlington during the late nineteenth century was low. It is interesting to note that this figure was not much different from the rate of persistence among French Canadians in Burlington between 1870 and 1880. Both cases should be understood within a wider context of renewal in Burlington. Indeed, as Bassett points out, “[m]any people moved in and out while the Queen City flourished.”<sup>101</sup> As the black population held at approximately 115 during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century, given the low rate of persistence, several new African Americans moved to Burlington. How newer arrivals interacted with older residents is a question for future researchers to consider.



### RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS

During the late nineteenth century, despite significant changes to the black population because of migration, the residential patterns of African Americans remained relatively stable. Between 1886 and 1900, according to the city directories, the majority of the black community, not including servants of wealthy whites, lived in the city's North End, usually within a few doors or blocks of one another and alongside many French Canadians. Also some Afro-Burlingtonians lived in extended households. In 1886, Marion and Fred Davis boarded at 20 Intervale with Arthur Davis, while a few doors down, John Wyatt boarded at the residence of Harry [Henry?] Fitch. Other black people lived in the near vicinity at streets such as Elmwood, North, Lafountain, and Peru.<sup>102</sup> Four years later, black people continued to live in the same neighborhood.

In 1890, Willard Kelley lived a few doors down from Abial Anthony.<sup>103</sup> Charity Freeman lived near Willard Kelley at 215 Elmwood Avenue.<sup>104</sup> Born in Vermont, Freeman had lived in New York and given birth to a daughter there in 1861 before returning to Vermont by 1880. In 1890, several African American families listed in the Burlington city directory lived on Elmwood Avenue, and others resided within close proximity. The majority of black people lived within a few blocks of one another at Intervale Avenue and North Champlain Street.<sup>105</sup> Ten years later, most African Americans in Burlington still resided at Elmwood and North Champlain, but only a few remained at Intervale.<sup>106</sup> This general pattern of residential continuity suggests that even if a large segment of the black population in Burlington was transitory, those who remained for more than a few years were able to carve out residential space that would be occupied by other African Americans after earlier black residents had left the city.

### CONCLUSION

Historians can draw a few conclusions about African Americans in Burlington in the last two decades of the century. First, the population remained around 115 people. Second, the majority of Afro-Burlingtonians were native Vermonters, but a significant minority came from Virginia and New York. Third, the majority of black people in Burlington worked unskilled jobs and the percentage of those working in menial occupations increased during the late nineteenth century. Fourth, the rate of persistence among African Americans in Burlington was low. Entire families left the city between the 1880 and 1900 census. However, the rate of persistence for black people over shorter time periods, such as five or ten years, was higher, hovering around 40 or 50 percent. Fifth, despite the high rate of migration in and out of the black community in

Burlington, African Americans lived nearby one another in a compact and distinct neighborhood.

Although these conclusions are limited, it is possible to offer several more intriguing possibilities about the black experience during the late nineteenth century by asking questions. First, why did the Irish in Northfield achieve upward social and economic mobility, while the general trend among Afro-Burlingtonians seems to point to downward mobility? The downward mobility of the local black population suggests that racism limited job opportunities. Scholar Noel Ignatiev has written about how the Irish eventually became accepted as white Americans and this acceptance, in the case of Vermont, probably opened up opportunities for social mobility that were denied to Afro-Burlingtonians.<sup>107</sup>

Given the possibility of racism limiting job opportunities, it is important to ask why Afro-Burlingtonians did not develop an African American church or any long-lasting exclusively black social organizations. Certainly, these institutions often arose elsewhere as buffers against racism and job discrimination. Several interpretations are possible depending on whether historians want to see Afro-Burlingtonian history in a negative or positive light. The experience of black people in Burlington may be seen as negative in several ways: patterns of out-migration and immigration, downward economic mobility, small degree of home ownership, and the lack of community institutions. Perhaps the absence of social institutions contributed to making the black experience in Burlington unstable. Alternatively, it is possible that population fluctuation impeded the formation of stable social institutions. In contrast, there were some positive aspects to Afro-Burlingtonian life between 1880 and 1900. The community did have some families who achieved economic mobility. A few individuals owned their homes or small businesses such as barber shops. The younger generation attended schools and achieved literacy. It is possible that the absence of the church and social organizations reflected a conscious attempt of Afro-Burlingtonians to eschew segregated institutions in favor of integration into the city's mainstream by attending predominantly white churches and schools.

This paper may ask more questions than it answers. But, to stimulate further research, historians need a base to work from to ponder more significant and complex questions. Why did Afro-Burlingtonians have a "colored" society during the late 1870s that was no longer "colored" by the mid-1880s? Did Afro-Burlingtonians pursue a conscious strategy of integration? How did light-skinned African Americans get along with their darker neighbors? Did white Burlingtonians treat lighter African Americans differently from darker-skinned ones? Given the high rate of migration in and out of Burlington, how did older and more perma-

ment residents interact with new arrivals? Was there tension in these relationships between older and newer residents or were both groups mutually supportive of one another? What was the relationship between black people and French Canadians? How much interracial marriage occurred in Burlington and what can this tell us about broader interactions between blacks and Irish or French Canadians? The answers to these questions may be difficult to discover, but the history of black people in an overwhelmingly white state is an area for inquiry that may tell us additional and perhaps different stories about the black experience in late-nineteenth-century America.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the anonymous peer reviewers for their insightful comments that helped me partially understand Vermont history. Michael Sherman and Alan Berolzheimer offered outstanding critiques and suggestions that made the article publishable. I must also thank the following individuals for their willingness to read drafts of this essay and for their advice: Dona Brown, Elise Guyette, Jeff Marshall, Paul Searls, Jane Williamson, and the staff of Special Collections at the University of Vermont. My graduate research assistant, Clayton J. Trutor, has helped me sort out many ideas.

<sup>2</sup> 1880 United States Census, Population Schedules of the Tenth Census of the United States.

<sup>3</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1889–90*, 66.

<sup>4</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1892*, 83.

<sup>5</sup> 1900 United States Census, Population Schedules of the Twelfth Census of the United States; *Burlington City Directory, 1900*, 70.

<sup>6</sup> 1900 United States Census.

<sup>7</sup> The historiography of Afro-Vermonters or subjects that partially focus on African Americans includes, but is not limited to: David Work, "The Buffalo Soldiers in Vermont, 1909–1913," *Vermont History* 73 (Winter/Spring 2005): 63–75; Kari J. Winter, *The Blind African Slave: Or Memoirs of Boyrereau Brinch, Nicknamed Jeffrey Brace* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004); John Saillant, *Black Puritan, Black Republican: The Life and Thought of Lemuel Haynes, 1753–1833* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Stephen M. Wrinn, *Civil Rights in the Whitest State: Vermont's Perceptions of Civil Rights, 1945–1968* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1998); Elsie B. Smith, "William J. Anderson: Shoreham's Negro Legislator in the Vermont House of Representatives," *Vermont History* 44 (Fall 1976): 203–213; John M. Lovejoy, "Racism in Antebellum Vermont," *Vermont History* 69 (Winter 2001): 48–65; Alice McShane, ed., "In Their Own Words: Reading, Writing, and War, A Vermonter's Experience in the Port Royal Experiment, 1863–1871," *Vermont History* 67 (Summer/Fall 1999): 101–114; Arthur O. White, "Prince Saunders: An Instance of Social Mobility among Antebellum New England Blacks," *Journal of Negro History* 60 (October 1975): 526–535; Randolph A. Roth, "The First Radical Abolitionists: The Reverend James Milligan and the Reformed Presbyterians of Vermont," *New England Quarterly* 55 (December 1982): 540–563; John L. Myers, "The Beginnings of Anti-Slavery Agencies in Vermont, 1832–1836," *Vermont History* 36 (Summer 1968): 126–141 [please note this article has a different title in the table of contents]; Marshall M. True, "Slavery in Burlington?: An Historical Note," *Vermont History* 50 (Fall 1982): 227–231; J. Kevin Graffagnino, "Vermont Attitudes Toward Slavery: The Need For A Closer Look," *Vermont History* 45 (Winter 1977): 31–35.

<sup>8</sup> T.D. Seymour Bassett, *The Growing Edge: Vermont Villages, 1840–1880* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1992), 197–221; Michael Sherman, Gene Sessions, and P. Jeffrey Potash, *Freedom and Unity: A History of Vermont* (Barre: Vermont Historical Society, 2004), 290–292; Elin Anderson, *We Americans: A Study of Cleavage in an American City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937); Betsy Beattie, "Migrants and Millworkers: The French Canadian Population of Burlington and Colchester, 1860–1870," *Vermont History* 60 (Spring 1992): 95–117; Betsy Beattie, "Community-Building in Uncertain Times: The French Canadians of Burlington and Colchester, 1850–1860," *Vermont History* 57 (Spring 1989): 84–102.

<sup>9</sup> Between 1860 and 1900, Afro-Vermonters never made up more than 0.3 percent of the total state population. In 1860, 709 African Americans lived in Vermont, but this number increased ten years



later to 924. In 1880, the black population reached its peak for the period with 1,057 individuals, but then decreased to only 826 in 1900. The percentage of southern-born blacks in Vermont remained above 10 percent during the period and was 22 and 23 percent in 1870 and 1900, respectively.

<sup>10</sup>Elise A. Guyette, "Black Lives and White Racism in Vermont, 1760–1870," (MA Thesis, University of Vermont, 1992), 152–156; Sherman, Sessions, and Potash, *Freedom and Unity*, 627–628; *Report on Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895), 556; *Census Reports Volume I: Twelfth Census of the United States Taken In The Year 1900* (Washington: United States Census Office, 1901), 682; 1880 United States Census; 1900 United States Census. The numbers in parenthesis are the totals that I found in the census. For the 1880 and 1900 census of Burlington, I identified 115 and 116 African Americans respectively from the population schedules. The published reports list the figures of African Americans in 1880 and 1900 as 116 and 115 respectively. The numbers used in this paper for the percentage of blacks in Burlington or for work patterns should be understood as generally correct. Of course, no historian's work is beyond reproach and it is possible that another researcher might find more names.

<sup>11</sup>Maureen Elgersman Lee, *Black Bangor: African Americans in a Maine Community, 1880–1950* (Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2005), 89–95.

<sup>12</sup>*Burlington City Directory, 1879–1881*. Lodge No. 8 was not listed in the 1881–1883 directory, but reappeared in the directories of the mid-1880s without being listed as colored.

<sup>13</sup>David Fahey, *Temperance and Racism: John Bull, Johnny Reb, and the Good Templars* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996).

<sup>14</sup>Anderson, *We Americans*, 124–186, 202–257; on page 40, Anderson noted that the subjects of her study did not want to live near black people or the Chinese. Perhaps these attitudes partially explain black people's limited assimilation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

<sup>15</sup>Lee, *Black Bangor*, xv. Other treatments of African American history during the late nineteenth century include, but are not limited to, the following: Rayford Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro: From Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* (1965; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1997); Elizabeth Hafkin Pleck, *Black Migration and Poverty: Boston 1865–1900* (New York: Academic Press, 1979); Richard Paul Fuke, *Imperfect Equality: African Americans and the Confines of White Racial Attitudes in Post-Emancipation Maryland* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999); Jane Dailey, *Before Jim Crow: The Politics of Race in Postemancipation Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Jeffrey R. Kerr-Ritchie, *Freedpeople in the Tobacco South: Virginia, 1860–1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Allison Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875–1906* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004); Michael J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society, 1874–1947* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Heather Cox Richardson, *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865–1901* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Gerald David Jaynes, *Branches Without Roots: Genesis of the Black Working Class in the American South, 1862–1882* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Leon F. Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998); Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003); W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Louis R. Harlan, *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1856–1901* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972); David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868–1919* (New York: Henry Holt, 1993); Patricia A. Schechter, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett and American Reform, 1880–1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Howard N. Rabinowitz, *Race Relations in the Urban South, 1865–1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

<sup>16</sup>Guyette, "Black Lives"; Elise A. Guyette, "The Working Lives of African Vermonters in Census and Literature, 1790–1870," *Vermont History* 61 (Spring 1993): 69–84.

<sup>17</sup>Census takers were not always circumspect or careful when enumerating African Americans. Elise Guyette discusses some of these problems, see "Black Lives," 60–61; on the limitations of the census in regard to the black population in nineteenth-century Boston, see Pleck, *Black Migration*, 214–218; Kris Inwood and Richard Reid, "Introduction: The Use of Census Manuscript Data for Historical Research," *Social History* 28 (November 1995): 301–311; on the problems of the census in North America see Bruce Curtis, *The Politics of Population: State Formation, Statistics, and the Census of Canada, 1840–1875* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

<sup>18</sup>Richard Reid, "The 1870 United States Census and Black Underenumeration: A Test Case from North Carolina," *Social History* 28 (November 1995): 488. The period 1880 to 1900 is distinct in the history of black Burlington as the population jumped from 77 to 115 between 1870 and 1880. Also, some African Americans migrated to the city after 1870 including Madison Paxton and Jacob Bland, who left Rutland County for Burlington. These two men and parts of their families would remain in Burlington for the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. For Guyette's work, see Database of Center for Rural Studies, University of Vermont. Guyette's census work is available at

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the website: [www.historyharvest.org/census/africanamerican.html](http://www.historyharvest.org/census/africanamerican.html); Raeone Christensen Steuart, *Vermont 1870 Census Index* (Bountiful: Heritage Quest, 2000).

<sup>19</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1889–90*, 219.

<sup>20</sup> 1880 United States Census; see *Burlington City Directory, 1886–87*, 5; *Burlington City Directory, 1889–90*, 67.

<sup>21</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* All of the couples discussed in this paper were black. Although some interracial marriages are evident in the 1880 and 1900 censuses, this difficult topic deserves more attention than this study can offer.

<sup>25</sup> 1900 United States Census.

<sup>26</sup> The Maritime Provinces suffered high out-migration. The classic study of this phenomenon is Alan A. Brookes, "Out-Migration from the Maritime Provinces, 1860–1900: Some Preliminary Considerations," *Acadiensis* 5 (Spring 1976): 26–55; the revisionist interpretation is Patricia A. Thornton, "The Problem of Out-Migration from Atlantic Canada, 1871–1921: A New Look," *Acadiensis* 15 (Autumn 1985): 3–34.

<sup>27</sup> Bassett, *The Growing Edge*, 175–196.

<sup>28</sup> Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction* (1976; reprint, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977); more generally on black migration and settlement in the west, see Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528–1990* (New York: Norton, 1998); on the Liberian Exodus of 1877, see Stephen W. Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and African-American Religion in the South* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992).

<sup>29</sup> Lee, *Black Bangor*, 6.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* 7.

<sup>31</sup> Joe William Trotter, Jr., "Conclusion, Black Migration Studies: The Future," in Joe William Trotter, Jr., ed., *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class, and Gender* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 147.

<sup>32</sup> Pleck, *Black Migration*, 58.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* 55–61.

<sup>34</sup> David Quigley, *Second Founding: New York City, Reconstruction and the Making of American Democracy* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004); David N. Gellman and David Quigley, eds., *Jim Crow New York: A Documentary History of Race and Citizenship, 1777–1877* (New York: New York University Press, 2003).

<sup>35</sup> 1900 United States Census.

<sup>36</sup> The importance of kinship networks is discussed in various geographic locations in Trotter, ed., *The Great Migration*; Pleck, *Black Migration*, 63–67.

<sup>37</sup> John S. MacDonald and Leatrice D. MacDonald, "Chain Migration, Ethnic Neighborhood Formation and Social Networks," *Milbank Memorial Fund* 42 (1964): 82, cited in Earl Lewis, "Expectations, Economic Opportunities, and Life in the Industrial Age: Black Migration to Norfolk, Virginia, 1910–1945," in *Great Migration*, 24.

<sup>38</sup> Pleck, *Black Migration*, 64.

<sup>39</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>40</sup> 1900 United States Census.

<sup>41</sup> 1880 United States Census. In 1880 the enumeration of the birthplaces of African Americans in Burlington were: 62 Vermont, 22 New York, 15 Virginia, 5 Massachusetts, 2 Maryland, 2 Canada, 1 South Carolina, 1 Connecticut, 1 Tennessee, 1 New Jersey, 1 United States, 1 Louisiana, 1 District of Columbia.

<sup>42</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Negro Population in the United States, 1790–1915* (New York: Arno Press, 1968), 71.

<sup>44</sup> Sherman, Sessions, and Potash, *Freedom and Unity*, 287–290.

<sup>45</sup> 1900 United States Census. Black hotel worker James Virgin was from Bermuda.

<sup>46</sup> Pleck, *Black Migration*, 52–53; Steven J. Hoffman, *Race, Class, and Power in the Building of Richmond, 1870–1920* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2004); Kerr-Ritchie, *Freedpeople in the Tobacco South*; Pleck, *Black Migration*, 57–60. The term mulatto was used to describe biracial Americans during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Today, the term has been abandoned in favor of the word biracial or multiracial.

<sup>47</sup> The 1880 census for Burlington included a designation for mulattoes. In the 1880 census a substantial number of African Americans (from Vermont and other states) were listed as mulattoes; see 1880 United States Census.

<sup>48</sup> Pleck, *Black Migration*, 53; on the advantages of mulattoes in nineteenth century America, see

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James Oliver Horton, *Free People of Color: Inside the African American Community* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1993), 122–144.

<sup>49</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>50</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>51</sup> This information about George Washington Henderson is available at [www.vermontcivilwar.org/units/8/henderson.php](http://www.vermontcivilwar.org/units/8/henderson.php) (website accessed April 8, 2006).

<sup>52</sup> Lee, *Black Bangor*, 8–9; 1880 United States Census; 1900 United States Census.

<sup>53</sup> Pleck, *Black Migration*, 46; 1880 United States Census; 1900 United States Census.

<sup>54</sup> Lee, *Black Bangor*, 13; Pleck, *Black Migration*, 47–49, 92–93.

<sup>55</sup> Harvey Amani Whitfield, *Blacks on the Border: The Black Refugees in British North America, 1815–1860* (Burlington: University of Vermont Press; Hanover: University Press of New England, 2006).

<sup>56</sup> Robert L. Hall and Michael M. Harvey, eds., *Making a Living: The Work Experience of African-Americans in New England, Selected Readings* (Boston: New England Foundation for the Humanities, 1995), 132.

<sup>57</sup> Gene Sessions, “‘Years of Struggle’: The Irish in the Village of Northfield, 1845–1900,” *Vermont History* 55 (Spring 1987): 69–95.

<sup>58</sup> Guyette, “Working Lives of Afro-Vermonters,” 69–84.

<sup>59</sup> Lee, *Black Bangor*, 52.

<sup>60</sup> Pleck, *Black Migration*, 129.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 128, 104.

<sup>62</sup> James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, *Black Bostonians: Family Life and Community Struggle in the Antebellum North* (1979; reprint, New York: Holmes and Meier, 1999), 10.

<sup>63</sup> 1880 United States Census; 1900 United States Census.

<sup>64</sup> Bassett, *The Growing Edge*, 197.

<sup>65</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Bassett, *The Growing Edge*, 208–210.

<sup>68</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>69</sup> Beattie, “Migrants and Millworkers,” 103.

<sup>70</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>71</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1886–87*, 5, 19, 59; 1880 United States Census.

<sup>72</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1889–90*, 247–248.

<sup>73</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1894*, 265–266.

<sup>74</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> Sessions, “Years of Struggle,” 74.

<sup>77</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>78</sup> Sessions, “Years of Struggle,” 74.

<sup>79</sup> Sharon Harley, “For the Good of Family and Race: Gender, Work, and Domestic Roles in the Black Community, 1880–1930,” *Signs* 15 (Winter 1990): 337.

<sup>80</sup> 1880 United States Census.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*; 1900 United States Census.

<sup>83</sup> Sessions, “Years of Struggle,” 89.

<sup>84</sup> Pleck, *Black Migration*, 122–124; Stephan Thernstrom, *The Other Bostonians: Poverty and Progress in an American Metropolis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973).

<sup>85</sup> Bassett, *The Growing Edge*, 178.

<sup>86</sup> 1880 United States Census; 1900 United States Census.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*; 1900 United States Census. I have identified the following people as remaining in Burlington (they are listed by men, women, and children from 1880 census). Abial Anthony, George Williams, A. Davis, Leander Freeman (this person’s last name seems to be different in the 1900 census, but the ages, place of birth, and parents’ place of birth all match up; also Leander is listed in the 1900 city directory), William Watkins, Madison Paxton, Jacob Bland, John Jones, Clara Anthony, Mary Thomas, Nettie Williams, Eliza Anthony, Rachel Freeman, Gertrude Freeman, William Johnson, Grace Anthony, Victoria Williams, and Lucinda Smith.

<sup>89</sup> 1880 United States Census; 1900 United States Census.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*; *Burlington City Directory, 1895*, 75.

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<sup>95</sup> 1880 United States Census; 1900 United States Census.

<sup>96</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1896*, 137, 168.

<sup>97</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1898*, 166; *Burlington City Directory, 1899*, 111.

<sup>98</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1894*, 259; *Burlington City Directory, 1895*, 271; *Burlington City Directory, 1896*, 276; *Burlington City Directory, 1898*, 278.

<sup>99</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1889/90*; *Burlington City Directory, 1895*.

<sup>100</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1889/90*; *Burlington City Directory, 1899*.

<sup>101</sup> Bassett, *The Growing Edge*, 197.

<sup>102</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1886/87*.

<sup>103</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1889–90*, 147.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> *Burlington City Directory, 1900*.

<sup>107</sup> Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).