

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name Garfield Historic District

Other names/site number N/A

Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

2. Location

Street & number 914-916, 915 and 921 Garfield Street

N/A	not for publication
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City or town Poplar Bluff

N/A	vicinity
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State Missouri Code MO County Butler Code 023 Zip code 63901

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 national statewide x local
Applicable National Register Criteria: x A B C D
Toni M. Drawl AUG 11 2017
Signature of certifying official/Title Toni M. Prawl, Ph.D., Deputy SHPO Date
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____
Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____
Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

Garfield Historic District
Name of Property

Butler County, Missouri
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
1	0	objects
3	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

One

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: single dwelling

Commerce/Trade: specialty store

Education: school

Religion: religious facility

Social: civic

Education: library

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: single dwelling

Commerce/Trade: specialty store

Recreation and Culture: museum

Religion: religious facility

Social: civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Colonial

Revival

Mixed

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

Weatherboard

roof: Asphalt

other: _____

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Garfield Historic District
Name of Property

Butler County, Missouri
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance

1908 - 1968

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: Bonsack and Pearce, Inc

Builder: Miller, J. J.

Builder: Greer, A.W.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Garfield Historic District
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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.3

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 36.764603 -90.397722 3 36.763960 -90.397253
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

2 36.764606 -90.397266 4 36.763944 -90.396724
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

1 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Terri L. Foley, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization Private Contractor date January 27, 2017

street & number 8812 Sedgley Drive telephone 573-382-8590

city or town Wilmington state NC zip code 28412

e-mail tlfoley@zoho.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Garfield Historic District

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: **Garfield Historic District**

City or Vicinity: **Poplar Bluff**

County: **Butler** State: **Missouri**

Photographer: **Daron House**

Date

Photographed: **February 8, 2017**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 15: 916 Garfield Street, façade, looking east.
- 2 of 15: 914 – 916 Garfield Street, facades, looking east.
- 3 of 15: 914-916 Garfield Street, south elevation, looking north.
- 4 of 15: 916 Garfield Street, north elevation, looking south.
- 5 of 15: 916 Garfield Street, east and north elevation, looking southwest.
- 6 of 15: 915 Garfield Street, façade, looking west.
- 7 of 15: 915 Garfield Street, south elevation, looking north.
- 8 of 15: 915 Garfield Street, north elevation, looking south.
- 9 of 15: 915 Garfield Street, west elevation, looking east.
- 10 of 15: 921 Garfield Street, façade, looking west
- 11 of 15: 921 Garfield Street, north elevation, looking south.
- 12 of 15: 921 Garfield Street, south elevation, looking northeast.
- 13 of 15: 921 Garfield Street, west elevation, looking east.
- 14 of 15: 914-916, 915, and 921 Garfield Street, streetscape looking northwest.
- 15 of 15: 921, 914-916, and 915 Garfield Street, streetscape looking southwest.

Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

1 of 22: **Garfield Historic District Boundary Map and Latitude/Longitude Coordinates.** Source: Plat map on file with the recorder of deeds, Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri.

2 of 22: Photo key map of Garfield Historic District.

3 of 22: **Sanborn Fire Insurance Sanborn map – revised 1928 map, completed in 1950, showing the Garfield Historic District.** Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Poplar Bluff, Butler County Missouri, New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1950.

4 of 22: **Historic Photograph of Gatlin Grocery Store.** Photo shows grocery store when it was Martin's Grocery store (sign on side elevation) while the storefront states Carter's Grocery. Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

5 of 22: **Historic Photograph of Gatlin Grocery Store.** Photo shows grocery store with storefront intact and original roofline. Pete Price is standing in front of the store. Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

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- 6 of 22: Historic Photograph of Pleasant Hill Baptism Church, 1925. Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.
- 7 of 22: Historic Photograph of Pleasant Hill Baptism Church, 1955. Source: Sandra Davis.
- 8 of 22: Historic Photograph of Wheatley School, 1940. Showing Lonnie Davis, upper left. Source: Sandra Davis.
- 9 of 22: Map showing the boundaries of the Fifth Ward (during the period of significance), Poplar Bluff, Missouri. Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.
- 10 of 22: "Wheatley School Bible School." *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940, On file with the Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.
- 11 of 22: "Library." *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940. Source: Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.
- 12 of 22: "Mrs. Plater Speaks at Pleasant Hill." *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940. Source: Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.
- 13 of 22: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing original storefront windows and configuration (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.
- 14 of 22: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing original storefront transoms (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.
- 15 of 22: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing original or early period display (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.
- 16 of 22: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing Coca Cola Star Burst clock and bench (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.
- 17 of 22: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing barber shop with chair, cash register, sink and 1960s flooring (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.
- 18 of 22: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing barber shop looking toward kitchen and store space (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.
- 19 of 22: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing barber shop with sign (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.
- 20 of 22: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing kitchen with 1920s Roper stove (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office
- 21 of 22: 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing the Garfield Historic District and the surrounding area in the Fifth Ward. Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Poplar Bluff, Butler County Missouri, New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1950.
- 22 of 22: Current Map, showing the Garfield Historic District and the surrounding area in the Fifth Ward. Map depicts the loss of buildings compared to the 1950 Sanborn Map Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

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Garfield Historic District
Name of Property
Butler County, Missouri
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Summary

The Garfield Historic District (Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri) contains the most cohesive, intact collection of African American resources in the community. The district encompasses three buildings and one object (a sign) situated on approximately 1.3 acres in the 900 block of Garfield Street in the Fifth Ward, situated between Jefferson Avenue to the north, West Neat Street to the south, Benton Street to the west and Alice Street on the east (see Figure 1 and Photos 14-15). One resource, the Wheatley School – is previously listed in the National Register (NRL 02/13/1998). All resources contribute to the district's historic context. The district was established in 1908 with the construction of the first resource 914-916 Garfield Street, The Gatlin Grocery Store/Jordan, Frank and Lutie House (contributing building), other resources include the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church constructed in 1919 (915 Garfield Street) (contributing building), as well as the church sign (1963) (contributing object) located on the front property lot and Wheatley School constructed in 1928 (921 Garfield Street) (previously listed). The Garfield Historic District represents the only intact resources that represent the African American community of Poplar Bluff during the Jim Crow era, segregation and the settlement of the Fifth Ward during the time of the Great Black Migration. The African American community continued to thrive until 1968 when desegregation in Poplar Bluff occurred, resulting in the African Americans relocating to other areas of town, more young adults leaving the area to attend college or better employment opportunities elsewhere with the desegregation throughout the country. After 1968, the area surrounding the Garfield Historic District experienced a decline in businesses and population (see Figures 21 and 22 for maps showing the change in building density). The period of significance for the Garfield Historic District begins with the date of the initial construction of the first building 1908, and extends through 1968 which was the date schools were fully desegregated in Poplar Bluff, ending a time in history when the school no longer educated just African American students but white students as well. Wheatley School after 1968 did not offer classes for students in grades first through third. More importantly, desegregation changed the overall atmosphere of the district with white students being bussed into the Garfield Historic District area.

The Garfield Historic District is in a section of Poplar Bluff that represents the area where African-Americans settled and formed a community within Poplar Bluff. The buildings located at 914-916, 915, and 921 Garfield Street represent the only intact cohesive collection of early twentieth-century commercial with attached dwelling, educational and religious buildings that interrelate to express a history of development, commerce, education, and social history spanning the district's period of significance 1908 - 1968.

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Historic resources contributing to the Garfield Historic District are at least 50 years old, retain character defining features, and are recognizable to the period of significance. Contributing resources that have exterior modifications retain sufficient architectural elements and demonstrate the feeling and association of the period of significance, as well as the original function. Contributing buildings retain original construction methods and material or those from a later, cohesive, historic-era upgrading.

The resources retain the majority of the aspects of integrity (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association) from the district's period of significance 1908-1968.

Setting

The Garfield Historic District is located approximately 2.5 miles north of the commercial downtown area, and roughly 3.20 miles east of Business 60. Within proximity to the Garfield Historic District are two National Register Districts; the North Main Street Historic District, approximately .74 of a mile to the southeast and the Cynthia-Kinzer Historic District approximately 2.75 miles to the southwest. The blocks adjoining the district are comprised of several vacant lots, residential dwellings, and the Central Baptist Church (African-American Church at 1023 Alice Street). The surrounding vacant lot flanking the grocery store/dwelling (different parcel, lot 7) and on the south and west side of the church (different parcels, lots 2-8) do not contribute to the district's historic character and were excluded from the district boundaries. Lots five-eight (different from the parcel Wheatley School is located) situated behind the school building to the west were also left out, as the objects (pavilion and playground equipment) are not associated with the period of significance of the school. In addition, lots five-eight were not included in the original Wheatley School nomination boundaries¹ (See Figure 1 for the boundaries of the Garfield Historic District).

The Garfield Historic District spans part of the 900 block of Garfield Street at the cross alley, with Pleasant Hill Baptist Church on the southwest corner, the Wheatley School on the northwest corner and the Gatlin Grocery Store with dwelling on the southeast corner (see Photo 14-15). Setbacks of the historic resources vary. Topography, the Garfield Historic District is elevated on the west side of the street with Wheatley School and Pleasant Hill Baptist Church at a slightly higher elevation than Gatlin's Grocery Store/dwelling on the west side of the street. The landscape from Jefferson Avenue south to West Neat Street has a slight slope to the flat property lot that holds the Gatlin Grocery Store, dwelling with a portable storage building (not counted as a resource) with the adjacent lot and street exhibiting a slight slope toward West Neat Street (see Photo 1-3, 14). Garfield Street is asphalt with concrete curbing and

¹Philip Thomason. National Register nomination, "Wheatley Public School, Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri

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sidewalks located in front of the Gatlin Grocery Store and Wheatley School. A concrete retaining wall runs the width of the school and partially runs on the side elevations near Jefferson Avenue and the cross alley (see Photo 10). Pleasant Hill Baptist Church has a concrete brick red landscape block retainer wall that runs the width of the church along Garfield Street (see Photo 14). A paved crossroad alley runs east-west dividing the school and the church, and the grocery store.

Individual Property Descriptions

Historic names are based upon first known owner or occupant. Dates at the end of the heading represent construction dates or approximate construction dates; established by city directories, real estate tax records, interviews with property owners, and Sanborn maps.

[c] = contributing; [nc] = non-contributing; [NRL] – National Register Listed.

Primary resource contributing status listed on the first line of entry; status of secondary resource is listed at the end of the narrative.

1. 914-916 Garfield Street, Gatlin's Grocery Store and Jordan, Frank and Lutie House; 1925 and 1908 [c] Historically known as 816 (dwelling) and 818 (store) Garfield Street

Any changes and alterations to the store building and the dwelling were verified by oral interviews with members of the community who resided in area during the period of significance. All changes to this historic resource was completed in 1963. The only change to occur after 1963 was the painting of the fiberboard siding; fiberboard siding installed in 1963. There is no written documentation on any of the changes or alteration of the historic resources located at 914-916 Garfield Street.

Originally constructed as two separate buildings, a one-part commercial block and a one-and-half story Gable Front and Wing dwelling, the two buildings were connected in 1963 after the current owner's father, Taft Rattler, purchased the two buildings.² Prior to being interconnected, the two buildings were sited in very close proximity (Figure 3), the narrow spacing between the two properties prevented anyone from walking between the two buildings and gave the illusion the two buildings were connected.³ The one-story commercial block building was constructed in 1925, and originally had a rectangle footprint, flat roof with

² James Johnson, Colvin McDonald, Rex Rattler, and Bill Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016.

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a metal shed awning, and was clad in wood siding (see Figures 4-5) prior to being interconnected to the dwelling with an L-shaped footprint. Today, the store is clad in fiberboard (fiberboard was installed in 1963) which covers the original wood siding. The storefront faces west toward Garfield Street, and retains the original configuration of a centered recessed entrance flanked by large displays windows that now have security bars (1963 – see documentation in footnote 4).⁴ Transoms and bulkheads are intact but are covered over (see Photos 1-2) (see Figures 13 and 14). The half gable-mansard roof is clad in asphalt shingle. The roof line is cut-off right past the ridgeline on the west elevation, then interconnects to the front gable roofline of the dwelling section (see Photos 2-3). The front gable of dwelling gives the impression the house originally had a gambrel roof, but the roofline was changed to connect to the store roofline. Originally, the commercial building featured a flat roof, and a metal shed roof that sheltered the store entrance (see Figures 4-5). The altered roofline was a result of the two buildings being connected in 1963. The façade and the front section of the south elevation of the commercial building features a wall surface clad in asphalt shingles (see Photos 1-3). The original metal shed roof that sheltered the storefront was replaced with an asphalt roof. The north elevation features two original small one-over-one windows, an original larger one-over-one window, and a window air condition unit in a third smaller window opening (see Photos 4-5). The rear addition is smaller in height and has a shed roof (1963). It features matching windows with security bars (1963) and an entrance (see Photos 4-5).⁵

The interior of the store has remained intact. The original or early period display cases, wooden wall shelves, 1960s Coca-Cola cooler, a 1960s Coca-Cola star burst clock and wooden benches are still utilized in the store (see Figures 15 and 16). The barber shop room is located behind the retail store space and is still intact with the barber chair, sink, a sign stating, “Taft’s Barber Shop, Hair Cuts \$5” and the 1963 colored tile flooring. While not in use, the original or early period cash register is stored in the barber shop area (see Figures 17, 18 and 19). Between the store and barber shop space is a small kitchen with a sink, and a 1920s style Roper enamel stove (see Figure 20).

The dwelling, built in 1908, fronts Garfield Street and is setback from the street with a semi- cross-gambrel roof, and is clad in fiberboard that matches the commercial building. The entrance is in the side

³ McDonald, Rattler, and Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 14, 2016.

⁴ Mayor Ed DeGaris. Telephone interview with Terri L. Foley, May 10, 2017. Mayor Ed DeGaris stated in 1963 when he was employed by the City of Poplar Bluff as a police officer, William Taft Rattler, installed security bars on the windows and interconnected the store and house for security reasons. Prior to these changes, Rattler had experience break-ins and vandalism to the store.

⁵ Ibid.

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gable section of the façade at the point where the front and side gable connect. The façade holds two smaller paired one-by-one double-hung windows to the south of the entrance, and a large paired one-over-one double-hung window located in the front gambrel section of the façade. All windows on the façade feature shed metal awnings. The north elevation adjoins the commercial building (see Photo 2). The south elevation features paired and single double-hung windows. When the store and dwelling were connected, the front porch was enclosed and an addition was constructed on the west and rear elevations of the dwelling (see Photo 3).⁶ Adjacent to the south elevation is a metal carport located on a separate property lot and it has been excluded from the boundaries as it does not represent the period of significance and does not share the same property lot as the dwelling and the store (see Photo 3).

The overall appearance of the grocery store and dwelling has changed over time because of the two buildings being interconnected. Gatlin purchased the dwelling prior to constructing the store, the reason the store and the house carry different historic names. While previous owners of the store also owned the house, like the Gatlin and Carter families, they did not live in the house. Prior owners (before the Rattler family) of the store/dwelling resided elsewhere in the Fifth Ward, and used the dwelling as an investment income by renting out the house. The Rattler family was the first family to own both the grocery store and to reside in the house. Although the two buildings have undergone changes, all changes except the repainting of the buildings occurred within the period of significance (alteration in roof over the store, fiberboard siding, security bars, the addition, and the buildings being connected). The interconnected buildings still reflect their historic use/function and thus retain integrity. Research and interviews conducted have made known the grocery store/dwelling building endures to be a significant source of information for exploring African American commercial, social, segregation, post-segregation, cultural, land use, daily living practices, and architectural customs of those who resided in the Fifth Ward. It is the only surviving African American commercial building left in Poplar Bluff. It visually illustrates both the significant evidence the property can convey (function of the store and dwelling) and the social and ethnic history of the African American community of Poplar Bluff.

A metal storage shed, a temporary structure, is in the backyard. Since it is a portable structure, not included in the resource count.

⁶ Ibid; McDonald, Rattler, and Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 14, 2016.

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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**2. 915 Garfield Street, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church; ca. 1919 [c]
Historically known as 817 and 917 Garfield Street**

This is a one-story brick clad building designed in the Colonial Revival style with a cross plan, a moderately pitched asphalt hipped roof, and wide overhanging eaves. The building sits on a concrete block foundation that is higher in the front and decreases to the back of the building; the foundation on the north elevation varies in height but the south elevation is equal in height (see Photo 8). The foundation on the south elevation maintains the same height from front to back (see Photo 7). A water table delineates the foundation from the upper wall surface area (see Photos 7-8). Located on the west elevation (rear) is an addition (ca. 1968)⁷ that harmonizes with the existing building in height and width (see Photo 9). The façade (east) has an arched recessed double-door entrance located at the north corner and is accessed by tiered concrete steps flanked by black iron railings that lead to a stoop. The brick archway has a centered keystone and matching keystones centered on each side. Located to the south of the entrance is a three-part vertical window with a fan light and matching keystone. A small circular window near the roofline is located between the entrance and the larger window. A steeple topped with a cross, rests on a square base clad in vinyl on the north corner of the roof, installed in 2011 when the existing 1968 steeple was damaged in a storm (see Photo 6). Located on the basement level under the stoop is an entrance with a solid paneled door. The north elevation features two arched windows in the front, cross and back sections. Two smaller double-hung windows flank a centered entrance on the north elevation of the addition, with an ADA accessible ramp (see Photo 8). The south elevation matches the north except for a narrow brick chimney located in the cross section (see Photo 7). The west elevation holds two small double-hung windows (see Photo 9). The foundation has windows on each elevation. A red concrete block (landscape block type) separates the front property area from Garfield Street (see Photo 14). Located on the front grassy area of the property lot is a moderate size brick signage board (installed 1963).⁸ A dirt driveway is located on the south elevation with a vacant lot to the south of the driveway. A paved alley runs alongside the north elevation.

By 1968, the rear addition was constructed by local African American church members to house the educational rooms, and at the same time the steeple was replaced (first replacement) and the sanctuary was remodeled; primarily cosmetic. The addition on the back does not distract from the original church building, and is not visible from the front of the building. Since this time, the only change to occur was the

⁸ McDonald, Colvin. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Phone Interview. September 28, 2016.

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removal of the original windows (in storage) for protection until the windows can be restored. In addition, the 1968 steeple was replaced in 2011 due to storm damage (second replacement).⁹

A brick framed sign installed at ground level is located on the front lot of the church property. It is considered a contributing resource due to its age and its association with the church.

**3. 921 Garfield Street, Wheatley Public School; ca. 1928 [NRL 02/13/1998]
Historically known as 825 Garfield Street**

A two-story brick Colonial Revival school building, with a “U-shaped” plan, a flat roof, and a concrete foundation. The façade (east) consist of a recessed seven-bay center portion, capped on either side by one-bay projections (see Photo 10). It has a centered double French door entrance with multi-light side-lights and transom. The entrance features the original cast concrete surround and dentilled cornice with “Wheatley Public School” inscribed in a flat concrete panel with scrollwork above the cornice. There are three paired double-hung six-over-one windows that flank the entrance on both stories and a tripled paired window (four-over-one flanking a central six-over-one). Window sills are concrete with flat brick headers with keystones. The brick headers on the second level extend out between windows and to the corners to serve as a stringcourse. An elliptical brick arch with a concrete keystone is centered above the triple paired window. Flanking the entrance and the triple paired window are small six-light windows. The projecting ends (north and south corners) feature concrete quoins that run the height of the first and second level. Paired six-over-one windows are centered on each store and are connected by a brick soldier string course (see Photo 10). The south elevation holds a centered projecting entrance with double aluminum and glass doors. The projecting wing is full-height, with concrete quoins and holds a large double one-over-one aluminum window, with a matching brick elliptical arch to the arch on the façade. Windows on the south elevation are paired aluminum three vertical lights; each level holds eight windows each. Some of the windows (six on the second level with two boarded and one bricked-in on the first level) have been covered to protect the windows (see Photo 12). A few of the windows are partially covered and two on each level hold air conditioning units. The north elevation matches the south except for a brick chimney located on the west section of the elevation. Located above the centered entrance on the second level is a bricked-in window opening. There are three large window openings (west section) with elliptical arches that are bricked-in and the window openings on the east section (three windows on each level) are bricked-in (see Photo 11). The west (rear) elevation windows have been boarded over; four windows are the same size; one window has the heating and air metal duct work installed through the opening (but boarded up). Located on the south section of the rear elevation is a small window opening with a matching

⁹ Ibid.

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opening above, both are covered over. Between the windows are brick pilasters. The north and south section hold a solid door entrance (see Photo 13).

In 2011, the Wheatley Historic Preservation Association with the preservation technical assistance of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, replaced the 1970s (façade) aluminum glass entrance doors and windows with historically appropriate windows and doors.¹⁰

Integrity

The development and progress of the historic resources is conveyed in the Garfield Historic District and the integrity of the district has been retained, although there have been some alterations to the buildings. The alterations for the most part are historic alterations and occurred during the period of significance. Only a few changes occurred after the period of significance but those changes do not compromise the overall integrity of the district. The first building to be constructed was 1908 and the last building to be constructed in the district was completed in 1928.

Alterations to the three buildings are explained below:

Gatlin Grocery Store/dwelling – In 1963, the house and store were interconnected together to allow access from one building to the other from the interior. When the two buildings were connected, the original flat roof of the store was raised to conform to the roofline of the dwelling. The store exhibits a gable over the main section of the building with a mansard type roof over the storefront section. Originally, a metal shed awning protected the storefront. The configuration of the original storefront is intact. Security bars were added to the display windows, a window on the east and rear elevation in 1963.¹¹ The dwelling originally had a front-to-side gable roof, but gives the appearance it was a gambrel due to the alteration. The connection to the store roofline, the house now has a gambrel-gable type roof. Additionally, in 1963 the wood siding of the store and dwelling was covered with fiberboard (original wood siding is retained underneath). Metal awnings were installed over the original windows.¹² The half-width porch of the dwelling was enclosed and an addition was constructed to the west and rear elevation of the house in 1963.¹³ All of the changes to the store and house are historic and occurred during the period of significance. The only change to occur outside the period of significance is the fiberboard siding has been repainted.

¹⁰ William “Bill” Turner and Tracy Frish. *Wheatley School: Interim Report to the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Lowes Charitable and Education Foundation*. 23 January 2011.

¹¹ DeGaris.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid .

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The Pleasant Hill Baptist Church by 1968 constructed a rear addition to house the educational facilities, a remodeled sanctuary (cosmetic) and a replacement steeple. In 2011, a storm damaged the 1968 steeple. A replacement steeple was installed in 2011. The original windows of the church have been removed and placed in secure storage awaiting rehabilitation. Once the rehabilitation is completed, the original windows will be installed. A brick framed signage board was installed in the front lot area between the street and the church in 1963.

Wheatley Public School – This building has undergone some changes in 2011, but did so with the recommendation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Wheatley Historic Preservation Association with the preservation technical assistance of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, replaced the 1970s (façade) aluminum glass entrance doors and windows with historically appropriate windows and doors. Some of the windows on the side elevations and rear elevation has been bricked in or covered with plywood. The original size and shape of the window openings are still intact and still convey the feel of window openings.

The three buildings plus the one object (signage) that represent the district along with the streetscape as a whole establish the visual character and setting of the Garfield Historic District. The district thoroughly illustrates the sense of the period of significance (1908-1968) and the three historic buildings are identifiable to the period as well. Each historic resource retains its original location and setting. Most alterations reflect an historic-era remodeling that occurred during the period of significance.

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Summary

The Garfield Historic District is locally significant under the National Register Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage for its association with African American history of Poplar Bluff and its role in the development of the African American community of Poplar Bluff. As a district, these three buildings represent the social core of the historic African American neighborhood in Poplar Bluff and is the most intact collection of African American resources in the community today. The period of significance for the Garfield Historic District begins with the date of the initial construction of the first building 1908, and extends through 1968 which was the date schools were fully desegregated in Poplar Bluff. After this date, the population of the neighborhood started to decline as residents moved elsewhere (see Figures 21 and 22 for maps showing the change in building density)¹⁴. The district includes a residential dwelling interconnected to a commercial building that houses a grocery store, a church with a contributing sign, and a school listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRL 02/13/1998).

Originally, the buildings that make up the district were part of a larger collective neighborhood that served the social, business, education, and everyday living needs of the African American residents of the Fifth Ward in Poplar Bluff. As the Fifth Ward changed over time, several of the residential dwellings have disappeared, and only one of the many commercial buildings has survived – Gatlin Grocery Store, a contributing resource in the district.

Narrative Statement of Significance

There is very little written documentation on the history of the Garfield Historic District or the African American history of Poplar Bluff. Written documentation was limited to land and tax records, city directories, school yearbooks and school board minutes. Much of historic information was gained through oral interviews of members of the community that presently live or lived in Poplar Bluff through the years including individuals who have been a part of the Garfield Historic District history for over 90 years.

Comprised of three buildings, the Garfield Historic District has endured as a cohesive unit that embodies the African American experience of forming an independent and self-reliant community within the town of Poplar Bluff, through the struggle of the Jim Crow era of segregation, and racism.¹⁵ The surrounding area has experienced a loss of dwellings and all commercial buildings except for the Gatlin Grocery Store.

¹⁴ McDonald, Rattler, and Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 14, 2016.

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According to numerous individual oral interviews, this district symbolizes the characteristics of the struggles of the African American people of Poplar Bluff, along with their successes, as well as represents the community it served and continues to serve. The Garfield Historic District existed in an era that taught in the idea of self-sufficiency, the value of community, individual worth and independence, according to local members of the community. The African American residents of Poplar Bluff and those that have moved away from the area view the Gatlin Grocery Store with attached dwelling, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church and Wheatley Public School as a whole, bestow a vital significance in Poplar Bluff. For them the district denotes identity and heritage for African Americans and a physical cohesion to the community life of those who lived or still live and worked or still work in the African American community life.¹⁶

Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage: Black

The Garfield Historic District is locally significant in the area of Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage: African-American, as a representative example of a historically African American community in Poplar Bluff. African Americans who settled in Poplar Bluff established their own community within the Fifth Ward (see Figure 9) (earlier censuses referred to it as the Third Ward)¹⁷, a circumstance of the practices of the era. Settlement of African Americans within their community was defined by segregation practices of the time. While Poplar Bluff did not have, an ordinance imposing sections of town where the white and black citizens could inhabit within the town, the African-American community in Poplar Bluff was influenced by the well-known Jim Crow segregation customs of the time, customs that were established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.¹⁸ The common understanding of the Jim Crow practice is that African Americans were not supposed to reside, attend church or schools, or conduct business in the white communities. A direct result of this segregation custom was African Americans had to establish their own communities within communities. Various city directories and numerous interviews with members of the community confirmed, this African American community, within the Fifth Ward, was created to serve the African American people and included schools, churches, library, public gathering places, retail stores, grocery stores, doctor offices, funeral homes and other types of services needed by the African American

¹⁵ James Johnson, Colvin McDonald, Rex Rattler, and Bill Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016.

¹⁶ Ibid; Sandra Davis, Carolyn Diggs Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

¹⁷ "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 01 November 2016).

¹⁸ Ordinance records. On file with the City of Poplar Bluff, City Hall, Poplar Bluff, Missouri; Bill Turner. Personal Interview, conducted by Terri L. Foley, Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016.

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community.¹⁹ The Garfield Historic District includes the last remaining commercial business and building of the Fifth Ward that was established to serve the African American community during the Jim Crow era, and the only school as well – Wheatley Public School. The Gatlin Grocery store is not only the longest operating African American business, it is also the only African American business established to still be in operation and standing. Additionally, the store is the longest running grocery store in the same location in the entire town of Poplar Bluff.²⁰ The final building to make up the district is the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church (designated a Local Landmark – April 15, 2013) and while not the only or last remaining church to service the African American community, it played a significant role of the history in the African American community. The church’s proximity to Wheatley Public School, played a vital role in the services the church would offer to the community – it served as a place to provide school lunches and a place to hold classes for the local students when Wheatley School was being constructed in 1928. The location and development of these historic resources offers a viewpoint on the day-to-day lifestyles of African Americans in Poplar Bluff, as well as those from outside the city limits (African Americans who resided in Butler County), who attended school, church or conducted business in the Fifth Ward during the early-to-mid-20th century.²¹ The buildings that comprise the Garfield Historic District became a center to foster identity for African Americans and helped to encourage members of the community to pursue better results for their lives by serving as a social, educational and religious center during the Jim Crow era.²² After the Civil Rights Movement began the Fifth Ward underwent a decline in the businesses of the African American community of Poplar Bluff around 1968, when mostly younger residents and some older moved away to seek better jobs and to attend college. Vacant houses and commercial buildings became more prevalent, without businesses being replaced or new residents to occupy the dwellings. By 1968, the neighborhood experienced a steadily decline. Some families remained and continue to call the area

¹⁹Hoffman, W.H. W.H. Hoffman’s City Directory of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, Quincy, IL: 1906, 1908,1909, 1910, 1914, 1919, 1926, 1929, 1931 and 1945; James Johnson, Colvin McDonald, Rex Rattler Sr., and Bill Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016; Norene Sloan. Interview with Emily Wolpers. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 6 February 2017; Gus Ridgel. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 16 January 2017; Sandra Davis, Carolyn Diggs Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

²⁰Rex Rattler Sr., Dennis Avery, Nevada Young, Emily Wolpers. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016.

²¹James Johnson, Colvin McDonald, Rex Rattler Sr., and Bill Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016; Norene Sloan. Interview with Emily Wolpers. Sandra Davis, Carolyn Diggs Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

²² Ibid.

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around the Garfield Historic District home.²³ These three buildings serve as a symbol of Poplar Bluff's cultural heritage; most of the resources that reflected the African American heritage have disappeared population (see Figures 21 and 22 for maps showing the change in building density)..

Settlement and Growth

African Americans have been residing in Butler County since it was established in 1849. While not a large slave population or a free person population, the county had a total of 53 females and 23 male slaves. By 1860, a decrease in the total of slaves occurred with 26 females and 26 males and 1 free female and male African American. Per the 1880 census, the African American population in the county had significantly increased from 21 residents in 1870 to 1,429.

Since the incorporation of Poplar Bluff in 1870, African Americans were among the residents of the community. In the early 20th century, Poplar Bluff experienced an increase in African American residents who arrived to establish a functioning community of their own located 2.5 miles north of the downtown commercial district, and the county courthouse. African Americans established various businesses, churches, and a school with a public library and purchased or leased houses. They created their own society out of necessity of the time but to also represent their ethnicity and culture.²⁴

The area surrounding the Garfield Historic District was influenced from the early 1900s to the 1960s by the many migrants who settled in Poplar Bluff during The Great Black Migration, those relocating for jobs, a better way of life, and a lower cost of housing compared to larger cities.²⁵ The Great Black Migration occurred from 1910 to 1970, when millions of African American migrated from the south to other areas of the country. This mass migration transpired in two movements; the first lasted until around 1930 and the second influx of migrants started about 1940 and lasted until 1970.²⁶ Like so many towns in the United States, Poplar Bluff experienced an influx of African Americans relocating during the Great Black Migration. While most moved to large cities like Chicago, St. Louis, New York, and Los Angeles, many preferred life in smaller towns which offered a low cost of living and more affordable real estate. Poplar

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ McDonald and Turner. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016; Hoffman, W.H. W.H. Hoffman's City Directory of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, Quincy, IL: 1906, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1914, 1919, 1926, 1929, 1931 and 1945; "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>): accessed 01 November 2016.

²⁵ Ibid.; McDonald and Turner. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016; "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>): accessed 01 November 2016.

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Bluff was one of those small towns.²⁷ Long-standing residents, Norene Sloan and James Johnson stated their families moved to the Garfield Historic District area during the Great Black Migration. The Sloan's family and James Johnson's were just two of the families to settle in Poplar Bluff during the first migration movement. Sloan came to Poplar Bluff from Augusta, Arkansas with her mother (Nona Clopton) and siblings for employment. The Clopton family resided at 820 Garfield. Trained by her mother, Norene was employed by the Jeffress family (owners of Barnes Wholesale Grocers located at 1125 East Harper) as a domestic worker. Upon the deaths of Mr. and Mrs. Jeffress, she worked for Mary Lee and Dale McMullan, their daughter and son-in-law, until their deaths. In the past thirty years, Mrs. Sloan has worked for a number of Poplar Bluff families. Her mother was employed by the Plot family for a short time, and then worked many years for the Boeving family who owned Boeving Brothers Cotton Gin.²⁸ Johnson moved to Poplar Bluff from Kentucky with his father after the death of his mother to be near his grandparents living in the area.²⁹

While the Garfield District is comprised of three buildings, it is imperative to look at the African American neighborhood as whole to gather an understanding of how the Garfield Historic District evolved in the Fifth Ward of Poplar Bluff during the era of the Great Black Migration. While a search of census records prior to 1900 did not break down the totals of African Americans living in Poplar Bluff versus Butler County, it is important to note African Americans who lived outside of the city limits of Poplar Bluff shopped, attended school and church within the African American community of the Fifth Ward including Gatlin Grocery Store, Wheatley Public School and Pleasant Hill Church.³⁰

It's important to understand how many African Americans living in Poplar Bluff from 1900-1940 were not born in Missouri, as many residents relocated to Poplar Bluff during the time of the Great Black Migration. Population totals by a detailed breakdown are only provided up to the year of 1940, the last year released presently by the U.S. Census Bureau that provided a breakdown of data. By showing those not born in Missouri, it indicates the number of African Americans who relocated during the Great Black Migration to Missouri from other states. Census records documented people relocated from Alabama,

²⁶Steven A. Reich. Encyclopedia of the Great Black Migration. (Westport: Greenwood Press,2006) p. XXXV, 528-531.

²⁷ Ibid. "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 01 November 2016).

²⁸ Norene Sloan. Interview with Emily Wolpers. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 6 February 2017.

²⁹ James Johnson. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

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Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. The data in the table below, supports Poplar Bluff experienced a wave of African Americans migrating to the community (total does not reflect the overall Butler County totals) between 1900 to 1940.³¹ The number of African Americans to migrate to Poplar Bluff during this timeframe was higher than those born in the state of Missouri for each decade.

Census Year	African American Population	African Americans Who Migrated to Missouri	African Americans Born in Missouri	Total Population Poplar Bluff
1900	1,442	734	708	4,321
1910	1,266	712	554	6,916
1920	1,358	776	582	8,042
1930	1,443	906	537	7,551
1940	1,107	727	380	11,163

Table 1 – U. S. Census total from 1910 to 1940 for Poplar Bluff, Missouri. ³²

Per the data compiled by the U.S. Census, 3,855 African Americans migrated to Poplar Bluff from 1900 to 1940. The African American population of Poplar Bluff, 58.27 percent migrated to the area from states outside of Missouri, indicating the African American community in Poplar Bluff was settled by those seeking out a new place to live and work during the Great Black Migration.³³

History of the Garfield District

While a few businesses and houses were established in the late 19th century in Poplar Bluff to serve the African American people, the increase in population of the African American residents migrating to the area combined with the Jim Crow laws produced a self-motivated, and an essentially self-contained

³⁰ McDonald and Turner. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016

³¹ "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 01 November 2016).

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*; James Johnson. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016; Norene Sloan. Interview with Emily Wolpers. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 6 February 2017.

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community in the area in and around the Garfield Historic District.³⁴ The settlement of the area surrounding the Garfield Historic District was formed and influenced by the waves of migration and the varied background of people (skills, trades, etc.) their drive to be self-sustaining or independent (to be in business for themselves), like Horace Gatlin who not only owned the grocery store but several properties in the area.³⁵ According to several members of the community, as more people located to the only African American community within the city, businesses operated and owned by African American were aimed to meet all the needs of their African American customers. The establishment of the school, the businesses, religious institutions, and residences that served the African American people played an extremely vital role not just for those living in the Fifth Ward but overall within Poplar Bluff, as it allowed for a community within a community. The African American businesses, Wheatley Public School, and churches served not just residents of Poplar Bluff but of Butler County as well.³⁶

The African American community of the Poplar Bluff was a group of hardworking and committed citizens that established this hamlet, were a combination of prominent leaders and businessmen, like Horace Gatlin (owner Gatlin Grocery Store), James L Short (educator, and who later served on the city council), George and Arthur Carter (Carter's Grocery), Mann and Lillie Carter, Pete and Flora Price (Pete and Flora's Grocery) (see Figure 5, historic photos showing Pete Price in front of store), Carolyn Diggs Cooper (teacher and former student of Wheatley), and many other middle and working-class residents.³⁷

City directories and census records (see Table 1 for population totals of the Fifth Ward) provide the positions held by the middle and working-class population. The town's two railroads employed several people from the community as porters or in the roundhouse. The federal government employed many through the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), such as James Johnson. A variety of occupations could be found among the residents such as, porters, cooks,

³⁴ "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 01 November 2016; Hoffman, W.H. W.H. Hoffman's City Directory of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, Quincy, IL: 1906, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1914, 1919, 1926, 1929, 1931 and 1945.

³⁵ Horace Gatlin. Record of Will database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 20 October 2016; Land Deeds. Recorder of Deeds, Butler County Courthouse, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

³⁶ James Johnson, Colvin McDonald, Rex Rattler Sr., and Bill Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016; Norene Sloan. Interview with Emily Wolpers. Sandra Davis, Carolyn Diggs Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

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dishwashers, maids, housekeepers, launderers, educators, barbers, beauticians, farmers, physicians, tailors, contractors, clergymen and restaurant owners.³⁸

While the Gatlin Grocery Store is the only commercial business still in operation, the African American citizens in Poplar Bluff established several businesses throughout the period of significance – 1908 to 1968. These businesses served the African American citizens of the community.³⁹ Various city directories documented the diversity of businesses found in the Fifth Ward to serve the African Americans over the years; six grocery stores (Avant, James and Company, Kelley, Myers, and Smith and Son), three barbers, W. E. Purcell, a physician and surgeon, two pressers and cleaners (Moore, Everett and Charter), two restaurants/lunch counters (Coleman, and McIntosh). By 1914, a billiards and pool hall was established by Reuben Wyatt, Edwards Hounline opened a confectionary store, three dye work businesses were in operation along with three tailors, another physician, W. B. Rowan, had set up practice and the Lee Hotel was established by 1931.⁴⁰ While businesses closed, or relocated, new businesses opened as well. The variety of businesses owned and operated by the African Americans within the community allowed members of the Fifth Ward to be independent of the white-owned businesses during the Jim Crow era.⁴¹ Gatlin Grocery Store is the only business from this era to remain.

The African American neighborhood had its highest time of development from the early-to-mid-20th century, when African Americans were establishing the neighborhood. The Jim Crow era created the section of town that served the African American community in Poplar Bluff. The passing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 ebbed the flow of development and people moving to the neighborhood. Instead, African American residents of the Fifth Ward explored new avenues of opportunity which led some members of the neighborhood to move away either locally in Poplar Bluff or outside of Poplar Bluff.⁴²

³⁸ W. H. Hoffman W.H. Hoffman's City Directory of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, (Quincy, IL: Hoffman Directory, 1906, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1914, 1919, 1926, 1929, 1931 and 1945); "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 01 November 2016. James Johnson. Personal Interview, conducted by Terri L. Foley, Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016

³⁹ James Johnson, Colvin McDonald, Rex Rattler Sr., and Bill Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016; Norene Sloan. Interview with Emily Wolpers. Sandra Davis, Carolyn Diggs Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

⁴⁰ W. H. Hoffman W.H. Hoffman's City Directory of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, (Quincy, IL: Hoffman Directory, 1906, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1914, 1919, 1926, 1929, 1931 and 1945).

⁴¹ Turner and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 14, 2016.

⁴² Turner and Johnson. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

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Several students of Wheatley Public School relocated for college like Eddie Moss who attend Southeast Missouri State University, then was drafted by the National Football League and played for the St. Louis Cardinals for a few years, then the Washington Redskins. Another student, Gus Ridgel went to Lincoln University in Missouri followed by graduate school at the University of Missouri at Columbia where he was the first African American to graduate with a Master's Degree, and he did so in one year.⁴³ He would later gain his Ph.D. and move to Kentucky.⁴⁴ Joseph (Joe) Johnson, whose mother Curley served school lunches at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, graduated from Lincoln University college and founded a company in California.⁴⁵ One student, Lonnie Davis, went on to play for the Harlem Globetrotters and was a significant role model for the African American students of Poplar Bluff (see Figure 8, showing Davis as a student at Wheatley).⁴⁶ William "Bill" Turner joined the United States Air Force as an inventory management specialist, then took a job with the United States Postal Service in Wisconsin after leaving the Air Force. Turner would later transfer back to Poplar Bluff.⁴⁷ Carolyn Diggs Cooper left Poplar Bluff to attend college but returned to Poplar Bluff to serve as an educator at the junior high school.

The Pleasant Hill Baptist Church and Rattler's Grocery Store visibly represent how buildings change with the times. These two buildings in the 1960s underwent physical improvements which would not have been acceptable prior to the Civil Rights movement due to the unwritten social rule of the times that African Americans should not display their financial success by making improvements to their properties.⁴⁸ The improvements Rattler made when he combined the two buildings, the changed roofline, fiberboard siding and the rear addition to the church with interior improvements represents a time when African Americans felt it was safe to make improvements compared to the years prior to the Civil Rights Movement.⁴⁹ Preceding the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans followed the unwritten but understood "code of conduct" that their buildings must always appear second-class to give the sense they were not successful or equal to the white community. While this offensive action might not have been true within the white

⁴³ Potter, Erik. *A Master Trailblazer*, Mizzou: The Magazine of the Mizzou Alumni Association, November 15, 2013. (<https://mizzoumag.missouri.edu/2013/11/a-master-trailblazer/>; accessed on 14 January 2017.)

⁴⁴Gus Ridgel. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 16 January 2017.

⁴⁵Joseph Johnson. Email correspondence with Emily Wolpers and Terri L Foley. 17 January 2017.

⁴⁶Sandra Davis; Carolyn Diggs Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

⁴⁷Turner. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

⁴⁸Leon F. Litwack. *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow*. (New York: Knopf), 1998 p. 329; Turner; Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

⁴⁹Ibid.

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community of Poplar Bluff, the African American community knew their actions reached outside the area of Poplar Bluff.⁵⁰

The neighborhood has experienced the changes of time and loss of building stock due to absentee ownership and economic hardships. As members of the African American community began to move away for better job opportunities or to attend college, houses became vacant and businesses declines. Since 1968, as absentee ownership has increased with the decrease in population, buildings were not maintained and many were razed⁵¹ population (see Figures 21 and 22 for maps showing the change in building density). In addition, the neighbor is no longer a place of just African American residents, but is comprised of multi-ethnic residents. While buildings have been lost that reflected the cultural heritage of the African American community, the Garfield Historic District has retained its historic character and is identified by Poplar Bluff residents as a significant African American cultural resource.

Gatlin's Grocery Store

The Gatlin Grocery Store is significant in the area of African American ethnic heritage as a rare survivor that illustrates a formerly thriving commercial neighborhood within Poplar Bluff that provided goods and services to the African American citizens, as well as a social meeting place for residents of Poplar Bluff to gather. The Gatlin's Grocery Store, also housed a barber shop and functioned as a bus stop for the commuting students post segregation. In addition, it is significant as the longest-operating and only surviving African American business in the Poplar Bluff, as well as the longest operating grocery store located in the same location in Poplar Bluff. The grocery store is also significant for the family-owned grocery store as it served the African American residents of the community for more than 90 years. Gatlin's Grocery Store symbolizes the robust commercial hub that helped the African American community to endure from the early 20th century until the late 1960s when the Jim Crow laws were followed. The grocery store reflects the tradition when residents of the Fifth Ward went to the grocery store daily or every couple of days, not just to buy supplies but to socialize at a place that served as a social center for African Americans.⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Turner, Rattler Sr., and Avery. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

⁵² James Johnson, Colvin McDonald, Rex Rattler Sr., and Bill Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016; Norene Sloan. Interview with Emily Wolpers. Sandra Davis, Carolyn Diggs Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

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While this building and the dwelling have undergone alterations when interconnected (alterations occurred within the period of significance), the building (house/store) demonstrates the only surviving African American commercial building left in Poplar Bluff. It visually illustrates both the significant evidence the property can convey (function of the store and dwelling) and the social and ethnic history of the African American community of Poplar Bluff. This contributing resource represents the social, commercial and cultural fabric of the African American community in Poplar Bluff.

The first listing of the grocery store in the city directory at its present location was in a 1926 (an indication the store was constructed in 1925 as the building was not shown on the 1924 Sanborn map) as the Gatlin Grocery Store, owned and operated by Horace R. Gatlin.⁵³ The store was originally located at 820 Garfield, across the alleyway to the north of the current store in a one-story building and was established by 1919 by Gatlin and a man by the last name of Wilson.⁵⁴ The store was listed in the 1919 city directory as Wilson and Gatlin, and was located in the rear building; the building is depicted on the 1924 Sanborn Fire Insurance map.⁵⁵ By 1926, Gatlin relocated his store to the current location. Gatlin would continue to operate the store until around 1931 when he died. Upon his death, George and Arthur Carter (brothers) would take over the store. The Carters would continue to operate the store until 1939 or 1940 when Lewis "Pete" and Flora Price took over running the store. Pete was the uncle to George and Arthur (their mother Lillie was Pete's sister). Price operated the store until he relocated to Illinois sometime after 1952. Then Owen Martin operated the store for a few years.⁵⁶ By 1958 William Taft Rattler took over running the store and would later purchase the store building and the house located on the same lot in 1963 from the long-standing owners, the Carters.⁵⁷

Throughout the years, the grocery store from the time it was operated by Gatlin and up to Rattler, provided the members of the African American community a place to shop for groceries, to socialize and for students or faculty of Wheatley Public School to buy lunches, candy and drinks like RC Cola. Other students would stop in the store before or after school to buy candy.⁵⁸ One of those students, Sandra Davis often went to Rattler's Grocery Store as a student to buy her lunch; a hot dog for 15 cents, a RC Cola

⁵³ Hoffman, 1926.

⁵⁴ "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 01 November 2016.)

⁵⁵ Hoffman. 1919. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Poplar Bluff, Butler County, MO, New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1924.

⁵⁶ Susan Douglas. Email correspondence with Terri L Foley. 12 and 16 September 2017. Douglas is a relative of George and Arthur Carter, and Lewis "Pete" Price.

⁵⁷ Land Deeds. Recorder of Deeds, Butler County Courthouse, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

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for 5 cents, potato chips for 5 cents and a package of three Jackson cookies for 5 cents. Another student, Carolyn Diggs Cooper also would purchase lunches from the store, either a hot dog, or a bologna sandwich (see Figures 13, 15-17 and 20 for interior photographs of the store).⁵⁹

According to members of the community, socialization at the store varied from members of the African American community hanging out and catching up with friends, getting the local news/gossip, to courting/dating, and dancing. By the 1950s, a jukebox was installed, and people would come into the store to enjoy music and to dance.⁶⁰ One community member, James Johnson would buy candy for the ladies and ask them for a dance. Another person who would often go to Rattler's to enjoy music and dancing was Ann Barnes, who moved to Poplar Bluff from Arkansas after accepting a position as a nurse with the local hospital.⁶¹

While Rattler's served as a grocery store, at various times a barber shop (still intact) (see Figures 18-19) was in the back section of the building; one of the barbers was Taft Rattler. Part of the Great Black Migration promotion of economic opportunity was to encourage men to become barbers. A barber had what was considered portable skills – you could do the skill in any town you relocated to, stable income, opportunity to become self-employed, and self-sufficient. Another asset of a local barber in an African American community, it provided a place for young African American men to socialize, and to discuss issues.⁶²

Another key role Rattler's Grocery Store played in the community was it functioned as a bus stop for students once integration of the Poplar Bluff schools started. In the school year, 1957–1958, a bus stop was established in front of the store for all students no longer attending Wheatley and attending Poplar Bluff High School. The bus stop was established for those students that were part of the first stage of

⁵⁸ Rattler, Turner, Johnson. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

⁵⁹ Sandra Davis; Carolyn Diggs Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

⁶⁰ James Johnson, Colvin McDonald, Rex Rattler Sr., and Bill Turner. Interviews were all conducted as individual interviews (different locations and times on date stated in Poplar Bluff) with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, September 13, 2016; Norene Sloan. Interview with Emily Wolpers. Sandra Davis, Carolyn Diggs Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

⁶¹ James Johnson and Ann Barnes. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

⁶² Reich, p. 58-60; Turner, Rattler, and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

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integration in Poplar Bluff and would continue to serve as a bus stop after full integration of the school district in 1968. Until 1968, Wheatley School educated only the African American community.⁶³

During the era of segregation, African American businesses, like Gatlin's Grocery Store, symbolized to members of the community an awareness of racial harmony and a self-sustainable environment. Gatlin's represented to African Americans of all ages, if you have your own business, you take care of your own people. The store encouraged economy within the African American community and protected their community from exploitation, as did all the other businesses established by African Americans.⁶⁴

Today the store still serves as a place to buy groceries, lunches, candy, and socialization. However, unlike during the period of significance, the store's customers have evolved to include individuals of different ethnic backgrounds who live in the area. Rex Rattler Sr., son of Taft Rattler owns and operates the store. Gatlin's Grocery Store is a vital remainder of the economic development of the African American community of Poplar Bluff. For residents of the Fifth Ward, going to Gatlin's Grocery Store fortified their close-knit neighborhood and their cultural heritage.⁶⁵

Jordan, Frank and Lutie House

Frank and Lutie Jordan are the earliest known owners of the house at 914 Garfield. The house is listed in the 1909 city directory, an indication it was built by 1908; the earliest Sanborn Fire Insurance maps to show this block is in 1924.⁶⁶ The Jordans rented the property over the years to various individuals until they sold the property to Horace and Josephine Gatlin on September 9, 1920 when they relocated to Pueblo, Colorado.⁶⁷ Gatlin purchased the house on Lot 7, Block 2 in Dunfords Addition for \$650.00 along with Lot 8 (presently Rattler's Grocery Store) for \$700.00 from the Jordans. A search of U.S. Census records and local city directories for Lot 7, shows a variety of people resided in the house over the years as

⁶³ Turner, Rattler, and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016; Davis and Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

⁶⁴ Reich. 84-87. Turner, Rattler, and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016

⁶⁵ Rattler Sr., Turner. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016. Observation. Witness by Terri L. Foley while on premises, 14-15, September 2016.

⁶⁶Hoffman. 1909.

⁶⁷Hoffman. 1909, 1910, 1914, and 1919; Pueblo City Directory, Pueblo Colorado, 1921 database with images, Ancestry (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 10 November 2016).

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the Gatlins, Jordans, and the Carters (later owners) used the house as an investment property and rented it out.⁶⁸

Grant and Kate (Kattie) Gravett lived in the dwelling in 1909–1911 per city directories. It is possible they resided in the house prior to 1909. Grant was a porter with the Quinn Hotel and Wright Hotel; he was originally from Arkansas, and Kate was born in Missouri. By 1914, Doxie and Dicey Butts rented the house when they moved to Poplar Bluff from Searcy, Arkansas. They were born in Mississippi. Doxie worked for Palmers.⁶⁹ By 1918, the Butts family relocated to another rental house within the Fifth Ward and Bernard “Burns” and Hattie Moore would reside in the house.⁷⁰ Bernard was born in Kentucky. Prior to moving to Poplar Bluff, the family lived in Pemiscot County, Missouri. Bernard was employed by the railroad as a porter. Per the census records, the Moore family lived in the house in 1920.⁷¹ A search of records provided information in 1939 - 1940, Willie White, employed by the WPA lived in the house. By 1952, Ira and Florence Hooper would live in the house until 1960 when it was listed as vacant.⁷²

Ownership of the house and store property only changed owners a few times. When Gatlin died in 1931, all his property and belongings went to his wife Josephine, his daughter Pearl and his step-daughter Augusta, except for one property lot located on Alice Street which he left to his son, Claude, per his will dated July 23, 1914.⁷³ Upon Gatlin’s death, George and Arthur Carter purchased the store and residential property. The Carter family would continue to own the properties until April 23, 1963 when they sold the properties to William Taft Rattler. George Raymond Carter and Vera Mae Jefferson Carter sold the properties for \$3,500.00.⁷⁴ Upon taking ownership of the property, Rattler connected the house to the store so he could easily access the store from his house without having to go outside, as well as for security purposes. This alteration involved the connection of the two rooflines, resulting in its current configuration.⁷⁵

⁶⁸United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 01 November 2016); W. H. Hoffman W.H. Hoffman’s City Directory of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, (Quincy, IL: Hoffman Directory, 1906, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1914, 1919, 1926, 1929, 1931 and 1945).

⁶⁹ Hoffman. 1914, 1919. The city directory did not specify what type of business Palmers was, only provided it as a place of employment.

⁷⁰Hoffman. 1909, 1914, and 1919; U.S. Census Records.

⁷¹U. S. Census Records, 1920.

⁷² Hoffman. 1939, 1940, 1952 and 1956 and 1960.

⁷³ Horace Gatlin. Record of Will database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 20 October 2016).

⁷⁴Land Deeds. On file with Rex Rattler, Sr, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

⁷⁵ Turner, Rattler, Jackson and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016; Davis and Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

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Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

The Pleasant Hill Baptist Church (1919) is significant for its role in the development of the African American community in the Fifth Ward. According to members of the community, the church served the African American community offering a place of worship, and a place for socialization within the community.⁷⁶ Another vital role the church played within the African American community as a school while the second Wheatley School was under construction and completed in 1928. Then in the 1950s, the church provided school lunches for the students of Wheatley if they did not bring their own lunch or purchase a lunch from the grocery store (Price's, Martin's and Rattler's Grocery Store).⁷⁷ Joseph "Joe" Johnson, a former student of Wheatley, stated his mother, Curley Johnson was employed as a cook (at the church) and served lunches to the students, including to him.⁷⁸ Pleasant Hill Baptist Church is a designated local landmark and has served multipurpose roles within the African American community.

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church was established in 1875 in the Poplar Bluff community by Reverend J. H. Hunt along with Mr. and Mrs. Tom Harris, Bennett Townsend, Tom Walker, Elmer Fuquay and Mr. Cook. The congregation did not have a building to hold services so they held services at the local A.M.E. Church. Then on December 9, 1889, the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church purchased property from H. I. Ruth on Oak Street for \$150.00 and constructed their first church at a cost of \$400.00. By 1903, the African American population of Poplar Bluff had increased along with the church membership, a new larger church was needed. On November 25, 1903, John W. Lindle sold a lot on Lester Street to the church for \$375.00. The trustees of the church and Reverend L. E. Avant hired local builder and businessman, A. W. Greer, to construct the new church for \$1,800.00. The church was located on Lester Street between Fifth and Sixth Street and is depicted on the 1910 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.⁷⁹ By 1912, the church was destroyed in a fire. The congregation held services in the Odd Fellows Hall, located on the same block as the church, until a new church was constructed in the present location.⁸⁰ On August 30, 1913, the church purchased the property lot at 915 Garfield Street, Lot 4 Block 3, Dunford's Addition for \$600.00 from Ruth. The new church was dedicated in 1914, but only served the community until 1917 when it was destroyed by fire. Once again, church services were held at the Odd Fellows Hal (non-extant) until 1919 when a new church was constructed by A. W. Greer for \$6,800.00.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Joseph Johnson. Email correspondence with Emily Wolpers and Terri L Foley. 17 January 2017.

⁷⁹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Poplar Bluff, Butler County, MO, New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1910.

⁸⁰ Pleasant Hill Baptist Church Records on file with the church, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

⁸¹ Land Deeds. Pleasant Hill Baptist Church Records on file with the church, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

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Pleasant Hill Baptist Church not only offered spiritual sustenance, it also had a vital role in the education, social, political and economic welfare of the African American community. While the second Wheatley School was being constructed (completed 1928), educational classes for the school were held in the basement of the church. Then in the 1950s, the church served school lunches to the children at Wheatley School for those students who did not bring their lunch or purchase lunch from the grocery store (Price's, Martin's and Rattler's) across the street. The church served as an informational hub for those new to the neighborhood, providing needed information about jobs, social organizations and local information. When not operating as a church offering spiritual guidance, the church was a meeting place for various social organizations that needed a place to hold their meetings.⁸² Pleasant Hill Baptist Church was a place of worship but it also served the community for social gatherings, political and civic discussions, and like Rattler's a place for social conversation. Members of the African American community would hold social gatherings at the church for *Highlight* programs for the school children, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, Martin Luther King, Jr. days, political meetings to discuss upcoming elections (local, state and national), chili suppers for the Victory Chili Club, and Masonic Lodge meetings for African American members.⁸³ One of the social events held at the church was a Mother's Day event. In May of 1958, Mrs. Platter, a teacher at Wheatley Public School did a reading of poetry in honor of Mother's Day (see Figure 12).⁸⁴

Since the construction of the church in 1919, the building has undergone a few changes with most completed during the period of significance, those changes are considered historic alterations. The steeple has been replaced twice, once by 1967 and in 2011 due to damage from a storm. The storm on August 7, 2011 dislodged the steeple from the roof, and damaged some shingles. The new steeple and roof repair was completed on October 5, 2011. By 1968 an educational addition was constructed onto the rear elevation. At this same time, the sanctuary was remodeled. The original windows have been placed in secure storage awaiting rehabilitation. When completed, the original windows will be re-installed.⁸⁵

⁸²Turner, Rattler Sr., and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

⁸³Turner, Rattler Sr., and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016. Minutes. Victory Chili Club, on file with Colvin McDonald, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

⁸⁴"Mrs. Plater Speaks at Pleasant Hill." *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940. Source: Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

⁸⁵Ibid; Pleasant Hill Baptist Church records. Records on file with Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

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Wheatley Public School

Wheatley Public School is significant for its role in the establishment of education for the African American community within Poplar Bluff and the county. The school served as a place to educate the African American youth in Poplar Bluff, as well as Butler County including children from Bacon Pasture, Cropperville, Providence and Morocco. The school is a reminder of the evolution of public education that served the African American children not only in a small town but the rural communities as well from the time it was established until Poplar Bluff was fully integrated in the 1968–1969 school year. Wheatley Public School is also significant for its role in the community as a public library, a place for social gatherings and activities – basketball, volleyball, and softball games, Future Homemakers of America functions, school plays, and the Boy Scouts of America. The school also held adult evening classes in the subject area of home economics and sewing classes. Also, various fundraisers were held for the American Red Cross or the athletic fund, such as a marble shooting contest.⁸⁶ During the summer months, dating back to at least 1940, vacation bible school was held at the school. While it is not known how this tradition was established, it is worth noting it was sponsored by various a white churches and congregations. The African Americans welcomed them into their neighborhood to host vacation bible school each summer for the children in the neighborhood, as seen in the article published in the Wheatley School newspaper – *Wheatley Tiger* (see Figure 10).⁸⁷ By the 1950s, the vacation bible school was under the direction of the First Baptist Church (Poplar Bluff). Nathan Phillips, minister of First Baptist Church directed the classes and piano music was provided by a member of the church as well.⁸⁸ In addition, the school housed a public library for the African American community in Butler County.⁸⁹

Prior to Wheatley School, the first school to be established to serve the educational needs of the African American children was organized in 1880 by Ruben Wyatt. Wyatt, per the 1880 census records, was a blacksmith born in Missouri. His wife Lucy was born in Tennessee and they had nine children. Wyatt and his wife did not read or write per documentation on the 1880 census. The 1900 census documented all their children could read and write. The only physical description of where the school located was “the

⁸⁶ Cheeks, Armenthia. “Red Cross;” Hunter, Irene.” Junior High,” *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940. Source: Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

⁸⁷ “Wheatley School Bible School.” *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940, On file with the Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

⁸⁸ Turner and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016; Boys Scouts of America Certification Certificate. On file with Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

⁸⁹ *Seventeenth Annual Report of the Missouri Library Commission: To the Honorable Arthur M. Hyde Governor of the State of Missouri for the year ending December 31, 1923.* (The Hugh Stephens Co. Printers, Jefferson City: MO., 1924. p. 8.

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little house on the hill.”⁹⁰ As the population of Poplar Bluff and the county increased, the formation of the Butler County School District No. 1 was established in March 1885. Later the county school district would evolve into Poplar Bluff R-1 School District. While no documentation could be located to determine the date or if this was a different school from the one Wyatt established, it was documented that a school for African Americans was located near Pine and 6th Streets.⁹¹

On April 10, 1901, the school district approved construction of a new school to serve the educational needs of the African American children within Butler County. It was approved on May 3, 1901 for plans to be submitted for review of the school to be built. By the May 10, 1901 meeting, the school district board approved a building committee to hire an architect to draw plans for a four-room school house for the African American community. It was decided by the board on May 27, 1901 to budget \$6,000.00 for the new school building, and approval for William F. Schrage, architect, to draw up the plans. Schrage was from Kansas City, Missouri. The board approved to accept construction bids on the school building on July 25, 1901. On September 18, 1901, it was approved to award the construction bid to Charles W. Tetwiler, a local contractor. Tetwiler was provided with \$500.00 upon contract and requested to use first class red brick instead of red stock brick with first class gray mortar. The property lot was purchased to construct the school on the present site of Wheatley School.⁹² Up until 1908, the school was known as the “colored” school, then it was given a new name with respect to Phillis Wheatley.⁹³ Wheatley, an African American poet was born in Senegal/Gambia in 1753 where she was captured around 1761 and enslaved. She was purchased by John Wheatley of Boston as a servant for his wife. The Wheatleys educated her and in 1767 she published her first poem. She would later be granted her freedom. She died in 1784.⁹⁴ In addition to acquiring a new name for the school, 1908 was the first year for commencement.⁹⁵

The school building continued to serve the African American community until 1928, when a new larger school was constructed to accommodate the increasing student population.⁹⁶ While the new larger school

⁹⁰ Long, p.3; "United States Census," database with images, *Ancestry* (<https://ancestry.com>: accessed 01 November 2016).

⁹¹ Long, p.3; This area of Poplar Bluff is a now commercial district.

⁹² Poplar Bluff R-1 School District Minutes. On file at the Poplar Bluff R-1 School District Office, Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri.

⁹³ Philip Thomason. National Register nomination, “Wheatley Public School, Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri (NR 02/13/1998).

⁹⁴ Phillis Wheatley Biography. <http://www.biography.com/people/phillis-wheatley-9528784#synopsis>: accessed 07 November 2016.

⁹⁵ Long, p. 4

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

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(present building) was under construction, students attended classes in the basement of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church next door to the school.⁹⁷

The architectural firm of Bonsack & Pearce, Inc. was contracted to design the new school and J. J. Miller was awarded the contract as the builder. Upon completion, the new educational building had eight classrooms, a library, and a gymnasium. As before, the building provided education for grades one through twelve.⁹⁸

The African American educators at Wheatley Public School were considered refined and well educated.⁹⁹ In addition to receiving a fine education, Wheatley offered students the chance to participate in home economics, the performing arts, sports and school proms.¹⁰⁰ One of those students, Carolyn Diggs Cooper stated in an interview, she was a cheerleader and performed in many plays as part of her educational experience at Wheatley.¹⁰¹ Edith Lampkin, another student, was a member of the homemaker's club, which attended a national meeting in Florida while she was a member.¹⁰² In addition to the activities Cooper and Lampkin participated in, various sports were offered at Wheatley included - softball, volleyball and basketball. The basketball teams in 1937 and 1938 were awarded the highest honor for an African American high school in Missouri, the Missouri Negro Interscholastic Athletic Association Championship. In addition, the music club of Wheatley, would compete on the state level with other African American Schools, the Missouri State Music Festival for African Americans was held each year at Lincoln University, an African American college. While Wheatley was known for providing students with an excellent education, it was also known for fostering extracurricular activities as well.¹⁰³

Like the previous school building, the library served a dual purpose as it was open to the students, as well as the members of the African American community. In 1923, the city of Poplar Bluff recognized the need for an African American library. Since the Jim Crow laws prohibited African Americans from using the

⁹⁷ Turner. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016

⁹⁸ Turner and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016; Thomason.

⁹⁹ Long. p. 4.

¹⁰⁰ Sarabeth Waller. "Black History Month Remembering Wheatley School , " *Daily American Republic*, 15 February 2012.

¹⁰¹ Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

¹⁰² Waller.

¹⁰³ Waller; Missouri State Music Festival Certificate. On file with Wheatley Public School Museum.

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city's public library, a new public library was established in Wheatley School.¹⁰⁴ Books were provided by the Board of Education and a community book club was established (see Figure 11).¹⁰⁵ The library was heavily used by students and the community. According to an article published in the February 28, 1945, 121 books of fiction were checked out by students in a three-week period, this total did not include other genres.¹⁰⁶

Wheatley School would continue to provide educational classes for the 11th and 12th grades until the 1957 – 1958 school year, the first year the school district complied with integration of the schools. Integration of Poplar Bluff's schools took ten years to complete. The process started in 1957 as part of the Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka ruling in 1954 which mandated integration. The ruling found “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.” It is not clear why 1957 was the first year for integration or why only the 12th and 11th grades were required to integrate. For those students in the first through tenth grades, it was a decision left up to their parents if they wanted their children to be integrated into the Poplar Bluff Public School system outside of Wheatley. While it is noted in the Wheatley Public School National Register nomination that integration was completed in 1967, the process of integration started in 1957 – 1958 with the 12th grade class then one grade per year to integrate until fully integrated in 1968-1969. However, other documentation (school yearbooks and school board minutes) and interviews conflict with the information provided in the Wheatley Public School National Register nomination. Interviews conducted with former students of Wheatley School and Poplar Bluff High School stated integration started in the 1957 -1958 school year with the requirement of senior and junior classes of Wheatley to integrate and it was optional for other grades until 1967.¹⁰⁷ According to the school district records, on March 11, 1957, the school board voted to start integration. Records state “grades 11 and 12 of Wheatley High School will be abolished at the beginning of the school year 1957-58, and that all schools will be open to all students, regardless of race.”¹⁰⁸ While the schools were open to all races, it was not implemented by

¹⁰⁴ *Seventeenth Annual Report of the Missouri Library Commission: To the Honorable Arthur M. Hyde Governor of the State of Missouri for the year ending December 31, 1923.* (The Hugh Stephens Co. Printers, Jefferson City: MO., 1924. p. 8.

¹⁰⁵ Carter, V. “Library,” *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940, On file with the Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

¹⁰⁶ “Wheatley Library,” *Wheatley Tiger*, 28 February 1928, On file with the Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

¹⁰⁷ John Stanard. Email correspondence with Emily Wolpers and Terri L Foley. 17 January 2017.; Jay Githens. Telephone Interview. 20 January 2017. Davis and Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

¹⁰⁸ Poplar Bluff School Board Records. On file at the Poplar Bluff School District Office, Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 11 March 1957.

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the school district to fully integrate all grades.¹⁰⁹ A research of Poplar Buff High School yearbooks, confirms the information provided by the former students. The yearbooks show in the 1957 – 1958 school year, there were 19 seniors, 13 juniors, and two sophomores (African Americans) attending the high school. The 1958 -1959 yearbook lists 13 seniors, 17 juniors and zero sophomores. A search of yearbooks for the junior high school first show seventh and eighth grades first in attendance in the 1966 school year. The years 1963 and 1964 do not show any African American students attending the junior high, and the 1965 book was not available.¹¹⁰ Full integration started in the fall of 1968, when all grades were required to integrate. Per school district minutes dated May 29, 1968, the school district had to comply with an order from the Missouri Commission on Human Rights and Unfair Employment and Unfair Housing Practices (referred to MCHC). Lee Schaffer upon a site inspection of Poplar Bluff Schools reported to Commissioner Limbaugh the school district was “guilty of unfair employment and housing practicing.” Violations by the district were “one, bussing negro children from Bacon Pasture to Wheatley. Two, having six rooms for all negro children.”¹¹¹ It was decided at this meeting to complete an integration plan for the 1968-1969 school year. By the June 5, 1968 school district board meeting an integration plan had been established. The school district was divided geographically into nine attendance centers or elementary programs with the exception of one (Live Oak) to serve the special education children. The nine centers were Live Oak, Lake Road, Oak Grove, Eugene Field, Cravens, Kinyon, J. Minnie Smith, Wheatley-Williamson-Kennedy, Mark Twain and O’Neal. Wheatley-Williamson-Kennedy was considered one attendance center but was divided. Wheatley served kindergarten and grades fourth through sixth, Williamson-Kennedy served grades one through fourth. It is not stated in the school board minutes the reason for the overlap in the fourth grade.¹¹² To verify this information Barbara Green who works for the school district, pulled her school records as she remembered being in the first class of elementary students to transfer to Wheatley School. Her record verifies she was transferred in the fall of 1968.¹¹³

The first year of full integration of the schools brought mixed emotions.¹¹⁴ The long-standing principal of Wheatley, Edward Coursey, was transferred from Wheatley to the junior high school as assistant principal and the social adjustment coordinator of the junior and senior high. Parents of the children at Wheatley

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Poplar Bluff High School Yearbooks 1957, 1958, 1959,1960. Poplar Bluff Junior High Yearbooks, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962,1963, 1964, 1966 and 1967.

¹¹¹Poplar Bluff School Board Records. On file at the Poplar Bluff School District Office, Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 29 May 1968 and 5 June 1968.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Barbara Green. Interview with Terri Foley. Telephone Interview. 23 January 2017.

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wanted Coursey to remain at Wheatley. James Hays was appointed the new principal of Wheatley-Williamson-Kennedy attendance center¹¹⁵. Full integration came with mixed reactions, many of those not recorded, except for Fred M. Morrow, superintendent of schools, who addressed the issue in a statement he wrote for the 1976-1968 yearbook. Morrow's written comment verified the integration of the Poplar Bluff's schools were the results of a requirement put forth by the federal government. In the 1967-1968 yearbook of the Poplar Bluff High School, the first year of full integration, Morrow wrote:

"There is increasing evidence that education is far more powerful instrument than most people have been willing to admit. The Federal Government has recognized this fact and is trying to implement additional education programs designed to raise the cultural as well as economic development of the American citizen.

It is with this fact in mind that the Senior High School of Poplar Bluff, Missouri must continue to put forth its most concentrated efforts to meet the educational needs of the young people of our community."¹¹⁶

After full integration, elementary classes continued be held at Wheatley, then later the school was converted to an early childhood learning center. In 2001, Wheatley was decommissioned as a school. Today, the school building operates as a museum for African American heritage and education. It also serves as a place for tutoring school children and social meeting place for the community of Poplar Bluff.¹¹⁷

Conclusion and Significance of the Garfield Historic District

Significance of the Garfield Historic

The Garfield Historic District is locally significant under the National Register Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage for its association with African American history of Poplar Bluff. As a historic district, these three historic resources played a vital role in the development of the African American community of Poplar Bluff. Gatlin's Grocery Store (with attached Jordan, Frank and Lutie House), the Pleasant Hill

¹¹⁴ Turner and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016; Davis and Cooper. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Telephone Interview. 17 January 2017.

¹¹⁵ Poplar Bluff School Board Records. On file at the Poplar Bluff School District Office, Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 15 August 1968.

¹¹⁶ Poplar Bluff High School Yearbook. 1968.

¹¹⁷ Turner and McDonald. Interview with Terri L. Foley. Personal Interview. Poplar Bluff, Missouri, 14 September 2016.

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Baptist Church and the Wheatley Public School represent the social, educational and economic core of the historic African American neighborhood in Poplar Bluff. While individual resources, these three historic resources interacted together during the period of significance; the grocery store (a social hub for students, sold lunches, candies, and drinks, and was a bus stop for commuting students), the church served school lunches and held classes in the lower level, as well as PTA meetings. The Garfield Historic District is the most intact collection of the African American resources in the community today. The period of significance for the Garfield Historic District begins with the date of the initial construction of the first building 1908, and extends through 1968 which was the date schools were fully desegregated in Poplar Bluff, ending a time in history when the school no longer educated just African American students but white students as well. Wheatley School after 1968 did not offer classes for students in grades first through third. More importantly, desegregation changed the overall atmosphere of the district with white students being bussed into the Garfield Historic District area.

Conclusion

The Garfield Historic District's three contributing resources convey the social, commercial, residential and educational history of the African American community in Poplar Bluff that was established out of necessity in answer to the Jim Crow era of segregation practices. These buildings functioned historically at the hub of Poplar Bluff's African American community. The continued research, preservation, and promotion of these historic resources is vital to creating a more far-reaching insight of the people and their day-to-day lives in the only African American community of Poplar Bluff during this era. The district is representative of a viable African American community that was established to meet the challenges of the era of the Jim Crow laws and how self-determination and resourcefulness created an economic, social, educational and residential center for African Americans who located to Poplar Bluff from others states and elsewhere in Missouri, as well as those born in Poplar Bluff. The Garfield Historic District evokes the struggles and accomplishments through a time in Poplar Bluff's history of segregation and illustrates the self-sufficient neighborhood that developed because of the era. This district reflects the only corner or section of a street in existence in the Fifth Ward where the commercial, social, religious, and educational practices co-mingled to serve the African American Community. Gatlin's Grocery store was a social hangout for students, sold lunches, candies, and drinks to the students and faculty of Wheatley before, during and after school hours, and later after integration started in 1957-1958 it served as the bus stop for commuting students. Pleasant Hill Baptist Church is linked to Wheatley School and the education of

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African American students as once holding classes in the lower level of the church, hosting PTA meetings and serving school lunches for students. The Garfield Historic District provides an awareness of community identity established by the African American residents of Poplar Bluff, a community they settled together.

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Latitude/Longitude Coordinates Continued

Coordinate	Latitude	Longitude
5	36.763814	-90.396714
6	36.763793	-90.397777

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Garfield Historic District are shown on the accompanying site plan. (see Figure 1) The boundaries can be roughly described as the property lots associated with the buildings located at 914-916, 915 and 921 Garfield Street. The boundary includes 3 buildings and one object, a signage board.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Garfield Historic District are drawn to encompass the greatest concentration of historic buildings that represent the African American heritage of the Fifth Ward in Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri. These boundaries include buildings constructed during the period of significance, 1908 – 1968 – that contribute to the historic heritage/culture of the district. The area immediately outside of the district is characterized by later or altered buildings or vacant lots that would not contribute to the district. The surrounding vacant lots flanking the grocery store/dwelling (different parcel, lot 7) and on the south and west side of the church (different parcels; lots 2-8) do not contribute to the district's historic character and were excluded from the district boundaries as well as, lots five – eight (different parcels from the parcel the Wheatley School building is located) situated behind the school to the west, as the objects (pavilion and playground equipment) are not associated with the period of significance of the school. In addition, the lots five-eight were not included in the original Wheatley School nomination boundaries¹¹⁸ (see Figure 1).

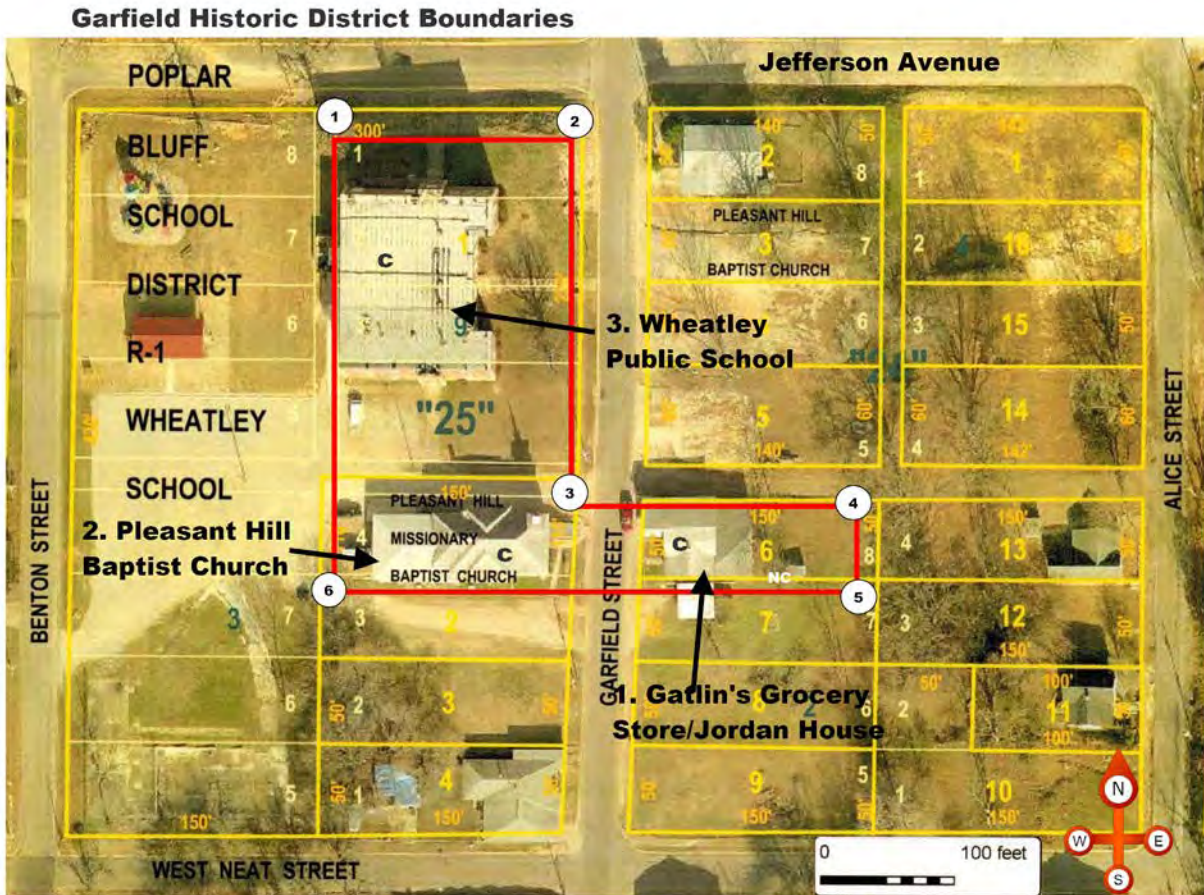
¹¹⁸Philip Thomason. National Register nomination, "Wheatley Public School, Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri

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Figure 1: Garfield Historic District Boundary Map and Latitude/Longitude Coordinates. Source: Plat map on file with the recorder of deeds, Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri.



- 1.) 36.764603/-90.397772 2.) 36.764606/-90.397266 3.) 36.76960/-90.397253 4.) 36.763944/-90.396724
5.) 36.763814/-90.396714 6.) 36.763793/-90.397777 C = contributing nc = non-contributing

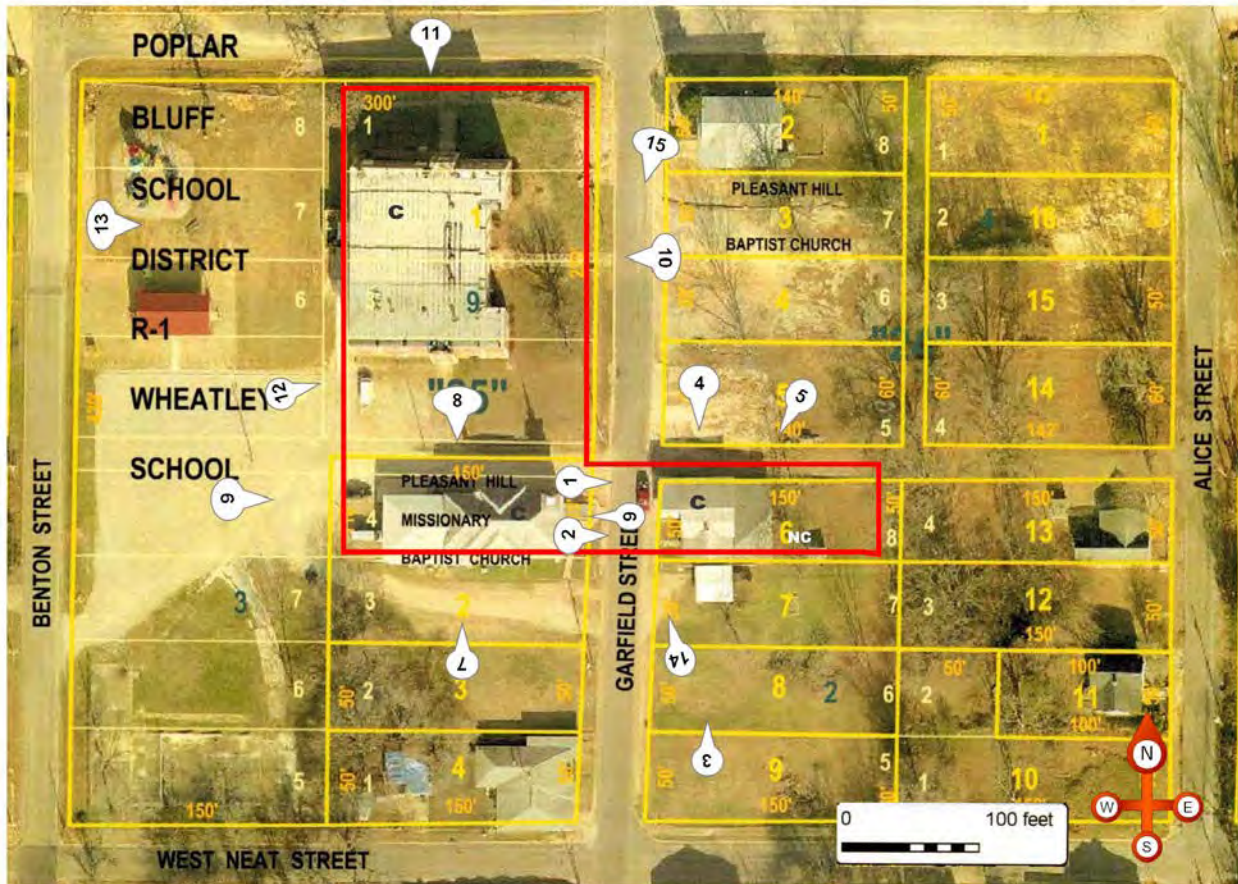
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Figure 2: Photo key map, Garfield Historic District.

Garfield Historic District Photo Key Map

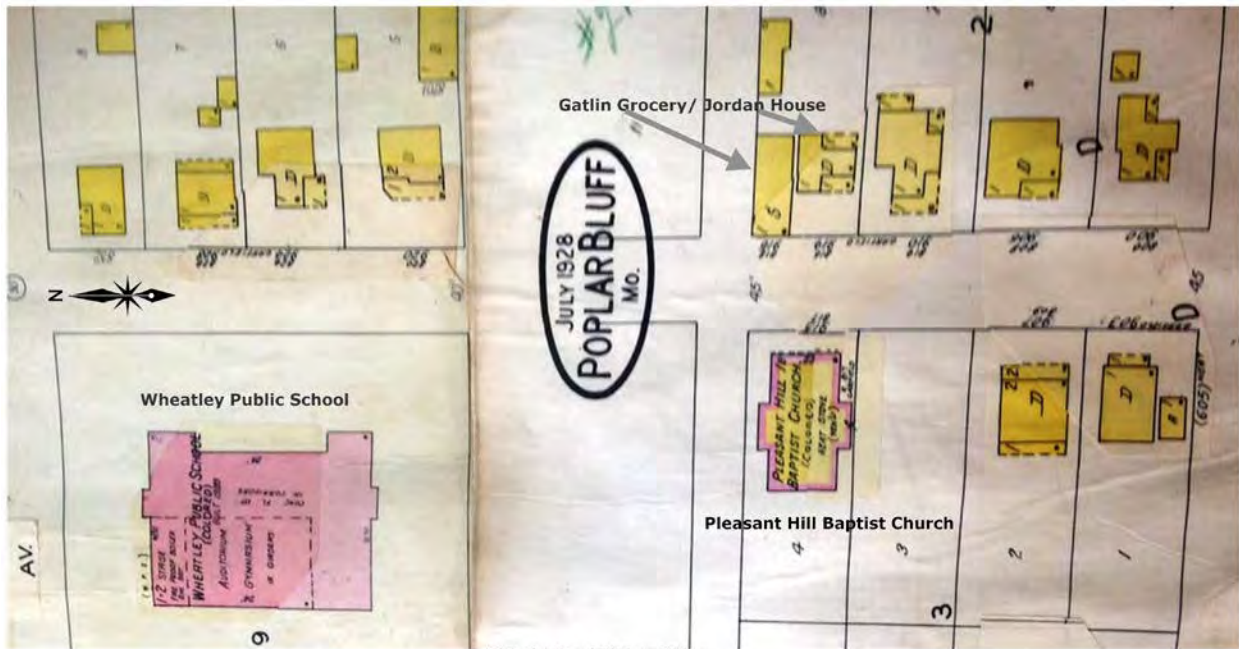


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Garfield Historic District
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Figure 3: Sanborn Fire Insurance Sanborn map – revised 1928 map, completed in 1950, showing the Garfield Historic District. Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Poplar Bluff, Butler County Missouri, New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1950.



This is the 1950 revision
the 1928 map

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Figure 4: Historic Photograph of Gatlin Grocery Store. Photo shows grocery store when it was Martin's Grocery store (sign on side elevation) while the storefront states Carter's Grocery. Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.



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Name of Property

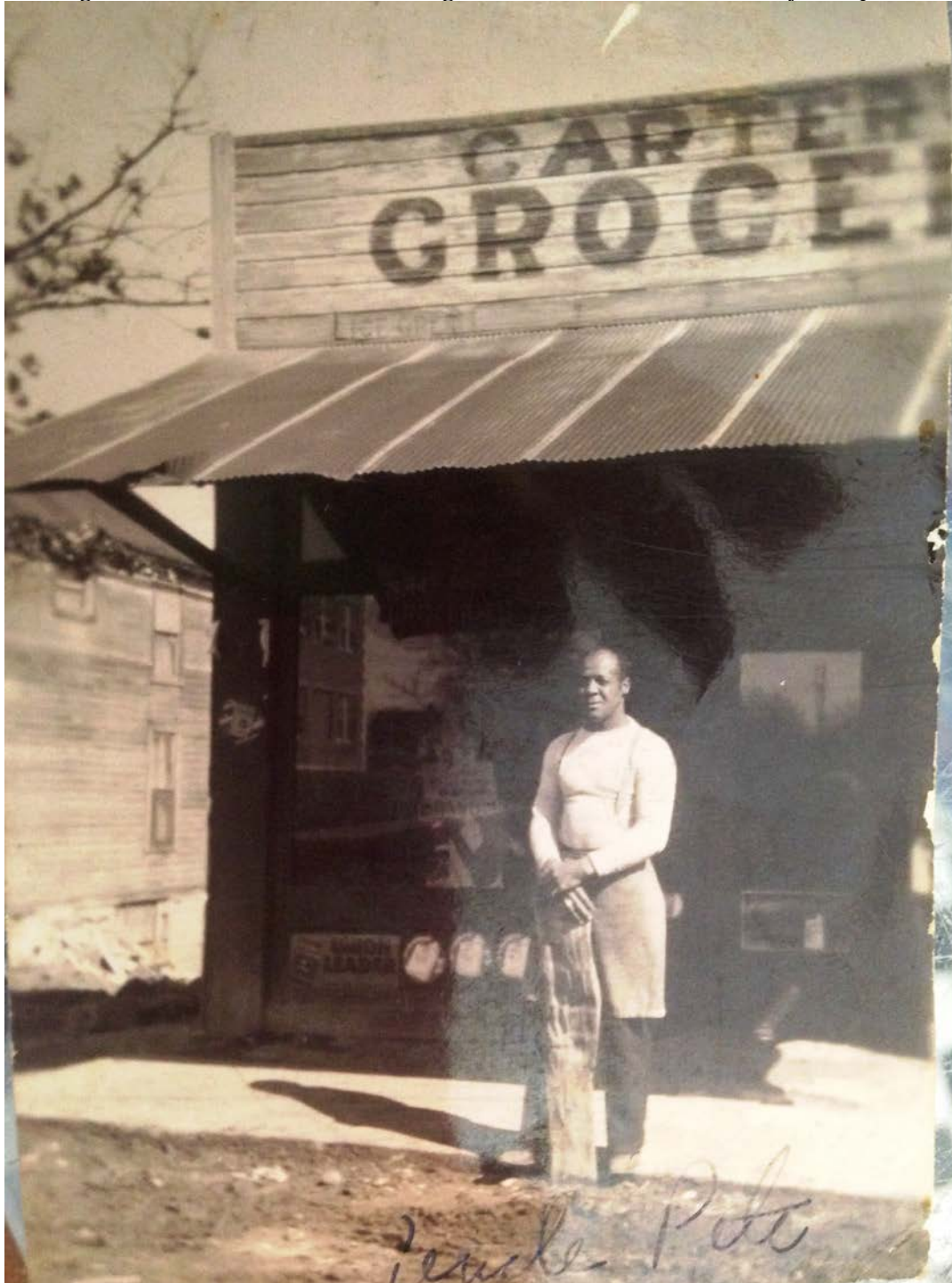
Butler County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 5: Historic Photograph of Gatlin Grocery Store. Photo shows grocery store with storefront intact and original roofline. Pete Price is standing in front of the store. Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri



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Figure 6: Historic Photograph of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, 1925. Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.



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Figure 7: Historic Photograph of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, 1955. Source: Sandra Davis



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Figure 8: Historic Photograph of Wheatley School, 1940. Showing Lonnie Davis, upper left. Source: Sandra Davis

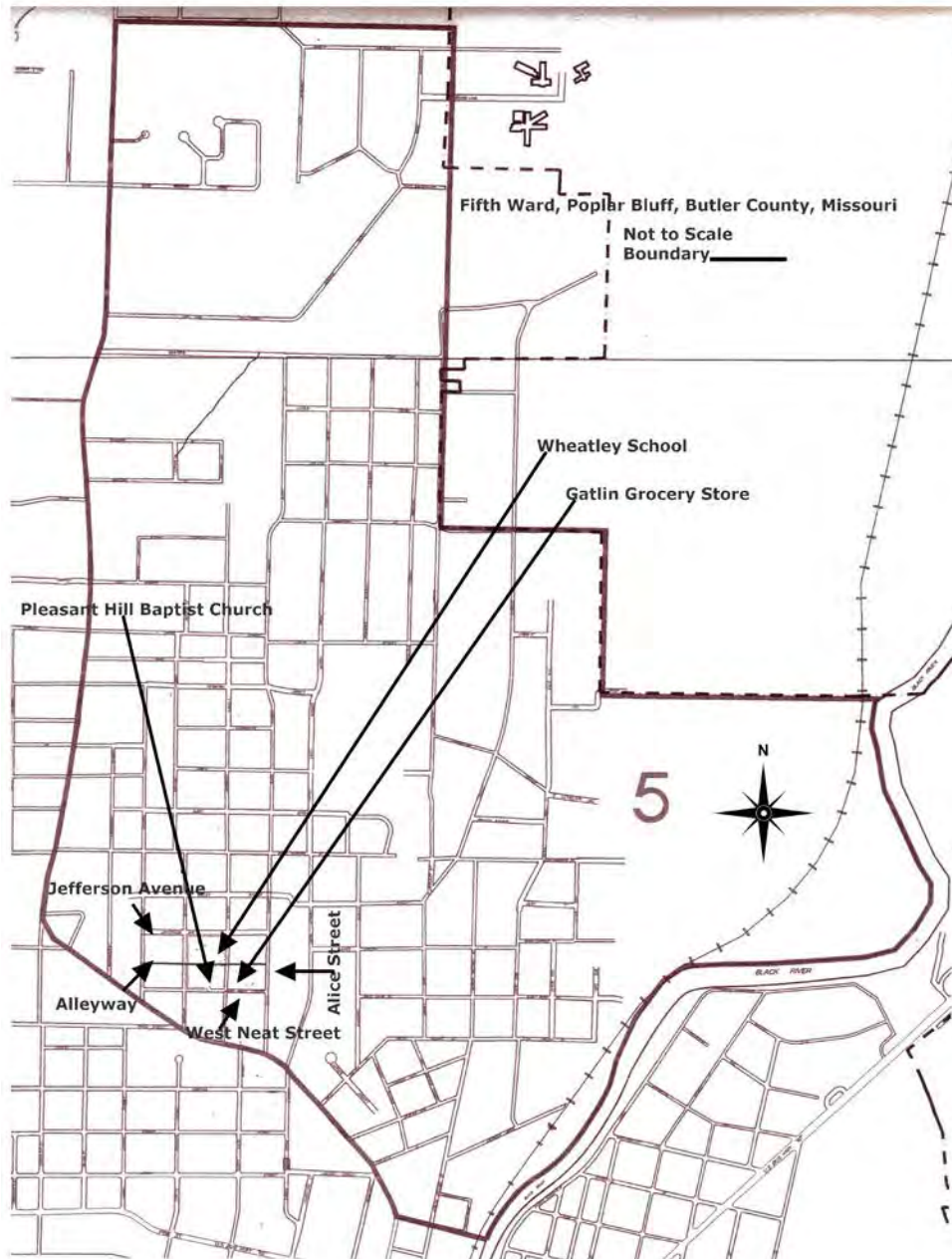


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Garfield Historic District
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Figure 9: Map showing the boundaries of the Fifth Ward (during the period of significance), Poplar Bluff, Missouri. Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

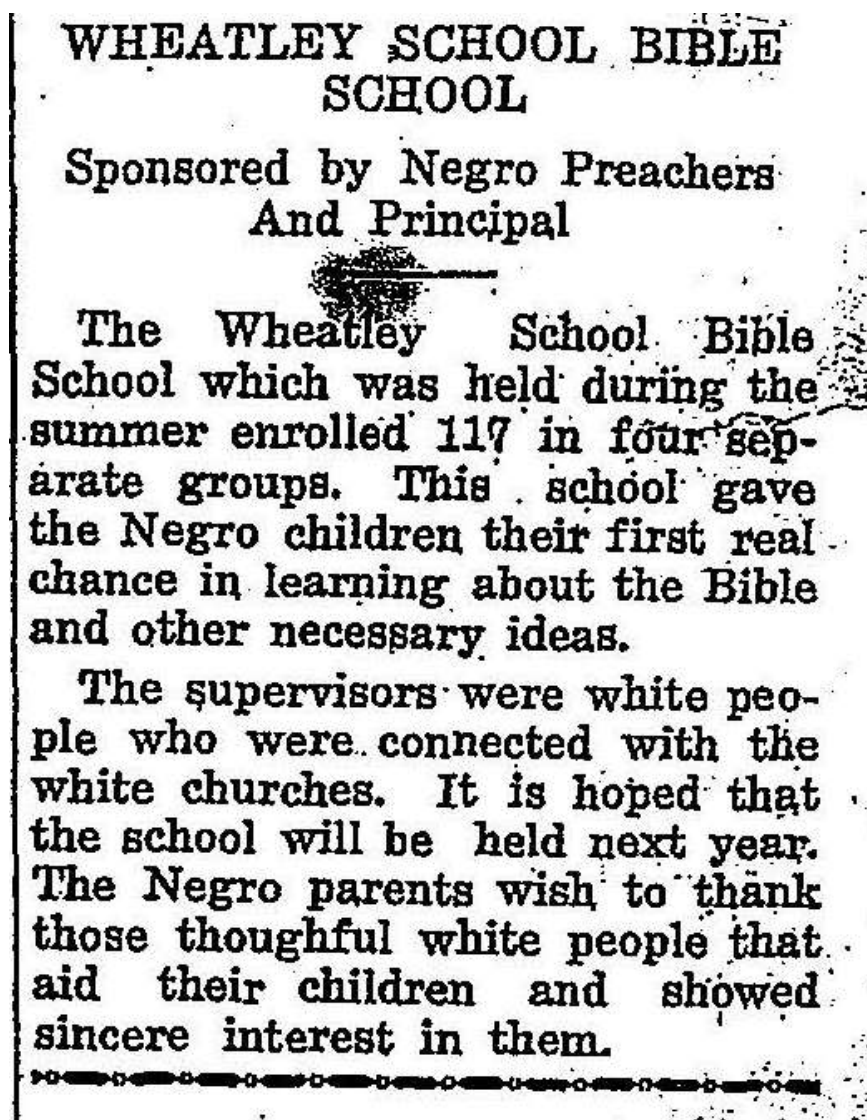


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Figure 10: "Wheatley School Bible School." *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940. Source: Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

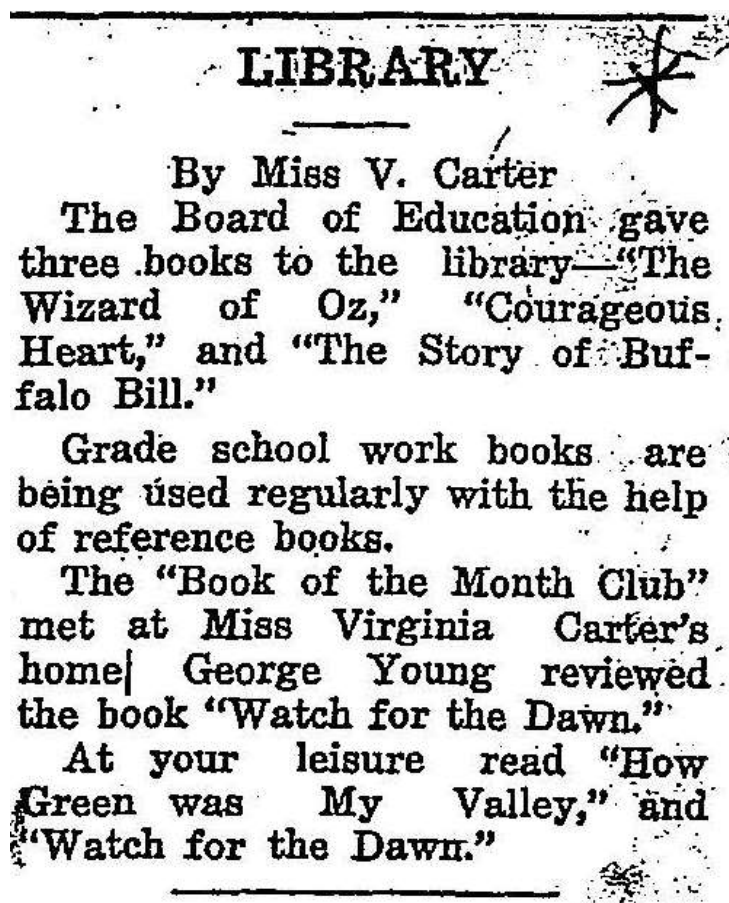


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Figure 11: "Library." *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940. Source: Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.



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Figure 12: "Mrs. Plater Speaks at Pleasant Hill." *Wheatley Tiger*, 29 November 1940. Source: Wheatley Public School Museum, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.



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Figure 13: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing original storefront windows and configuration (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.



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Figure 14: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing original storefront transoms (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.



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Garfield Historic District
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Figure 15: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing original or early period display (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.



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Figure 16: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing Coca Cola Star Burst clock and bench (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.



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Figure 17: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing barber shop with chair, cash register, sink and 1960s flooring (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.



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Garfield Historic District
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Figure 18: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing barber shop looking toward kitchen and store space (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.



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Garfield Historic District
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Figure 19: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing barber shop with sign (April 1, 2015).
Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office.



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Garfield Historic District
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Figure 20: Interior photograph of Gatlin's grocery store, showing kitchen with 1920s Roper stove (April 1, 2015). Source: Missouri State Historic Preservation Office

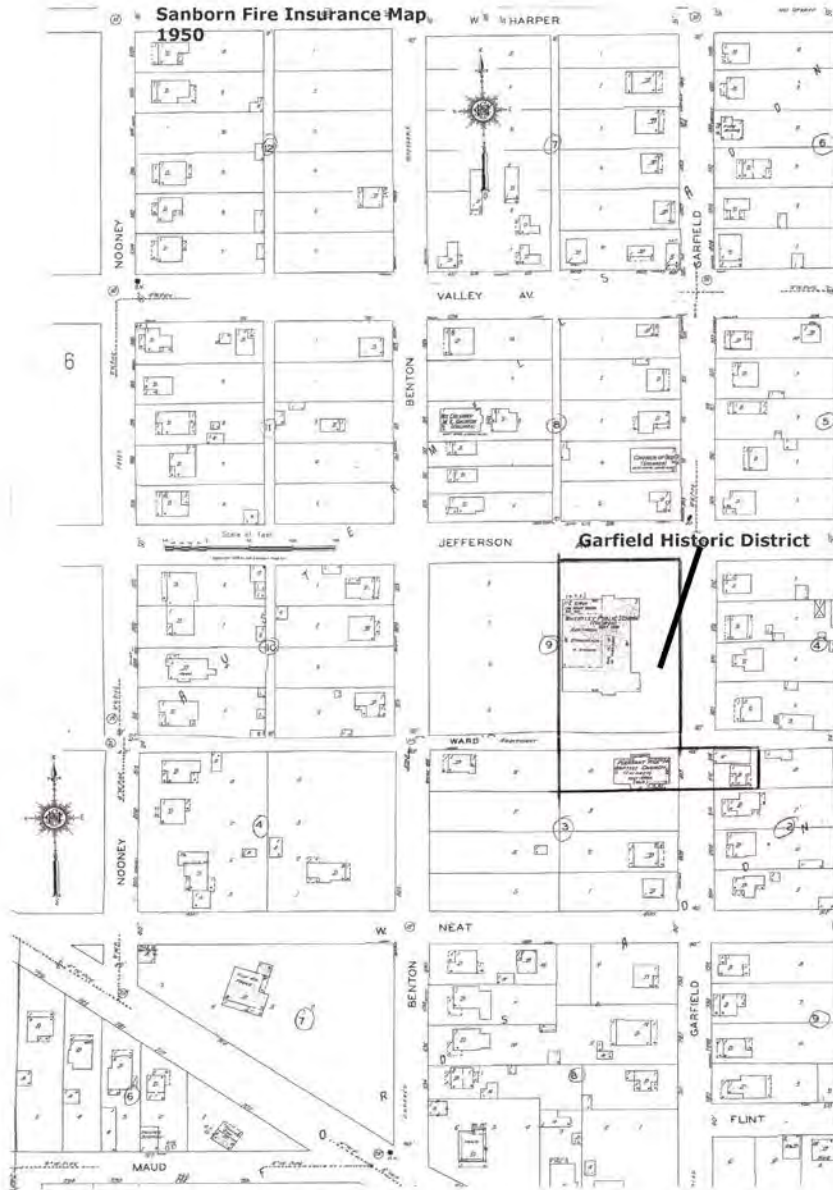


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Garfield Historic District
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Figure 21: 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing the Garfield Historic District and the surrounding area in the Fifth Ward. Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Poplar Bluff, Butler County Missouri, New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1950.



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Figure 22: Current Map, showing the Garfield Historic District and the surrounding area in the Fifth Ward. Map depicts the loss of buildings compared to the 1950 Sanborn Map Source: City of Poplar Bluff, Missouri.



Garfield Historic District













MCCASKEY HILL
BAPTIST CHURCH

MEMBERSHIP

SUNDAY SCHOOL	10:00 AM
WORSHIP SERVICE	11:00 AM
PRAYER MEETING	7:00 PM

MEMORIAL TO THE
BAPTIST CHURCH
OF THE
CITY OF
MEMPHIS
TENN.







PASTOR



4HS-002











SPEED
LIMIT
25

