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Article Summary: Prince Hall Masonry is an African American fraternal organization that arose because blacks were excluded from white Masonic lodges. During the 1920s Prince Hall Masonry in Nebraska experienced a brief boom, but by the middle of the decade a bust ensued. The 1924-25 industrial slump combined with the downturn in the agricultural sector curbed the influx of African American Americans to the state. At the onset of the Great Depression, Prince Hall Masonry was a weakened but viable and vital institution among the limited number of African Americans in Nebraska.

Cataloging Information:

Names: Trago T McWilliams, Ed P Smith, Nathaniel Hunter, D M Ansberry, James C Dahlman, Joseph Koutsky, N A Kemmish, Ben J Sallows, M W Jenkins, Craig Morris, Arthur J Weaver, Christian A Sorenson, W R Colly, Luther Allen, John A Singleton, E W Killingsworth, Warren G Harding, Richard H Young, Harry Buford, Tom Dennison, F L Barnett, E Y Clarke, F L Barnett, William Tucker, George Flippin, Nathaniel Hunter, C T Denton, Charles W Dickerson, Walter W Seals, Nathaniel Hunter, Alfred F Peoples, Charles C Dudley, R H Young, Edward Fletcher, W P Wade, Verne Hedge, John Andrew Singleton, James Finley Wilson, Scott Lewis

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Photographs / Images: Dr John Andrew Singleton; Luther Allen and his wife, Ida; hall on North Twenty-sixth Street in Omaha which was purchased by the Prince Hall Grand Lodge in 1927; a Masonic banquet in the early 1930s; Grand Tyler William Tucker, 1923; Prince Hall Mason Blue Lodges, 1920s [chart]

BOOM BUST

Prince Hall Masonry in Nebraska During the 1920s

By Dennis N. Mihelich

During the 1920s Prince Hall Masonry in Nebraska experienced a brief boom in the wake of the Great Migration, but by the middle of the decade a bust ensued. Prosperity made the 1920s “roar,” but the good times did not blanket the country. Pockets of economic problems muted the roar in some economic sectors and locales. In one instance, the recovery of European agriculture from the dislocations of World War I contributed to hard times for staple farmers on the Great Plains. Agricultural suppliers, processors, and shippers suffered immediate repercussions and much of the Nebraska economy stagnated well before the onset of the industrial depression of the 1930s. Without the pull factor of easily obtainable jobs, large-scale black migration to the state came to an abrupt halt, significantly affecting institutions created by the Great Migration, such as the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Nebraska (PHGLN). Nonetheless, Prince Hall Masonry survived the dislocations of the decade, although it lost many of its blue-collar members. On the other hand, it continued to attract the elite of black society, and thus, the strong correlation between community leadership and Prince Hall Masonry remained throughout the decade.

Before the PHGLN purchased a building in Omaha in 1927, it held its annual communications in the various cities

and towns that had blue lodges. Befitting a proud new institution, it staged grand public receptions prior to the restricted business sessions of the fraternity. Also signifying the stature of the society, state and local politicians attended the events and extended official welcomes to the delegates. A symbolic gesture, nonetheless it conveyed an encouraging civil message in an age of deteriorating race relations and may indicate the limits of influence of the Ku Klux Klan in Nebraska in the 1920s. White politicians, especially outside of Omaha, had little reason to court black voters who remained insignificant in number and held no balance of power position. Thus, it is difficult to envision a truly politically powerful Klan and white politicians who would court its ire by publicly showing respect for a black social group.

Newspaper coverage of Prince Hall activity expanded somewhat, but remained brief and infrequent. Four new black weeklies appeared during the 1920s, but no copies exist for two of them that had brief runs—*The Whip* in Omaha and *The Review* in Lincoln. In October 1920 Trago T. McWilliams sold *The Review* to *The Monitor* (Omaha), which subsequently included a full page of Lincoln news in its edition. Four months later, however, the “Lincoln Department” disappeared and only intermittently thereafter the paper printed a few paragraphs of news about the African American community in the state capital. *The New Era* published in Omaha between 1922 and 1926, but carried little masonic news, and the *Omaha Guide* began operation in 1927, but ex-

tant copies exist only from 1932. With two notable exceptions, infrequent, terse stories in the white press about the public reception associated with the annual communication augmented the sparse coverage in the black press.

In 1920 Mayor Ed P. Smith of Omaha welcomed the delegates to the second annual communication at a public reception held at the meeting place of the Omaha lodges at Twenty-second and Cuming. The evening also included an array of literary and musical performances. Once the formal session opened, however, Grand Master Nathaniel Hunter sounded several discordant notes. His unharmonious remarks indicated that the new institution suffered from growing pains. He reported having to deal with the transgressions of the worshipful masters of three Omaha lodges and he berated “some Masons, even Masters and Past Masters” who would “go the full length of their tow cable to stab a brother in the back.” Besides unbrotherly malice, Hunter and the Grand Lecturer both explained that they refrained from making their annual visits to all the lodges in the jurisdiction because those located in the small towns with small memberships could not afford the costs of subsidizing the official sojourn. Moreover, Hunter complained that poor bookkeeping and business practices jeopardized the finances of several lodges and made the reporting of Grand Lodge finance and membership figures unreliable. These complaints, along with constant criticism of shoddy performance of ritual, became the standard bill of fare of officer reports for ensuing decades.

Dennis N. Mihelich is an associate professor of history at Creighton University. In two previous articles in Nebraska History, he has written about the origins of Prince Hall Masonry in Nebraska, and the creation of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge.

Prince Hall Masonry in the 1920s

On the other hand, masonic fraternity radiated from the decision to loan money to a brother to hire an attorney to defend him in a criminal suit. Reflecting the mood of the times—within a year of the Omaha riot that contributed to the Red Summer of 1919—Hunter defended the decision explaining: “With the prejudice that exists in this country today against the Negro, if he is sent to jail, whether he is guilty or not, his life is in danger.”¹

The delegates also passed a resolution designating *The Review* as the “official organ” of the Grand Lodge. Unfortunately for masonic scholars, the publisher, a Prince Hall Mason, could not establish sound finances for the African American weekly in Lincoln. Thus, widespread coverage of black masonry did not materialize. *The Monitor*, however, did report the embarrassing end to the 1920 annual communication. The public was invited to a closing ceremony and dance at the Columbia Hall. The meeting ran long, however, and young people in attendance demanded the dancing begin. Subsequently, the program committee entered with the idea of beginning the formal program. Protests from the youngsters led to older people leaving and to canceling the grand march and program. Apologizing in print in *The Monitor*, officers explained that they decided to go with the “majority” in order to preserve “peace and harmony.”²

In 1921 the PHGLN held its annual communication at the McKinley Auditorium in Lincoln August 17–19 (the constitution mandated an annual meeting during the third week of August). It began with a public reception at the A.M.E. church that included a welcome address from D. M. Amsberry, Nebraska Secretary of State. Rain washed out a picnic planned to take place at the State Fair Grounds, but a concluding dance at Germania Hall went well. Also, the adventurous could supplement the seriousness of the formal meetings by hopping aboard the sponsored plane rides to view the capital city. Quite out of

character, *The Monitor* ran a special edition prior to the annual communication that featured a full page of pictures of the officers and news about the upcoming event. While most of the white-owned papers blared headlines of Negro crime—much of it committed in other cities—*The Lincoln Star* disdained those stories in favor of daily coverage of the Prince Hall Mason meeting.³

The 1922 conclave in Grand Island received no notice in the white or black press. Nonetheless, the mayor welcomed the visitors at a gathering at the lodge hall of True American #6 on East Third Street.⁴ In 1923 the annual communication returned to Omaha. It met

at the Alliance newspaper for his coverage.⁶

Positive news coverage of African Americans by the white press was a rare event and well appreciated by black community leaders. Thus, typically, back in Lincoln for the 1925 annual communication, again only *The Lincoln Star* briefly covered the session that met at Mt. Zion Baptist Church. While no representative of the city or the state gave an official greeting, the delegates did tour the State Capitol.⁷

The next year in Grand Island, Mayor M. W. Jenkins welcomed the delegates at a public program and this time the *Grand Island Daily Independent* recog-

**“With the prejudice that exists
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August 15–17 at the new meeting hall of the city’s lodges at Twenty-fourth and Parker. The *Proceedings* stated that Mayor James C. Dahlman saluted the group at a public reception at Cleaves Temple C.M.E., but *The New Era* and the *Omaha World-Herald* reported that his honor was out of town and that Commissioner Joseph Koutsky, the acting mayor, paid the city’s respects.⁵

“Out of sight, out of mind” must have been the policy of *The New Era* and *The Monitor* as they again failed to cover an out-of-town annual communication. In 1924 the fraternity traversed the state to the railroad town of Alliance situated in the Nebraska Panhandle. City Manager N. A. Kemmish hailed the more than one hundred delegates and the *Alliance Times and Herald* ran two long, front-page articles covering the event. In turn, *The Monitor* praised editor Ben J. Sal-

nized the gathering held at the GAR Hall.⁸ The 1927 convention in Omaha received no notice in the white or black press and the 1928 gathering in Lincoln at Lebanon #3’s meeting hall at 1133 M Street merited only a brief note in the “Lincoln News” section of *The Monitor*. *The Nebraska State Journal* (Lincoln), however, joined *The Lincoln Star* in covering the event. Mayor Verne Hedge welcomed the group that met simultaneously with the OES annual communication. The two societies then held a joint closing banquet at Mt. Zion Church.⁹ The official business portion of the annual communication concluded with the election of officers. During the 1920s the PHGLN established a tradition of short terms and frequent turnover of grand lodge officers. This stands in stark contrast to other African American fraternities and to some other Prince Hall

jurisdictions. Historian David Fahey argued that “charismatic leaders dominated the scene” and cited among others James Finley Wilson, who served as Grand Exalted Ruler of the black Elks for thirty years.¹⁰ More remarkably, the Lewis family established a dynasty in the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Louisiana. John G. Lewis Sr. became grand master in 1903 and served until his death in 1931. His son, Scott, succeeded to the office and held it for ten years until his untimely death. John Jr. replaced his brother and maintained the position for thirty-eight years, 1941–79.¹¹

Only one Grand Master of the PHGLN served more than five years and his decade of leadership ended in scandal in 1955. Except for the business-related offices of grand secretary and grand treasurer, which both had a series of long-serving individuals, the other grand offices routinely turned over. In part this was due to the rotation of the top office and individuals who secured election to a succession of offices, moving up the chain of command—for example, serving first as junior grand warden, then senior grand warden, then deputy grand master, and ultimately grand master. During the 1920s Lebanon #3 in Lincoln contributed the most grand officers, more than twice its nearest competitors, Rough Ashler #1, Excelsior #2, and Rescue #4. Thus, not surprisingly, long standing members from the oldest lodges controlled the PHGLN during its first decade of existence.

While the annual communication highlighted the masonic year, other ceremonial activities punctuated the routine flow of standard events. For example, the Grand Lodge was asked to send a representative to Port-au-Prince on the fourth Sunday in January 1924 to participate in the celebration of the centennial of Haitian independence. It respectfully declined the offer due to the costs involved. Prince Hall Masons remained visible in the community through annual observations such as St. John’s Day in which they congregated in full regalia and paraded to a service and ceremony at a commu-

nity church. Affiliated groups such as the various Scottish Rite societies, the Shriners, and the Order of the Eastern Star (OES) held similar regularly scheduled ritualistic celebrations.

One of the most cherished public ceremonies was the laying of a cornerstone. Those particular events also demonstrated the impact of the Great Migration that expanded and enriched estab-



Dr. John Andrew Singleton, Rough Ashler # 1, Omaha, was elected to the Nebraska Legislature in 1926. NSHS-RG2141-2028

lished churches, as well as created new ones. On October 8, 1922, the Prince Hall Masons laid the cornerstone of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Lincoln. Two months later, on December 3, they held similar rites for Bethel A.M.E. and St. John’s A.M.E. in Omaha. Then at the end of April 1923, Mayor Dahlman addressed the assembled and the Prince Hall Masons laid the cornerstone for Cleave Temple, C. M. E. in Omaha.¹² No other references to this activity appeared during the remainder of the decade. This highlights another one of the effects of the temporary end of sizeable

black migration to Nebraska during the interwar era. The mid-decade industrial slump and the onset of agricultural depression for Great Plains staple farmers severely constricted the migratory pull of economic opportunity for southern blacks. Thus, the size of the African American community in Nebraska towns and cities stabilized and the expansion of racial institutions ceased.

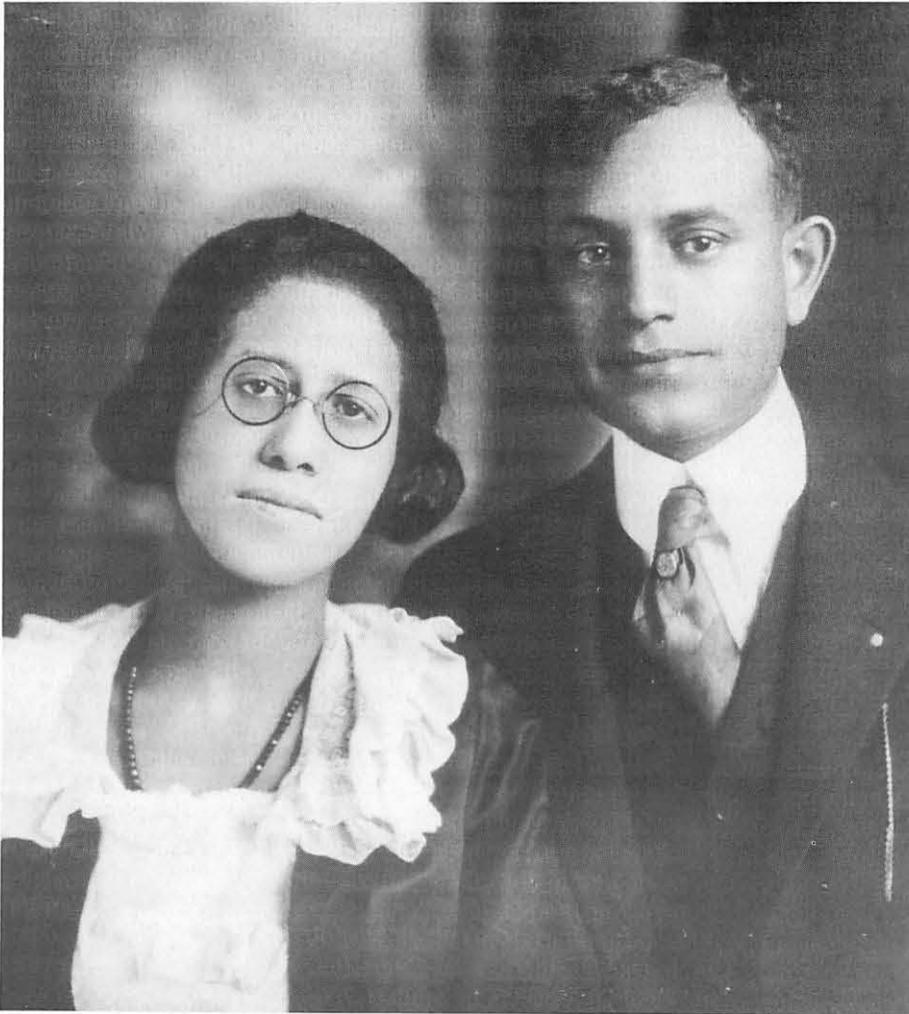
Prince Hall Masons played prominent roles in other community activities such as the Omaha Colored Commercial Club. In 1922 three of the four club officers were members of the fraternity—Nathaniel Hunter, president, Rough Ashler; Dr. Craig Morris, secretary, Rough Ashler; and Dan Desdunes, treasurer, Excelsior.

Similarly, fraternal members played a significant role in the failed attempt to get the YMCA to establish a facility in Omaha for black males. In January 1921 Dr. John A. Singleton, Rough Ashler #1, presided over an organizational meeting and was elected chairman of an executive committee formed to negotiate with Y officials. Six of nine committee members identified by *The Monitor* belonged to either Rough Ashler or Excelsior. Subsequently in 1926, in an atypical approach, the Prince Hall Masons as an organization took a direct role in the effort. Nathaniel Hunter, in behalf of the organization, applied to have the YWCA (which did have a facility for blacks) do a community study to assess the needs of the African American community. The YW convened a meeting to address the issue, but the YM did not establish a facility in the area of predominant black settlement at that time.¹³

The effort to obtain a black YMCA, however, did contribute to the creation of an Urban League affiliate in Omaha the following year. Dr. Craig Morris, Rough Ashler #1, spearheaded that drive and two of his lodge brothers, Nathaniel Hunter and Milton Hunter, joined him on the charter executive board of the Omaha Urban League.¹⁴

At the end of the decade several Prince Hall Masons again came to the

Prince Hall Masonry in the 1920s



Luther Allen and his wife, Ida. Allen, of Lebanon #3 in Lincoln, was one of the prominent black leaders who met with state officials following the North Platte racial incident in 1929. NSHS-RG2301-9

defense of their race. On July 13, 1929, in North Platte a black man killed a police officer. Shortly thereafter the assailant was also dead—possibly by suicide, but probably by police gunfire. Threats and fear led most blacks to leave town immediately. Quick action on the part of local and state officials prevented further violence and most African Americans returned to the city. Two days after the incident a group of prominent blacks from Omaha and Lincoln met with Governor Arthur J. Weaver and State Attorney General Christian A. Sorensen. One half of the delegation

belonged to Prince Hall lodges—W. R. Colly, Luther Allen, and the Rev. Trago McWilliams of Lebanon #3, Dr. John A. Singleton and E. W. Killingsworth of Rough Ashler #1, and Harrison J. Pinkett of Excelsior #2. Again, this type of high-profile activity that resulted in newspaper coverage demonstrates that Prince Hall Masonry attracted a goodly percentage of prominent blacks, but this impressionistic evidence of the membership should not distort the true multi-class composition of the PHGLN.¹⁵

In comparison to ceremonial and community activities, political partisan-

ship was barred at the lodge door. Yet, the Prince Hall Masons acted politically in the area of civil rights. Grand Master Nathaniel Hunter's address at the annual communication in 1921 reiterated a traditional position, advising personal character development, racial uplift, and the militant pursuit of equal rights:

While the World War brought to our people many laurels, it also added American prejudice, malice and hate. But thank God, the Negro as never before is demanding his rights. I am pleading to my people, however, to be honest to yourself and to your fellow man, regardless of race or color; be upright, sober, industrious and economical, but with it all demand your rights. Let us be manly, trust in God and continue to be loyal law-abiding citizens; get some of the world's wealth, beautify your homes, establish and maintain a business, and learn to trust each other as we do the other race. In this great work of racial uplift let Masonry play well its part.¹⁶

Taking the Grand Master's words to heart, St. John's lodge #11 of South Omaha sent a cable to President Warren G. Harding asking him to urge in his annual message to Congress the passage of the Dyer anti-lynching bill.¹⁷ Despite the failure of the legislation the PHGLN in 1923 published a full-page picture of Harding and a stirring poetic eulogy in its *Proceedings* of the annual communication. That same year Grand Master Richard H. Young, Lebanon #3, praised the work of the NAACP:

Of all the agencies that grapple with the various social, political and economical problems which affect the country and our race, I know of no other organization, fraternal or otherwise, that has done more toward solving or relieving these various conditions than the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Unlike the church or fraternal organizations the work of this association is not hampered by creeds or traditions from going the full limit for the protection and advancement of our people; and as far as it has available resources, it has left no stone unturned. It is indeed regrettable that the good and effective service this organization is rendering our group, particularly in the south [*sic*], does not receive more appreciation and support from the race as a whole.¹⁸

The meeting responded to his appeal. The PHGLN became a member of the NAACP, although the original proposal to purchase a \$25 national membership was amended to buy a \$10 local membership and donate \$15. The wording in the *Proceedings* does not make it clear if the donation went to the national office or to the local chapter.¹⁹

Moreover, despite the ban on politics in the lodge hall, local electioneering swirled around the edges of Prince Hall Masonry in Nebraska. Individual contact points abounded and members undoubtedly were affected by personal and fraternal associations. While these associations influenced their political loyalties, the lodge hall itself probably remained free of political discussion. Within that context lay the significance of Harry Buford, Excelsior #2, an Omaha policeman who for a time served as the chauffeur for political boss Tom Dennison. He was one of four individuals frequently identified as “ward heelers” for the “Dennison Machine” in the black community. The other three operated saloons at various times and thus could not become Prince Hall Masons.²⁰ Obviously Buford could influence his fraternal brothers without playing politics at lodge meetings.

In 1926 for the first time since the end of the nineteenth century, two African Americans gained election to the lower house of the Nebraska Legislature (it became a unicameral body in 1937). Both were Prince Hall Masons: Dr. John A. Singleton, Rough Ashler #1, and F. L. Barnett, Rescue #4. Singleton was born in Omaha in 1895, graduated from Central High School and Howard University, and served the community as a dentist. He actively supported Dennison’s Square Seven ticket, stooping to participate in fake KKK cross-burnings to smear opponents of the machine.²¹ The KKK was active in the city, but its actual historical impact in Nebraska remains to be determined. In 1921 a newspaper reported that E. Y. Clarke of Atlanta visited Omaha, claiming 750 members there and plans to organize a women’s



This hall on North Twenty-sixth Street in Omaha was purchased by the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Nebraska in 1927. From the Bostwick-Frohardt Collection owned by KMTV and on permanent loan to the Durham Western Heritage Museum, Omaha.

auxiliary.²² Seemingly, the KKK in Omaha served as a convenient scapegoat for the Dennison Machine, but not as a powerful political competitor.

The second new legislator, F. L. Barnett, had been born in Selma, Alabama, migrated first to Cleveland, Ohio, and then to Omaha in 1887. Two years later he established the first black newspaper, *The Progress*, which lasted seventeen years. Subsequently he held several patronage jobs with the city and at the time of his election was serving as head janitor at the city jail.²³

While a representative proportion of the noteworthy in the African American community remained active in Prince Hall Masonry in the interwar years, blue-collar membership shrank significantly. The relative economic security of the professional elite, the entrepreneurial and civil-servant middle class, and the semiskilled and skilled workers with seniority better allowed them to weather the economic vagaries of the decade. The newly hired and the unskilled la-

borer, however, did not fare as well. The economic opportunities of the first two decades of the twentieth century drew significant numbers of African American common laborers and domestic workers to Nebraska, especially to Omaha. Recruits from those groups swelled the rosters of Prince Hall Masonry and provided the critical mass necessary for the creation of an independent grand lodge. Subsequently, in the brief boom of the early 1920s St. John’s #11 in South Omaha mushroomed on the strength of packing-house workers. It succumbed just as quickly as a result of the economic constraints posed by the 1921–22 strike and the 1924 recession. Thus, membership by blue-collar workers diminished, although it remained a significant proportion of the PHGLN.

Membership analysis by different scholars for different locales of Prince Hall Masonry has produced conflicting statistical interpretations. Writing about the Chicago black community, Allan H.

Prince Hall Masonry in the 1920s



A Masonic banquet in the north Twenty-sixth Street hall, early 1930s. From the Bostwick-Frohardt Collection owned by KMTV and on permanent loan to the Durham Western Heritage Museum, Omaha.

Spear argued that fraternal societies began to decline at the beginning of the twentieth century. He cited the number of existing lodges of various orders in the 1880s, but gave no membership figures for pre- or post-1900.²⁴ In comparison, a study prompted by the Chicago race riot of 1919 claimed that membership was “large” and interest “strong” in black fraternal organizations.²⁵

Without discussing Prince Hall Masonry in particular, St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton in *Black Metropolis* asserted that “lodges” lost most of their influence after World War I. Yet, in 1940 in a Works Projects Administration survey, Drake, while acknowledging the impact of the Great Depression, asserted that “all ‘old line’ lodges [which would include Prince Hall Masonry] and several smaller groups are still strong.”²⁶ The above scholarship analyzed fraternities and/or “secret societies” in terms of “influence,” which may have referred to less prestige for the fraternities in the wake of the Great Migration and not to

depleted membership. None of the studies provided membership statistics particular to Prince Hall Masonry. In Ohio David A. Gerber reported that newer orders cut into masonic membership and that during the 1890s the Prince Hall Mason rosters in that state declined 50 percent, to just under 1,000 members.²⁷ While Gerber did not follow the order into the twentieth century, Kenneth Kusmer, addressing the situation in Cleveland, contended that in general the fraternities “declined in both numbers and significance” after World War I.²⁸

In comparison, Charles H. Wesley, a historian of Prince Hall Masonry in Ohio, reported that in 1904, forty-four lodges existed with 1,173 members. Those numbers demonstrated a rebound from the effects of the economically depressed 1890s that actually continued for two more decades. Ohio Prince Hall rosters swelled to fifty lodges with 1,983 members in 1914 and eventually to sixty-seven lodges with 3,463 members in 1925. Similarly, the OES

grew from eight chapters to “over three score.”²⁹ Next door in Indiana, Darrel E. Bigham’s research on Evansville led him to assert that black fraternities flourished through the 1920s, but then largely disappeared by 1941.³⁰

More generally, E. Franklin Frazier, conceding that reliable figures did not exist, argued that among blacks all fraternities save the Elks declined after mass migration to the cities [the Great Migration of World War I?]. He provided no specific date, but in one instance argued that “during the period following the Civil War and the first decade of the present century the Negro secret societies had their greatest growth.” Subsequently, without isolating on any particular fraternity, and combining rural and urban associations, he claimed that “the urban environment has caused the older fraternal organizations to lose much of their appeal.”³¹ William A.

Muraskin, however, documented that the Prince Hall Masons, at least, should also have been excluded from that sweeping generalization. He provided figures that supported an explosion of membership from 1900 to 1930. Texas, for example, mushroomed from 2,000 members in 1903 to 20,000 in 1927 and California followed the pattern, enlarging from a mere 157 Prince Hall Masons in 1900 to 2,400 in 1929.³² Prosperity, migration to southern towns, the Great Migration to northern and western cities, and the attraction of the traditional prestige of masonry obviously contributed to the rapid growth.

Nebraska, with a caveat, followed the California model. As Lawrence De Graaf pointed out, a strong economy and a good climate contributed to the doubling of Los Angeles’s population during the 1920s. African Americans kept pace, increasing their number from 15,579 to 38,898.³³ In comparison, the total population for the entire state of Nebraska increased by only 24,261 during the 1920s and the black population of Omaha, the only sizeable industrial city, inched forward by a mere 708.³⁴ In Nebraska the economic stagnation stifled migra-

tion and the weak economy combined with the lack of migrants to put Prince Hall Mason membership in a tailspin at mid-decade.

A typewritten PHGLN document distributed in 1940 claimed that its membership peaked in 1923 with eleven lodges containing a total of 800 brothers. Other official statistics of the grand secretary, however, revealed a summit of 742 members in 1922 and that by the end of March 1923 the figure had shrunk to 669. Grand Master Young explained that the decrease resulted from losses in the Omaha lodges, while Lebanon #3 in Lincoln gained members and those in central and western Nebraska held steady. He refused to grant a dispensation to an unnamed lodge to conduct a membership drive because it was “un-Masonic to solicit prospective members.” Instead he commended the Omaha action as good, “namely the removal of dead weight.”³⁵ Actually, it was the opening salvo in a battle to maintain viability.

In 1922 the PHGLN had increased to \$40 and \$20 the maximum and minimum fees for initiating, passing, and raising a candidate. In 1924 it rescinded that action, lowering the rates to \$25 and \$15. In 1927 Grand Master Charles W. Dickerson issued a dispensation allowing individual lodges to initiate, pass, and raise candidates for less than the constitutional fees and to reinstate “members who had been suspended for non-payment of dues, for a period of three years, or less, for a fee of \$5.00.” He did this “to stimulate interest, and to inject new life in our lodges, and to help suspended brothers, who have been unable to keep steady employment.” Despite thirty-one new initiates and seven reinstatements, sixty-five members were suspended in 1927, dropping the grand lodge roster to a total of 515.³⁶ The PHGLN ended the “prosperity decade” with the same number of members as when it began.

In a contorted manner the PHGLN did close the decade with the maximum number of eleven lodges. In 1920 three



Grand Tyler William Tucker. *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication, PHGLN, 1923, PHM MSS*

members of Lebanon #3 applied for a dispensation to start a new lodge in Lincoln. Lebanon, however, exercised its constitutional privilege and refused to endorse the movement; no further attempts were made.³⁷ In the next year in Omaha two new lodges did appear—Hiram #10 and St. John’s #11. However, in the same year, Grand Master Hunter revoked the charter of Platte Valley #8 at Scottsbluff.³⁸ Subsequently, a strike in the meatpacking industry in 1921–22 and the recession of 1924 took a toll on the membership in Omaha in general and in 1926 led specifically to the demise of St. John’s #11. At the same time Dr. George Flippin of True American #6 of Grand Island received a dispensation to form a lodge in North Platte. The city, however, was home to less than fifty black males at the time—forty-three according to the 1920 census and only nineteen listed in the 1930 census.³⁹ Those figures demonstrate the impact of the economic downturn on black workers residing in this western Nebraska railroad town sur-

rounded by farmland and pasture, and of the “riot” of 1929. Despite the initial mid-decade interest, the declining population forestalled the creation of a lodge. Finally, in 1928 the number of lodges rebounded with the chartering of the short-lived Arbor #11 in Nebraska City, which subsequently met its demise early in the Great Depression.⁴⁰

The spread of “clandestine” black masonry also affected the membership of the PHGLN. In masonic parlance “clandestine” referred to a lodge claiming masonic affiliation that was not a member of the PHGLN. Several competitive National Compact lodges existed in Lincoln and Omaha that were associated with the King Solomon Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted York Masons of Kansas and Jurisdiction.⁴¹ The National Compact was a rival group that claimed a masonic heritage the PHGLN did not recognize as legitimate. Grand Master Nathaniel Hunter battled vigorously against this rival organization, convincing the Nebraska Secretary of State not to issue it articles of incorporation. Moreover, Hiram lodge #10 began with twelve “healed clandestines” (that is, they dropped their affiliation with the National Compact and formed a Prince Hall blue lodge) including its first worshipful master, Charles H. Bradford.⁴²

Apparently the competition became less decorous in 1923. In that year the annual communication voted to commend Grand Tyler William Tucker, who prevented the Compact Masons from “breaking through” the line of march during the St. John’s Day parade.⁴³ The National Compact lodges continued to present meaningful competition throughout the remainder of the decade. In 1927 the annual communication debated the issue of suing them for “encroachment of rights.” Grand Master Dickerson resisted the move, arguing that it only gave masonry a “bad name.”⁴⁴

While the economic stagnation contributed to membership depletion, that scenario obviously also resulted in a precarious fiscal outlook. The PHGLN began as a jurisdiction in a state with

Prince Hall Masonry in the 1920s

relatively few African American residents and because of that it remained a relatively poor one. In its first year of operation the grand lodge received \$3,096 and disbursed \$1,142, leaving a balance of \$1,953. Following the brief boom in membership the balance almost quadrupled in two years to \$7,291 in 1922, but then grew slowly to \$10,672 by the end of 1927. By comparison, in 1920 the chairman of the committee on foreign correspondence (i.e., news from other masonic jurisdictions) reported that the Georgia Prince Hall Grand Lodge owned \$70,000 worth of property and had \$123,821.47 cash in hand.⁴⁵

The limited funds and the downspiral membership caused immediate financial problems. At the 1922 annual communication a committee that studied the operation of other grand lodges recommended the creation of the office of Grand Relief Secretary. The PHGLN accepted the recommendation and elected C. T. Denton, Lebanon #3, to the post. The creation of the new office coincided with a dues increase that caused dissension, especially from the smaller lodges. In fact, in 1923 True American #6 voted not to remit its relief and burial assessments because it felt that the position was not established legally. Grand Master Young lectured the lodge about the supremacy of the grand lodge, defended the office which could devote full time to an arduous task, and True American relented. The very next year, however, Young removed the officer because of dereliction of duty and opponents succeeded in eliminating the office as an unnecessary expense (grand lodge officers received compensation and transportation and per diem for annual communications). The cost of one extra officer was minimal, but with the rapid descent in membership after 1922, all expenses became greater as fewer and fewer individuals paid dues. Moreover, most members were blue-collar workers with limited discretionary family funds. Generally, they did not appreciate increases in assessments. Unfortunately, on several occasions the

misappropriation of funds by blue lodge officers exacerbated the situation and caused painful embarrassment to a society based on moral uprightness.⁴⁶

The battle over the office of Grand Relief Secretary highlighted the delicate financial situation that ensued by mid-decade. In 1925 the grand lecturer reported that he "thought it best not to visit many of the lodges because of working conditions among the brothers, many of whom were idle, and that my visits might embarrass the lodge's treasurers to a certain extent."⁴⁷ Two years later several lodges stood in arrears and in 1928 the PHGLN voted not to print a proceedings of the annual communication (for the next twenty years only brief handwritten or typewritten "minutes" were produced).⁴⁸

Seemingly, the financial challenges stimulated some lodges to undertake fundraising events once again. The women's auxiliary, the Order of the Eastern Star, had always held more public fundraisers, but even the infrequent pre-World War I lodge advertisements for socials disappeared from the press after the formation of the grand lodge. Possibly the boom created economic security for the individual blue lodges. If so, the bust reintroduced economic concern. In 1927 Lebanon #3 held a chicken dinner at Quinn Chapel A.M.E. The brothers reported that "our white friends were largely in evidence."⁴⁹ This was two years before the North Platte incident; and it points out the range of race relations in Nebraska during the 1920s in terms of individual attitudes, neighborhood circumstances, and peaceful or confrontational intergroup contact at any particular time or place.

The unstable finances brought concern but not destitution. Perquisites for grand lodge officers continued apace. In 1923 the grand lodge voted to expand the list of officers granted per diems and railroad fares for the annual communication. Two years later it authorized the purchase of ceremonial jewels for grand lodge officers and as late as 1928 it decided to compensate Grand Master

Charles W. Dickerson \$50 for his service.⁵⁰ Limited grants of charity to community groups also continued. For example, the Omaha lodges jointly celebrated St. John's Day at Zion Baptist Church. The money raised through the collection plate was donated to church auxiliaries and the Old Folks Home. The minister who conducted the service, however, was offended and berated the lodges in a newspaper article because he personally usually received \$10 from a single lodge and the six Omaha lodges paid him only \$5. The lodge officers claimed it was a misunderstanding not privation.⁵¹

Prince Hall Mason Blue Lodges, 1920s

Rough Ashler #1	Omaha
Excelsior #2	Omaha
Lebanon #3	Lincoln
Rescue #4	Omaha
Marvin #5	Hastings
True American #6	Grand Island
Alliance #7	Alliance
Platte Valley #8	Scottsbluff
Omaha #9	Omaha
St. John's #11	Omaha
Arbor #11	Nebraska City

The PHGLN also maintained its NAACP membership as well as making \$25 donations to the Old Folks Home of Lincoln in 1925 and the Federation of Colored Women's Clubs of Lincoln in 1927.⁵² "Charity" was reserved for fraternal brothers, but on occasion the PHGLN made donations outside the fraternity. While the PHGLN decided against building its own masonic home because of the high cost and the minimal need—an estimated \$6,000 to purchase the land and erect the facility and few elderly members—it did establish a Prince Hall Building Association in 1920 in order to work towards the purchase of a meeting hall. Rented space for the

meetings of the Omaha lodges, first at Twenty-second and Cuming and then at Twenty-fourth and Parker, proved insufficient. In 1927 the PHGLN purchased a building at Twenty-sixth and Blondo for \$7,500 and spent \$3,300 to remodel it. It used \$6,000 from its savings account for the first payment and assessed each member \$5 to partially reimburse the treasury.⁵³ Thus, the grand lodge ended the decade in a precarious financial situation. It had an already declining membership, a substantial proportion of which was immediately susceptible to economic slowdowns. Now, besides looking after the standard relief and burial responsibilities, it was in debt and had property to maintain.

In another area of concern, the early membership boom created opportunities as well as caused problems. Increased membership promised moderate dues and generous benefits. The pace of the growth in the first four years (1919–22), however, also caused chaos in terms of record keeping, lodge stability, fraternal behavior, and the quality of membership. Then, the rapidly ensuing bust exacerbated the existing difficulties and presented new concerns, especially in regard to finances. Thus, in 1925 Grand Master Young appointed a committee to revise the six-year-old constitution and general laws. Geographic practicality resulted in a group from Omaha and Lincoln; distance and travel time probably precluded regular participation by members of the central and western Nebraska lodges. The committee consisted of Walter L. Seals, chairman; Nathaniel Hunter, Alfred F. Peoples, and Charles C. Dudley, all of Rough Ashler #1; Grand Master R. H. Young and Trago T. McWilliams of Lebanon #3; and Edward Fletcher of Omaha #9, the only one of the group who was not a charter member of the PHGLN. Thus, obviously, the committee represented prestigious longterm members of Prince Hall Masonry.⁵⁴

The committee worked while the fraternity grappled with the weaknesses of human nature. In October 1926 the new

Grand Master, Charles W. Dickerson, Rescue #4, assembled the grand lodge officers residing in Omaha to discuss the conditions of the craft in the city. The group met twice a week until February of the following year. Nerves must have frayed; egos must have bruised. At the annual communication Dickerson confessed that the year had its “unpleasant” moments, but that he held no “enmity or malice” towards anyone. Yet, he complained of poorly attended lodge meetings and incompetent lodge officers. During a general discussion of conditions, W. P. Wade, Rescue #4, asserted that the brothers needed more instruction in order to represent the organization. Similarly, Edward Fletcher, who joined Omaha #9 in 1921, asked that past masters stop criticizing current masters.⁵⁵ The comments, perhaps, revealed class conflict, or senior member-new initiate, or established resident-recent migrant stress associated with a new confederation. Previously the blue lodges related as Nebraska entities submerged in the Iowa or Missouri jurisdictions. Now they had to relate to each other in terms of operating their own jurisdiction that obviously magnified squabbles.

Despite the rancor the constitutional committee completed its work and the delegates to the annual communication gave the document their approval. Probably in response to the challenge from clandestine groups, the revised constitution claimed “sole jurisdiction” over “symbolic masonry” in the state, as well as recognizing the affiliation of the Grand Court of the Heroines of Jericho and the Amaranthus Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. Also, it tried to curtail an ongoing battle over the form of ritual. One group, led by Nathaniel Hunter, wished to devise a ritual specific to the PHGLN. A second group headed by Edward Fletcher, W. P. Wade, and A. B. Matthews (Rescue #4) wanted to replace the Duncan ritual, because it could not keep the secrets of masonry “inviolable,” with the “Look to the East” ritual. The Duncanites, however, prevailed over both groups as the

revised constitution specified that work, and “strictly” forbade “all innovations or changes in said work or lectures.”⁵⁶

Besides ritual, the revised constitution also addressed revenue problems. First it hiked the annual relief tax from the original \$4 to \$6.20, collected quarterly at the rate of \$1.55 per Master Mason. Second, for any lodge that failed to make those monetary returns for six months it stipulated the automatic suspension from benefits until it paid in full. Furthermore, any lodge that fell a year into arrears would have to forfeit its charter. Finally, the revised constitution mandated that each subordinate lodge maintain two standing committees—finance to oversee the books and charity to bestow up to \$5 on a brother in distress.

The document also confronted the question of membership, revealing problems beyond declining rosters. Addressing the quality of candidates, the revised general laws specified that the qualifications for an initiate included:

Faith in God, Hope in immortality, charity (love) towards mankind. An applicant further shall have attained to the age of twenty-one years, be free-born, be under tongue of good report, and except as otherwise provided by law, shall have resided for the space of one year within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska, and six months in the jurisdiction of the particular lodge.

Each lodge had a territory within which its members had to reside. “Invading” another lodge’s territory for initiates was forbidden. Furthermore, members could not simultaneously belong to more than one blue lodge. A candidate rejected by one lodge could not be initiated into another lodge without the unanimous concurrence of the first lodge. All rejected petitioners had to wait six months before reapplying. These stipulations suggest that unscrupulous candidates, competitive lodges, and hasty decisions abounded during the dizzying boom-bust infancy of the PHGLN.

Besides candidates, officers also caused problems that needed constitutional remedy. At the 1927 annual com-

Prince Hall Masonry in the 1920s

munication the committee on jurisprudence refused to endorse Grand Master Dickerson's dispensation relative to reinstating suspended members at a nominal fee. Seemingly members in good standing did not want suspended members in arrears having their debts erased and reentered at costs less than new initiates. The revised constitution added a section directing that petitions for degrees or membership could only be received at regular communications and that "no prerogative of the Grand Master can avail to defeat this provision." It further curbed the power of the grand master by prohibiting him and the deputy grand master from serving simultaneously as the worshipful master of a blue lodge. Past grand officers, however, could serve as officers of subordinate lodges.⁵⁷

Not only officers behaved unmasonically. The revised general laws pertaining to behavior now listed the commission of a felony as the first offense subject to expulsion. Specifically, "selling liquor" (it was the era of prohibition) received a separate section. Atheism—remember the earlier article on the candidate qualifications—resulted in expulsion, although the punishment for drunkenness and profanity depended on the extent and "publicity" of the incident. Finally, the catch-all "unMasonic conduct" section defined an offense as "the doing of any act, or the neglect of any duty, contrary to or in violation of the obligations or teachings of the institution which would impair its usefulness or degrade it in the estimation of good people."⁵⁸

The constitutional revisions responded to and capped off the roller coaster ride of the PHGLN during the 1920s. The institution served as a socioeconomic microcosm of the lightly populated urban African American communities in Nebraska. Socially, at times the fraternity was favored with deference and dignity. On other occasions it was ignored or treated poorly. Also, the activities of the PHGLN in the area of race relations revealed a fratern-

ity that was simultaneously "conservative" and "liberal"; that is, it supported both accommodation and uplift as well as vociferously pushing for civil rights and equal treatment. For this group the positions were not mutually exclusive. They were different strategies to be applied in different situations.

Economically, the multiclass fraternity mirrored the plight of the black community in general that did not reap extensive benefits from the "roaring twenties." The decade opened with a sharp increase in membership in the wake of the Great Migration. However, the 1924–25 industrial slump combined with the downturn in the agricultural sector to stifle economic growth in Nebraska, thus curbing the influx of African Americans to the state. The economic woes did not merely arrest growth; the PHGLN rapidly lost members, demonstrating the economic vulnerability of blue-collar and service-sector blacks. The fraternity immediately experienced financial problems that severely limited its program, illustrating in turn the precarious nature of black institutions in areas of sparse settlement. Despite the losses, the record of the PHGLN supports the interpretations that stress the continued prestige and growth of Prince Hall Masonry, at least in the West, after World War I. At the onset of the Great Depression, Prince Hall Masonry was a weakened but viable and vital institution among the limited number of African Americans in Nebraska.

Notes

¹ *Proceedings of the Second Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1920, Prince Hall Mason Manuscripts, microfilm at Nebraska State Historical Society and Historical Society of Douglas County (hereafter cited as PHM MSS).

² *The Monitor*, Aug. 12 and 20, 1920.

³ *The Lincoln Star*, Aug. 17, 18, 21, 1921; *The Monitor*, Aug. 4 and 25, 1921; *Proceedings of the Third Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1921, PHM MSS.

⁴ *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1922, PHM MSS.

⁵ *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication*,

PHGLN, 1923, PHM MSS; *The New Era*, Aug. 24, 1923; *Omaha World-Herald*, Aug. 16, 1923, clipping file, Historical Society of Douglas County.

⁶ *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1924, PHM MSS; *Alliance Times and Herald*, Aug. 19 and 22, 1924; *The Monitor*, Aug. 29, 1924.

⁷ *The Lincoln Star*, Aug. 20 and 21, 1925.

⁸ *Grand Island Daily Independent*, Aug. 19, 1926. While the *Proceedings* for 1927 claim that three hundred copies of the *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Communication* were published, none is included in the PHM MSS.

⁹ *The Monitor*, Aug. 24, 1928; *Minutes of the Tenth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, PHM MSS. No *Proceedings* were published between 1928 and 1959. *The Lincoln Star*, Aug. 16 and 17, 1928; *Nebraska State Journal*, Aug. 16 and 17, 1928.

¹⁰ David Fahey, *The Black Lodge in White America: "True Reformer" Browne and His Economic Strategy* (Dayton, Ohio: Wright State University Press, 1994), 8.

¹¹ Joseph A. Walkes Jr., Jno. G. Lewis, Jr.—*End of an Era: The History of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Louisiana, 1842–1979*. (United States: Joseph A. Walkes Jr., 1986), 162–63, 185, 295.

¹² *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1923, PHM MSS; *The Monitor*, May 4, 1923; *The New Era*, May 4, 1923.

¹³ Edwin W. Pierce, general secretary of the Omaha YWCA to Nathaniel Hunter, June 22, 1926, correspondence, PHM MSS; *The Monitor*, Jan. 20, 1921; Mar. 10, 1922.

¹⁴ Craig Morris to L. Hollingsworth Wood, president of the National Urban League, Dec. 3, 1926, Series V, National Urban League Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; *Annual Report of the Omaha Urban League, 1929*, *Ibid.*, Series V.

¹⁵ David G. Dales, "North Platte Racial Incident: Black-White Confrontation, 1929," *Nebraska History*, 60 (Fall 1979), 432.

¹⁶ *Proceedings of the Third Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1921, PHM MSS.

¹⁷ *The Monitor*, Dec. 8, 1921.

¹⁸ *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1923, PHM MSS.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Orville D. Menard, *Political Bossism in Mid-America: Tom Dennison's Omaha, 1900–1933* (New York: University Press of America, 1989), 168, 172–3, 228.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 163; *The Monitor*, Nov. 5, 1926.

²² *Nebraska State Journal*, Aug. 20, 1921, 5.

²³ *The Monitor*, Nov. 5, 1926.

²⁴ Allan H. Spear, *Black Chicago: The Making of*

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a *Negro Ghetto, 1890–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 107–9.

²⁵ The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922), 141.

²⁶ St. Clair Drake, *Churches and Voluntary Associations in the Chicago Negro Community*, Works Project Administration Official Project 465–54–386, District 3, Chicago, 1940, 211.

²⁷ David A. Gerber, *Black Ohio and the Color Line, 1860–1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 160–61.

²⁸ Kenneth Kusmer, *A Ghetto Takes Shape: Black Cleveland, 1870–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 206.

²⁹ Charles H. Wesley, *The History of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Ohio, 1849–1960* (Wilberforce, OH: Central States College Press, 1961), 211, 218.

³⁰ Darrel E. Bigham, *We Ask Only a Fair Trial: A History of the Black Community of Evansville, Indiana* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 182–85.

³¹ E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro in the United States* (New York: 1957), 374, 378–79; 379 n. 34.

³² William A. Muraskin, *Middle-Class Blacks in a White Society: Prince Hall Freemasonry in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 29. His figures compare to those for white masonry presented by Lynn Dumenil, *Freemasonry and American Culture, 1880–1930* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 151, 225. Muraskin's and Dumenil's data also contradict the interpretation presented in Jeffrey A. Clark, *Service Clubs in American Society: Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993). He argued that after 1900, and especially after World War I, service clubs replaced fraternities (11–32). Yet he claimed 400,000 members for the three service clubs by the end of the 1920s (45; 173 n. 36) while Dumenil reported that the white Masons grew by over one million during the decade. Furthermore, all three service clubs barred blacks until after World War II; therefore, his analysis does not easily transfer to an analysis of black fraternities and clubs.

³³ Lawrence De Graaf, "The City of Black Angels; Emergence of the Los Angeles Ghetto, 1890–1930," *Pacific Historical Quarterly*, 39 (1970), 328–50.

³⁴ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States, 1920–32* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1935), 9, 55.

³⁵ *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1923; *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1922; Untitled typed document presented at the Twenty-second Annual Communication, 1940, PHM MSS.

³⁶ *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1927; *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1922; *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1924, PHM MSS.

³⁷ *Proceedings of the Second Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1920, PHM MSS.

³⁸ *Proceedings of the Third Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1921, PHM MSS; *The Monitor*, Mar. 17, Sept. 22, 1921.

³⁹ *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1923; *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1925, PHM MSS; *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1920*, Vol. III, Population, 604; *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*, Vol. III, Pt. 2, Population, 82.

⁴⁰ *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1928, PHM MSS; *The Monitor*, July 13, 1928. Arbor #11 was cited last in the Minutes to the Twelfth Annual Communication, PHGLN, 1930, PHM MSS.

⁴¹ *The Monitor*, June 1, 1918; May 31, Aug. 7, Sept. 11, 1919; Jan. 22, Sept. 2, 1920; Nov. 24, 1921.

⁴² *Proceedings of the Third Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1921, PHM MSS; *The Monitor*, Mar. 17, Aug. 25, 1921.

⁴³ *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1923, PHM MSS.

⁴⁴ *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1927, PHM MSS. For a general history of the National Compact see Matthew Brock, *History of the National Grand Lodge* (Columbus, Ohio: Matthew Brock, 1980). Brock discusses litigation but shows no case from Nebraska. He did not analyze the organization in terms of individual states. Thus, he shed no light on its development in Nebraska. His list of grand masters for 1978 did not include one from Nebraska, but his roster of grand lodges for 1980 listed St. Stephens for the state. Seemingly, if National Compact blue lodges continued to exist in Nebraska after the 1920s, they

broke away from the Kansas jurisdiction to establish a separate grand lodge at that time.

⁴⁵ *Proceedings of the Second Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1920; *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1922; *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1924, PHM MSS.

⁴⁶ *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1922; *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1923; *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1924, PHM MSS.

⁴⁷ *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1925, PHM MSS.

⁴⁸ *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1927; *Minutes of the Tenth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1928, PHM MSS.

⁴⁹ *The Monitor*, May 13, 1927.

⁵⁰ *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1923; *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1925; *Minutes of the Tenth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1928, PHM MSS.

⁵¹ *The New Era*, June 27, 1924.

⁵² *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1925; *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1927, PHM MSS.

⁵³ *Proceedings of the Third Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1921; *Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1923; *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1927, PHM MSS.

⁵⁴ *Revised Constitution and General Laws, 1927*, PHM MSS.

⁵⁵ *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1927; *Minutes of the Ninth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1927, PHM MSS.

⁵⁶ *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1922; *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Communication*, PHGLN, 1924; *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Communications*, PHGLN, 1927; *Revised Constitution, 1927*, PHM MSS.

⁵⁷ *Revised Constitution, 1927; Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Communication, 1927*, PHGLN, PHM MSS.

⁵⁸ *Revised Constitution, 1927*, PHM MSS.