

M1919

LIST OF SELECTED AFRICAN AMERICANS  
FROM THE  
1890 AND 1900 FEDERAL POPULATION CENSUSES OF DELAWARE  
AND RELATED CENSUS PUBLICATIONS  
*AGRICULTURE IN THE STATE OF DELAWARE (1901)*  
AND  
*NEGROES IN THE UNITED STATES (1904)*

Compiled by Claire Prechtel-Kluskins

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## INTRODUCTION

On the single roll of this microfilm publication, M1919, are reproduced lists of selected African Americans from the 1890 and 1900 censuses of Delaware that are part of the Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group (RG) 29. In addition, selected Bureau of the Census publications relating to this subject matter have been reproduced from the Publications of the U.S. Government, RG 287.

## BACKGROUND

The Bureau of the Census was established in the Department of Commerce and Labor on July 1, 1903 (Department of Commerce since March 4, 1913). Temporary census offices superintended the taking of the 1790–1900 censuses, submitting returns to the President (1790), Secretary of State (1800–40), and Secretary of the Interior (1850–1900).

Following the taking of the Twelfth Census in 1900, the Census Office published a variety of statistical reports based upon data collected in that and previous censuses. These reports included a series called *Census Bulletin*, numbered from 1 to 247.

In 1901, Le Grand Powers was the Chief Statistician for Agriculture.<sup>1</sup> In September 1901, Mr. Powers, or clerks under his supervision, drafted proposed *Census Bulletin No. 100 on Agriculture in the State of Delaware*, published September 30, 1901. It appears that, a few days before publication of this *Bulletin*, someone within the Census Bureau disagreed with or questioned the conclusions reached about “Negro” farmers. As a result, a search was undertaken to locate all African American (“Negro”) farmers in the Twelfth Census of the United States (1900) for Delaware, and then locate as many of them as possible in the Eleventh Census of the United States (1890) for Delaware. The “Memorandum for Conference with Mr. Sloane,”<sup>2</sup> having a file stamp of September 26, 1901 (reproduced as Appendix I), describes the search undertaken by the Bureau. On December 28, 1901, the Chief of the Geographer’s Division<sup>3</sup> summarized the search results in a letter to Professor Walter F. Willcox,<sup>4</sup> another chief statistician for the 1900 census. (The letter is reproduced as Appendix II.) Of the 818 “Negro” farmers in Delaware in 1900, the Bureau was able to locate 454 in the 1890 Delaware population and agricultural schedules. The Geographer retained these lists in his files, which were accessioned into the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) decades later.

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<sup>1</sup> Le Grand Powers was born in New York. He was appointed from Hennepin Co., Minnesota and earned \$3,000 annually. *Official Register of the United States [for the Year Ending] July 1, 1901* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office), p. 1036. Mr. Powers and all census employees noted in these footnotes worked in Washington, DC.

<sup>2</sup> Charles S. Sloane, one of seven “Expert Chiefs of Division,” was born in Pennsylvania. He was appointed from Cass Co., North Dakota and earned \$2,000 annually. *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Henry Gannett, the Chief “Geographer,” was born in Maine. He was appointed from Sagadahoc Co., Maine and earned “none” annually. *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Walter F. Willcox, one of five “Chief Statisticians,” was born in Massachusetts. He was appointed from Tompkins Co., New York and earned \$3,000 annually. *Ibid.*

Since the results of the Geographer's 1890–1900 compilation were not available until December, it is likely that the “rejected paragraph”—as the problem language was called in the “Memorandum for conference with Mr. Sloane”—was published unaltered in the *Bulletin*. “Negro” farmers are mentioned several places throughout the publication, so it is difficult to guess whether *specific* published language was questioned. However, since the results of the search of the 1890 census included each person's occupation, most likely the “disputed text” consists of these sentences, which speak to improvement in occupational status:

Of the farms in 1900, 818, or 8.4 per cent, were operated by negroes or those of negro descent. In 1850 the negroes owning farms in Delaware, as in the other slave states, were so few in number as to be a negligible quantity. Hence it can be said that practically none of the negroes operating farms in 1900, or of their negro ancestors, were farm owners at the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1900, 332 farms were operated by negroes who owned the whole or a part of the land contained therein; 471 were operated by negro tenants; and 15 by salaried negro managers. A very small number of these farmers were the descendants of men who had risen in their lifetime from wage service or slavery to farm tenancy or ownership. The great majority were born in families that occupied industrial positions much lower than the ones in which they now stand. [*Bulletin No. 100*, p. 3.]

It is significant that the list of “Negroes” in Delaware in 1890 has survived, since it fills a gap for the otherwise nonexistent Delaware 1890 Federal population census schedules. On January 10, 1921, a significant portion of all the 1890 census schedules were either burned (25 percent) or significantly damaged by water (50 percent) in a fire at the Commerce Department Building, Washington, DC. On February 21, 1933, Congress authorized their disposal, and they were finally destroyed either in 1934 or 1935. In 1942 and 1953, NARA accessioned the remaining fragments of the 1890 census discovered in Census Bureau offices. Those fragments, containing some 6,160 names from Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota, Texas, and the District of Columbia, have been reproduced as National Archives Microfilm Publication M407, *Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890* (3 rolls), and are indexed by National Archives Microfilm Publication M496, *Index to the Eleventh Census of the United States, 1890* (2 rolls). For more information, see Kellee Blake, “First in the Path of the Firemen”: The Fate of the 1890 Population Census, *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives and Records Administration*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Spring 1996): 64–81.

## RECORDS DESCRIPTION

RECORDS OF THE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, RECORD GROUP 29

### **Item 1: List of Selected African Americans from the 1890 and 1900 Censuses of Delaware, and Related Memorandums**

This item consists of a folder, “Delaware: Negro Farmers Named and Located by Enumeration Districts and Hundreds as Reported in the Censuses of 1890 and 1900.”

This folder is from Box 43 of Series 160 [MLR No. 109522], "Geography Division Subject File, 1889–1950," described in Katherine H. Davidson and Charlotte M. Ashby, Preliminary Inventory (PI) No. 161, *Records of the Bureau of the Census* (Washington, DC: National Archives, 1964, reprinted 1997).

This item consists of the following:

1. Typescript "Memorandum for Conference with Mr. Sloane," (unsigned), file-stamped September 26, 1901.
2. Carbon copy of letter, Chief of Geographer's Division to Professor Walter F. Willcox, Chief Statistician, 12th Census, December 28, 1901.
3. Typescript draft of the same letter, with attachments containing raw data, incorporated in the draft.
4. "1890 List"—Roughly alphabetical list of African Americans giving  
surname  
first name  
1890 Enumeration District (ED) number  
1890 ED description  
occupation
5. "1890–1900 Consolidated List"—Alphabetized list of African Americans giving  
surname  
first name  
1900 ED number  
1890 ED number  
1890 ED description  
occupation
6. "Partial 1900 List by Crowley"<sup>5</sup>—List of African Americans found in 1900 census by Crowley giving  
surname  
first name  
1900 ED number  
1900 ED description  
occupation  
name of Hundred in which located (geographic unit in Delaware)

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<sup>5</sup> Michael D. Crowley, a "Clerk," was born in Pennsylvania. He was appointed from Lackawanna Co., Pennsylvania, and earned \$1,000 annually. *Ibid.*, p. 1043. The Bureau also employed as clerks Miss May E. Crowley, a District of Columbia native, and Miss Belle Crowley, a New York native, who earned \$900 and \$720, respectively, but their lower rank in the Bureau, as evidenced by their pay level, makes it unlikely either was the "Crowley" who worked on this project. *Ibid.*, pp. 1054 and 1065.

7. "Partial 1900 List by "G. Van H. B."<sup>6</sup>–List of African Americans found in 1900 census by "G. Van H. B." giving
  - 1900 ED number
  - first name
  - surname
  - ED description
  - occupation
  - name of Hundred in which located

PUBLICATIONS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, RECORD GROUP 287

**Item 2: Census Bulletin No. 100, *Agriculture in the State of Delaware* (Washington, DC: Census Office, Department of the Interior, September 30, 1901). 12 pp. SuDoc I 13.3:100.**

This 10 page *Bulletin* was authored by or under the direction of Le Grand Powers, Chief Statistician for Agriculture. As noted above, language in this *Bulletin* resulted in the compilation of the "List of Selected African-Americans from the 1890 and 1900 Censuses of Delaware, and Related Memoranda" reproduced as Item 1 of this microfilm publication.

**Item 3: Excerpt from *Twelfth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1900, Volume 5, Agriculture, Part I* (Washington: United States Census Office, 1902). SuDoc No. I 13.5 v.5.**

Agricultural statistics comprised the fifth and sixth volumes of the Census Office's national comprehensive six-volume statistical report derived from the data collected during the 1900 census. Volume 5, pages xciii (93) thru cxx (120), compared whites and "colored" farmers in a section called "Farms Classified by Color or Race of Farmer," which is reproduced here.

**Item 4: *Bureau of Census Bulletin No. 8, Negroes in the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904). SuDoc No. C3.3:8.**

The Bureau of the Census published a comprehensive 333-page report on *Negroes in the United States* in 1904 because "requests for information" upon this subject were "frequently received" by the Bureau, according to Census Director S.N.D. North in the introductory remarks. The bulk of the data and analysis was done by W. C. Hunt, the Bureau's chief statistician and Professor W. F. Wilcox of Cornell University, a special agent of the Bureau. W.E.B. DuBois, Ph.D., of Atlanta University, compiled pages 69–98 relating to "The Negro Farmer." The statistical data and analysis was compiled not only

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<sup>6</sup> "G. Van H. B." probably George H. Van Buren, a "Clerk," was born in New York. He was appointed from Hamilton Co., Ohio, and earned \$1,000 annually. *Ibid.*, p. 1050.

from the 1900 census, but also the 1870–1890 censuses. The data should be of interest to genealogical and other researchers.

### RELATED RECORDS

The 1900 federal population census schedules for Delaware have been reproduced on rolls 153–157 of National Archives Microfilm Publication T623, *Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900* (1,854 rolls), and indexed by National Archives Microfilm Publication T1037, *Index (Soundex) to the 1900 Federal Population Census Schedules for Delaware, 1900* (21 rolls).

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Persons interested in researching agricultural practices in Delaware circa 1900 will find a variety of useful publications.

The Delaware State Board of Agriculture published a numbered series called *Bulletin*. *Bulletin No. 1* was the act authorizing the establishment of the Board. *Bulletin No. 2* (“The Peach Yellows Law”) and *Bulletin No. 3* (“The San Jose Scale”) were published in the *First and Second Annual Reports of the [Delaware] State Board of Agriculture (New Series) 1901–1902* (Dover, DE: The Sentinel Printing Co.). The board’s annual reports for later years have also been published, as well as subsequent publications in the *Bulletin* series.

The Federal Government publication *Experiment Station Record* (SuDoc No. A10.6:year) abstracts all the publications from all states’ agricultural experiment stations, including Delaware’s *Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin*.

The *Annual Report of the Office of Experiment Stations* (SuDoc No. A10.1/2:year) summarizes the annual reports from every state’s experiment station. Before 1909, the *Annual Report of the Office of Experiment Stations* was included with other annual reports of the Agriculture Department and published in the *Congressional Serial Set*.

Federal Government publications are in large public and university libraries participating in the U.S. Government’s depository library program, although participating libraries typically do *not* have *every* Federal Government publication.

Interested researchers may find the publications mentioned here at several research facilities, including Morris Library, University of Delaware, Newark, DE; the Delaware Public Archives, Dover, DE; or NARA. At NARA, Federal Government publications will be found in RG 287, Publications of the U.S. Government, either at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, or at the National Archives at College Park, MD (NARA location [in 2004] varies depending on SuDoc number). In addition, the Archives Library Information Center, NARA, College Park, MD, has some Federal Government publications.

NARA Microfilm Publication T852, *Extension Service Annual Reports: Delaware, 1914–1944* (13 rolls) provides frequently interesting annual reports on community agricultural practices and extension service programs from both the county and state levels. Annual reports after 1944 have not been microfilmed, but are in Record Group 33, Records of the Extension Service, NARA, College Park, MD. For more information about these records, see D. Clayton Brown, “Prosperous Farms and Happier Homes: Arkansas Agricultural Extension Service, 1911–1966,” *Prologue: Quarterly of the National Archives and Records Administration* Vol. 30, No. 2 (Summer 1998): 136–145.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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**APPENDIX I**  
**“MEMORANDUM FOR CONFERENCE WITH MR. SLOANE”**  
**FILE-STAMPED SEPTEMBER 26, 1901**

Memorandum for conference with Mr. Sloane:

Since the argument in the rejected paragraph to the Bulletin on Delaware Agriculture is likely to be repeated and emphasized in the extended reports and since a detailed investigation of the facts in this one instance seems easy because of the small number of persons involved, I suggest that an effort be made to obtain the facts from the population schedules regarding the 818 negro farm proprietors in Delaware, June, 1, 1900, and thereabouts in 1890. If the schedules for Farms, Homes and Mortgages in 1890 can be had a large number of the 818 should be found among the 606 negro farm proprietors quoted by that inquiry. Most of the others might be located on the population schedules for 1890. Even though a certain number can not be traced, we might hope for evidence enough to throw light upon the validity of Mr. Powers' line of argument.

**APPENDIX II**  
**“LETTER, CHIEF GEOGRAPHER TO PROFESSOR WILLCOX”**  
**DATED DECEMBER 28, 1901**

December 28, 1901

Professor Walter F. Willcox,  
 Chief Statistician, 12th Census

My dear Professor:

I have at last completed the examination of the farm and population schedules of 1890, for the purpose of ascertaining how many of the 818 negroes returned on farm schedules in 1900 were also enumerated in 1890 and their occupations at that time. The result, while not as satisfactory as hoped for, is fairly good. Of the 818 negro farmers of 1900, 295 were returned on farm schedules in 1890; 104 were returned as farm laborers; 27 as laborers; and 28 with miscellaneous occupations, making a total of 454 of the 818 that were enumerated in 1890.

I give below, in detail, the occupations in 1890 of these 454 negroes.

Returned on farm schedules in 1890.....	295
in 1890 as farm laborers .....	104
laborers .....	27
gardners .....	3
housewives .....	3
teamsters .....	2
blacksmiths .....	1
cook .....	1
driver.....	1
engineer .....	1
hostler .....	1
hotel waiter .....	1
mill hand .....	1
school teacher .....	1
with no occupation given.....	<u>12</u>
Total.....	454

Very respectfully,

Chief of Geographer's Division

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2	ITEM 2: <i>Census Bulletin No. 100, Agriculture in the State of Delaware</i> (Washington, DC: Census Office, Department of the Interior, September 30, 1901). SuDoc I 13.3:100.
3	ITEM 3: <i>Twelfth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1900, Volume 5, Agriculture, Part I</i> (Washington: United States Census Office, 1902). SuDoc. No. I 13.5 v.5, pages xciii (93) thru cxx (120) comprising the section called “Farms Classified by Color or Race of Farmer.”
4	ITEM 4: <i>Bureau of Census Bulletin No. 8, Negroes in the United States</i> (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904). SuDoc C3.3:8.