

# The Heritage of Urban Renewal

## *Generations impacted in Lancaster and beyond..*

### Introduction—From the exhibit:

#### Lancaster in the 60s—1660s, 1760s, 1860s, 1960s at LancasterHistory

“After World War II, the nation-and Lancaster-experienced a population boom. As more people moved to the suburban businesses followed. Between 1955 and 1964, Lancaster County lost 1,750 farms to development. Suburban malls overtook small shops as the seat of commerce. Affordable housing became hard to find.

The creation of the Lancaster Redevelopment Authority marked the beginning of Urban Renewal in the city, a phenomenon that also swept the nation. In 1962, a \$10 million plan was announced to rehabilitate North Queen Street—the heart of downtown Lancaster. Complaints poured in over the next four years. The plan would displace families, destroy historic architecture, and divide communities. The project continued despite objections and demolition began in 1966. The North Queen Street project became a notorious failure in the Lancaster community.

Other Urban Renewal projects yielded mixed results. The Higbee School, now Martin Luther King Elementary School, opened in 1968. The Redevelopment Authority created low-income and subsidized rental housing to relocate families displaced by the project.



Conestoga Elks State Conference Parade, South Duke Street, view southeast. Approximate location of the linked historical marker, circa 1950. Photograph courtesy of the family of Leon B. "Buddy" Glover Jr.

As a result, long-established neighborhoods were torn apart, disrupting connections and further disenfranchising residents.

As suburbanization rapidly expanded, and the city was in a fit of demolition, counter-movements sprung up to save Lancaster's green spaces and preserve its historic places. Private and public partnerships began to work together to save historic properties in Lancaster County and to preserve tracts of natural lands.”



# American *renewal* or neighborhoods *lost*?

## In 1960s & 70s, *community overlooked, demolished*



Conestoga Elks Parade. Photograph courtesy of the family of Leon B. "Buddy" Glover Jr.

### Urban Renewal's painful legacy

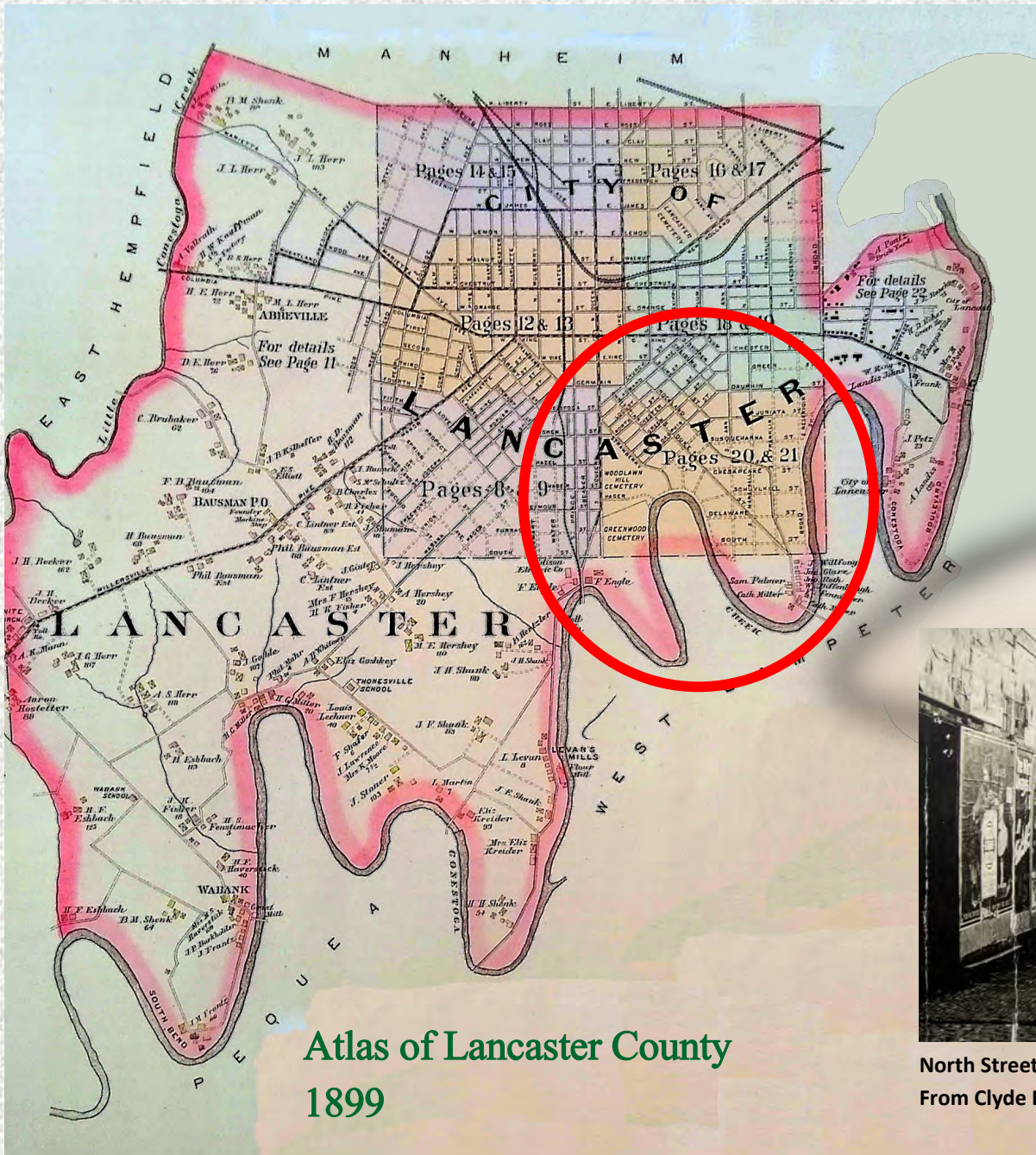


Recollection of former Locust Street resident, Betty Hurdle, as quoted by LNP, 2016. Photo, courtesy City of Lancaster

**S**trong community spirit here followed World War II's upheavals: A parade along 400 block of South Duke Street, 1950s. View northeast from the roof of Conestoga Elks Lodge, corner of South Duke and North Streets. In just a few years, radical change came to this neighborhood due to Lancaster's implementation of the mass clearance activities of the federal Urban Renewal program. These historic dwellings razed circa 1970. A boy tends to younger children while City and federal representatives survey his Southeast neighborhood, deciding its future with little citizen input.

**Reproduction of interpretive marker, located near southeast corner of South Duke Street at North Street**





Atlas of Lancaster County  
1899

## Southeast City Neighborhoods - An Urban Renewal Target Area



North Street, Lancaster, PA, circa 1890. Photographer unknown.  
From Clyde Brown Collection, courtesy, Kathleen Anderson



# Mussertown & Adamstown

Southeast Area of Borough of Lancaster, 1744

“Sale of 15 acres from Hans Musser to Adam Simon Kuhn establishes “housing development” known as Adamstown.”

“ Who made the first move we do not know, but on September 7, 1744, John and Veronica “Frony” Musser, for the sum of 190 pounds, sold to Dr. Adam Simon Kuhn, of the Borough of Lancaster, 15 acres of their land. The piece of ground they sold was bounded on the northeast by the Provincial Road (King Street); on the northwest by land of James Hamilton (along present Church Street); on the southwest by land of John Musser (along present Rockland Street), and on the southeast by land also of John Musser (along present Locust Street).<sup>19</sup> ”

19-Lancaster County Deed Book U-Pages 679-681

Text and Map from

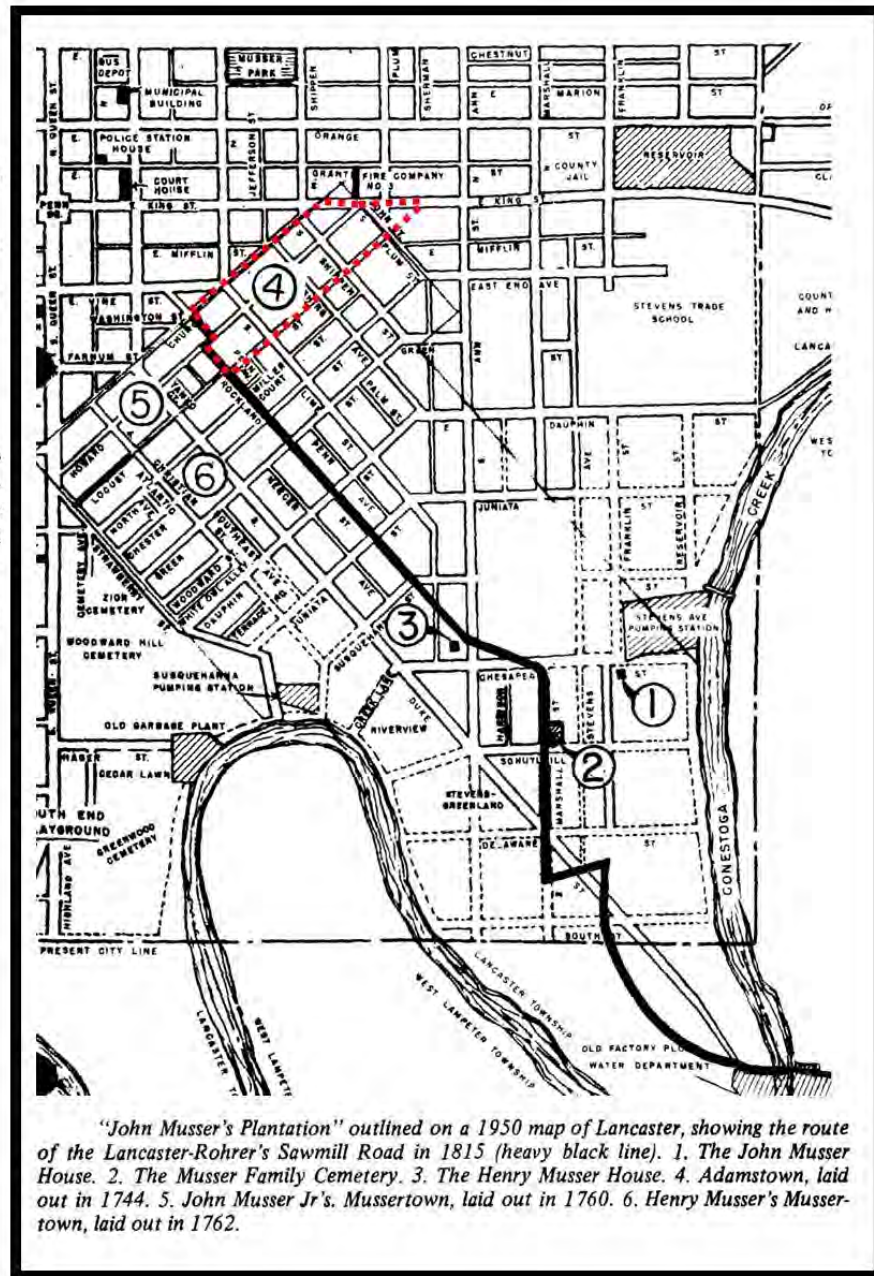
*John Musser's Plantation in Southeast Lancaster*

By Edgar A. Musser, 1979

Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society

Volume 83-No. 3-Pages 158-185

Excerpts and map annotations prepared by Randolph Harris



“John Musser's Plantation” outlined on a 1950 map of Lancaster, showing the route of the Lancaster-Rohrer's Sawmill Road in 1815 (heavy black line). 1. The John Musser House. 2. The Musser Family Cemetery. 3. The Henry Musser House. 4. Adamstown, laid out in 1744. 5. John Musser Jr's. Mussertown, laid out in 1760. 6. Henry Musser's Mussertown, laid out in 1762.



# Predominant locations of African American Households

- Owners and tenants -

City of Lancaster

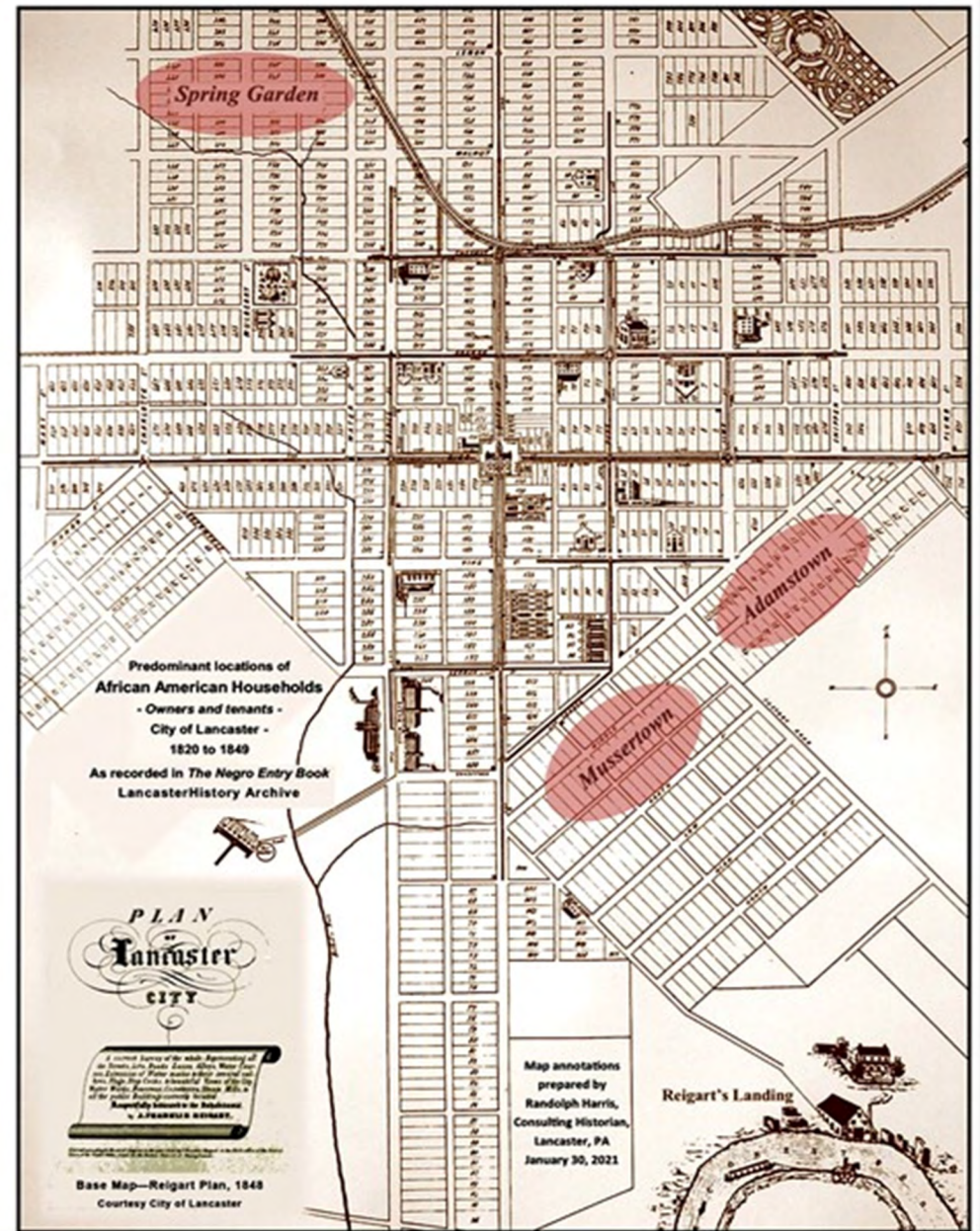
1820 to 1849

**Adamstown - 36**

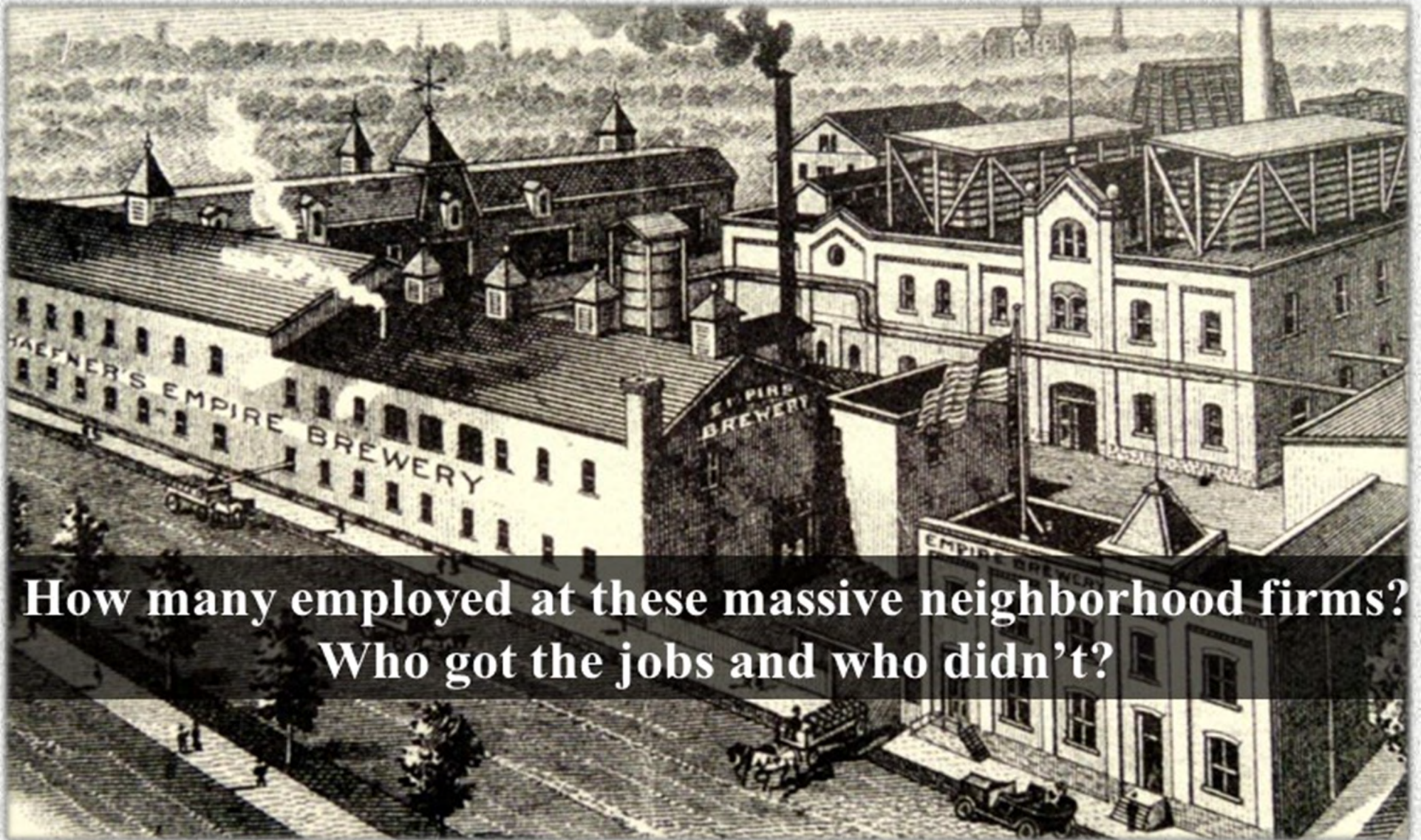
**Mussertown - 17**

**Spring Garden - 17**

This record shows households of families and individuals of African descent living in all four quadrants of the City during this period.







**How many employed at these massive neighborhood firms?  
Who got the jobs and who didn't?**

**Haefner's Empire Brewery, Locust Street between South Lime & Pershing Streets, until 1960s**





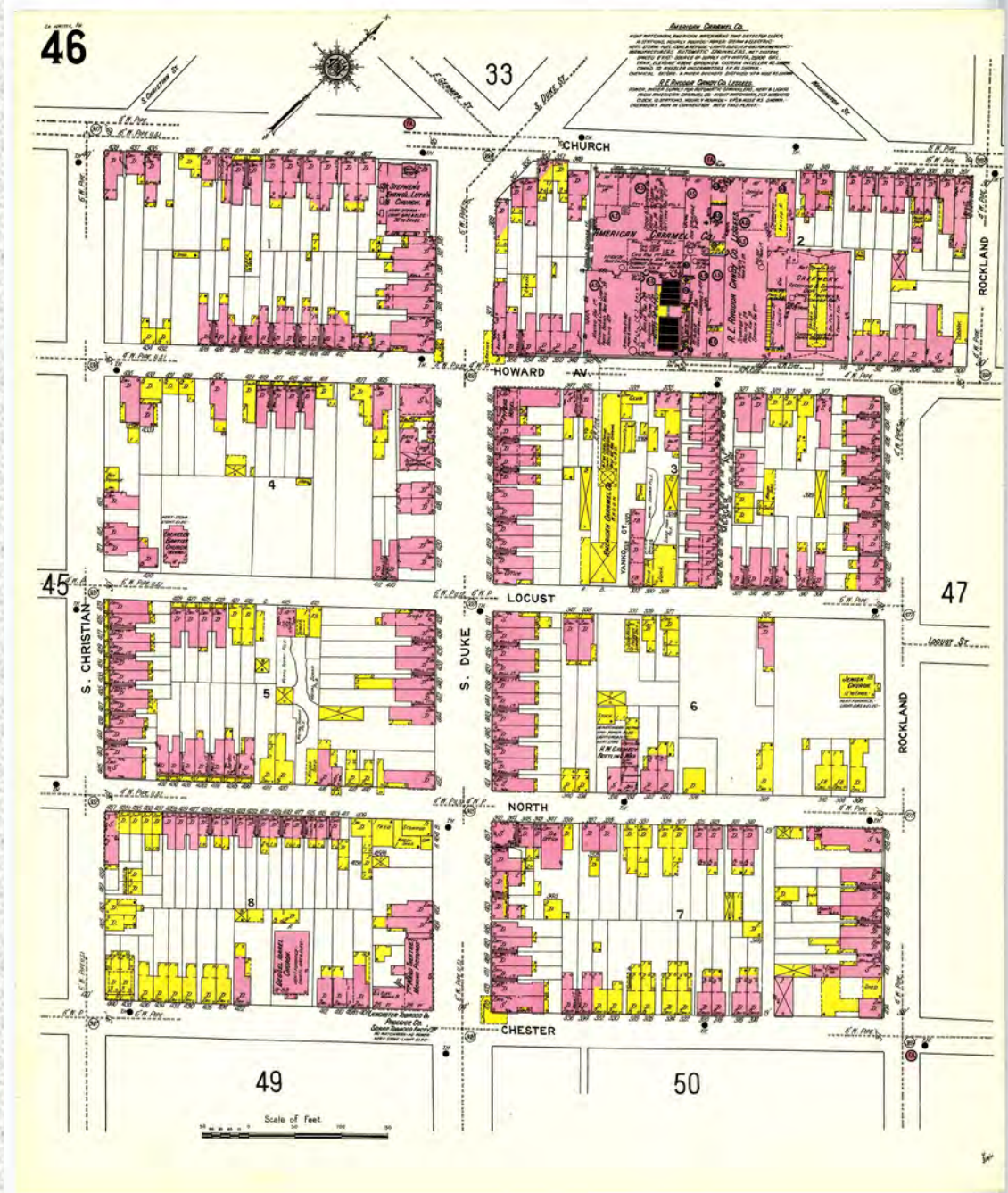
Photo courtesy City of Lancaster

**1960s-Adams/Musser Renewal Area-View North  
American Caramel Factory demolished. Site preparation for public housing tower.**



# Lancaster 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Sheet 46 - South Duke Street Corridor

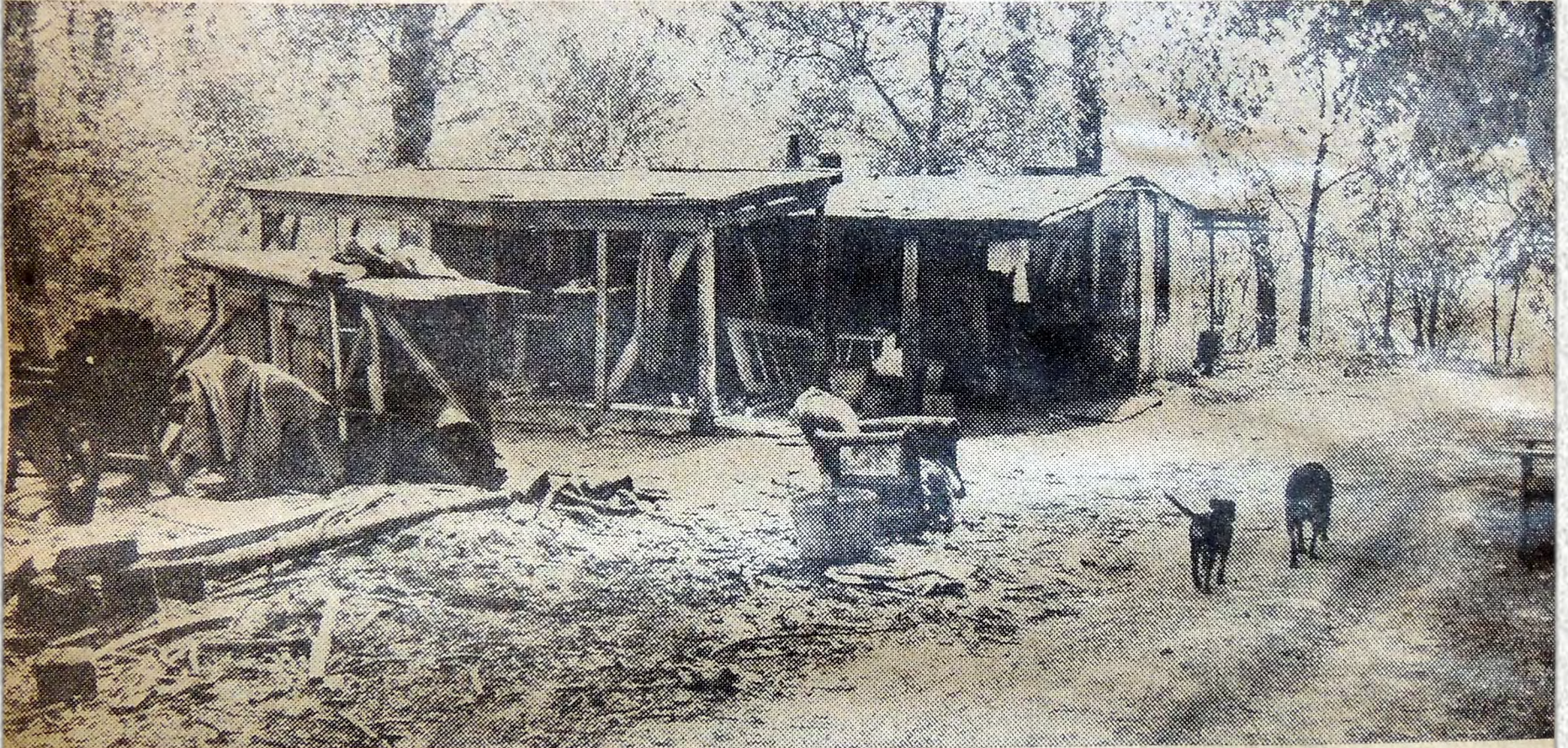
*Find this and other  
Sanborn Maps at  
Penn State  
University Library-  
Free & downloadable*





MAY 13 1944

## Some of Negroes' Homes Here Branded As Unfit for Living Quarters



Above, entrance to Shantytown, on the edge of the George Washington School grounds. "Squatters" occupy 48 shanties constructed of materials taken from a nearby dump.

Below, Barney Google Row at the foot of S. Duke St. Here fam-

ilies live in two and three room units with not more than 16 square feet per room. The Housing committee of the Post War Planning Council says occupants pay an annual rent of about \$1,500—equal to 40 or 50 per cent of the value of the shacks.

### Lancaster New Era, May 13, 1944





Barney Google Row, off South Duke Street

Photo courtesy City of Lancaster

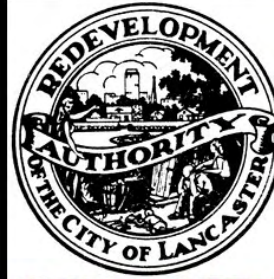




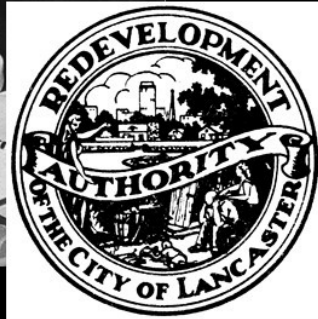
Photo courtesy City of Lancaster

## Mercer Avenue, circa 1960





Photos courtesy City of Lancaster







**W. Hensel  
Brown, Jr.**

**Mayor  
George Coe**

**Lancaster's southeast quadrant, the seventh ward,  
shown with members of Lancaster City Council and  
Redevelopment Authority tour the area to be cleared in  
the 1960s.**

**Mayor Coe, with paper in paper in pocket, leads the group.  
W. Hensel Brown, Jr. is on the sidewalk at left.**

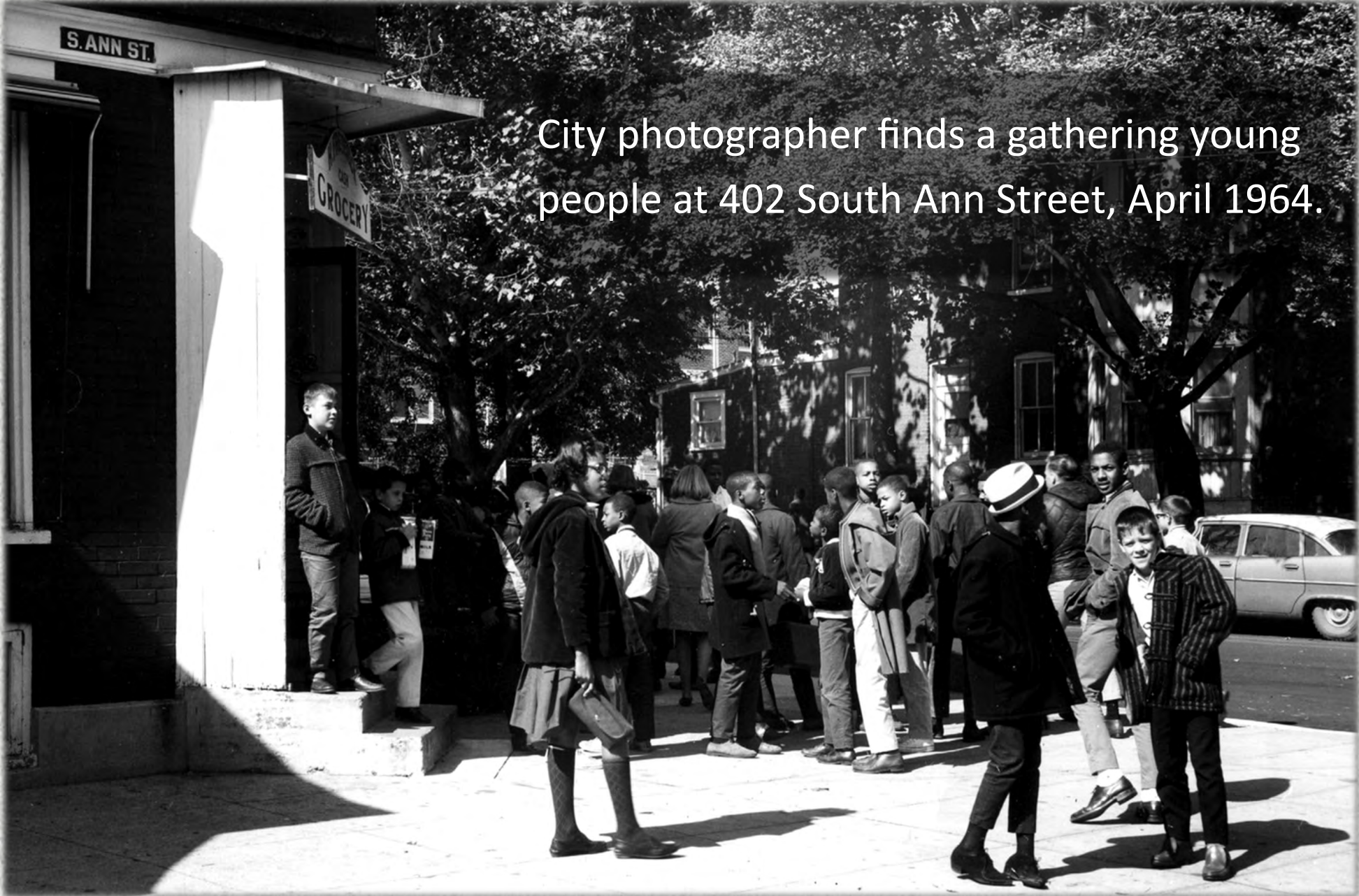




**“In June 1962 Lancaster Redevelopment Authority Director Burrell B. Cohen led a walking tour of the Adams-Musser Towns urban renewal area in the city's southeastern quadrant. In a story accompanying a photograph of Cohen... the New Era added a caption that described the expedition as "Tour Dreamland."**

**Photograph courtesy Bureau of Planning, City of Lancaster.” Excerpt of text of photo caption by staff, Bureau of Planning.**





City photographer finds a gathering young people at 402 South Ann Street, April 1964.



# First Property Acquisition

Adams-Musser Towns  
Renewal Area

613 South Duke Street

April 1964.

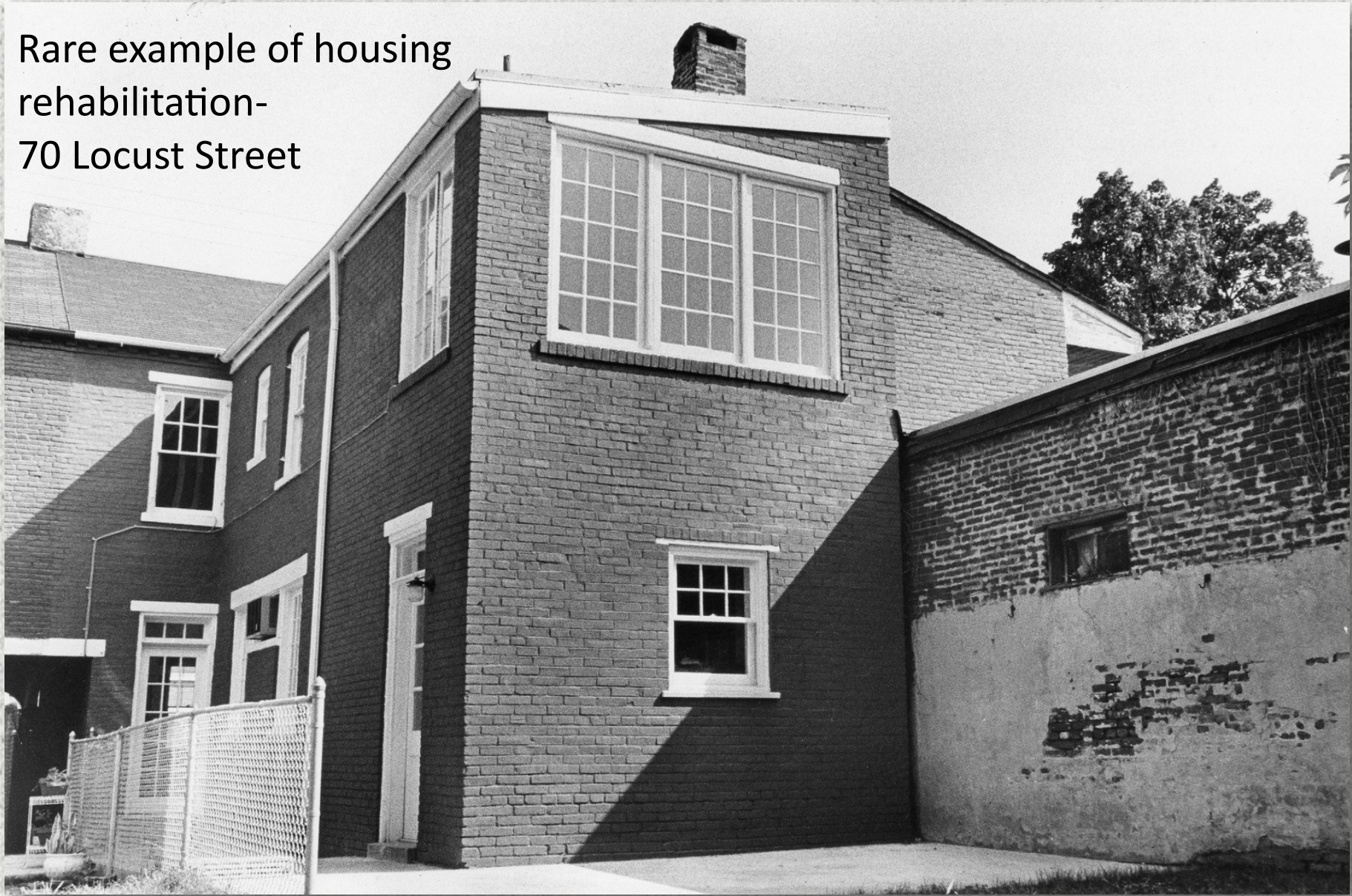
Where are they now?



FIRST PROPERTY ACQUISITION  
Project One  
Adams-Musser Towns Renewal Area  
613 South Duke Street



Rare example of housing  
rehabilitation-  
70 Locust Street



**Two and one-half-story, 19th century dwelling within the Adamstown Renewal Project area is described in City photo archives as a “Demonstration House.” This is an example of the limited number of existing, historic properties improved rather than demolished in this area of the City during this period. Rear exterior elevation after rehab, December 1967.**



For more information, read this in-depth report published by LNP, January 17, 2016

Subscribers have free on line access

This report: Impact of Urban Renewal

976 buildings demolished, 1960s and 70s

831 units of rental housing developed with assistance from public sources

358 Lancaster property owners who refused to rent or sell to Black families, 1964-65

144 homes built or rehabilitated in Southeast Lancaster and sold by Spanish American Civic Association to first-time homebuyers, 1993-2016

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Patriots advance  
New England holds off Chiefs  
Sports, page C

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 2016 \$2.00 LANCASTERONLINE.COM  
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LNP Special Report  
**RACISM, POVERTY & THE FAILURE OF URBAN RENEWAL IN LANCASTER'S SOUTHEAST**

# 'I FELT LIKE WE WERE JUST ERASED'



Neighborhood pride in Lancaster's Southeast was never greater than when bands and drill teams marched down South Duke Street during the Coronation Day Parade. This undated photo from before the urban renewal of the High captures a sense of community that was later fractured. The houses on both blocks are long gone. The top of the Great Building can be seen in the upper left corner.

This & more: Photos of what this area of the city looks like today > page A2

**IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL**  
**Sanctions to be lifted, Americans released**  
US says Iran's pathways to a nuclear weapon all have been closed down  
DAVID E. SANDER  
The Wall Street Journal

VIENNA — International inspectors confirmed Saturday that Iran had dismantled large sections of its nuclear program, an agreed-upon step in a historic agreement last summer, paving the way for the lifting of oil and financial sanctions by the United States and other world powers.

The announcement came just hours after Iran said it had released four American detainees in Washington Post reporter Jason Derris, as part of a prisoner swap with the United States. US officials said the two deals were linked.

**CAMPAIGN 2016**  
**Dems brace for a messy winter race**  
Clinton, Sanders contest heats up as primaries loom  
LISA LEHRER AND KEN THOMAS  
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — There was a time when Democrats fretted about Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign because of her perceived weakness without the test of a primary election to prepare for a general election showdown against the Republican nominee.

The race is heated about that anxiety.

In the past few weeks the Democratic race has gone from a relatively civil disagreement over policy to a combative winter competition between a former secretary of state Clinton and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders.

Clinton's horticultural strength and her support among the minority voters who make up a large portion of the party's base will put her in a formidable position, even as polls show Sanders surging in Iowa and northeastern

**50 years after Lancaster demolished integrated neighborhoods, the Southeast is burdened by the highest concentration of poverty in Lancaster County**

JEFF HAWKES  
LANCASTERONLINE.COM

**G**rowing up in a big family in Lancaster's segregated Southeast in the 1940s and 1950s, Betty Handy says her father got to work as a short-order cook, a hospital janitor and, on Saturdays, a shoemaker.

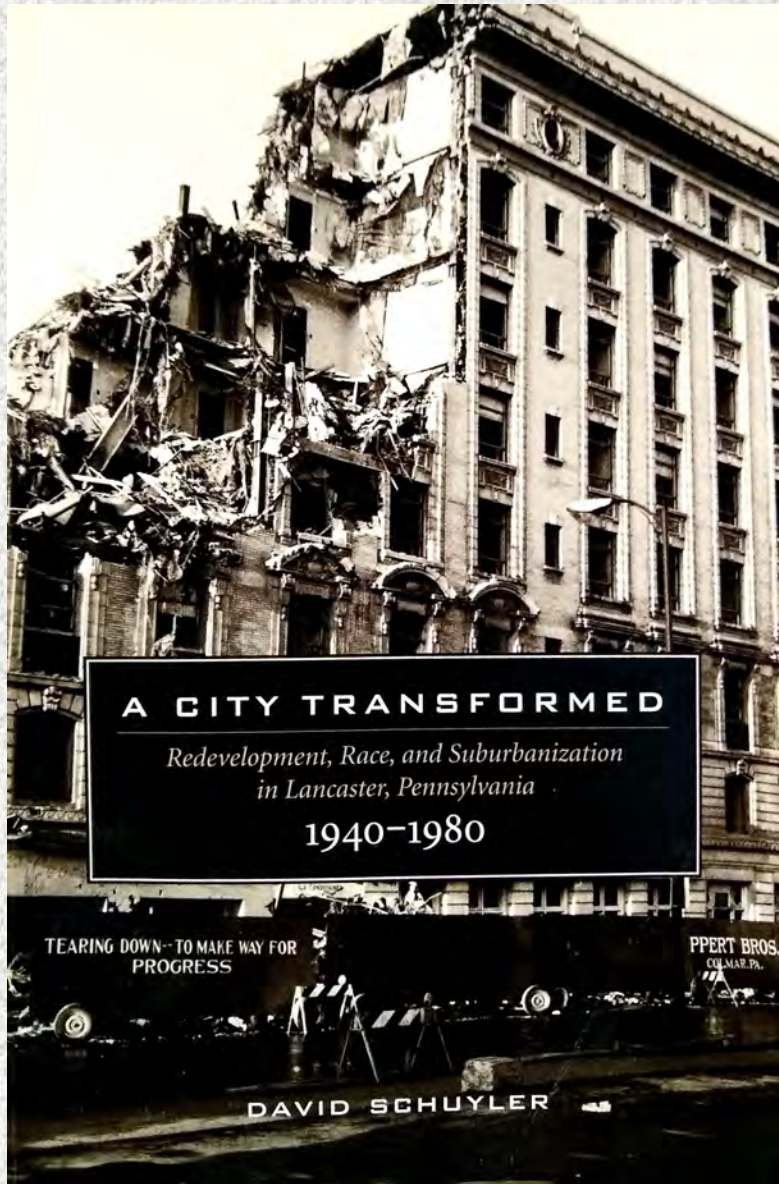
Her mother cleaned a doctor's office. Handy's family was still tight, so much so that when her father approved to the bottom of his

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Lancaster's high-poverty, high-unemployment Southeast still has a long way to go  
Lancaster's high-poverty, high-unemployment Southeast still has a long way to go

EBARA, page A1



# 'TEARING DOWN-TO MAKE WAY FOR PROGRESS'



The defining research to date on the impacts of Urban Renewal in the City of Lancaster

By Professor David Schuyler,  
Franklin & Marshall College,  
Lancaster, PA

The Pennsylvania State University Press  
University Park, PA, 2002



Commemorating  
Southeast Lancaster's  
Diverse Heritage  
*Notable People & Events  
in Community History*



An Elm Street program  
sponsored by  
SACA Development Corp

The Spanish American Civic Association of Lancaster

With research assistance from the African American  
Historical Society of South Central Pennsylvania



# Research, community outreach, design and collaboration on installation of commemorative historical markers

**Project scope and sites recommended for approval at the monthly meeting  
of the African American Historical Society of South Central Pennsylvania,  
August 16, 2020**



# Elm Street support

16 sites under  
consideration

First phase  
funding for  
8 markers





## **SACA/Elm Street Program—Potential Historical Marker Sites**

- 1 **Stevens-Greenland Cemetery**—Last public burial ground for African Americans
- 2 **Saint Paul African Union Methodist Protestant Church**—Diversity in faith communities & how some predominantly Black churches moved so often, sometimes against their will
- 3 **Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church**—Oldest Black Congregation in Lancaster County; some members had Underground Railroad connections
- 4 **Bethel AME Church Cemetery**—Graves of Civil War veterans and community leaders
- 5 **Lancaster In “Green Book”** c. 1940—Home of Abraham Polite, Sr., Place of hospitality & safety for African American travelers during the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century
- 6 **Home of James Clendenin**—Early Black business and property owner; Helps establish new church, circa 1820, that becomes Bethel AME by late 19th century
- 7 **Crispus Attucks Community Center**—Youth education & recreation facility; est. late 1920s
- 8 **Dr. Copper & other early physicians**—*(Site)* Medical providers were still considered pioneers well into mid-20th century, delivering badly-needed health care to people of color, who were not routinely able to access the same services as citizens of the white community



## **SACA/Elm Street Program—Potential Historical Marker Sites**

- 9 **Conestoga Elks Lodge**—Early Black Fraternal Lodge; Chartered by Abraham Polite and others; Barney Ewell employed here
- 10 **Sumner House Hotel**—*(Site)* First hotel owned and operated by African Americans, as early as 1870s at 314-316 Middle Street (now Howard Ave.) Named in honor of US Sen. Charles Sumner, the noted 19th century Abolitionist
- 11 **Home of Sadie Harlem**—*(Site)* Barney Ewell's grade school teacher. Became his track coach & encouraged him to overcome the polio affliction in his leg by racing in school
- 12 **Roberto Clemente Field**—named in honor of the great Pittsburgh Pirate outfield slugger and humanitarian, this athletic facility is a source of Puerto Rican heritage and community pride
- 13 **Urban Renewal**—1970s mass displacement of nearly the entire original community along South Duke Street Corridor
- 14 **Ebenezer Baptist Church**—Illustrates diversity of faith communities; original building an 1870s era mission church of Saint James Episcopal Church, Lancaster. Ebenezer organized 1905 and continues to function as a strong church at a different location in the area
- 15 **Sprenger Brewery**—*(Site)* Major employer, but like other large scale businesses, few opportunities afforded to people of color
- 16 **Spanish American Civic Association ( SACA)**—In honor of educator and community leader Ms. Iris MacRae, first SACA Board Chair who brought community development programs and anti-drug actions to the neighborhood, as well bilingual education programs at School District of Lancaster in the 1970s



