

# In Recognition of Their Prominence: A Case Study of the Economic and Social Backgrounds of an Ante- Bellum Negro Business and Farming Class in Lancaster County

Carl D. Oblinger

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## Preface

Social and political revolutions are based upon a few determinants. There must be a mass of men (identifiable through class, race, or some common interest), exploited, degraded, and estranged from the political process. There must also be leadership capable of exploiting these natural grievances in order to arouse the mass to shake off their oppressors. In the nineteenth century, the mass of unskilled blacks, exploited and held politically and economically impotent by their white employers, constituted a potentially revolutionary element. They were incapable of united and effective action, however, not only because of their vulnerable position in an overwhelmingly, powerful white society, but also because of the nature of black leadership. As Leslie H. Fishel, Jr. has noted recently:

The evolving social structure of the Northern Negro group could only become an inhibiting force to race unity and leadership. The evidence is scattered and the details obscure in this period, but it is

from which class most leadership sprang, and the colored masses almost as broad a chasm as between white and Negro leaders.<sup>1</sup>

This paper undertakes to study the social structure of a few local black communities in an attempt to answer why such a chasm existed between the two segments of the black community.

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## I

The twenty Negro barbers of Lancaster City and Columbia borough<sup>2</sup> who clipped the hair and shaved the beards of the white community in 1850 shared common economic and social backgrounds. They were all members of six well-to-do Negro families which had been present in the county for at least thirty years and which had accumulated property over the same length of time.<sup>3</sup> In each case, certain white abolitionists and Quakers had helped; property had either been sold to them at a low price or given to their parents. The barbers' contacts with these whites were not limited to business and economic transactions. The black barbers also acted in concert with these whites to fight the Columbia and Lancaster Colonization Societies<sup>4</sup>; they smuggled Negro fugitives into Lancaster County from the South; and they supported each other in local elections before 1838.<sup>5</sup>

Is there a similarly significant pattern of background traits typical of the upper Negro occupational structure as a whole of which barbers were a part? To answer this question I plan to study the economic and social backgrounds of an ante-bellum Negro business and farming group<sup>6</sup> in one Northern county. Specifically, I considered such factors as property ownership, birthplace, length of continuous residence, religious affiliation, schooling, and especially the extent and type of contacts with members of the white community. If I find a pattern, this will tell us a great deal about the economic and social differences long noted in other historical accounts between this Negro occupational group and the mass of common black laborers.

Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, is a particularly representative and appropriate place for a study of this nature. Most studies of Northern black communities to date have been made in urban areas.<sup>7</sup> Yet most Negroes in Northern states before the Civil War lived in predominantly rural counties.<sup>8</sup> In Pennsylvania, for example, approximately two-thirds of the state's 59,000 Negroes in 1860 lived in nine, rural southeastern counties. Lancaster was representative of these counties because it was rural, bordered a slave state, and had approximately the same white-Negro proportionate composition as the other eight southeastern counties. Furthermore, the manuscript sources necessary for a study of this type are available.<sup>9</sup>

I chose to study two urban communities and two southern rural townships in the county, since most Lancaster Negroes lived in the

southern part of the county and in these two urban areas.<sup>10</sup> The two townships selected, Drumore and Fulton, and the two urban communities, Lancaster City and Columbia borough, held approximately half of the 3,600 Negroes of the entire county during the 1850's<sup>11</sup> I thought it probable that the backgrounds of other Negro businessmen and farmers in the county could not be much different.

## II

I studied the economic and social backgrounds of each Negro listed as a farmer, artisan, or non-manual worker in either the 1850 or the 1860 census in the two townships and two communities selected. Of the approximately 400 Negro workers living in the four areas during the 1850's, seventy-five were in these three occupational classes.<sup>12</sup> Background information on the seventy-five men and their families was relatively easy to find. Most of these men had been in the county for at least one generation and consequently I could trace their exact length of residence, property ownership, and occupation through the local tax records. County Negroes whose economic and social backgrounds could not be traced through the tax lists were often the subject of newspaper reminiscences on the antebellum Negro community.<sup>13</sup> Almost all seventy-five men can be found in the local will and deed books. Furthermore, I extracted important information from local histories, manuscript collections in the Pennsylvania State Archives, church histories, county prison records, and a few secondary sources.<sup>14</sup>

After gathering all the possible background information on these seventy-five Negroes, I compared this information with the background data on the 340 unskilled and semi-skilled Negroes present in the 1850 or the 1860 censuses in the same four townships and communities of Lancaster County. In gathering background information on this latter group, I used the same materials and manuscript sources. I made this comparison on the assumption that if these seventy-five were indeed a distinct and significant group, the differences should be most observable in the economic and social backgrounds of the two groups.

There is a certain limitation in a study of this sort on the Negro occupational elite. It should not be assumed that occupation, the only index I have been able to use in this study, is the sole indicator of social status. Other variables such as residence, property, conjugal ties, and membership in fraternal and church organizations must be considered in order to ascertain an individual's social position in a community.

## III

Negroes found that opportunities for occupational advancement were severely circumscribed by the 1850's in Lancaster County.

The seventy-five Negroes in the occupational elite were fortunate in having secured their occupations during the 1850's. One-eighth of all Negroes were employed in skilled or non-manual labor in 1850, but only approximately one-tenth held such jobs in 1860.<sup>15</sup> These figures on occupations are more meaningful when they are broken down by community. In the 1850's, more economic opportunity was available in the urban communities than in the rural townships. By 1860, one in every five Negroes in Columbia or Lancaster City was a skilled artisan or non-manual worker. In contrast only one in every sixteen was a farmer or artisan in the rural townships.

Sixty-five of the seventy-five Negroes who achieved a position above a common laborer or domestic servant lived in the two urban communities of Lancaster County in the 1850's; and about one-third of them were barbers. About one-fourth held other skilled jobs, while the other Negroes were in the non-manual occupations. Except for the barbers, the skilled laborers held precarious jobs. Shoemaking all but disappeared in Columbia between 1850 and 1860, as did coppersmithing in Lancaster City. Barbering was usually a more secure and prestigious position; it appears that the four major barbering families of Columbia and the two barbering families of Lancaster City dominated this field between 1840-1870. The most prominent and secure members of the skilled and non-manual classes in the urban communities, though, were the three clergymen and one teacher present in the 1860 census and the two Columbia lumber merchants, James Burrill and William Whipper.

#### IV

The great majority (80%) of these skilled and professional men and their families had been present for more than one generation in Lancaster County.<sup>16</sup> Some of them had been born slaves in Columbia or Fulton township, while most of the other Negroes had come from other areas of Pennsylvania or the upper South.<sup>17</sup> A number of the Negroes descended from the earliest black county families had been able to build up profitable businesses in Columbia and to move their families out of the Negro ghetto that had formed there.

These Negroes ranged in age from seventeen to eighty. The skilled workers were a younger group than the proprietors, businessmen, and professionals.<sup>18</sup> Most of the skilled workmen were in their twenties and thirties. The non-manual workers were all over forty.

Nearly all of these Negroes in Columbia and Lancaster City were mulattoes, while only one of the ten in Fulton and Drumore township was light-skinned.<sup>19</sup> Skilled workers in the cities were overwhelmingly mulatto. About half the clergy, railroad agents, and clerks of the urban areas were black and half mulatto.

These Negroes appear to have had some education and much

business acumen. None were listed as illiterate in the 1850 or 1860 census. A few of their number, such as William Whipper, the Columbia lumberman, and Nick Pleasants, William Clegget, and Elijah Boston, the barbers, were able and intelligent businessmen. William Whipper, in particular, grew wealthy from his many shrewd speculations in property in Lancaster City, Columbia, and Philadelphia.<sup>20</sup> He and the Negro barbers of Columbia were also responsible for effectively organizing the Columbia blacks in opposition to the Columbia Colonization Society.<sup>21</sup>

The African Methodist Episcopal and African Baptist Churches dominated the religious life of the four black communities. The African Methodist meeting houses in Fulton township were the private property of the two prominent Negro families that produced the occupational and economic leaders of the township. In Lancaster City, the African Methodist Church, endowed by certain prominent whites, in the early 1820's, had a few select Negroes as trustees. Likewise in Columbia, the Baptist Church was the private preserve of the Negro lumbermen, having been erected and financed out of the pocket of William Whipper's partner, Stephen Smith.<sup>22</sup>

Nearly all of these Negroes owned property.<sup>23</sup> William Whipper's real estate holdings, which were evaluated at \$7,300 in the 1860 tax assessments, included one hundred feet of wharf space along the Susquehanna River, a two-story residence on Columbia's exclusive Front Street, and numerous other brick homes in Columbia and Lancaster. Most of the other seventy-four Negroes were not as fortunate as Whipper, but they all owned at least their own house and lot. Significantly, every Negro in Fulton township and in Columbia who advanced from unskilled labor to a higher occupational position during the 1850's owned property before this advance.<sup>24</sup>

Some of these Negroes had had personal, business and property contacts with certain key whites of Lancaster County. In Columbia, for example, the Negro barbers found early and continued support from the Quaker abolitionists in the form of land grants and loans. The lumber merchants, particularly Stephen Smith, James Burrill, and William Whipper, were financed, patronized, and protected by three Quaker families.<sup>25</sup> Most of the Negro businessmen of Lancaster city either were reared by some of the abolitionists in the surrounding rural townships or had been domestics and slaves in the homes of a few prominent men of the community.<sup>26</sup> There is no way to determine how long these personal contacts were maintained in Lancaster City, but the initial contacts were strong. In Fulton township, every farmer and skilled worker had received or had bought land at cheap prices from the wealthiest Quaker landowners in the township.<sup>27</sup> These thirty-three Negroes of the county having business and property transactions, as well as social intercourse, with a number of whites were the wealthiest black members of their communities.<sup>28</sup>

Thus by the 1850's the Lancaster County Negro businessman was usually a life-long resident of the county and had been a prop-

erty-holder before he had advanced to his present occupation. He was a young member or perhaps a middle-aged trustee of either the African Methodist Episcopal or Baptist Church in his community. If a non-manual worker, a barber, or a resident of Fulton township, he would certainly have had personal, business and property transactions in the past with some person in the white community. If wealthier than the rest of the Negroes in his class, he would quite possibly have been involved in the operations of the underground railroad and had extensive contact with a few of the more prominent Quaker abolitionists of the county.<sup>29</sup>

## V

The backgrounds of the 340 Negro semi-skilled and unskilled laborers of the four communities stood in sharp contrast to that of the seventy-five Negro farmers and businessmen. Less than ten per cent of this laboring group had lived in the county for more than twenty years, and only a few of these men and their families were in the county before 1820. The majority of these unskilled and semi-skilled Negroes had come from the upper slave states after that date.<sup>30</sup> The rest of the sample had come from other parts of Pennsylvania. These Negroes were mostly darker than the businessmen and farmers, and, for the most part, they were illiterate.<sup>31</sup>

In property ownership and contacts with the white population, these unskilled Negroes lagged far behind their skilled and farming Negro contemporaries. Only a handful of these Negroes owned a house and lot, while a vast bulk were not even listed among those taxed for property or wages in Lancaster City and Columbia borough.<sup>32</sup> Those listed in the tax records at all were usually tenants or single and propertyless freemen, and the assessors taxed their yearly wages the minimum allowable by Pennsylvania law. Probably the only whites these Negroes dealt with were the sheriff of the county, the county prison officials, and the landowners to whom they owed rent money and for whom they preformed contract labor.<sup>33</sup>

This comparison of the two groups strengthens the significance of several factors that I have already extracted from the backgrounds of the Negro farming and business group. Besides the universality of property ownership in this group, the white-black contacts are a most interesting and relevant background factor. That the wealthiest Negroes of the area studied had the only recent, observable contact with the white Quaker abolitionists makes this factor doubly significant. These contacts between the two groups were responsible, it is evident, for the development of a sphere of common interests that was condemned by the white-working class and resented by the black proletariat.<sup>34</sup> Certainly, the upper strata of Negroes had more in common with the white Quakers and abolitionists of their community than they had with the vast group of black unskilled in Lancaster County. This condition when reinforced

by other background factors common to these Negroes, i.e. literacy, color, length of continuous residence, birthplace, and property ownership, would also partially explain the nature of the divisions in the Negro communities of Lancaster County in the nineteenth century. That these same factors could also go a long way in explaining similar divisions in other black communities is a distinct and exciting possibility.<sup>35</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Leslie H. Fishel, Jr., "Repercussions of Reconstruction: The Northern Negro, 1870-1883", *Civil War History*, XIV (Dec., 1968), 334-335.

<sup>2</sup> I have used a number of terms to identify the geographical subdivisions of Lancaster County in the 1850's that a reader might find confusing. Under the Pennsylvania Constitution, each of the three kinds of municipality mentioned here (borough, cities, and townships) derived certain powers from the Commonwealth.

Townships have a quasi-corporate status, and generally are created by the county quarter sessions courts following petition of inhabitants involved. Rural in its character, the township was intended to be an administrative unit without judicial functions. Boroughs and cities historically are more formally constituted units of local government, deriving their corporate status from the state legislature. They are virtually the same except for the forms of government that are available, and these, too, have tended to become almost identical. While boroughs customarily are smaller than cities, there is no legislation to govern that distinction. There are about 950 boroughs ranging from 100 persons to nearly 40,000 inhabitants (Norristown, for example). To be a city a settlement must have a minimum of 10,000 inhabitants, although four cities have smaller populations. Pennsylvania has one First Class City (Philadelphia), one Second Class City (Pittsburgh), one Second Class-A City (Scranton), and 47 Third Class Cities of which Lancaster is one.

Thus, from these definitions, Columbia is a borough; Lancaster is a city; and Fulton and Drumore are townships.—Letter from John Ward Willson Loose, March 31, 1969, Lancaster, Pa.

<sup>3</sup> These were the same Negroes whose families had come to Columbia with the manumitted slaves from Henrico and Hanover Counties, Virginia, in 1820 and 1821. See Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, with Biographical Sketches of Its Pioneer and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883). 543-544; and the undated clippings of articles written by Francis Xavier Reuss, an old Columbia historian, in *The Columbia Herald*, from 1903 to 1905.

<sup>4</sup> The Lancaster and Columbia Colonization Societies were organized by an agent of the American Colonization Society in the early 1830's with the same objectives as the American Colonization Society. Primarily, the two local societies were engaged in raising money to send twenty freed Negroes back to Africa. Although measured in terms of their ability to send Negroes back to Africa, the two societies were a failure, their very existence constituted a threat to the local Negroes. In Columbia, some of the Negroes' best friends joined the steering committee of the Society since they believed the Negro problem insoluble. In Columbia, on August 5, 1831, Stephen Smith, the Negro lumber merchant, presided over a public meeting of Afro-Americans in a school house for the purpose of devising a plan to combat the colonization society. Resolutions were adopted, and some of the Negroes' friends rallied to their support. By the early 1840's, the local colonization societies lay dormant. See William Frederic Worner, "The Lancaster County Colonization Society", *Lancaster County Historical Society Papers* (hereafter cited L.C.H.S.P.), XXVI, No. 5 (May, 1922), 26-43.

<sup>5</sup> Worner, "The Colonization Society", 26-43; Marianna G. Brubaker, "The Underground Railroad", *L.C.H.S.P.*, XV, No. 4 (April, 1911) 95-119; William

Frederic Worner, "The Columbia Race Riots," *L.C.H.S.P.*, XXVI, No. 8 (Oct., 1922) 182-187; Thomas Whitson, "The Early Abolitionists of Lancaster County", *L.C.H.S.P.*, XV, No. 3 (March, 1911) 203-207; and Robert C. Smedley, *History of the Underground Railroad in Chester and Neighboring Counties* (Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Office of the Journal, 1883), Chapters 1 & 2.

<sup>6</sup> In this study, I employed several ambiguous terms for the sake of brevity. The business and farming group, as an occupational elite, was not monolithic. The business group included both skilled and non-manual workers. In particular, the skilled workers were artisans such as carpenters, plasterers, barbers, blacksmiths, etc.; the non-manual workers were the white collar workers (clerks), business proprietors (merchants), and professionals. Farmers were those Negroes who worked more than eight acres of their land for employment, the minimum needed in 1860 to sustain a family of three.

<sup>7</sup> See for example, Leon Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); W. E. DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1899); and Robert A. Warner, *New Haven Negroes: A Social History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940).

<sup>8</sup> A rural county in 1860 was one in which there was located no city over 25,000 population.

<sup>9</sup> I owe John Ward Willson Loose of the Lancaster County Historical Society a word of thanks in helping me retrieve and evaluate the evidence I have used in this paper, as well as for the constant and sympathetic understanding he has shown towards a novice to local historical studies. He has demonstrated, more than any other contemporary, the value of historical studies engaged at the local level by historians who are trying to confirm or deny broad historical themes. I am sure I am not alone in this judgment, but I believe my task has been made infinitely more bearable.

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix I: Map of Lancaster County.

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix II: Tables on Negro population.

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix III: Tables on Business and Farming Class.

<sup>13</sup> These newspaper reminiscences which I depended upon for information could be misleading, coming as they did at least twenty-five years after these men had died. To compensate for this discrepancy, I confirmed the newspaper's information where possible with local histories, prison records, and so forth. Surprisingly, these articles proved to be substantially correct.

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix IV: Note on Local Sources.

<sup>15</sup> See Appendix V: Tables on Negro Employment.

<sup>16</sup> See local tax lists and census reports for 1820.

<sup>17</sup> The slaves held in bondage in eighteenth and nineteenth century Pennsylvania could be found employed in small numbers as farm workers on county estates, as iron workers for the non-Quaker, Scotch-Irish, and as domestics in the homes of influential men. In Lancaster County, as in the rest of southeastern Pennsylvania, the majority of the slaveholders were of Scotch-Irish or English descent and only a few were German and Quaker.

Many slave owners in Pennsylvania, especially the Quakers, began to manumit their slaves after 1750. In 1754, the yearly meeting of the Friends enjoined its members to "set their slaves free and make a Christian provision for them". By 1774, practically all the Quakers supposedly had freed their slaves. Many slaveholders, including the Quakers, were especially encouraged to manumit their slaves because of the increasingly heavy Pennsylvania tax levied upon the owners of the bondsmen.

Only by an act of the General Assembly in 1780, however, was the fate of slavery sealed. This act provided for the gradual abolition of slavery. No Negro child born in Pennsylvania after the year 1780 would be considered a slave by law. Those children who were slaves in 1780 would be considered such only until they reached the age of 28. Slave owners in Pennsylvania were given until November 1, 1780, to "register and record their name, occupation, place of residence, and the name, age, and sex of their slaves" at the local county court house.



Slavery persisted long after 1808. Slave masters developed subtle tactics to circumvent the manumission law of 1780. They usually would either sell the slaves for profit into other slave states, or they would send their pregnant female slaves into a slave state so that their children would not be born to freedom. To try to circumvent these provisions of the law, the Pennsylvania General Assembly required, after 1788, that the birth of all slave children was to be registered at the county court houses, and that pregnant female slaves would not be sent out of the state. By 1840, all of the former bondsmen in Pennsylvania had been freed and many had been provided for in some fashion.

After 1820, Colerain, Conestoga, Bart, Hempfield (including Columbia and Marietta boroughs), Little Britain (including Fulton), Martic, and Sadsbury Townships received large numbers of fugitive and manumitted slaves from the upper slave state of Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware mainly because of their closeness to the Mason and Dixon Line.

Slave employment is discussed extensively in Darold D. Wax, "The Demand for Slave Labor in Colonial Pennsylvania", *Pennsylvania History* XXXIV, No. 4 (Oct., 1967) 334-336; Ulrich B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1966) 112-113; and, Commission on Pennsylvania Agriculture, *Pennsylvania Agriculture and County Life, 1640-1840* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania History and Museum Commission, 1950). For slavery and the Quakers see Martha B. Clark, "Lancaster County's Relation to Slavery", *L.C.H.S.P.* XV, No. 2 (Feb., 1961), 45, 52-53. On the legal aspects of slavery one should consult Stanley J. Kutler, "Pennsylvania Courts: The Abolition Acts and Negro Rights", *Pennsylvania History*, XXV, No. 1 (Jan., 1963) 14-27; and, Edward R. Turner, *The Negroes in Pennsylvania, 1638-1861* (Washington: American Historical Association, 1911) 64-68, 80-81.

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix VI: Table on Age Distribution for 1850 and 1860.

<sup>19</sup> See Appendix VII: Table on Color of Business and Farming Class.

<sup>20</sup> Worner, "The Race Riots", 177; Deed Book Q, Vol. 6, 167 (Oct. 16, 1829): Deed Book Q, Vol. 6, 408 (April 14, 1828): Deed Book G, Vol. 7, 582 (Dec. 16, 1852); and, Deed Book W, Vol. 8, 12 (April 7, 1848). All the Deed Books are located at the Lancaster County Court House, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

<sup>21</sup> Worner, "The Colonization Society", 105-107.

<sup>22</sup> Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneer and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883) 478, 560, 860; and Worner, "The Race Riots", 177.

<sup>23</sup> See Appendix VIII: Negro Property Ownership in 1850 and 1860.

<sup>24</sup> Six Negroes were in this group.

<sup>25</sup> Ellis and Evans, *History of Lancaster County*, 587-588.

<sup>26</sup> Brubaker, "The Underground Railroad", 110; Whitson, "The Early Abolitionists", 89; and, Martha B. Clark, "Lancaster County's Relation to Slavery", *L.C.H.S.P.*, XV, No. 2 (Feb., 1911) 43-61.

<sup>27</sup> See Deed Book H, Vol. 7, 465 (April 5, 1842): Deed Book W, Vol. 3, 375 (May 1, 1807): Deed Book O, Vol. 7, 78 (April 13, 1849): Deed Book Q, Vol. 7, 169 (July 27, 1850): Deed Book S, Vol. 6, 602 (Oct. 28, 1839): Deed Book B, Vol. 7, 198 (Nov. 19, 1844): Deed Book M, Vol. 7, 305 (April 21, 1849): Deed Book I, Vol. 7, 309, Deed Book M, Vol. 7, 302 (April 21, 1849): Deed Book I, Vol. 6, 212 (April 10, 1837). All the Deed Books are located at the Lancaster County Court House, Recorder of Deeds Office, Lancaster, Pa.

<sup>28</sup> See Appendix IX for property evaluations of these men.

<sup>29</sup> For these involvements see Smedley, *History of the Underground Railroad*, Chapters I and II: and, Brubaker, "The Underground Railroad", 95-119.

<sup>30</sup> See Appendix X for nativity of these men.

<sup>31</sup> See Appendix VII.

<sup>32</sup> See Appendix VIII.

<sup>33</sup> Ellis and Evans, *A History of Lancaster County*, 577-78, 73; Worner, "The

Colonization Society", 105-122; Worner, "The Race Riots", 175-187; and, in particular, H. A. Rockafeld, *A Complete History of the Double Murder of Mrs. Garber and Mrs. Ream with the Only Life and Confession of Alexander Anderson* (Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Evening Express Office, 1858) which is a sensational compendium of crimes committed by Negroes in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

\* Worner, William F., "The Race Riots", 182-187; and Ellis and Evans, *A History of Lancaster County*, 574.

\* For an example of writings about splits in other black communities see Litwack, *North of Slavery*, 151-186, 247-279; August Meier, "Negro Class Structure and Ideology in the Age of Booker T. Washington", *Phylon*, XXXIII (1962) 258-266; and, August Meier and David Lewis, "History of the Negro Upper Class in Atlanta, Georgia, 1890-1958", *Journal of Negro Education*, XXVIII (Spring, 1959) 128-139.

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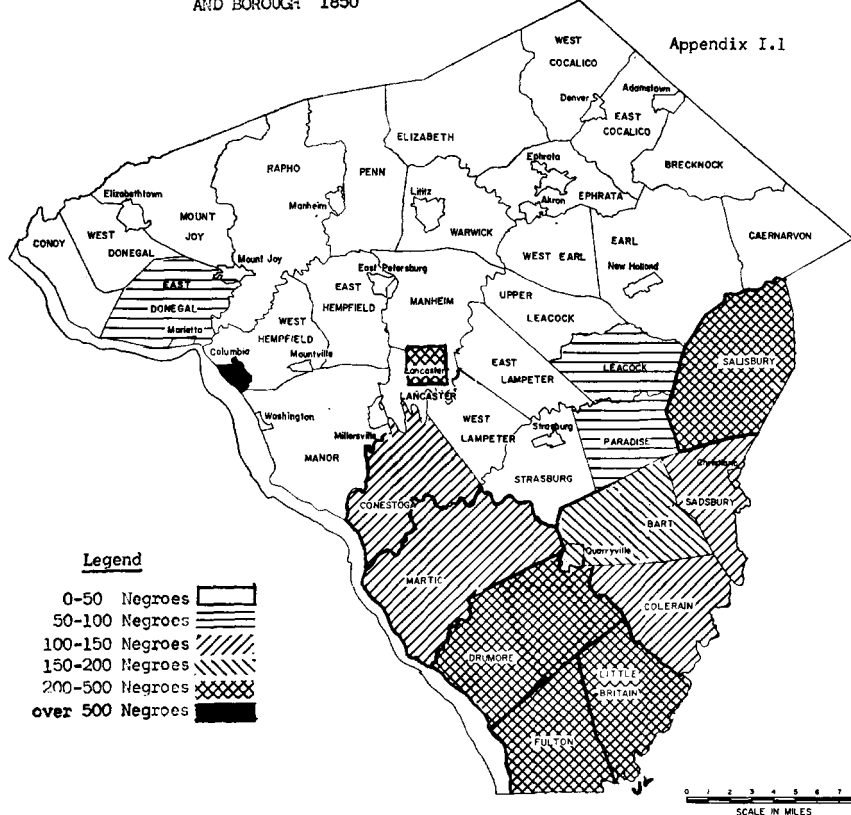
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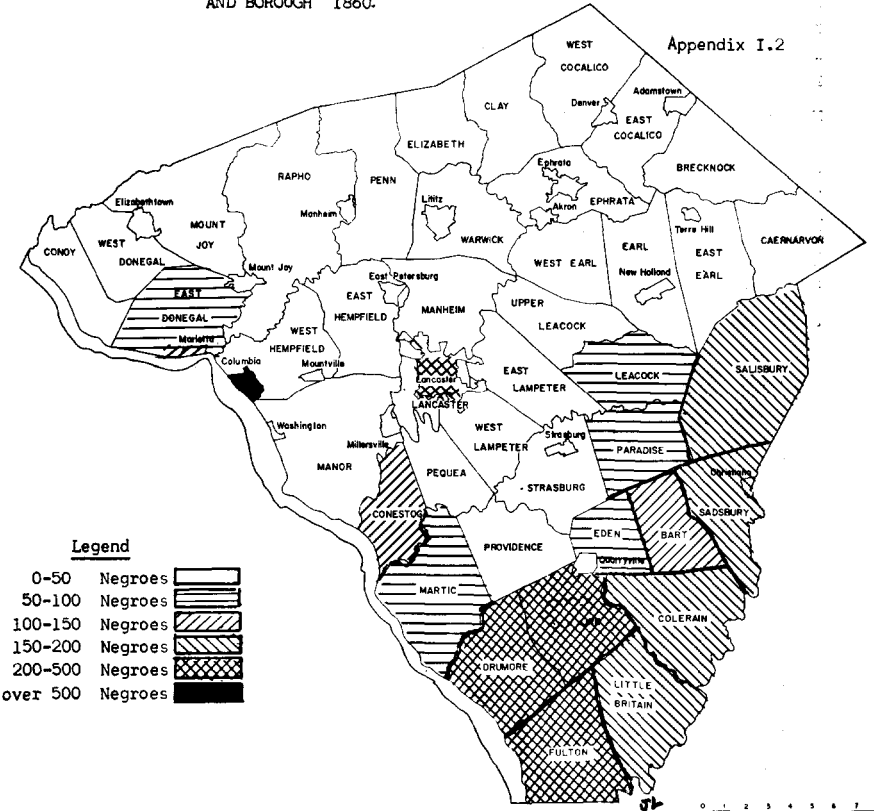
# NEGRO POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF LANCASTER COUNTY BY TOWNSHIP AND BOROUGH 1850

Appendix I.1



# NEGRO POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF LANCASTER COUNTY BY TOWNSHIP AND BOROUGH 1860.

Appendix I.2



Negro Population of Lancaster County by Selected Townships  
and Boroughs, 1850 - 1860

Sub-division	1850			1860		
	White Pop.	Black Pop.	% of Black Total in County	White Pop.	Black Pop.	% of Black Total in County
Bart	2,177	160	4.4	1,405	127	3.6
Colerain	1,499	103	2.8	1,570	170	4.9
Columbia	3,267	873	24.3	4,359	648	18.8
Conestoga	3,483	103	2.8	2,136	111	3.2
Drumore	2,515	311	8.6	2,810	288	8.4
East Donegal	1,923	74	2.1	2,097	86	2.5
Fulton	1,520	277	7.6	1,753	273	8.0
Lancaster City	12,127	242	6.7	17,307	296	8.5
Little Britain	1,564	230	6.7	1,640	182	5.2
Marietta	1,889	210	6.0	2,040	146	4.2
Martic	2,957	140	4.1	1,701	79	2.3
Paradise	1,763	65	1.8	1,989	92	2.6
Sadsbury	1,381	148	4.1	1,554	185	5.2
Salisbury	3,403	243	6.7	3,529	196	5.8
Total County	95,230	3,614	100.0	112,854	3,459	100.0

Sources: Original Returns of the Assistant Marshals. Seventh Census of the United States: 1850. National Archives, Washington, D.C.; and Original Returns of the Assistant Marshals. Eighth Census of the United States: 1860. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

## Appendix III

Communities, Occupations, and Dates of Residences of the Skilled and Non-Manual Negroes of Lancaster County, 1850 - 1860

Negroes Present in Columbia, Penna. (38)

<u>In 1850 only(18)</u>	<u>In 1860 only(10)</u>	<u>In both 1850 and 1860(10)</u>
4 - barbers	1 - barber	6 - barbers
8 - shoemakers	1 - carter	1 - blacksmith
1 - carter	1 - forgerman	2 - lumber merchants
1 - hostler	1 - hotel host	1 - clerk
1 - plasterer	1 - conductor	
1 - brickmoulder	3 - shopkeepers	
2 - car agents	1 - teacher	
	1 - clergyman	

Negroes Present in Lancaster City, Penna. (27)

<u>In 1850 only(12)</u>	<u>In 1860 only(10)</u>	<u>In both 1850 and 1860(5)</u>
5 - barbers	3 - barbers	5 - barbers
1 - seetmaker	1 - baker	
1 - forgerman	1 - forgerman	
2 - coppersmiths	1 - carter	
1 - confectioner	1 - car agent	
2 - clergymen	1 - doctor	
	2 - clergymen	

Negroes Present in Fulton Township (7)

<u>In 1850 only(2)</u>	<u>In 1860 only(2)</u>	<u>In both 1850 and 1860(3)</u>
1 - cooper	1 - shoemaker	1 - mason
1 - slater	1 - farmer	2 - farmers

Negroes Present in Drumore Township (3)

<u>In 1850 only(0)</u>	<u>In 1860 only(2)</u>	<u>In both 1850 and 1860(1)</u>
none	1 - river pilot	1 - farmer
	1 - farmer	

Sources: Original Returns of the Assistant Marshals. Seventh Census of the United States: 1850. National Archives, Washington, D.C.; and Original Returns of the Assistant Marshals. Eighth Census of the United State: 1860. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

## NOTE ON LOCAL SOURCES

Manuscript sources were the most valuable aid in a study of this nature on the background of a Negro farming and business group. The property tax returns, which are located at the Lancaster County Historical Society, told me a man's occupation revealed his length of residence and usually gave me the exact amount of his valued property, both personal and real estate, in the period 1790-1860. I gathered additional manuscript information from the will and deed books. Not only were they valuable in tracing the extent and nature of Negro manumissions in the county, but they were particularly indispensable when looking for local white-black property transactions. I supplemented these sources with the manuscript collections of Samuel Evans, a local Columbian politician and historian, and John Jay Wisler, Sr., a Lancaster County chronicler. Probably less relevant for my research, but nevertheless, invaluable for a history of any inarticulate class, are the Lancaster County prison books in the warden's office and a number of pamphlets associated with the public hangings conducted there up through the 1840's.

Newspaper reminiscences and accounts on various aspects of the Negro community constituted a major source. The most valuable were a series of clipings and articles found in the John Jay Wisler, Sr. Collection which were dated between 1903-1905 and which related major events in the Columbia Negro Community. The *Bethania Palladium* (a Quaker paper) had a regular column devoted to the fugitives and Negroes that entered Lancaster County between 1830-1837; and the *Columbia Spy* always carried interesting items on the Negro business communities of Columbia in advertisements or news columns.

To find further biographical data on the most prominent men, I used the voluminous Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men*. Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883; Frederic Godcharles, *Chronicles of Central Pennsylvania*. New York: Lewis Historical Publisher, 1944; John Meginnese, *Biographical Annals of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*. Chicago: J. H. Beers & Co., 1869; and, Jacob Mombert, *An Authentic History of Lancaster County*. Pennsylvania: J. E. Barr & Co., 1869. The colorful abolitionist reminiscences supplemented these local histories: Marianna Brubaker, "The Underground Railroad". *Lancaster County Historical Society Papers*, XV, No. 4 (April, 1911), 95-119; Robert Smedley, *History of the Underground Railroad in Chester and Neighboring Counties*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Office of the Journal, 1883; Thomas Whitson, "The Early Abolitionists of Lancaster County". *Lancaster County Historical Society Papers*, XV, No. 3 (March, 1911). William Frederick Worner's detailed and indispensable articles, "The Columbia Race Riots". *Lancaster County Historical Society Papers*, XXVI, No. 8 (Oct., 1922), 175-187; and, "The Lancaster County Colonization Society", *Lancaster County Historical Society Papers*, XXVI, No. 5 (May, 1922), 105-122, were a major source on black-white relations in Columbia.

## Occupational Structure of Lancaster County's Negro Community

1850 - 1860

Lancaster City1850

(55.6%) Unskilled - 25  
 25 - day laborers  
 ( 6.7%) Semi-skilled - 3  
 2 - waiters  
 1 - coachman

(31.1%) Skilled - 14  
 10 - barbers  
 1 - sweetmaker  
 1 - forgerman  
 2 - coppersmiths

( 2.2%) Proprietors - 1  
 1 - confectioner

( 4.4%) Professional - 2  
 2 - clergymen

---

(100.0%) Total 45

Drumore Township

(98.7%) Unskilled - 75  
 75 - day and farm laborers

( 1.3%) Proprietors - 1  
 1 - farmer

---

(100.0%) Total 76

Fulton Township

(90.9%) Unskilled - 50  
 50 - laborers

( 5.5%) Skilled - 3  
 1 - mason  
 1 - cooper  
 1 - slater

( 3.6%) Proprietors - 2  
 2 - farmers

---

(100.0%) Total 55

1860

(64.3%) Unskilled - 36  
 36 - day laborers  
 ( 8.9%) Semi-skilled - 5  
 1 - waiter  
 1 - factory hand  
 1 - coachman  
 2 - gardeners

(19.6%) Skilled - 11  
 8 - barbers  
 1 - baker  
 1 - forgerman  
 1 - carter

( 1.8%) White Collar - 1  
 1 - car agent

( 5.4%) Professional - 3  
 1 - doctor  
 2 - clergymen

---

(100.0%) Total 56

(94.7%) Unskilled - 72  
 72 - day and farm laborers

( 1.3%) Semi-skilled - 1  
 1 - wagoner

( 1.3%) Skilled - 1  
 1 - river pilot

( 2.7%) Proprietors - 2  
 2 - farmers

---

(100.0%) Total 76

(92.2%) Unskilled - 59  
 59 - laborers

( 3.1%) Skilled - 2  
 1 - shoemaker  
 1 - mason

( 4.7%) Proprietors - 3  
 3 - farmers

---

(100.0%) Total 64



Columbia Borough

(84.1%) Unskilled - 191  
191 - day laborers  
( 3.5%) Semi-skilled - 8  
2 - waiters  
2 - porters  
2 - gardeners  
2 - hucksters

(10.1%) Skilled - 23  
10 - barbers  
8 - shoemakers  
1 - hostler  
1 - plasterer  
1 - blacksmith  
1 - brickmoulder

( 1.3%) White Collar - 3  
2 - car agents  
1 - clerk  
( 1.0%) Proprietors - 2  
2 - lumber merchants

---

(100.0%)    Total       227

(86.2%) Unskilled - 150  
150 - day laborers  
( 2.3%) Semi-skilled - 4  
2 - servants  
1 - porter  
1 - teamster

( 5.7%) Skilled - 10  
7 - barbers  
1 - carter  
1 - blacksmith  
1 - forgerman

( 1.7%) White Collar - 3  
1 - conductor  
1 - clerk  
1 - hotel host

( 2.9%) Proprietors - 5  
3 - shopkeepers  
2 - lumber merchants  
( 1.2%) Professionals - 2  
1 - teacher  
1 - clergyman

---

(100.0%)    Total       174

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Sources: Original Returns of the Assistant Marshals. Seventh Census of the United States: 1850. National Archives, Washington, D.C.; and Original Returns of the Assistant Marshals. Eighth Census of the United States: 1860. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

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Appendix VI

**Age Distribution of Business and Farming Sample, 1850 & 1860**

**Average Age of Negroes That Were Present in Lancaster County and Listed as Businessmen in Only 1850**

5-non-manual = 53.2 years  
27-skilled = 29.4 years  
Total 32 men

**Average Age of Negroes That Were Present in Lancaster County and Listed as Farmers or Businessmen in Only 1860**

11-non-manual = 45.8 years  
11-skilled = 30.1 years  
2-farmers = 48.0 years  
Total 24 men

**Average Age of Negroes That Were Present in Lancaster County and Listed Both as Farmers and Businessmen in 1850 and 1860 (Average Age in 1855)**

3-non-manual = 50.0 years  
13-skilled = 51.8 years  
3-farmers = 56.0 years  
Total 19 men

## Color of Farming and Business Class

<u>Non-Manual</u>			<u>Skilled</u>		
<u>Black</u>	<u>Mulatto</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Mulatto</u>	<u>Total</u>
9 (47%)	10 (53%)	19	15 (30%)	36 (70%)	51
<u>Unskilled &amp; Semiskilled</u>			<u>Farmers</u>		
<u>Black</u>	<u>Mulatto</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Mulatto</u>	<u>Total</u>
287 (84%)	53 (16%)	340	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	5

Sources for both tables:

Original Returns of the Assistant Marshals. Seventh Census of the United States:1850. National Archives, Washington, D.C. ;and, Original Returns of the Assistant Marshals. Eighth Census of the United States:1860. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

## Appendix VIII

## Negro Property Ownership in Columbia Borough and Fulton Township\*

<u>Columbia- 1850</u>		1860
Total community valuation	\$538,855	\$787,345
Total black valuation	\$25,815	\$24,762
Number blacks with property	67 (52 unskilled, 15 skilled & above)	62 (46 unskilled, 16 skilled & above)
Skilled and above valuation	\$18,351	\$17,653
Unskilled valuation	\$7,464	\$7,109
<u>Fulton Township</u>		
1850		1860
Total township valuation	\$341,340	\$356,715
Total black valuation	\$6,189	\$4,615
Number blacks with property	18 (5 skilled & farmers, 13 unskilled)	15 (5 skilled & farmers, 10 unskilled)
Skilled and farmers valuation	\$4,331	\$3,105
Unskilled valuation	\$1,858	\$1,510

\*Tax lists were complete in these communities. The censuses were used for property valuations in Lancaster City and Drumore Township, and since their accuracy is questionable, they were not used here.

## THIRTY-THREE WEALTHIEST NEGROES, 1850-1860

Twenty-three of these 33 men of Columbia and Fulton aggregated \$31,014 of the possible Negro total, \$61,381. James Burill, Stephen Smith, and William Whipper aggregated \$21,895 between them.

## APPENDIX X

## BIRTH PLACES OF UNSKILLED NEGROES

	Total	Per Cent
Lancaster County	28	8
Pennsylvania, other than Lancaster County	98	29
Upper Slave States	201	60
Other	13	3
	340	100

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carl Douglas Oblinger was born in 1944 in Springfield, Illinois, and attended public school there. From 1961 to 1963 he studied at Williston Academy, Easthampton, Massachusetts.

The author received his A.B. in history from Franklin and Marshall College in 1967. In 1964 he was chosen by the Pennsylvania Political Internship Program to work the summer in Congress. Following graduation, Mr. Oblinger studied and taught history at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois. Presently, he is a research and teaching assistant at the Johns Hopkins University, specializing in mid-nineteenth century political and social history under the tutelage of the Pulitzer Prize-winning professor of American history, Dr. David Donald. His doctoral program accents the new techniques in quantification; hence, Mr. Oblinger's present research utilizes these new tools.

Upon receiving his doctorate, the author hopes either to enter the foreign service, teach and research in the black communities along the eastern seaboard, or teach history in a university.

Mr. Oblinger lives with his wife, Carole, and daughter in Baltimore.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author wishes to dedicate this essay to Professor Frederic Shriver Klein, now retiring after a long career as Audenreid Professor of American History in Franklin and Marshall College during which time his instruction, his guidance, and his inspiration influenced several generations of students. The author also would like to thank Professor David Donald of the Johns Hopkins University for providing the direction and encouragement for this study, and his seminar colleagues for providing stimulating criticisms. He is grateful to his wife for typing the original manuscript.