

“Beautiful New Homes”

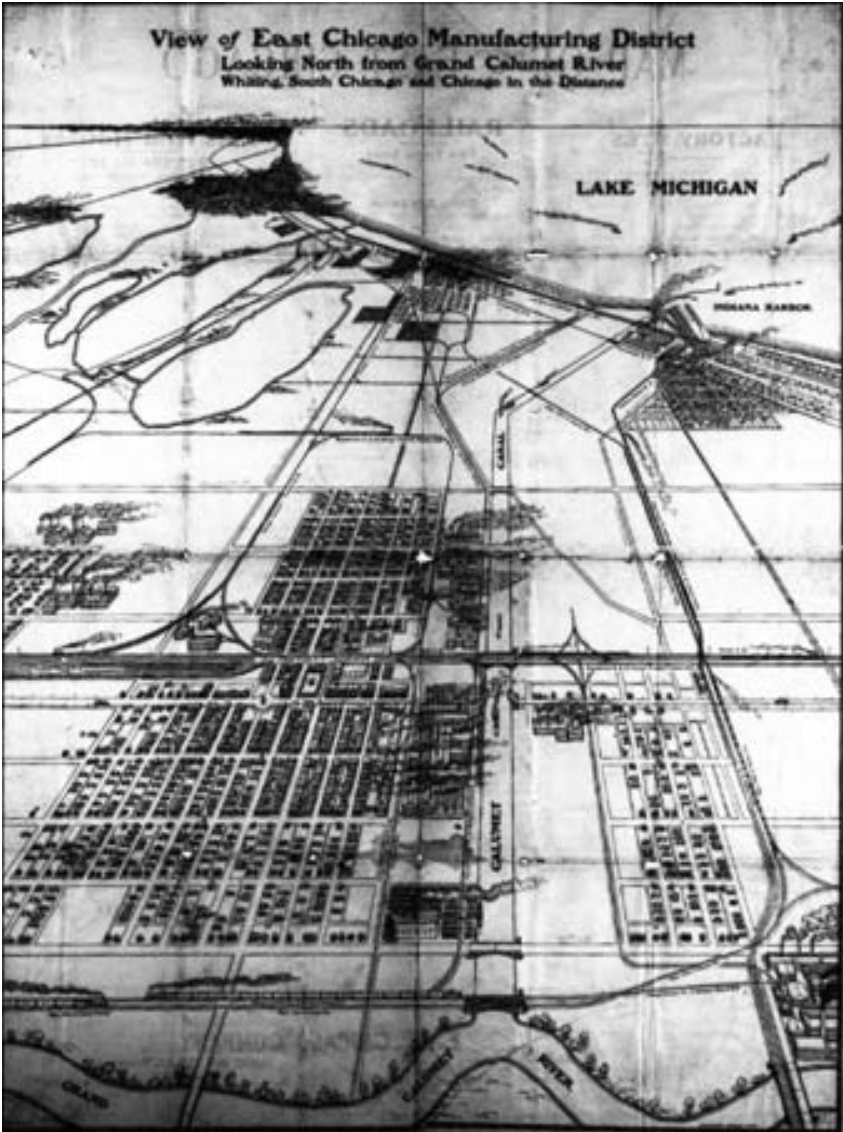
The Development of Middle-Class Housing in the Industrial Suburb of East Chicago, Indiana

TAMSEN ANDERSON

The decentralization of industry away from the city of Chicago during the late nineteenth century transformed northwestern Indiana's Calumet Region into one of the most heavily industrialized areas of metropolitan Chicago. A flourishing industrial economy drew thousands of foreign-born and southern black laborers to the Region and in turn stimulated the development of working-class neighborhoods near factory gates. Yet despite the concentrated manufacturing activity within their limits, the industrial suburbs of East Chicago, Gary, Hammond, and Whiting were not homogeneous blue-collar communities. In addition to unimproved areas crowded with a mix of saloons, stores, and workers' housing, these industrial suburbs included middle-class residential neighborhoods, where white native-born and northern European businessmen and professionals lived alongside factory supervisors and skilled workers in “beautiful new homes” set apart from commercial and industrial areas.¹

Tamsen Anderson is Visiting Assistant Professor of architectural history in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of New Mexico.

¹*Lake County Times*, January 13, 1925.



East Chicago Manufacturing District, circa 1897. Looking north from the Grand Calumet River, this image features the industrial suburbs of East Chicago and Indiana Harbor.
Courtesy, East Chicago Public Library History Room.

Studies of home building in America's industrial suburbs have often focused on workers' housing and thus minimized the economic and social differences that persisted among the residents of such communities. A close analysis, however, reveals that sharp divisions between native-born white elites and foreign-born immigrants and southern black migrants encouraged the development of a dual housing market, which effectively sorted residents based on class, ethnicity, and race. In Chicago and other large industrial cities, the use of intimidation and deed restrictions helped to create and maintain neighborhood boundaries.² This study of East Chicago's elite North Side neighborhood and Indiana Harbor's Washington Park subdivision—the lakefront part of East Chicago—offers insight into the formation of the Calumet Region's segmented housing market and demonstrates that socioeconomic heterogeneity existed not just between suburbs, but also within them.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Chicago's rapidly expanding industrial economy prompted an increasing number of manufacturers to begin building factories along major transportation routes outside the city center.³ In 1880, the North Chicago Rolling Mill Company opened its enormous new works in South Chicago, an industrial settlement situated ten miles southeast of Chicago's center.⁴ The presence of the iron and steel works stimulated a frenzy of real estate activity in South Chicago, as lots doubled and even tripled in value.⁵ Spurred by the success of South Chicago, real estate syndicates composed of eager investors hurriedly platted industrial suburbs throughout the area around Lake Calumet and the surrounding Calumet River system. Among the new towns was East Chicago, then a sparsely settled community lying along Lake Michigan in northwestern Indiana, roughly thirty miles south of downtown.⁶

Early efforts to develop Chicago's industrializing outskirts occurred unevenly, due in part to the erratic national economy and uncertain real estate conditions. The repeated financial downturns of the late nineteenth

²Thomas Lee Philpott, *The Slum and the Ghetto: Immigrants, Blacks, and Reformers in Chicago, 1880-1930* (Belmont, Calif., 1991), 191-200.

³Robert Lewis, *Chicago Made: Factory Networks in the Industrial Metropolis* (Chicago, 2008).

⁴*Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 15, 1880.

⁵*Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 8, 1882.

⁶*Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 28, 1881.

century dashed many suburban real estate speculators' dreams of quick sales and easy profits. After other speculators' unsuccessful efforts, investors from Chicago and eastern cities organized two land companies—the Calumet Canal and Improvement Company and the Standard Steel and Iron Company (later consolidated as the East Chicago Company)—to improve and market seven thousand acres in East Chicago for industrial, commercial, and residential use.⁷ In 1888, the Standard Steel and Iron Company platted a ten-acre gridded subdivision in the southwestern portion of the new town, allotting “one section along the canal and river for manufacturers, one section for business, and one for residence houses.”⁸ Unlike the developers of elite residential suburbs—who barred industry in order to encourage first-class residential development—the real estate syndicates operating in East Chicago segregated land use not to banish industry from town, but to ensure that factories had immediate access to transportation facilities. Large iron and steel manufacturing firms, such as the Interstate Iron and Steel Company and the Republic Iron and Steel Company, settled on lots fronting the proposed shipping canal and the Chicago Terminal Transfer Railway's line, while other plants less dependent on bulky raw materials—including the Famous Manufacturing Company, a farm machinery manufacturer, and the Graver Tank Works—occupied lots with rail access only.⁹

The fledgling community of East Chicago originally coalesced in the ten-block area bounded by Chicago Avenue on the north, 151st Street on the south, Railroad Avenue on the east, and Forsyth Avenue (now Indianapolis Boulevard) on the west, near the Famous Manufacturing Company and the Graver Tank Works. Most of the town's early residents settled south of Chicago Avenue, between Tod Avenue on the east and Forsyth Avenue on the west.¹⁰ In this choice, they followed the lead of William H. Penman, the town's first permanent resident, who in 1888 had

⁷William Frederick Howat, ed., *A Standard History of Lake County, Indiana and the Calumet Region* (Chicago, 1915), 1:419; and Powell A. Moore, *The Calumet Region: Indiana's Last Frontier* (1959; reprint, Indianapolis, Ind., 1997), 220-22.

⁸*East Chicago Journal*, 1889. The copies of the *East Chicago Journal* held at the East Chicago Public Library, East Chicago, Indiana, have crumbled into pieces, often making it impossible to determine the dates of individual newspapers.

⁹*Chicago Tribune*, December 9, 1888; *East Chicago Journal*, September 17, 1889; and *Lake County Times*, August 25, 1910.

¹⁰Archibald McKinlay, *Twin City: A Pictorial History of East Chicago, Indiana* (Virginia Beach, Va., 1988), 31.

built a simple two-story frame, hipped-roof house on the northwest corner of 148th Street and Tod Avenue opposite the Graver Tank Works, which he supervised on behalf of his brother-in-law William Graver.¹¹ Those with few financial resources or little interest in remaining in the area long-term soon found housing in short supply, with no more than fifty to seventy-five dwellings available for roughly four hundred residents. Faced with limited options, many factory workers rented rooms in the boardinghouses and hotels located across from the factories along Railroad Avenue.¹²

Few people settled in the relatively remote wooded section northwest of Chicago Avenue until the turn of the twentieth century, when an increasing number of the suburb's most prosperous white, native-born residents began building homes in an area known as the North Side.¹³ In the opening decades of the twentieth century, proximity to factories in large part determined the desirability of neighborhoods in industrial suburbs like East Chicago. For middle-class residents who shunned areas deemed either too close or too far from industry, the North Side presented an ideal residential choice. Located roughly five blocks west of Railroad Avenue, the neighborhood stood far enough from industry to escape the worst of the noise and pollution, but remained within walking distance of factories and the business district developing around the streetcar terminus at the intersection of Chicago and Forsyth Avenues.¹⁴ Unlike comfortably middle-class families in large cities such as Boston and Chicago—who by the late nineteenth century had fled to new residential suburbs built along railroad and streetcar lines—many North Side households continued to live near their place of work until the automobile's popularization in the 1920s.¹⁵

¹¹Thomas H. Cannon, H. H. Loring, and Charles J. Robb, eds., *History of the Lake and Calumet Region of Indiana, Embracing the Counties of Lake, Porter and La Porte: An Historical Account of Its People and Its Progress from the Earliest Times to the Present* (Indianapolis, Ind., 1927), 1:709; Howat, *A Standard History of Lake County, Indiana and the Calumet Region*, 1:178-79, 271; *Pictorial and Biographical Record of La Porte, Porter, Lake and Starke Counties, Indiana* (Chicago, 1894), 224-25; and Graver Tank & Manufacturing, Inc., *A Century of Craftsmanship in Steel and Alloys, 1857-1957* (n.p., 1957).

¹²Hammond Historical Society, *The First City Directory for the Following Cities: Hammond, Indiana; East Chicago, Indiana; Hegewisch, Illinois; Burnham, Illinois; West Hammond, Illinois* (1889; Hammond, Ind., 1976), 139, 145, 147, 150.

¹³*Lake County Times*, February 5, 1924.

¹⁴*Lake County Times*, February 17, 1914.

¹⁵Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York, 1985); Ann Durkin Keating, *Building Chicago: Suburban Developers and the Creation of a Divided Metropolis* (Urbana, Ill., 2002); and Sam Bass Warner Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1978).



North Side neighborhood, East Chicago, Indiana, 1919. At the turn of the twentieth century, an increasing number of East Chicago's most prosperous white, native-born residents began building homes in the North Side. Home building flourished on North Magoun Avenue (pictured here), the town's first paved residential street.

Courtesy, Lake County Times.

In East Chicago—as elsewhere in the country at the turn of the twentieth century—the middle-class elite largely consisted of white, native-born Protestants. In 1910, nearly 75 percent of the sixty-one heads of households living on the North Side's fashionable North Magoun Avenue were native-born; the remainder, who came mainly from England or Wales, shared the same ethnic background as many of their

native-born neighbors.¹⁶ Nearly all worked in business, the professions, or as members of the so-called “labor aristocracy”—men who held supervisory and skilled factory positions. The skilled craftsmen employed in East Chicago’s iron and steel mills included bushelers, who converted iron scrap into wrought iron, and puddlers, who performed similar work, but manipulated unrefined pig iron instead of iron scrap. Bushelers and puddlers transferred balls of wrought iron to rollers, who supervised the process of further refining and rolling the wrought iron into uniform bars. Heaters—the men who reheated the bars of wrought iron during the rolling process—were among the best remunerated in the mill.¹⁷ In some instances, the highest-paid skilled workers earned more than their solidly middle-class counterparts. In 1917, for example, rollers working for the United States Steel Corporation in nearby Gary, Indiana, earned between \$340 and \$500 per month, while local school teachers reportedly made as little as \$72 a month.¹⁸

The relative prosperity of East Chicago’s skilled workers allowed them to live in middle-class neighborhoods tucked away from factories and the crowded quarters of foreign-born unskilled workers, a pattern found in industrial communities throughout the United States.¹⁹ The geographer James Vance referred to the process in which residents with similar economic and social characteristics voluntarily clustered together in neighborhoods as “congregation,” a process he contrasted with that of segregation.²⁰ Segregation forced some residents, usually African Americans and Mexicans, but sometimes poor southern and eastern European immigrants, to cluster together in neighborhoods apart from those inhabited by the white, native-born elite. In keeping with national trends,

¹⁶*The Amalgamated Journal*, August 20, 1914; and U.S., Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census, 1910, Population Schedule for Lake County, Indiana (Washington, D.C., 1910).

¹⁷David Brody, *Steelworkers in America: The Nonunion Era* (1960; Urbana, Ill., 1998), 7-12, 30-31; Frances G. Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh: Class and Culture in an Industrializing City, 1877-1919* (Albany, N.Y., 1984), 19-20; John A. Fitch, *The Steel Workers* (1910; Pittsburgh, Pa., 1989), 32-37, 45-56; David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925* (Cambridge, Mass., 1987), 14-22; Peter Temin, *Iron and Steel in Nineteenth-Century America: An Economic Inquiry* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964); and George H. Manlove and Charles Vickers, *Scrap Metals* (Cleveland, Ohio, 1918), 77.

¹⁸*Lake County Times*, August 11, 1917.

¹⁹See Fitch, *The Steel Workers*, 152; and Henry M. KcKiven Jr., *Iron and Steel: Class, Race, and Community in Birmingham, Alabama, 1875-1920* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1995), 136-37.

²⁰James E. Vance Jr., *The Continuing City: Urban Morphology in Western Civilization* (Baltimore, Md., 1990), 36-37.

the East Chicago home-building and real estate industry catered to the profitable middle-class segment of the housing market, encouraging the development of neighborhoods segregated by income, ethnicity, and race.

In the opening decade of the twentieth century, local building contractors and real estate firms rushed to build on the North Side, where the Standard Steel and Iron Company had earlier platted uniform-sized lots and built a few houses in the hopes of encouraging further development.²¹ In 1910, East Chicago's major newspaper, the *Lake County Times*, reported that "the streets on the north side are fast becoming the most popular residence section of East Chicago."²² Home building flourished on North Magoun Avenue, the town's first paved residential street.²³ The paper credited the Smith-Miller Company—headed by East Chicago real estate agent Clarence C. Smith and his brother-in-law, contractor Bruce Miller—with developing North Magoun and other North Side streets "along high class residential lines."²⁴ To appeal to middle-class home buyers, Smith-Miller erected popular modern house types, such as the four-square and bungalow, which ranged in cost from \$2,500 to \$4,000.²⁵ In 1910, school principal Thomas Williams purchased a \$4,000 four-square frame house on North Magoun Avenue between 143rd and 144th Streets, only a few blocks from the elementary school where he worked.²⁶ Its simple, two-story, rectilinear design and prominent hipped roof and street-facing dormer window replicated other four-squares being built here and elsewhere across the country at the time.²⁷ Inside, public and private spaces remained strictly separated, with a large reception hall, parlor, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor and four bedrooms on the second. The four-square house could thus accommodate formal entertaining, albeit in a simpler setting than in the typical late nineteenth-century middle-class house.

At the same time that home builders across the country were constructing the four-square house type, the bungalow became increasingly

²¹*East Chicago Globe*, September 19, 1902.

²²*Lake County Times*, August 12, 1910.

²³*Lake County Times*, February 5, 1924.

²⁴*Lake County Times*, June 28, 1918.

²⁵*Lake County Times*, February 8, 1910, January 29, 1912.

²⁶*Lake County Times*, August 12, 1910.

²⁷Alan Gowans, *The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture, 1890-1930* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 84-87.

popular among American middle-class families seeking a more informal domestic environment.²⁸ In contrast to the grand Victorian homes maligned by critics for their eclectic design and maze of specialized rooms, the ideal one or one-and-a-half-story bungalows promoted in the pages of the *Ladies Home Journal* and other popular periodicals of the day promised simple, compact, and efficiently laid out spaces. A generous front porch and somewhat open floor plan often offset their relatively small size and created a sense of spaciousness by minimizing the separation between the dining and living rooms. In 1910, the Smith-Miller Company constructed East Chicago's "first real bungalow" for Adam J. Hermandsorfer, an engineer at the Hubbard Foundry Company. Located on North Magoun Avenue, the one-story bungalow contained only a kitchen, dining room, living room, and three bedrooms, but was still found to be "quite roomy on investigation."²⁹ The following year, Smith-Miller erected a substantial one-and-a-half-story brick bungalow on North Magoun for city attorney Abe Ottenheimer, who appeared standing on the front porch of his new home in a boosterish publication celebrating East Chicago's prosperous and up-to-date character.³⁰ The North Side's modern houses, neatly manicured lawns, and treelined sidewalks soon attracted other prominent East Chicago residents, including Dr. Alexander G. Schlieker, who in 1914 purchased a bungalow on North Baring Avenue, one block west of North Magoun.³¹ Schlieker and his wife exemplified Progressive-minded middle-class families of the time: he served as a longtime member of East Chicago's Board of Health while she distinguished herself through her work with the East Chicago Woman's Club's disease-prevention outreach efforts.³² As proponents of public health-related infrastructure improvements, they would have demanded a house with such modern sanitary amenities as flush toilets. Yet the cost of these new household technologies placed even the most modest North Side bungalow beyond the reach of most of East Chicago's unskilled immigrant workers. These laborers, who earned no more than eighteen cents an hour in 1913, would have struggled to

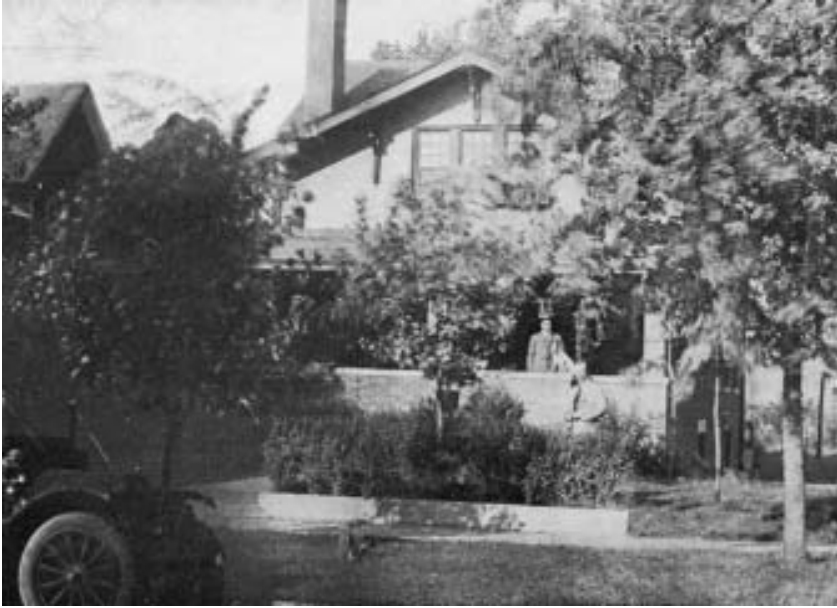
²⁸For a discussion of bungalows in the Calumet Region, see Joseph C. Bigott, *From Cottage to Bungalow: Houses and the Working Class in Metropolitan Chicago, 1869-1929* (Chicago, 2001).

²⁹*Lake County Times*, August 12, 1910.

³⁰East Chicago- Indiana Harbor Twin Cities of Indiana: Political . . . Historical . . . Industrial Sketch (East Chicago, Ind., 1913); and *Lake County Times*, May 12, September 12, 1911.

³¹*Lake County Times*, August 12, 1914.

³²*Lake County Times*, August 9, 1913, September 23, 1914, December 20, 1915, November 29, 1918.



City attorney Abe Ottenheimer on the porch of his North Magoun Avenue bungalow, East Chicago, Indiana, 1911. The bungalow represented one of several housing options for Americans ready to move away from Victorian architecture and design. The Smith-Miller Company constructed East Chicago's first bungalow in 1910.

Courtesy, East Chicago Public Library History Room.

afford even the cheap, four-room frame workers' cottages being sold at prices between \$1,200 and \$1,500 in the suburb's poorer working-class neighborhoods.³³

In North American industrial suburbs such as East Chicago, the middle class included households with a range of incomes; their neighborhoods consequently contained modest, as well as larger, more impressive homes.³⁴ On the North Side, substantial four-square dwellings and bungalows stood alongside the type of simple one-and-a-half-story workers' cottages found throughout the Midwest. These smaller structures typically contained a kitchen, parlor, and perhaps one or two small bedrooms on the first floor

³³*Lake County Times*, January 30, February 5, 1913.

³⁴*The Amalgamated Journal*, December 12, 1912.

and upstairs. Serviceable and cheap, the worker's cottage also appealed to relatively well-paid workers such as railroad conductor LeRoy James, who lived with his wife and daughter on North Magoun Avenue.³⁵ According to labor historian Ileen A. DeVault, the high pay and public visibility of the typical railroad conductor "reinforced his desire to present a 'respectable' image, while his economic status gave him the wherewithal to do so."³⁶

Despite some design similarities, significant differences distinguished the North Side worker's cottage owned by James and those located in East Chicago's working-class immigrant communities. Unlike foreign-born immigrants, native-born and northern European families typically lived without roomers or boarders, although exceptions existed. Households with more modest or irregular incomes—including those headed by widows or skilled factory workers who suffered regular bouts of unemployment—sometimes took on roomers or boarders. In 1910, for example, Mrs. Laura Cox, a recent widow, shared her North Magoun Avenue home with four female lodgers, all of them teachers like herself.³⁷ Overall, however, the number of North Side households living with nonfamily members was small compared to the frequency of the practice among immigrant families, who often occupied only part of their dwelling in order to leave space for roomers or boarders. In 1909, for instance, Pietro Guagliard and his wife Marie rented a "humble cottage" on Tod Avenue and 148th Street near the Republic Iron and Steel Company's factory, where Pietro worked with nine of his compatriots from Italy. All of the men boarded with Pietro, leaving his wife to struggle with housework while caring for their infant daughter.³⁸ LeRoy James and his family, on the other hand, lived without roomers or boarders in an exclusively residential neighborhood that featured paved streets, cement sidewalks, and other infrastructure improvements, sharply contrasting with East Chicago's working-class districts, where boardinghouses, saloons, and stores stood on unpaved streets across from mill gates.³⁹

³⁵Moore's *Standard Directory of East Chicago* (New York, 1908), 29b; and *The Lake County Directory of Lake County, Indiana* (Gary, Ind., 1909), 372.

³⁶Ileen A. DeVault, *Sons and Daughters of Labor: Class and Clerical Works in Turn-of-the-Century Pittsburgh* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1990), 93-94.

³⁷*Lake County Times*, June 14, 1910; and U.S., Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census, 1910, Population Schedule for Lake County, Indiana (Washington, D.C., 1910).

³⁸*Lake County Times*, March 13, 1909.

³⁹*Lake County Times*, January 17, June 2, 1910, December 22, 1913.

In spite of their occupational differences, the North Side's skilled blue-collar residents often formed close relationships with their white-collar neighbors, together constituting a broad middle class. Alfred Berquist—a roller at the Interstate Iron and Steel mill whose North Magoun Avenue home the *Lake County Times* praised as “one of the handsomest in East Chicago”—formed such a link.⁴⁰ In 1909, the Berquist family added a canted corner tower to their rectilinear, two-story residence, creating space for a first-floor library, which they, like other middle-class American families, used not just for displaying their collection of books and reading, but also for formal entertaining.⁴¹ When the Berquists threw a party to celebrate their newly enlarged home—grandly christened “La Anthony”—their guests included supervisory and skilled factory workers, such as Charles Johns, a former superintendent at the Interstate Iron and Steel mill, and Richard G. Howell, a heater at the Interstate Iron and Steel mill, as well as East Chicago school superintendent Edward N. Canine, high school principal Howard H. Clark, and city attorney Abe Ottenheimer, all of whom resided on the North Side.⁴² The social interaction between the Berquists and their white-collar neighbors was not an isolated event. The month after the housewarming, Mrs. Berquist attended a party organized by Mrs. Ottenheimer “for her immediate neighbors in the block in which she live[d].”⁴³ In 1912, the Berquist, Clark, and Ottenheimer families hosted a lawn social in their backyards, assisted by Mrs. Anna Johns, the wife of the former superintendent of the Interstate Iron and Steel mill, and Mrs. Mary Poor, the wife of Samuel H. Poor, a “highly respected” railroad engineer.⁴⁴ Two years later, Mr. and Mrs. Edward N. Canine and Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Poor gathered at the Berquist home for Christmas dinner.⁴⁵ Tellingly, Alfred Berquist's middle-class pretensions did not escape the notice of other millmen. In a report to the *Amalgamated Journal*, a fellow union worker

⁴⁰*Lake County Times*, June 14, 22, 1909.

⁴¹*Lake County Times*, November 21, 1910; and Margaret Marsh, “From Separation to Togetherness: The Social Construction of Domestic Space in American Suburbs, 1840-1915,” *Journal of American History* 76 (September 1989), 506-27.

⁴²*Lake County Times*, June 22, 1909.

⁴³*Lake County Times*, July 1, 1909.

⁴⁴*Lake County Times*, July 17, 1912, May 6, 1920.

⁴⁵*Lake County Times*, December 28, 1914.

quipped that “Bro. Berquist has fixed up his lawn so that he thinks he is as well off as if he went to a summer resort.”⁴⁶

In East Chicago, factory supervisors and skilled workers not only lived in the same neighborhoods as white-collar businessmen and professionals, they also worshiped with them. A number attended the First Congregational Church, one of East Chicago’s most fashionable congregations.⁴⁷ Leading church members included East Chicago school superintendent Canine, real estate dealer Clarence C. Smith, and railroad engineer Poor, as well as skilled steel workers, such as Berquist, William Jeppeson, and Richard G. Howell, who was lauded as “an indefatigable and most loyal worker in the Congregational Church.”⁴⁸ At Howell’s invitation, the church’s pastor spoke at a union meeting, prompting one member to deem the minister “in sense, word and deed a union man.”⁴⁹ The Congregational Church’s Men’s Club also invited the presidents of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Tin, and Steel Workers and the Woman’s Trade Union League to speak to parishioners—further evidence of the influential role that skilled iron and steel union members played in church life.⁵⁰ Other North Side residents attended the nearby Methodist Church situated south of Chicago Avenue on Baring Street. Here, white-collar professionals such as high school principal Howard H. Clark and city treasurer Ansel G. Slocomb worshiped alongside skilled industrial workers like William H. Olds, puddle boss at the Interstate Iron and Steel Company, and John A. Jones, a puddler employed at the Republic Iron and Steel Company.⁵¹ The Congregational and Methodist churches maintained a close cooperative relationship and, at times, even held services together.⁵² Their members’ shared Protestant

⁴⁶*The Amalgamated Journal*, June 13, 1912. For a similar pattern among skilled blue-collar workers and their white-collar neighbors in Detroit, see Richard J. Oestreicher, “Industrialization, Class, and Competing Cultural Systems: Detroit Workers, 1875-1900,” in *German Workers in Industrial Chicago, 1850-1910: A Comparative Perspective*, ed. Hartmut Keil and John B. Jentz (DeKalb, Ill., 1983), 61.

⁴⁷Howat, *A Standard History of Lake County, Indiana and the Calumet Region*, 1:432.

⁴⁸*Lake County Times*, September 30, November 27, 1909, January 12, 1912, May 18, 1914, January 28, 1921.

⁴⁹*The Amalgamated Journal*, April 25, 1907.

⁵⁰*The Amalgamated Journal*, August 19, 1915; and *Lake County Times*, May 7, 1912.

⁵¹*The Amalgamated Journal*, December 10, 1908; and *Lake County Times*, July 11, November 12, 15, 1912, April 8, 1913, February 18, 1914; Howat, *A Standard History of Lake County, Indiana and the Calumet Region*, 1:430-31.

⁵²*Lake County Times*, November 22, 1910, August 17, 1918.



First Congregational Church, North Magoun Avenue, East Chicago, Indiana. Located in East Chicago's North Side neighborhood and home to one of the city's most fashionable congregations, this church provided a space for skilled iron and steel union members to worship alongside white-collar businessmen and professionals.

Courtesy, East Chicago Public Library History Room.

faith helped further to differentiate them from the predominantly Catholic unskilled immigrant workers.⁵³

Beyond their Protestant faith, East Chicago's North Side elite also distinguished themselves through their active involvement in social clubs—a hallmark of middle-class life at the turn of the twentieth century. Like their counterparts elsewhere in the country, East Chicago's white, elite, native-born women organized various social clubs, including church-sponsored ladies' aid societies as well as literary and music clubs.⁵⁴ Historian Karen J. Blair notes that these types of clubs typically attracted

⁵³*Lake County Times*, November 13, 1914. East Chicago's native-born middle-class elites appear to have accepted English-speaking Catholics, among whom included prominent native-born German and Irish residents. English-speaking Catholics worshipped at St. Mary's Church on the North Side rather than in the ethnic parishes located in East Chicago's working-class neighborhoods.

⁵⁴*Lake County Times*, November 7, 1910, May 1, 1912.

“women who shared a common background of some sort.”⁵⁵ The East Chicago Woman’s Club and the Indiana Harbor Woman’s Club restricted membership to white, native-born women, in keeping with the policies of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs with which they were affiliated.⁵⁶ The most active members of the first group included Mrs. Nannie Canine, the wife of the school superintendent; Mrs. Leona Clark, the principal’s wife; Mrs. Hazel K. Groves, the wife of the superintendent of the Republic Iron and Steel Company; Mrs. Mary Howell, whose husband worked as a heater at the Interstate Iron and Steel mill; and Mrs. Anna Johns, the wife of the Interstate Iron’s former superintendent.⁵⁷ The wives of factory supervisors and skilled workers proved as integral to club life as those of white-collar businessmen and professionals. In 1916, when Mrs. Margaret Jones relocated to Knoxville, Tennessee, with her husband Edward—Interstate Iron’s assistant manager—the local newspaper lamented that “no less than Mr. Jones’ departure from the business interests will Mrs. Jones’ departure from the social and club affairs of the city be felt.”⁵⁸ Mrs. Jones and other club members centered their attention on children, family, and home life—issues that concerned middle-class women across the country.⁵⁹ Participating in club life thus fostered a sense of shared values and reinforced the ties that bound together East Chicago’s broad middle class.

Rates of college attendance also helped give shape to the North Side’s middle-class character. In the early decades of the twentieth century, the heavy flow of southern and eastern European immigrants into the United States heightened anxiety over competition in the labor market, making a college education increasingly important to young white native-born men seeking to maintain or establish their middle-class status.⁶⁰ Perhaps not surprisingly, given their own educational attainment, the professional heads of households who lived on North Magoun Avenue sent their sons

⁵⁵Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York, 1980), 63.

⁵⁶Anne Ruggles Gere, *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women’s Clubs, 1880-1920* (Urbana, Ill., 1997), 5-6.

⁵⁷*Lake County Times*, May 1, December 19, 1912, April 7, 1913, May 5, October 5, 6, 1914, May 8, September 28, 1917, February 4, October 13, November 12, 1919, September 25, 1926.

⁵⁸*Lake County Times*, May 13, 1916.

⁵⁹*Lake County Times*, May 1, 1912.

⁶⁰Daniel A. Clark, *Creating the College Man: American Mass Magazines and Middle-Class Manhood, 1890-1915* (Madison, Wis., 2010), 5, 24.

and, occasionally, their daughters to college. In 1912, Edward Canine's son Ralph enrolled at Northwestern University.⁶¹ His daughter Margaret, who later became a teacher, attended Indiana University, as did Howard Clark Jr., and Lester Ottenheimer, the son of city attorney Abe Ottenheimer.⁶² By the early 1900s, the children of some factory supervisors and skilled blue-collar workers also began attending college rather than following their father's footsteps into the mills. This shift occurred during a time of dramatic change in the iron and steel industry. The transformation from a craft-based to an increasingly mechanized system of labor reduced the demand for skilled workers and eroded their status within the mill. This change no doubt increased the appeal of white-collar work to young men such as Charles, David, and Llywolaif Johns—the sons of former steel mill supervisor Charles Johns—who all graduated from medical school.⁶³

Aside from enhancing social standing, white-collar employment also allowed young men from blue-collar backgrounds to avoid the dangerous conditions and physical exhaustion that accompanied mill work. Writing to his fellow union members in the pages of the *Amalgamated Journal*, busheler James McCoy observed:

I think that when this generation has gone, busheling on sand bottom will pass with it. There are many reasons I say this. Chief of which is the physical inability to keep at it, as we have to do everlastingly, while the clock goes round 8 times on fingers thereof. Who knows but the man himself, and his Maker, how and what he suffers while and immediately after he has made the ball. So great are the varieties and difficulties of stock worked on sand bottom and the breathless and breakneck speed we go at it would make our fathers regard us at idiots. Look at the men who follow it. Men who are old at 40 . . . No wonder men no longer want to follow the trade; no wonder fathers will not allow their sons to learn it.⁶⁴

⁶¹*Lake County Times*, September 26, 1912, February 7, 1913, June 17, 1916.

⁶²*Lake County Times*, September 7, 1912, February 7, 1913, June 12, 1914, June 5, 20, 1916, November 24, 1919.

⁶³*Lake County Times*, May 16, 1910.

⁶⁴*The Amalgamated Journal*, September 10, 1908.

McCoy's own son Alphonsus graduated from St. Joseph's College in southern Indiana, where he studied the "classical and liberal arts."⁶⁵ A college education, however, was not the only path to the white-collar world.⁶⁶ Young men with a high school education also secured positions as clerks in offices and stores.⁶⁷ Charles Jeppeson, for instance, the son of North Side roll turner William Jeppeson, began his career as a clerk in the East Chicago treasurer's office after graduating from high school and obtaining a "trustworthy" position in an East Chicago bank.⁶⁸

While their youth afforded the sons of skilled iron and steel workers more opportunities to avoid dangerous and unstable forms of employment, their fathers sometimes left the mills to pursue other lines of work as well. In industrial suburbs like East Chicago, local government work provided one of the few means of escaping the factory. Congratulating his union brother David J. Evans "on his good fortune in securing a position in government service" in 1907, Richard G. Howell joked that "this is what we all need. Eh, Hugo?"⁶⁹ Indeed, a steady stream of skilled industrial workers left the mills to work for the city during the opening decades of the new century. In 1908, Peter Sterling, a longtime member and former president of the local steel union, quit his job as a busheler at the Republic Iron and Steel mill upon being appointed assistant street commissioner. A few years later, Arthur Newton, a former heater at the Interstate Iron and Steel Company's mill, joined the East Chicago Fire Department.⁷⁰ In 1914 alone, Peter Bauhm, Edward Knight, and John Morner all took jobs on the police force; Dave Berry was appointed assistant chief of the fire department; and Mike Kernan—"an old time puddler"—was designated street commissioner.⁷¹ A similar employment pattern prevailed in other American industrial communities. Nearby in Chicago's Packingtown, as historian Thomas J. Jablonsky notes, the first- and second-generation Irish immigrants who held positions as foremen, managers, and supervisors in

⁶⁵*The Amalgamated Journal*, January 10, 1918; *Lake County Times*, September 19, 1918, June 15, 1921.

⁶⁶DeVault, *Sons and Daughters of Labor*, 17.

⁶⁷*The Amalgamated Journal*, March 27, 1919; and *Lake County Times*, June 15, 1921.

⁶⁸*Lake County Times*, September 28, 1915.

⁶⁹*The Amalgamated Journal*, December 26, 1907.

⁷⁰*The Amalgamated Journal*, March 29, 1900, May 31, 1906, April 30, 1908, August 1, 1912.

⁷¹*The Amalgamated Journal*, January 29, 1914; *Lake County Times*, January 6, 8, 1914.

the Union Stock Yards also “moved up the occupational ladder . . . into jobs with the municipal police, fire, and education departments,” in the process strengthening their ties to the middle class.⁷²

Like their white-collar neighbors, some ambitious North Side mill workers pursued political office in an effort to extend their influence beyond the factory and union hall. In 1909, William H. Olds, a puddle boss at the Interstate Iron and Steel Company, successfully ran for alderman of East Chicago’s First Ward, an “American” area that included the North Side.⁷³ Born and raised in Brazil, a small farming community in central Indiana, Olds enjoyed a broad base of support among his North Side neighbors.⁷⁴ Winning a race for alderman was, of course, far easier than being elected mayor. In most cases, only native-born businessmen and professionals won mayoral contests, a fact that disgruntled the immigrant electorate. In 1917, Teofil H. Grabowski, the Polish-born chairman of the Citizens’ League of East Chicago, complained that “we who are foreign born pay 75 per cent of the taxes and constitute 85 per cent of the population and yet the government here and at Crown Point is handled Tammany-like by a few ringleading politicians and we are shut out.”⁷⁵ Perhaps in response to Grabowski’s complaint, the Citizens’ League allegedly attempted to organize an “exclusive foreign ticket” for the 1917 municipal election. Some native-born residents, angered by what seemed to be pointedly anti-American behavior, called for repealing the country’s naturalization laws and supported efforts to require immigrants to live in the country twenty-one years before being allowed to vote.⁷⁶

The clash between native-born and foreign-born whites transcended the divide between skilled native-born craftsmen and poor, unskilled immigrant workers. The experience of Judge William A. Fuzy illustrates that even American-born children of well-to-do eastern European immigrants faced hostility when they challenged the authority of native-born residents of northern European descent. The son of a prosperous Hun-

⁷²Thomas J. Jablonsky, *Pride in the Jungle: Community and Everyday Life in Back of the Yards Chicago* (Baltimore, Md., 1992), 29.

⁷³*The Amalgamated Journal*, October 25, 1906, December 10, 1908; and *Lake County Times*, August 30, 1909, January 26, 1917.

⁷⁴*The Amalgamated Journal*, August 5, 11, 1910.

⁷⁵*Lake County Times*, January 24, 1917.

⁷⁶*Lake County Times*, January 25, 1917.

garian immigrant businessman, Fuzy rose to political prominence in East Chicago's immigrant community in the early 1900s.⁷⁷ After graduating from public high school in Chicago, he relocated with his family to East Chicago, where he began his professional career as deputy postmaster, working during the day and attending law school at night. While at the post office, he opened a foreign exchange business that provided an array of commercial and financial services to the immigrant community.⁷⁸ Hoping to capitalize on his popularity among fellow Hungarians, he ran for mayor on the Independent Republican ticket in 1909. Although he lost, 171 of his followers "cast their votes for him alone," signaling his electoral viability.⁷⁹ Four years later, he was elected city judge and moved with his wife to Beacon Street, an "exclusive street" near the North Side.⁸⁰ In 1917, a short time after Judge Fuzy had rented his furnished home to the family of F. G. D. Smith, a metallurgist who worked for the U. S. Metals Refining Company, he grew worried that they would damage his house; he soon asked them to leave. When Fuzy arrived on the day of the move to request the return of the house key, Mrs. Smith responded angrily, calling him "a big simp." Outraged, Fuzy demanded her arrest. In its coverage of Mrs. Smith's subsequent trial, the *Lake County Times* reported that "East Chicago's elite circles have been stirred to their depths," noting that "bankers, real estate men, attorneys, business men, city officials and appointees, officers and members of the Red Cross, many club women and social workers" filled the courtroom, "nearly all in sympathy with the defendant." To show their support, several businessmen "stood ready to pay the fine" when Mr. Smith was threatened with contempt of court and "a dozen business and professional men" offered to secure a bond for him following his arrest for attempting to punch Fuzy during the court proceedings.⁸¹ No matter their wealth or professional accomplishments, eastern European immigrants and their American-born children remained on the margins of respectable middle-class society in the early decades of the twentieth century.

⁷⁷*Lake County Times*, March 3, 1910, November 7, 1913, April 23, 1914, January 24, 1917.

⁷⁸*Lake County Times*, April 24, 1915, January 25, March 5, 1917.

⁷⁹*Lake County Times*, November 3, 1909.

⁸⁰*Lake County Times*, November 5, 1913, February 19, 1914, August 2, 1917, July 2, 1919.

⁸¹*Lake County Times*, January 4, 1918.

⁸²*Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 20, 1917; *Lake County Times*, May 24, 1916.

During World War I, social tensions in East Chicago continued to mount, as recruited Mexican and southern black migrants arrived to fill the positions vacated by men leaving to fight in Europe.⁸² As race riots raged in the streets of East St. Louis, the *Lake County Times* reported more race-related trouble in East Chicago than “in any otherplace [sic]” in northern Indiana.⁸³ Newly arrived African American workers encountered strong resistance from southern and eastern European immigrants seeking to prevent them from settling in the neighborhoods where they lived. White native-born elites felt threatened by the presence of both black migrants—whom they resented and feared as strikebreakers and degenerates—and foreign-born immigrants, whom they suspected of being political radicals. These feelings created ideal conditions for the newly revived Ku Klux Klan, strongest in the state’s industrialized middle and northern counties, and its message of “100% Americanism.”⁸⁴ According to historian Leonard J. Moore, 20 percent of native-born men in the Lake County industrial communities of East Chicago, Gary, and Hammond held Klan membership in 1925. Northern Indiana Klansmen came more frequently from “low-level white-collar and skilled occupations than those in the population at large,” a pattern that other historians have similarly noted in Ohio’s heavily industrialized Mahoning Valley and the industrial port city of Oakland, California.⁸⁵ In spite of its anti-union stance, the Klan found a ready audience among white native-born skilled workers who saw themselves being replaced by machinery operated by lower paid and less skilled foreign-born and southern black workers.

Announcements of women’s Klan meetings began appearing regularly in the social column of the *Lake County Times* in 1917. The small organization likely functioned as an informal women’s auxiliary, with meetings hosted by the daughters of respected skilled iron and steel workers who were presumably themselves Klan members.⁸⁶ Three cousins became the

⁸³*Lake County Times*, July 20, 1917.

⁸⁴*Lake County Times*, July 23, 1921; Harper Barnes, *Never Been a Time: The 1917 Race Riot That Sparked the Civil Rights Movement* (New York, 2008), 59.

⁸⁵William D. Jenkins, *Steel Valley Klan: The Ku Klux Klan in Ohio’s Mahoning Valley* (Kent, Ohio, 1990), 82-85; Leonard J. Moore, *Citizen Klansmen: The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, 1921-1928* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1997), 53, 57-58, 60-63; and Chris Rhomberg, “White Nativism and Urban Politics: The 1920s Ku Klux Klan in Oakland, California,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 17 (Winter 1998), 40.

⁸⁶*Lake County Times*, May 24, September 20, October 1, November 23, 1917; and Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley, Calif., 1991), 25, 27.

most prominent members of the women's Klan auxiliary: Gwendolyn Williams, the daughter of Frank Williams, a "staunch union man" who worked at the Republic Iron and Steel mill; Iddresse Williams, the daughter of Thomas D. Williams, a roller at the Republic Iron and Steel mill; and Vivian Williams, the daughter of Llewellyn Williams, a roller at the Interstate Iron and Steel mill.⁸⁷ Other female Klan members included Clara Petersen, who later married Vivian's brother David, and Clara's neighbor Beatrice Jamieson. Both women had fathers who worked in the mills.⁸⁸ Austin Perkins, one of the few other East Chicago residents publicly associated with the Klan, was also a skilled steel worker. In 1923, the East Chicago Board of Public Safety expelled Perkins for his alleged Klan affiliation.⁸⁹

In the Calumet Region and elsewhere, the Methodist Episcopal Church boasted the highest Klan membership of any Protestant denomination in the 1920s. Methodist ministers sympathetic to the Klan encouraged their members to participate in the organization and often offered their churches as Klan meeting places.⁹⁰ The relationship between the KKK and the East Chicago Methodist Church may have begun as early as 1917, when Vivian Williams married in the church sanctuary. The *Lake County Times* reported that the "Ku Klux Klan of which she was a member, accompanied her with rice and many best wishes for her future happiness" while the Ladies' Social Union of the Methodist Church served the wedding meal to the guests, among them Mr. and Mrs. Edward N. Canine, the groom's aunt and uncle.⁹¹ During the flurry of Klan activity in 1923, the East Chicago Methodist Church hosted at least three recruitment meetings. According to one source, "Hundreds of persons gathered at the East Chicago Methodist Episcopal church last night to hear a speaker on what Klanism means and its ideals. Following the meeting, men and women are reported to have passed membership to the Invisible Order." Although purported "to have always been small," Klan membership in East Chicago continued to increase in popularity during the first half of the 1920s, particularly among

⁸⁷*The Amalgamated Journal*, August 22, 1907, April 21, 1910, February 23, 1914; and *Lake County Times*, September 23, 1914, April 12, 1916, September 10, 1917, April 10, 1918, August 1, 1921, November 27, 1923, November 27, 1927.

⁸⁸*Lake County Times*, April 11, 1917, June 18, July 2, 1921.

⁸⁹*Lake County Times*, June 14, 1921.

⁹⁰Jenkins, *Steel Valley Klan*, 10-11, 92; and M. William Lutholtz, *Grand Dragon: D. C. Stephenson and the Ku Klux Klan in Indiana* (West Lafayette, Ind., 1991), 37, 59, 71.

⁹¹*Lake County Times*, September 17, 1916, September 10, December 3, 1917.

the white native-born skilled manufacturing workers concentrated on the city's North Side.⁹²

The Klan's presence suggests that the North Side's ethnic and racial homogeneity reflected more than decisions based solely on economic considerations or personal choice. The potential threat of intimidation and violence alone may have discouraged eastern and southern European immigrants and southern black migrants from settling in the area. In addition, real estate firms operating throughout the Calumet Region adopted the national trend of developing restricted subdivisions—which dictated land use and the minimum cost of homes—to ensure that neighborhoods remained economically and socially homogenous. Overtly discriminatory real estate practices appeared in East Chicago at the time of the national 1919 steel strike, an event that exacerbated relations between skilled native-born iron and steel workers and foreign-born unskilled workers. In an expression of the same nativist sentiments that helped to fuel the steel strike, J. D. Millar & Company marketed residential lots in the North Side block bounded by 141st Street on the north, 142nd Street and Homer Lee Avenue on the east, and Wegg Avenue on the west exclusively to white native-born American home buyers. The company's 1919 newspaper advertisement highlighted the subdivision's segregated character as a selling point:

Millar's Addition to East Chicago is in the best part of the select All American section of the city. The famous northwest section. The property is surrounded by pretty homes, lawns and gardens. We sell lots in this tract to Americans only. This will keep the property like the neighborhood always clean and high class. Prices will constantly increase.⁹³

The promise to sell lots to "Americans only" no doubt appealed to those residents whose fears of being "invaded by somebody or something that would seriously depreciate the property and practically spoil the place for a home or for an investment" found a voice in the East Chicago Chamber of Commerce.⁹⁴ Such deed restrictions helped solidify neighborhood

⁹²*Lake County Times*, November 23, 1917.

⁹³*Lake County Times*, October 18, 1919.

⁹⁴*Lake County Times*, January 29, 1916.

boundaries, effectively restricting most of the poor foreign-born population in the city proper to the area south of 148th Street.

A similar pattern of residential segregation developed in Indiana Harbor, the lakefront part of East Chicago. Here, however, the location of elite neighborhoods shifted repeatedly as the scale of industry increased and the population of southern and eastern European immigrants and southern black migrants rose. Aided by the automobile, Indiana Harbor's elite residents gradually relocated away from Lake Michigan to newly developed subdivisions to the south and west, leaving the areas near the industrialized lakefront to the poorest residents, who either could not afford or were not welcome in more desirable neighborhoods.

The 1903 opening of Inland Steel Company's mill on the shores of Lake Michigan transformed Indiana Harbor from an isolated swath of low-lying land into a thriving industrial community. In anticipation of the plant's opening, the Calumet Canal and Improvement Company laid out a triangular tract of land near Lake Michigan, reserving lots along the proposed harbor and canal for industry and leaving the remaining land for commercial and residential use.⁹⁵ The intersecting edges of the proposed canal and shoreline formed the original northern boundary of Indiana Harbor, while the southern boundary terminated at 137th Street (now Broadway Street).⁹⁶ Within the settlement's northern and southern boundaries, a canted grid of blocks running parallel to the lakefront abutted a conventionally oriented grid of blocks stretching from Alder Street on the east to Parrish Avenue on the west. The Calumet Canal and Improvement Company tasked the renowned Chicago landscape architect Ossian C. Simonds with shaping the marshy terrain into an orderly community. Trained as a civil engineer, Simonds first gained recognition for his contributions to Chicago's famed Graceland Cemetery. His experience there—excavating marshland, installing drains, and grading roads—made him an ideal candidate to oversee the layout of Indiana Harbor.⁹⁷ More than two hundred hired men dug sewers, paved major streets, and planted five

⁹⁵*Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 30, 1911.

⁹⁶Lake County Plat Book 5, Office of the Lake County Recorder, Crown Point, Indiana. In 1901, East Chicago's common council approved the annexed plat of the Lake Michigan Land Company.

⁹⁷*The Economist*, February 28, April 11, 1891, August 24, 1901; and Julia Sneiderman Bachrach, "Ossian Cole Simonds: Conservation Ethic in the Prairie Style," in *Midwestern Landscape Architecture*, ed. William H. Tishler (Urbana, Ill., 2000), 80-89.

thousand “company trees,” suggesting the real estate syndicates’ concern for the area’s appearance, particularly those parts developed for the most affluent residents.⁹⁸

In their effort to develop Indiana Harbor’s lakefront into an important industrial center, the real estate syndicates invested in more than just basic infrastructure. Under the direction of its agent, Owen F. Aldis, the Lake Michigan Land Company financed the construction of the South Bay Hotel, an imposing structure designed by the noted Chicago architect Jarvis Hunt in partnership with the Chicago architecture firm Holabird & Roche.⁹⁹ The South Bay Hotel anchored Indiana Harbor’s first elite neighborhood, which the company laid out along the shores of Lake Michigan.¹⁰⁰ In 1901, Aldis hired Holabird & Roche once more, this time to produce plans for the stately, single-family homes built along Aldis Avenue.¹⁰¹ Members of Indiana Harbor’s elite—including Inland Steel’s superintendent John Stephens and chief chemist John C. Dickson, as well as skilled British and native-born steel workers such as roller Michael Elmore and heater Samuel Wheale—owned the grand lakefront residences.¹⁰² Despite being built within immediate view of the mill, John Stephens’s grand colonial revival house resembled those that Holabird & Roche designed for prosperous Chicago businessmen and professionals.¹⁰³

Industrial expansion gradually pushed Indiana Harbor’s elite away from the shores of Lake Michigan. As early as 1907, the Chicago, Lake

⁹⁸*Chicago Sunday Tribune*, December 7, 1902.

⁹⁹*The Economist*, August 24, 1901; *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, October 18, 1903.

¹⁰⁰*Lake County Times*, March 1, 1907.

¹⁰¹Cottage “A,” Architectural Drawings, Holabird and Roche/Holabird and Root Collection, 1979.0242, Chicago History Museum, Chicago, Illinois; and Robert Brueggemann, *The Architects and the City: Holabird & Roche of Chicago, 1880-1918* (Chicago, 1997), 107.

¹⁰²*Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 26, 1904; *Hammond Times*, September 17, 1939; and *The Lake County Directory of Lake County, Indiana, Embracing a Complete Alphabetical List of Business Firms and Every Adult of Eighteen Years and Over...* (Gary, Ind., 1909), 424, 426, 461, 467.

¹⁰³*Chicago Sunday Tribune*, December 7, 1902, June 5, 1904; *The Economist*, June 15, August 24, 1901; *Lake County Times*, June 27, 1911; and Robert Brueggemann, *Holabird & Roche, Holabird & Root: An Illustrated Catalog of Works, 1880-1911*, vol. 1 (New York, 1991). The proximity of middle-class homes to factories was not a wholly unfamiliar sight on the industrialized outskirts of American cities. In his study of the textile town of North Charlotte in North Carolina, historian Thomas W. Hanchett noted the development in 1906 of “a small area of houses that looked much like the white-collar streetcar suburbs then springing into existence elsewhere around Charlotte.” Thomas W. Hanchett, *Sorting Out the New South City: Race, Class, and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875-1975* (Charlotte, N.C., 1998), 110-11.



Stephens residence beside Lake Michigan, Indiana Harbor, Indiana. Designed by Chicago architecture firm Holabird & Roche, the home of Inland Steel superintendent John Stephens resembled those that the firm designed for prosperous Chicago businessmen and professionals. The Inland Steel mill appears in the background.

Courtesy, East Chicago Public Library History Room.

Shore & Eastern Railroad Company began buying up lakeshore property for its rail yards, forcing the owners of “fifty or one hundred houses” to relocate.¹⁰⁴ Around that time, a new, more desirable neighborhood developed on Fir and Grapevine Streets, in an area situated roughly one mile southwest of the Inland Steel mill. Residents could easily traverse the distance by automobile, the increasing ubiquity of which caused one Indiana Harbor resident to claim in 1910 that “it is almost as dangerous crossing Michigan avenue here as it is the same named thoroughfare in Chicago.”¹⁰⁵ In addition to doctors and lawyers, skilled industrial workers also owned automobiles. Inland Steel foreman William Fuhrmark—who in

¹⁰⁴*Lake County Times*, March 1, 1907.

¹⁰⁵*Lake County Times*, July 26, 1910.

1917 perfunctorily sent his son to Hammond to purchase a car—prompted the local newspaper to declare that “the automobile has become a staple article such as dry-goods.”¹⁰⁶

Following the pattern established on East Chicago’s North Side, the stretch of Fir and Grapevine Streets between Michigan Avenue and 135th Street attracted prominent native-born and northern European businessmen, professionals, factory supervisors, and skilled workers. Among them was Dr. Frederick Sauer, who in 1907 erected a two-story hipped-roof house on Fir Street near 135th Street. The structure’s large scale, substantial brick construction, and Tudor revival details made it “one of the finest residences in Indiana Harbor.”¹⁰⁷ Across the street stood a two-story, eight-room red brick house embellished with a corner tower, designed for Dr. George Orf by Hammond architect Mac Turner in 1909. Orf’s home was notably the only house in Indiana Harbor with a slate roof—a luxury that no doubt contributed to its relatively high cost, estimated to be around \$6,500.¹⁰⁸ An even more expensive house stood next door, where the Hammond firm of Bump and Berry designed a Tudor-inspired, two-story brick and half-timbered stucco dwelling for Inland Steel superintendent John W. Lees and his new wife, Fortunetta, in 1911. Though one could find costlier residences in the leafy upper-middle-class suburbs north of Chicago, the Lees’ \$10,000 home stood out in a region where in 1910 many unskilled factory workers earned less than \$2.00 for a twelve-hour day.¹⁰⁹

Architect-designed homes were not uncommon in middle-class neighborhoods. Prosperous residents routinely engaged the services of local architects such as Addison C. Berry, a partner in the firm of Bump and Berry, who had worked in the office of the prominent Chicago architect Daniel H. Burnham for seventeen years before moving to Hammond.¹¹⁰ Berry and his colleagues generally adhered to architectural conventions, designing houses in the popular colonial and Tudor revival styles. Aside from their ornamental flourishes, architect-designed dwellings distinguished themselves from speculatively built ones by their substantial appearance. A sturdy, two-story, brick dwelling on Grapevine Street, designed by Bump

¹⁰⁶*Lake County Times*, May 5, 1917.

¹⁰⁷*Lake County Times*, September 14, 1907.

¹⁰⁸*Lake County Times*, September 23, 1909.

¹⁰⁹*Chicago Sunday Tribune*, March 13, 1910; and *Lake County Times*, April 14, 1910, October 19, 1911, September 5, 1912.

¹¹⁰*Hammond Times*, February 13, 1940; and *Lake County Times*, June 3, November 27, 1912.

and Berry for Inland Steel bar mill superintendent William Fox, included space not only for a parlor and dining room, but also for a library. At least two other neighboring homes contained libraries as well.¹¹¹ Such details echoed the advice of *Chicago Sunday Tribune* home decorating columnist Anita de Campi, who encouraged homemakers to “indulge in a library.” De Campi conjured an imaginary conversation between the lady of the house and a visitor to show the social advantages of having a home library: “‘Huh,’ he will say, ‘I see you read Samuel Butler, I’m fond of Chesterton, too. And Conrad—nobody like him. Flaubert? Years since I read him, but great stuff all right. I’m glad you like Anatole France’—and so on.”¹¹² Libraries offered homeowners the opportunity to exhibit their cultural refinement and taste, a desire that socially ambitious families in Indiana Harbor shared with middle-class homeowners who resided in more bucolic surroundings.

The concentration of middle-class residents on Fir and Grapevine Streets drew prominent public and religious institutions whose presence further heightened the neighborhood’s desirability. Foremost among these was a Carnegie public library, the quintessential middle-class cultural institution. Historian Abigail Van Slyck points out that Carnegie libraries were “devoted primarily to middle-class users, meeting middle-class demands for leisure-time activities and requiring all users to adopt middle-class standards for genteel behavior.”¹¹³ As they did elsewhere across the country, Indiana Harbor’s native-born middle-class club women spearheaded efforts to obtain funds from Andrew Carnegie to build a public library.¹¹⁴ Club women shared Carnegie’s belief in the transformative power of libraries, envisioning them as an alternative to what they considered unsavory forms of entertainment such as drinking and gambling. When club women had the opportunity to select the site for a library, they preferred to build in the middle-class residential areas where they lived rather than in working-class neighborhoods where saloons and other such recreational establishments

¹¹¹*Lake County Times*, May 21, 1912, January 31, 1913; Linda M. Kruger, “Home Libraries: Special Spaces, Reading Places,” in *American Home Life, 1880-1930: A Social History of Spaces and Services*, ed. Jessica H. Foy and Thomas J. Schlereth (Knoxville, Tenn., 1997), 94-119.

¹¹²*Chicago Sunday Tribune*, February 20, 1921.

¹¹³Abigail A. Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920* (Chicago, 1995), 66.

¹¹⁴Paul D. Watson, “Founding Mothers: The Contribution of Women’s Organizations to Public Library Development in the United States,” *The Library Quarterly* 64 (July 1994), 233-69.



Carnegie Library, Grapevine Avenue and 136th Street, Indiana Harbor, Indiana. Designed in 1911 by Chicago architect Argyle E. Robinson, the stately red brick building enhanced the street's appearance and helped attract middle-class residents to the area.

Courtesy, Tamsen Anderson.



Fir Street with homes of Dr. George Orf and John W. Lees in right foreground, Indiana Harbor, Indiana. The concentration of middle-class housing on Fir and Grapevine Streets drew prominent native-born and northern European businessmen, professionals, factory supervisors, and skilled workers, especially during the 1910s.

Courtesy, Tamsen Anderson.

flourished. Not surprisingly, then, the Indiana Harbor Carnegie Library's boosters chose the corner of Grapevine Avenue and 136th Street as its home. Designed in 1911 by Chicago architect Argyle E. Robinson, the stately red brick building enhanced the street's appearance and helped attract middle-class residents to the area.¹¹⁵ Nearly ten years later, real estate advertisements continued to highlight the proximity of houses on Grapevine Street to the library.¹¹⁶

The presence of Protestant churches also increased the neighborhood's appeal to Indiana Harbor's middle-class residents. In 1911, the members of the First Methodist Episcopal Church—the first Protestant congregation in Indiana Harbor—laid the cornerstone of their monumental new brick sanctuary across the street from the Carnegie Library.¹¹⁷ Built at an estimated cost of \$15,000, the church featured a square plan with a crenellated bell tower set at an angle to the street, beckoning worshipers into the large sanctuary.¹¹⁸ Originally intended to stand near the lakefront houses of leading members of the congregation such as William Collins, an Inland Steel Company roller, who served as church deacon, and founding church member John Stephens, superintendent of the Inland Steel Company, the shift of elite residential development southwestward led to the decision to build on Grapevine Street, where an increasing number of the congregation migrated.¹¹⁹ Inland Steel's chief chemist John C. Dickson and his wife Viola, a leading local club woman, were among the congregants who moved from the lakefront to the area around Grapevine Street.¹²⁰

As on East Chicago's North Side, the middle-class neighborhood that developed along Grapevine and Fir Streets largely housed white native-born and northern European residents. A sample of forty-three households living on Grapevine Street in 1910 reveals only two headed by men from southern or eastern Europe: Joseph Esola, an Italian fruit merchant, and George Walcis, a Slovakian saloon owner, both of whom resided on the

¹¹⁵*Lake County Times*, April 5, 1911.

¹¹⁶*Lake County Times*, April 29, 1920.

¹¹⁷*Lake County Times*, May 2, 1911; and Howat, *A Standard History of Lake County, Indiana and the Calumet Region*, 1:433.

¹¹⁸*Lake County Times*, November 4, 1910.

¹¹⁹*Lake County Times*, July 28, 1909, April 27, 1920; and Hugh F. McGlasson, *History in Brief: Indiana Harbor Methodist Church* (n.p., 1952).

¹²⁰*Lake County Times*, June 8, 1915, October 25, 1917.

northernmost end of Grapevine Street near Michigan Avenue, then Indiana Harbor's principal business thoroughfare.¹²¹ The area's ethnic homogeneity proved particularly striking given that Grapevine and Fir Streets stood only two blocks west of the heart of Indiana Harbor's immigrant community on Deodar and Cedar Streets. Still, informal segregation failed to assuage the concerns of some native-born residents. Speaking before the Woman's Club of Indiana Harbor in 1910, Mrs. May Patterson—the wife of the Lake County prosecuting attorney and a Grapevine Street resident—complained that “undesirable foreigners” were “allowed to live in the same vicinity with respectable people.”¹²² To minimize damage to his political career, James A. Patterson later attempted to clarify his wife's remarks, explaining that “both Mrs. Patterson and I have great respect for the foreign born of our population, and it was only of the ‘undesirables’ among them that Mrs. Patterson spoke in criticism.”¹²³ But no amount of rhetorical finessing could conceal the often uneasy relationship that existed between the community's native-born and foreign-born residents.

Enterprising real estate developers throughout the Calumet Region seized the opportunity to profit by developing large-scale, restrictive residential subdivisions for white middle-class home buyers. In 1910, local realtors Fred J. Smith and Gallus J. Bader formed the Washington Park Land Company to transform what was then the distantly located Washington Park subdivision into Indiana Harbor's “most exclusive residential section.”¹²⁴ Nearly a decade earlier, the East Chicago Company had subdivided the seventy-acre tract of land into twenty-eight blocks and attempted to stimulate residential growth by building forty-one dwellings in the northern part of the property.¹²⁵ Described in the press as “colonial style residences,” the two-story frame four-square houses were rectilinear in plan and simplified in appearance. In each house, a flight of stairs led to a narrow covered porch on a raised first floor. Designers achieved some variety by altering the placement and design of doors and windows and alternating between hipped and gabled roofs. Despite being newly con-

¹²¹*Lake County Times*, January 6, 1909; U.S., Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census, 1910, Population Schedule for Lake County, Indiana (Washington, D.C., 1910).

¹²²*Lake County Times*, September 16, 1910.

¹²³*Chicago Sunday Tribune*, September 18, 1910.

¹²⁴*Lake County Times*, February 13, April 17, 1912, March 15, 1924.

¹²⁵*Lake County Times*, May 14, 1910.

structed with “steam heat and all modern improvements,” the dwellings appealed to few home buyers. Drainage problems caused the basements to flood, diminishing interest in the remote area, which for some time thereafter the press disparagingly referred to as “the Jungles.”¹²⁶

Although the Washington Park subdivision was long dismissed as “a white elephant,” Smith and Bader recognized that the neighborhood’s distance from heavy industry and crowded, unimproved immigrant neighborhoods made it ideal for a restrictive residential development.¹²⁷ As part of their effort to appeal to middle-class home buyers, the organizers of the Washington Park Land Company reserved a large tract of land in the center of the subdivision for a park. In addition to extensively landscaping the park, they hired a workforce of carpenters, masons, painters, and plumbers to renovate and repair the existing dwellings, effectively “mak[ing] them like new houses.”¹²⁸ Publicly financed improvements further heightened the neighborhood’s appeal. In 1911, the East Chicago Board of Public Works announced plans to invest \$130,000 in infrastructure improvements, including sidewalk construction, street paving, and the installation of sewer lines and water pipes.¹²⁹

To signal the neighborhood’s exclusivity, advertisements for the Washington Park subdivision stressed its status as the “only restricted subdivision in Indiana Harbor.”¹³⁰ Like the developers of other middle-class residential subdivisions, the Washington Park Land Company relied on deed restrictions to help ensure that “a high standard of excellence for the entire tract will be adhered to” and that the neighborhood would not see the kind of mixed-use development found in East Chicago’s ethnic working-class neighborhoods.¹³¹ In addition, dwellings had to cost at least \$2,000 to “prohibit the erection of any but substantial and good houses,”

¹²⁶*Lake County Times*, January 8, 1909.

¹²⁷*Lake County Times*, January 20, 1912.

¹²⁸*Lake County Times*, January 27, 1911. The addresses of the houses constructed by the East Chicago Company have not yet been fully identified, but newspaper articles offer some scattered information about their location. For example, in 1911, the local newspaper reported that the Washington Park Land Company hired workers to repair two of the East Chicago Company’s houses on the western edge of the subdivision: one at 4129 Drummond Street and another on the corner of 142nd Street and Euclid Avenue.

¹²⁹*Lake County Times*, June 6, 1911.

¹³⁰*Lake County Times*, August 25, 1910, January 24, 27, 1911.

¹³¹*Lake County Times*, September 16, 1910.



Early house in the Washington Park subdivision, Indiana Harbor, Indiana. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the East Chicago Company attempted to stimulate residential growth by building forty-one dwellings, described in the press as “colonial style residences.” Despite being newly constructed with “steam heat and all modern improvements,” they appealed to few home buyers. Drainage problems caused the basements to flood, diminishing interest in the remote area, which for some time thereafter the press disparagingly referred to as “the Jungles.”

Courtesy, East Chicago Public Library History Room.

and those situated on the large lots fronting the park had to be at least two stories high and built of substantial materials such as brick, concrete, or stone.¹³² Well into the 1920s, even the modest sum of \$2,000 remained prohibitively expensive for the region’s vast workforce of poorly paid unskilled laborers. According to Hammond manufacturer and housing philanthropist Frank S. Betz, in 1923, the typical unskilled wage earner

¹³²Lake County Deed Record 233, p. 243, Office of the Lake County Recorder; Lake County Deed Record 235, p. 219, Office of the Lake County Recorder; and *Lake County Times*, August 25, 1910.



Photograph of Washington Park subdivision, *The Chamber of Commerce Magazine*, April 1927, East Chicago, Indiana. Between 1910 and 1920, local realtors Fred J. Smith and Gallus J. Bader transformed Washington Park from a “white elephant,” disparaged for its distance from industry, to Indiana Harbor’s “most exclusive residential section,” here celebrated as a neighborhood set apart from heavy industry and the working class.

Courtesy, Calumet Regional Archives, Indiana University Northwest, Gary, Indiana.

supported a family on \$3.50 to \$4.00 a day; based on Betz's calculations, such a worker could afford to pay no more than \$1,500 for a house.¹³³

The relatively high price of lots and costly building requirements created an effective economic barrier that helped maintain Washington Park's ethnic and racial exclusivity. However, these factors also slowed the pace of development until the 1920s, when a wave of home building swept over the country.¹³⁴ Local builders initially constructed brick bungalows in the western part of Washington Park, which boasted smaller and cheaper lots. In spring 1921, for example, East Chicago contractors Harry Olney and Frank Stephens completed eight new brick bungalows on 143rd Street between Parrish Avenue and Ivy Street.¹³⁵ To the east of the 143rd Street bungalows stood more expensive but still moderately priced houses, including the two-story Dutch colonial revival-style dwelling that contractor George Roop built on the corner of 142nd and Ivy Streets at an estimated cost of \$5,500.¹³⁶ Larger and more expensive residences stood on the choice lots facing the park. In 1924, attorney Willard Van Horne and his wife Lara, a "well known society and club woman," moved into a \$20,000, two-story, brick home on 142nd Street.¹³⁷ Their neighbors who, like them, had moved from Fir and Grapevine Streets included Superior Court Judge Maurice Crites; attorney William J. Murray and his wife Lillian, the niece of Inland superintendent John W. Lees; and Monroe Schock, a longtime alderman and business partner of Mayor Frank Callahan.¹³⁸ In keeping with national trends, their houses featured popular revival styles. Typical of these was the two-story, red-brick house designed by East Chicago architect Joseph Kraft for Monroe Schock in 1924.¹³⁹ The rectangular dwelling sat lengthwise on its large lot. Colonial details such as a broken pediment above the centrally placed door and symmetrically disposed double-hung sash windows enhanced the formality of the street-facing façade and emphasized the historical associations that, as Robert

¹³³*Lake County Times*, March 5, 1923.

¹³⁴*Lake County Times*, July 31, August 21, 1924.

¹³⁵*Lake County Times*, July 14, 1921.

¹³⁶*Lake County Times*, April 19, June 1, 1921.

¹³⁷*Lake County Times*, March 17, 1914, April 5, 1921, March 15, 1924.

¹³⁸*Lake County Times*, September 4, 1909, June 11, 1913, January 6, 1914, November 7, 28, 1919.

¹³⁹*Lake County Times*, November 28, 1919, October 17, 1921, December 24, 1923, February 7, 1924.

Fishman has written of the American suburban home more generally, “identified its owner with the colonial settlers who had preceded the immigrant hordes.”¹⁴⁰

As large numbers of African American and Mexican migrants began arriving to work in East Chicago's mills in the 1920s, nativist attitudes towards white immigrants began to soften, and the most prosperous and assimilated foreign-born residents, such as attorney Andrew H. Sambor, found themselves welcomed into elite social circles and exclusive residential neighborhoods like Washington Park. Sambor's rise to prominence in the city's Polish community had led to his election to the Indiana House of Representatives, where he lobbied on behalf of his fellow immigrants.¹⁴¹ Unlike his more radical compatriots, in 1921, Sambor staunchly opposed efforts to form an electoral ticket composed solely of foreign-born candidates.¹⁴² Speaking on behalf of native-born mayoral candidate Frank Callahan, Sambor declared that “no man in the United States has a right to run for office except on one narrow path and that is Americanism. When my wife and I go to the polls Nov. 8 we have agreed to vote for Frank Callahan to protect our city and our American principles. There is no other way for patriotic people to vote.”¹⁴³ As a founding member of the East Chicago Americanization committee, Sambor subscribed to the view that “an American is a man who feels American, thinks American and acts American no matter where he was born.”¹⁴⁴ For those foreign-born immigrants with the economic means, part of “acting American” meant living in “American” neighborhoods rather than in ethnic enclaves. Sometime around 1925, Sambor moved into a two-story, Tudor revival, brick and half-timbered stucco home across from Washington Park.¹⁴⁵ Among his neighbors were his political allies: Crites and Schock, as well as attorneys Murray and Van Horne, professional colleagues with whom he also shared social interests, such as membership in the exclusive East Chicago Motor

¹⁴⁰Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York, 1987), 149.

¹⁴¹*Lake County Times*, December 29, 1915, March 7, 1917, April 23, 1926.

¹⁴²*Lake County Times*, October 17, 1921.

¹⁴³*Lake County Times*, October 24, 1921.

¹⁴⁴*Lake County Times*, February 18, 1920.

¹⁴⁵East Chicago Chamber of Commerce, *The Chamber of Commerce Magazine*, October 1925, Calumet Regional Archives, Indiana University Northwest, Gary, Indiana.

Club.¹⁴⁶ During the 1920s, few southern or eastern European immigrants had integrated into Indiana Harbor's elite social circles as successfully as Sambor. As time went on, however, other prominent professionals with political clout increasingly gained acceptance among native-born whites as friends and neighbors.

At the same time that attempts to discourage white ethnic residents from settling in predominantly white native-born neighborhoods began to subside, the influx of African American and Mexican migrants hardened white residents' efforts to ensure racial segregation. As early as 1916, East Chicago's real estate leaders' proposed solution to the "negro problem" called for restricting African American residents to two areas in Indiana Harbor: Parrish Avenue between Michigan Avenue and 136th Street and Block Avenue between Michigan Avenue and Washington Street.¹⁴⁷ Given their limited housing options, many African American and Mexican workers crowded into segregated areas, where boarding houses stood amid a collection of brothels, gambling halls, and saloons.¹⁴⁸ Still, African Americans and Mexicans struggled to find housing, even in the least desirable neighborhoods near the mills. In 1926, one African American family reportedly offered to pay \$65 a month to live in a one-story house in a neighborhood surrounded by chemical plants and oil refineries, but the landlord refused them and instead rented the house to two white families for less money.¹⁴⁹ Mexican immigrants reported similar experiences.¹⁵⁰ One claimed that landlords "rent only the poorest houses to Mexicans," adding that "if they want to rent in a better part of town the landlords will not rent to them."¹⁵¹

During the 1920s, East Chicago began to experience an outmigration of white native-born residents who relocated to restricted subdivisions in other parts of the Calumet Region at an ever-quickening pace.¹⁵² In 1923, the *Lake County Times* reported that

¹⁴⁶*Lake County Times*, October 13, 1916, November 9, 1923, August 6, 1924.

¹⁴⁷*Lake County Times*, August 8, 1916.

¹⁴⁸*Lake County Times*, May 21, September 29, 1923, March 26, May 9, 1924.

¹⁴⁹*Lake County Times*, October 2, 1926.

¹⁵⁰Francisco Arturo Rosales and Daniel T. Simon, "Mexican Immigrant Experience in the Urban Midwest: East Chicago, Indiana, 1919-1945," *Indiana Magazine of History* 77 (December 1981), 341.

¹⁵¹Paul S. Taylor, *Mexican Labor in the United States* (1932; New York, 1970), 2:226.

¹⁵²*Lake County Times*, June 25, 1921, April 26, May 21, 1923.

the tendency now is to get away from the noise, grime, smoke and unloveliness of crowded districts and live in a pretty suburban section. East Chicago industries give work to 22,000 men, Hammond industries and railroad yards employ a third of that number, or about 7,000. Yet Hammond, because it has more territory and gives its workers a chance to get away from the gates of the plants had a population of 46,000.¹⁵³

The *Times* left unstated the fact that Hammond's population was overwhelmingly native-born and white despite reporting three years earlier that "no other industrial city of the region can show such a low percentage of negroes as Hammond."¹⁵⁴ In contrast, East Chicago's population in 1920 included roughly 1,400 African Americans and 500 Mexican immigrants.¹⁵⁵ A 1926 study commissioned by the East Chicago Chamber of Commerce revealed that alarmed white residents sought to distance themselves from African American and Mexican migrants. Nearly 25 percent of respondents identified the presence of African American and Mexican residents as the primary reason they chose not to live in East Chicago and Indiana Harbor. Comments such as "too many Negroes and Mexicans," and, "wife refuses to live in East Chicago on account of negro and Mexican element," were typical. The study recommended racial segregation as the solution to such complaints, even though it recognized that African Americans and Mexicans already faced segregation from the white, native-born population.¹⁵⁶ The outmigration of white residents from East Chicago in the 1920s established a pattern that continued throughout the remainder of the twentieth century as real estate developers hurried to build modern brick homes for white homeowners in new residential subdivisions away from older neighborhoods.¹⁵⁷ In summer 1945, the local newspaper reported that Hammond "led other cities in

¹⁵³*Lake County Times*, May 21, 1923.

¹⁵⁴*Lake County Times*, May 1, 1920.

¹⁵⁵U.S., Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census, 1920, vol. 3, Population, Composition and Characteristics (Washington, D.C., 1920), 286; and *Lake County Times*, November 26, 1919.

¹⁵⁶James Walker, *Planning for the Future of East Chicago, Indiana: A General Survey of Its Social and Economic Problems* (East Chicago, Ind., 1926), 24-31, 121-22.

¹⁵⁷*Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 10, 1943, January 12, 1947; and *Hammond Times*, June 8, 1944.

the Calumet region in the home building program” with 103 new dwellings, while only one house was erected in East Chicago.¹⁵⁸

In East Chicago, discriminatory ethnic and racial attitudes ensured that a pattern of residential segregation would remain entrenched well into the second half of the twentieth century. The experience of lifelong East Chicago resident Cleotis White highlights this fact. As a child in the early 1960s, he lived with his family on the second floor of a cold-water flat on 135th Street and Parrish Avenue in Indiana Harbor. In the winter, his father had to walk a mile to a gas station to purchase fuel to heat the apartment, compounding the family’s already difficult living conditions. An “unwritten rule” not to sell to African Americans stymied his parents’ efforts to obtain better housing in white neighborhoods.¹⁵⁹ In addition, some white residents added clauses in their wills stipulating that their home “couldn’t be sold to a black.”¹⁶⁰ Indeed, until they began to loosen in the 1960s, racial housing restrictions prohibited African Americans from even walking through certain neighborhoods, including the Sunnyside subdivision in Indiana Harbor, built in the 1920s for the Inland Steel Company’s skilled white workforce.¹⁶¹ By 1966, the Whites and other African American families enjoyed access to once-restricted neighborhoods like Sunnyside.¹⁶² In response, many white residents fled to newly developed areas in south Lake County, causing East Chicago’s white population to fall from nearly 44,000 in 1960 to 11,000 in 1986.¹⁶³ Dramatic demographic change did not mean that the Calumet Region’s neighborhoods immediately or invariably lost their appeal to middle-class home buyers. Among those who settled in Washington Park was Cleotis White, who in 1980 secured a coveted position as a skilled operator at the Amoco refinery in nearby Whiting. That same year, Cleotis and his wife Vivian purchased the residence once owned by Superior Court Judge Maurice Crites. During his twenty-year tenure at Amoco, Cleotis earned his BA and MA in social work at Indiana University Northwest and from

¹⁵⁸*Hammond Times*, July 27, 1945.

¹⁵⁹Cleotis White, interview with author, East Chicago, Indiana, September 4, 2010.

¹⁶⁰*Hammond Times*, January 6, 1986.

¹⁶¹*Hammond Times*, January 6, 1986.

¹⁶²Cleotis White, interview with author.

¹⁶³*Hammond Times*, January 5, 1986.

2005 until 2008 served as East Chicago's human rights director, a career trajectory similar to those of ambitious skilled white workers at the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁶⁴

In spite of their heavily industrialized economy and landscape of looming factories, then, the Calumet Region's industrial suburbs were not uniformly working-class environments. During the early 1900s, well-paid native-born white-collar professionals and supervisory and skilled blue-collar workers resided in homogeneous neighborhoods away from the industrial districts inhabited by poor foreign-born workers. Residential segregation intensified in the 1920s as white, middle-class families moved into restricted subdivisions further removed from both industry and the black southern migrants and Mexican immigrants recruited to replace striking white workers. For decades, white homeowners successfully relied on deed restrictions and other legal mechanisms to resist the creation of racially integrated neighborhoods. When barriers to minority homeownership weakened in the 1960s, large numbers of white residents, following the widespread national pattern, moved away from East Chicago. The familiarity of the most recent part of this narrative—industrial decline and white flight—should not obscure the long history of social conflicts in East Chicago and other American industrial suburbs and the spatially differentiated residential pattern that developed as a result.



¹⁶⁴Cleotis White, interview with author.