

# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-934 (Rev. 12-2015)

OMB Control No. 1024-0276 (Exp. 01/31/2019)

## CARTER G. WOODSON HOME

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### 1. NAME AND LOCATION OF PROPERTY

**Historic Name:** Carter G. Woodson Home

**Other Name/Site Number:** Carter G. Woodson National Historic Site

**Street and Number (if applicable):** 1538 Ninth Street, NW

**City/Town:** Washington

**County:**

**State:** District of Columbia

### 2. SIGNIFICANCE DATA

**NHL Criteria:** 2 and 3

**NHL Criteria Exceptions:**

**NHL Theme(s):**

- II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements
  - 1. clubs and organizations
  - 2. reform movements
- III. Expressing Cultural Values
  - 1. educational and intellectual currents
  - 3. literature
  - 4. mass media
- IV. Shaping the Political Landscape
  - 4. political ideas, cultures, and theories

**Period(s) of Significance:** 1922-1950

**Significant Person(s) (only Criterion 2):** Carter Godwin Woodson

**Cultural Affiliation (only Criterion 6):**

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement.** We are collecting this information under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (16 U.S.C. 461-467) and 36 CFR part 65. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We will use the information you provide to evaluate properties nominated as National Historic Landmarks. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has approved this collection of information and assigned Control No. 1024-0276.

**Estimated Burden Statement.** Public reporting burden is 2 hours for an initial inquiry letter and 344 hours for NPS Form 10-934 (per response), including the time it takes to read, gather and maintain data, review instructions and complete the letter/form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate, or any aspects of this form, to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Mail Stop 242, Reston, VA 20192. Please do not send your form to this address.

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CARTER G. WOODSON HOME

Designer/Creator/Architect/Builder: Not known

Historic Contexts: Civil Rights in America Theme Study
Rekindling Civil Rights, 1900-1941
The Birth of the Civil Rights Movement, 1941-1954

XIX. Literature

- C. Non-Fiction
D. Journalism: Opinion and Criticism
E. Newswriting and Reporting

XXVII. Education

- D. Specialized Education
1. Conceptual Development
2. Patterns of Organization
G. Adjunct Educational Institutions
4. Other Specialized Institutions
H. Special Populations
2. Ethnic Populations

XXXIX. Intellectual Currents

- C. Ideologies and Interpretation of the Branches of Knowledge (History, Philosophy of History, Political Philosophy, etc.)

XXXI. Social and Humanitarian Movements

- M. Civil Rights Movements

3. WITHHOLDING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

Does this nomination contain sensitive information that should be withheld under Section 304 of the National Historic Preservation Act?

\_\_\_ Yes

X No

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### **4. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**1. Acreage of Property:** Less than one acre

**2. Use either Latitude/Longitude Coordinates or the UTM system:**

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates:** 38.910797, -77.024271

Datum if other than WGS84:  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

**Latitude:      Longitude:**

**OR**

| <b>UTM References:</b> | <b>Zone</b> | <b>Easting</b> | <b>Northing</b> |
|------------------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
|                        | 18          | 324480         | 4308530         |

**3. Verbal Boundary Description:**

The Carter G. Woodson Home stands on Lot 819, Square 365 at 1538 Ninth Street in Northwest Washington, D.C. The coordinate represents the point of intersection of the west wall of the house's main block and the south wall of its rear ell. The Latitude/Longitude Coordinates were obtained using Google Earth imagery dated October 12, 2012, and its datum is World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS-84). The Carter G. Woodson Home location has no restriction on its release to the public.<sup>1</sup>

**4. Boundary Justification:**

The Carter G. Woodson Home was designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) and concurrently listed in the National Register of Historic Places on May 11, 1976, for its association with the life of Carter G. Woodson. The National Historic Site boundaries include the two properties adjacent to and directly north of the Woodson Home -- 1540 and 1542 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C. These properties are used for museum space, interpretation, offices, and a store. The NHL boundary only encompasses the house and property at 1538 Ninth Street, NW, which is historically associated with Carter G. Woodson during the period of significance, and which maintains historic integrity.

<sup>1</sup> Coordinates from Historic American Buildings Survey Addendum to Carter G. Woodson House (The Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site) HABS No. DC-369.

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### 5. SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION

#### INTRODUCTION: SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

“Only by careful study of the Negro himself and the life which he is forced to lead can we arrive at the proper procedure in this crisis.”— Carter G. Woodson (1933)

Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1976, the Carter G. Woodson Home, located at 1538 Ninth Street, NW, Washington, D.C., is the former home, office, and workplace of Carter Godwin Woodson (December 19, 1875 - April 3, 1950), known as the “Father of Black History.” Woodson purchased the house in 1922 to serve as his residence and as a place to pursue his lifelong commitment to the professionalization and promotion of black history.<sup>2</sup> The home served as the headquarters of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), co-founded by Woodson in 1915 and later renamed the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH, as it is known today); the *Journal of Negro History*, started in 1916; Associated Publishers, Inc., incorporated in 1921; and Negro History Week, co-founded in 1926.<sup>3</sup> From his “office home,” Woodson created and maintained a space for himself and dozens of women and men to work collectively to write and publish hundreds of books and articles; to promote the importance of black history through lectures, presentations, newsletters and history kits; to research, collect, archive and display a wide range of textual and visual material; and to provide venues for scholars to present and publish their work.<sup>4</sup> From 1922 until his death in 1950, Woodson, who was active in civil rights and black freedom struggles in Washington, D.C. and nationally, believed that education was central to combating racism and white supremacy, and to achieving true freedom as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.

The Woodson Home meets **NHL Criterion 2** for its close and longstanding association with the life and work of Carter G. Woodson who made exceptional contributions to American history. It was the office home from

<sup>2</sup> The 2005 deed for transfer of the house from ASALH to NPS as well as the *Historic Structure Report* states the purchase date as August 30, 1922 -- Beyer Blinder Belle, *Carter G. Woodson Home Historic Structure Report*, (Washington, D.C.: Beyer Blinder Belle, 2008), 27-28, while Pero Gaglo Dagbovie states the date was July 18, 1922 in “‘Willing to Sacrifice:’ Carter G. Woodson, the Father of Black History, and the Carter G. Woodson Home,” *Woodson Home National Historic Site Historic Resource Study* (2012), v, and July 22, 1922 in his book *Carter G. Woodson in Washington, D.C.: The Father of Black History*. (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2014), 50. The variance in dates is a result of the fact that Woodson submitted his final payment for purchase on July 18, 1922. The title was cleared on August 12, 1922, a certificate of title was issued on September 8, 1922. Two deed documents are located within the Woodson Papers at the Library of Congress, one dated August 30, 1922, and another dated September 6, 1922. See Reel 1 Part II, Carter Godwin Woodson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. and Reel 25 Part II, Carter Godwin Woodson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Both the deed and title are in Woodson’s name.

<sup>3</sup> Carter G. Woodson, William B. Hartgrove, George Cleveland Hall, Alexander L. Jackson, and James E. Stamps co-founded ASNLH in Chicago. The organization was incorporated on October 2, 1915 in Washington, D.C. Associated Publishers, Inc. was also incorporated in Washington, D.C., on June 3, 1921. See Reel 2 Part II, Carter Godwin Woodson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History was renamed the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History in 1972, then subsequently renamed the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. The organization still exists in robust form today. The organization’s journals are also still in publication -- the *Journal of Negro History* (now the *Journal of African American History*) and the *Negro History Bulletin* (now the *Black History Bulletin*).

<sup>4</sup> The term “office home” will be used throughout this form to refer to Woodson’s residence. The term was dubbed by ASNLH employee Willie Leanna Miles in “Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson as I Recall Him, 1943-1950” *Journal of Negro History* 76 no. 1/4 (Winter - Autumn, 1991): 92-100. The term was adopted by Pero Gaglo Dagbovie in his work with the NPS on the site. It is already consistently used by NPS park rangers in public interpretation on site, and on NPS websites, articles, and social media.

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which Woodson developed, promulgated, and sustained the idea of black history. He operated his organization from the building, published books, articles, and newsletters that supported the idea of black history, and engaged the public from this site. In essence, this building served as a home, office, archive, and site of production.

The property also meets **NHL Criterion 3** because it demonstrates and has come to symbolize Americans' faith in education as a central tool in combatting racism and all forms of discrimination, and in achieving true freedom and racial equality. Carter G. Woodson brought about the rewriting of the American past by starting a movement that would ultimately convey the true meaning of the first line of the U.S. Constitution's preamble: "We the people of the United States." These ideals are represented in Woodson's work through ASNLH to promote educational pedagogy and information that debunked the racist histories that supported Jim Crow-era oppression of black people. In so doing, Woodson laid the foundation for black social consciousness that would grow during the "modern" Civil Rights era of the 1950s and 1960s. Through his work, Woodson tasked blacks and other Americans with pushing the nation forward to realize its truest ideals of citizenship.

This updated NHL nomination builds on and expands the 1976 nomination, using up-to-date documentation standards and criteria of the National Park Service (NPS) NHL program. It is also informed by recent studies on the Carter G. Woodson Home including a 2001 *Special Resource Study*, a 2008 *Historic Structure Report*, and a 2012 *Historic Resource Study*. In 2016, the NPS completed an extensive restoration and rehabilitation of the house after decades of neglect and damage from a 2011 earthquake and hurricane. This update fully addresses the physical characteristics of the building, identifies the current condition and results of the restoration and rehabilitation efforts, and provides a clear and thorough understanding of the NHL's historical significance and connection to Carter G. Woodson and his outstanding accomplishments in scholarship and in the advancement of African American Civil Rights. The house is located within the locally designated Shaw Historic District and the Mount Vernon West National Register of Historic Places Historic District. It was listed in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites on March 3, 1979 and was documented by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1983, with additional study in 2012-2013.

In addition to his home being recognized as a National Historic Landmark and a National Historic Site in 2003, Woodson's legacy has been celebrated in myriad ways. His alma maters - Douglass High School (WV), Berea College (KY), and the University of Chicago - pay him tribute. A statue of Woodson was erected in Huntington, Cabell County, West Virginia facing the location of the first Douglass High School building, which is no longer extant. The Carter G. Woodson Center for Interracial Education is located at Berea College, and the University of Chicago Urban Education Institute operates the UChicago Charter School Carter G. Woodson Middle School campus. There is also the Carter G. Woodson Regional Library in Chicago, as well as the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies at the University of Virginia. In 1984, the United States Postal Service honored Woodson on a stamp. In 1998, musical artist Lauryn Hill released her debut album *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*, a nod to Woodson's 1933 classic *The Mis-Education of the Negro*. In 2015, Washington, D.C. dedicated a memorial park to Woodson on a triangular plot of land near his home, bounded by 9th Street, Q Street and Rhode Island Avenue. Sculptor Raymond Kaskey designed an elaborate representation of Woodson, surrounded by the books that he published during his career. The park creates a visual and physical link between the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA and 9th Street, where Woodson's home is located. Woodson was featured as the February 1, 2018 Google Doodle in recognition of his role in the founding of Black History Month. Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C., the first public high school in the United States for black children, opened the Carter G. Woodson

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Black Studies Academy in August 2019 as part of its 150th anniversary celebration. Woodson taught at Dunbar High School for several years. The academy is the first of its kind in the United States. There are schools, parks, libraries, museums, academic buildings, and roads named after Woodson in at least fourteen states and Washington, D.C.

### Woodson's Life and Accomplishments (Criterion 2)

#### *Early Life*

Carter G. Woodson was born on December 19, 1875 in New Canton, Virginia in Buckingham County. Woodson's parents were Anne Eliza Riddle Woodson and James Henry Woodson. They had both been legally enslaved prior to 1864 and had nine children together. His mother, who knew how to read, shared with Woodson the horrific experience of being a teenager separated from her parents and siblings, and sent to Richmond, Virginia, to be sold. She was daily carted between a slave pen and an auction block to be looked over by prospective white buyers. Woodson's father, who was skilled in carpentry and fishing, made a little money on the side after he completed his "hired out" duties for the day. In response to this entrepreneurial spirit, the white man he was hired-out-to attempted to whip him. Instead, James Woodson whipped *him* and then fled, eventually joining a Union Army regiment in 1864.<sup>5</sup> In 1874, one year before Woodson was born, his parents bought a house and farm in New Canton. As a child, he worked on the family farm eight months of the year and attended school the remaining four months. Once Woodson learned to read by engaging the McGuffey reader, his father insisted that he read to him from newspapers.

As a teenager in the early 1890s, Woodson sought paid work outside the family farm. He worked as a farm and manual laborer and a garbage truck driver. At around 18 years old, in 1892, Woodson moved to Fayette County, West Virginia to work in the coal mines. In West Virginia, Woodson participated in a reading and discussion group in the home of one of his fellow workers, Oliver Jones, a Civil War veteran. Jones opened his home and provided a space for his fellow workers to read and converse about the news. Jones' library collection included works by George Washington Williams, J.T. Wilson and W.J. Simmons. Woodson would later write about these early scholars of black history.<sup>6</sup>

#### *The Formal Education of Carter G. Woodson*

Woodson attended Frederick Douglass High School in Huntington, West Virginia from 1895-1897. Beginning in the fall of 1897, Woodson attended Berea College in Kentucky as a part-time student, graduating in 1903 with a degree in literature.<sup>7</sup> Berea College was one of the few U.S. colleges in the 19th century to offer equal admission to black and white students. Woodson's cohort was the college's last interracial graduating class due to changes in the Kentucky legislature regarding education.<sup>8</sup> In 1907, during a short sojourn in Europe,

<sup>5</sup> Jacqueline Goggin, *Carter G. Woodson: A Life in Black History*. Southern Biography Series. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), 1-4.

<sup>6</sup> Carter G. Woodson, "My Recollections of Veterans of the Civil War," *Negro History Bulletin* (February 1944). Dagbovie, *Carter G. Woodson in Washington, D.C.*, 35.

<sup>7</sup> According to Rayford Logan, Carter G. Woodson spent one semester at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania after he enrolled at Berea. Rayford Logan, "Phylon Profile VI: Carter G. Woodson," *Phylon* Volume 6, Number 4 (1945): 319.

<sup>8</sup> In 1904, the Kentucky Legislature outlawed interracial education at Berea, which effectively ended education of black students at the school. Berea College fought the New Day Act. The court case, *Berea College vs. Kentucky College* reached the U.S. Supreme Court. Berea College was unsuccessful in its attempt to maintain interracial education. Lyle Roelofs, "Interracial Education at Berea

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Woodson studied European history at the Sorbonne in Paris. Woodson attended the University of Chicago from 1907-1908, receiving a master's degree in history, romance languages, and literature. In 1908, he entered the Ph.D. program in history at Harvard University, one of several historically white "colonial colleges" that gained some of its wealth from slavery. When Woodson completed his Ph.D. in 1912, he became the second black person to receive a Ph.D. in the history department.<sup>9</sup>

### *Carter G. Woodson as Teacher and Administrator*

Woodson's first formal experience as a teacher occurred at a school in Winona, West Virginia, from 1898-1900. (After his first year at Berea, he worked in education while also intermittently taking classes.) Winona was a mining town and Woodson was hired to teach the children of miners. His second experience was at his alma mater, Frederick Douglass High School where he served as a history teacher and principal from 1900-1903. In 1901, Woodson became certified as a high school teacher in West Virginia. He was examined across twenty subjects, ranging from the theory of teaching and drawing to physics and Latin. He scored an average of 91 percent with no grade under an 82 percent.<sup>10</sup> His third teaching experience was in the Philippines, where he taught classes in English, health, and agriculture from December 1903 to February 1907. His fourth experience was in Washington, DC, in 1909. This may have been his first time in the nation's capital. He taught at Armstrong Manual Training School, a public vocational school in the city, and at M Street High School (now Dunbar High School), which developed from the first school to offer secondary education (Preparatory School for Colored Youth), and was the first public high school for blacks in the U.S.<sup>11</sup> Woodson taught English, French, Spanish, and history.<sup>12</sup> Rayford W. Logan took Woodson's French literature class as a high school senior from 1912-1913 and would become one of Woodson's closest protégées in later years. Logan would also go on to earn a Ph.D. in history from Harvard. In 1918, Woodson returned to Armstrong as school principal. Although the school focused on teaching trades, Woodson insisted that students have vocational *and* liberal arts classes. He also instituted an adult education program.<sup>13</sup> This commitment to adult education would continue in his work with the ASNLH.<sup>14</sup>

Woodson served as Dean of the School of Liberal Arts at Howard University from 1919-1920. At Howard, he

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College," <https://www.berea.edu/president/blog/interracial-education-berea-college/> Accessed August 14, 2019. Gossie Harold Hudson, *Labors at the Capstone of American Education: Berea College, Lincoln University, the Sorbonne, and Harvard University* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1989).

<sup>9</sup> W.E.B. DuBois was the first black person to receive a Ph.D. in history from Harvard.

<sup>10</sup> Woodson's "Teacher's High School Certificate" reprinted in *Negro History Bulletin* (May 1950): 180.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth Alphonso Mitchell, Jr., "The Story Of Dunbar High School: How Students From The First Public High School For Black Students In The United States Influenced America," Georgetown University, B.A. thesis, 2012. According to Kimberly Springle, Executive Director of the Charles Sumner Museum, the official repository of Washington, D.C. Public Schools, the Preparatory School for Colored Youth, founded in 1870, was the first school to offer secondary education. In the 1890s, it became M Street High School. Dunbar High School developed from the M Street High School. Email conversation, 25 October 2019.

<sup>12</sup> Woodson learned Spanish while living in the Philippines.

<sup>13</sup> Anna Julia Cooper, who received her Ph.D. from the Sorbonne in 1925 and taught Latin at the Preparatory School for Colored Youth, and Alain Locke, who received his Ph.D. in philosophy from Harvard in 1907, were also advocates of adult education in Washington, D.C. Cooper was active in Frelinghuysen University, a night school for adults. Locke co-founded the Associates in Negro Folk Education, which produced a set of "Bronze Booklets," thin readers on a range of subjects including art and the Caribbean. Marya McQuirter, "Claiming the City: African Americans, Urbanization and Leisure in Washington, D.C., 1902-1957," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 2000.

<sup>14</sup> Rayford W. Logan, "Carter G. Woodson: Mirror and Molder of His Time, 1875-1950," *Journal of Negro History* 58 no. 1 (January 1973): 8-9; William M. Cobb, "Carter G. Woodson: The Father of Negro History," *Journal of the National Medical Association* 62 no. 5 (September 1970): 389; Goggin, 29-30.

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taught undergraduate and graduate classes in black history.<sup>15</sup> Five students were enrolled in Woodson's first graduate course at Howard University in the 1919-1920 academic year. Among them was Arnett Lindsay, who recounted the "characteristically frank manner" that Woodson "outlined the requirements for completing the work leading to the M.A. degree." Woodson professed "that any student would be dropped automatically with no opportunity to make up any deficiency unless the minimum grade of [a] B was maintained in every required subject." In this class, Woodson worked to offer his students a "new and acceptable form of history" that considered social conditions and attended to the lived experiences of black people. In 1920, he began serving as a dean at the West Virginia Collegiate Institute. He stayed there until 1922. In that year, he returned to Washington, D.C., where he would live for the remainder of his life, devoting himself full-time to the ASNLH and the expansion of a national (and global) black history movement.<sup>16</sup>

### Woodson's Washington, 1900-1950

"After a full day's work in the office [Woodson] enjoy[ed] a hearty dinner followed by a long stroll."<sup>17</sup>  
Rayford Logan

By 1900, Washington had the largest percentage of African Americans of any city outside the Deep South.<sup>18</sup> It is for this reason, in part, that Kelly Miller, a former teacher at the M Street High School and a professor and administrator at Howard University, proclaimed Washington, D.C. as the "Negro's heaven."<sup>19</sup> The city was rich with educational, recreational, religious, social, political, and intellectual institutions, including Howard University, the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA, the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, the American Negro Academy, and Shiloh Baptist Church. Woodson would draw strength from the legacies of these and other local institutions as he forged his own.

As noted in Rayford Logan's quote above, Woodson's preferred method of travel was walking. From his Northwest Washington home on 9th Street near Q Street, NW, it was a short jaunt to U Street, one of the city's majority black centers. There, he had access to benevolent, social, commercial, and entertainment enterprises, such as Industrial Bank, the Howard, Lincoln and Republic Theatres, True Reformer's Hall, Griffith Stadium, and Scurlock Studio. These sites, in addition to clothing shops, pool halls, and corner stores, offered social interaction and what historian Blair Ruble called a "contact zone," between educators, intellectuals, artists, writers, entertainers, athletes, busboys, and domestics that created the heart of "Black Broadway."<sup>20</sup> Woodson took many of his dinners at the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA at 901 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, an easy one block walk from his home. There he would often talk into the evening with residents and other visitors.<sup>21</sup> Woodson

<sup>15</sup> It is important to note that in March 1968 students at Howard University took over the administration building asking for, among other things, black history courses and a black studies minor, and for the university to fully orient itself toward education for freedom and liberation. This is another indication of how Woodson was in the forefront of the institutionalization of black history. Woodson was directly responsible for the first classes and lecture series on Negro history. Goggin, 48-49.

<sup>16</sup> Randall K. Burkett, Pellom McDaniels, and Tiffany Gleason, *The Mind of Carter G. Woodson as Reflected in the Books He Owned, Read, & Published: A Catalog of the Library of Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History* (Atlanta: Emory University, 2006): 28.

<sup>17</sup> Rayford W. Logan, "Phylon Profile VI: Carter G. Woodson," *Phylon* 6 no. 4 (4th Qtr., 1945): 320.

<sup>18</sup> In addition to African Americans, the city's population included Chinese Americans, Native Americans, Latinx and whites.

<sup>19</sup> Kelly Miller, "Where is the Negro's Heaven," *Opportunity* (December 1926): 370-373.

<sup>20</sup> John Edward Hasse, "Washington's Duke Ellington," *Washington History* 26 (Spring 2014): 36-59; Blair A. Ruble, *Washington's U Street: A Biography* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010). The Howard, Lincoln and Republic theatres were white-owned, as was Griffith Stadium.

<sup>21</sup> Dagbovie, *Carter G. Woodson in Washington, D.C.*, 70. He also dined at the Gateway Dining Room in Union Station.



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also walked the nine blocks to his bank, the Industrial Bank, at 11th and U streets NW. Woodson's decision to do business with Industrial Bank undoubtedly reflected his desire to support other black-owned institutions and the fact that most white-owned banks in the city refused to service African Americans' financial needs.

He also walked to the Library of Congress, near the U.S. Capitol, to do his research, and to the post office on North Capitol and Massachusetts Avenue, near Union Station, to ship off his countless packages of books and letters.<sup>22</sup> To get to the Library of Congress and to Union Station, Woodson would have walked out of his home and turned right to go south on 9th Street, NW. After 13 blocks, he would turn left to go east onto Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. After 10 blocks, he would have reached Union Station. From there, the Library of Congress was five more blocks. During these walks, in addition to getting great exercise, Woodson was able to observe his fellow citizens and be a part of the crowd in a burgeoning urban center.

Woodson's walks throughout his city, however, were not always pleasant. In fact, during the "Red Summer" of 1919,<sup>23</sup> he feared for his life. Washingtonians, as did residents in major cities throughout the U.S., experienced a wave of terror after the end of World War I instigated by white servicemen, often with the support of white police officers and white-owned newspapers, including the *Washington Post*. On July 20th, Woodson was walking home on Pennsylvania Avenue and saw a white mob approaching and "hid in the shadows of a storefront." Woodson recounted that the white mob "had caught a Negro and deliberately held him as one would a beef for slaughter...and when they had conveniently adjusted him for lynching, they shot him. I heard him groaning in his struggle as I hurried away as fast as I could without running, expecting every moment to be lynched myself."<sup>24</sup>

What is also significant about this reign of white terror is that African American women and men fought back. They armed themselves with guns to prevent whites from going on a murder spree and decimating their neighborhoods as whites had done in East St. Louis in 1917. With this organized and armed resistance, Washingtonians proclaimed that there was a "New Negro" in the city and that they were no longer "slaves."<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the term "New Negro," usually associated with the cultural renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s, gained new meaning in 1919. Woodson and his work were integral to the development of the "New Negro."

In 1922, the DC chapter of the NAACP held a silent march to protest lynching and to encourage Congress to pass a federal anti-lynching bill. (Congress failed to act.) Woodson was one of the 5,000 protestors who marched in front of the U.S. Capitol and the White House. The DC chapter of the NAACP was founded in 1913, the same year that Woodrow Wilson was elected the 28th U.S. president. During Wilson's tenure, Washingtonians witnessed the institutionalization of racist practices in the federal government. Wilson, with the support and urging of his wife, Ellen Louis Wilson, authorized the racial and gender segregation of offices and bathrooms in federal government agencies. Moreover, as historian Eric Yellin notes, under Wilson, African Americans were systematically demoted and removed from positions, and whites who scored lower than

<sup>22</sup> Dagbovie, "Willing to Sacrifice," 50.

<sup>23</sup> Late winter 1919 through autumn 1919 has become known as Red Summer because of the explosion of racial violence that erupted in dozens of cities across the United States, resulting of hundreds of deaths and destruction of many African American neighborhoods by marauding white supremacists. "RED SUMMER, The Race Riots of 1919," The National World War I Museum and Memorial: <https://www.theworldwar.org/learn/wwi/red-summer>

<sup>24</sup> Goggin, 153. Craig Simpson, "Before 1963: The 1922 Silent March on Washington," *Washington Spark* <https://washingtonareaspark.com/2013/02/06/before-1963-the-1922-silent-march-on-washington/> Accessed August 7, 2019.

<sup>25</sup> Charles Alan Spears, "'The Nation's Gratitude': The Washington, D.C. Race Riot of 1919," Master's thesis, Howard University, 1999. Peter Perl, "Race Riots of 1919 Gave Glimpse of Future Struggles," *Washington Post* March 1, 1999: A1. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/2000/raceriot0301.htm>. Accessed October 30, 2019.

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African Americans on civil service exams were given jobs over more qualified African Americans.<sup>26</sup>

While D.C. is often described by scholars as a “Jim Crow” or “southern city,” social and cultural relations in D.C., across race and gender, were much more fluid than those terms denote. Public transportation and the public library system were open to all. However, public schools and recreation centers were divided into “colored” and “white” divisions. There were divergent views about this legal practice of racial segregation. Some Washingtonians were happy that young people had access to publicly funded schools and that teachers and administrators had access to well-paying jobs. Others, who were committed to the ideal of democracy, believed that racial segregation was antithetical to democracy and, therefore, fought for racial integration.

The city was also important in the early civil rights movement and black freedom struggles. Although the National Mall looms large as the primary site for protests, Washingtonians were also engaged in local protests that had national reverberations. In 1933, John A. Davis, Sr., Belford V. Lawson, and M. Franklin Thorne founded the New Negro Alliance (NNA). Woodson supported the new organization and became a member. The NNA organized a “Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work” campaign, boycotting white-owned stores in black neighborhoods that refused to hire African Americans.<sup>27</sup> Some white business owners retaliated by seeking a legal injunction to prevent the boycotts. Lawson, an attorney, with the assistance of Thurgood Marshall, took the case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and won. In 1938, *New Negro Alliance v. The Sanitary Grocery Co.* became a landmark decision safeguarding citizens’ right to boycott. In 1939, Woodson’s good friend and colleague, Mary McLeod Bethune, during her tenure as ASNLH president, joined the NNA in a boycott of People’s Drug Store.

In 1949, Mary Church Terrell, first president of the first major national civil rights organization, the National Association of Colored Women (1896), co-led the Coordinating Committee for the Enforcement of the D.C. Anti-Discrimination Laws, expanding on the work of the NNA by targeting white-owned downtown businesses, including restaurants and department stores, that refused to service African Americans. Through pickets, boycotts, and legal action they sought to end racism in public accommodations. In 1953, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *District of Columbia v. John R. Thompson, Co.*, upheld a Reconstruction-era law that made segregation in D.C. public accommodations illegal.<sup>28</sup>

In 1949 and 1950, a group of parents living in the Anacostia neighborhood petitioned the D.C. Board of Education to have their children attend Sousa Junior High School, which was in the white division of the school system. The board refused them admission. James M. Nabrit served as the attorney for the 11 children who served as plaintiffs in *Bolling v. Sharpe*. This case also reached the U.S. Supreme Court and was decided on the same day as the more well-known *Brown v. Board of Education* on May 17, 1954. While *Brown* was unanimously decided using the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, Chief Justice Warren used the Fifth Amendment’s guarantee of *liberty* to declare racial segregation unconstitutional in Washington, D.C.

### ASNLH (1915) & The Journal of Negro History (1916)

<sup>26</sup> Eric S. Yellin, *Racism in the Nation's Service: Government Workers and the Color Line in Woodrow Wilson's America* (University of North Carolina Press, 2016): 127-128.

<sup>27</sup> Michele F. Pacifico, “A History of the New Negro Alliance of Washington, D.C., 1933-1941,” M.A. thesis, George Washington University, 1983.

<sup>28</sup> Marya Annette McQuirter, “African Americans in Washington, D.C.: 1800-1975,” *African American Heritage Trail, Washington, D.C.*, 2003, 5.

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“Its object shall be the collection of sociological and historical documents and the promotion of studies bearing on the Negro.”<sup>29</sup>

### 1917 ASNLH Constitution

“One of Dr. Woodson’s main reasons for establishing [the *Journal*] was to afford Negro scholars a vehicle for publication of their researches.”<sup>30</sup>

### Lorenzo Greene

In September 1915, Woodson was visiting Chicago and in residence at the Wabash Avenue YMCA. It was there that he decided to move forward with the idea of creating an organization devoted to the study of black history and culture. On September 9th, Woodson co-founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH) with four other gentlemen: George Cleveland Hall, W. B. Hartgrove, Alexander L. Jackson, and James E. Stamps. In 1915, the socio-political terrain of the U.S. was particularly intense. While racism had been ever present since the end of Reconstruction, that year marked a resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), a white supremacist organization founded in 1865. A notable landmark of this reinvigorated articulation of white supremacy in American popular culture was the release of D.W. Griffith’s film *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), which created a counternarrative to the democratic gains of Reconstruction by positing the KKK as the organization that would reorient the country back to white rule. Critical to the film was the displacement of violence from whites to blacks. Thus, the film portrayed black men as potential and actual rapists of white women, when the truth was that white men and white women had been the purveyors of violence against black women and men in the U.S. for centuries. Led by the NAACP, individuals and organizations protested the showing of the film through picketing at theaters throughout the U.S. and through appeals to government officials. One of the earliest screenings of the film was at the White House, attended by President Wilson and his family members. In addition, the National Press Club held a private screening in the grand ballroom of the Raleigh Hotel in downtown D.C. Attendees included Chief Justice Edward White, his spouse Leita Montgomery Kent, Secretary of the Navy Josephus P. Daniels, his spouse Addie Worth Bagley, and 88 members of the U.S. Congress and their spouses.<sup>31</sup>

While the ASNLH was not the first organization to promote black history, it was the first national organization with such an expansive vision of black history. As Dr. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, current president of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (formerly ASNLH), stated, “Woodson and the ASNLH, unlike previous groups, began a black history movement led by professionally trained historians whose mission it was to research, promote, publish, and disseminate the history of African-descended people. No other organization before, during, or since the organization’s founding has come close to the breadth and scope of the ASNLH. Woodson, and his many collaborators, made the ASNLH the most successful and longest running organization of its kind, with his life dedicated to ‘the cause’.”<sup>32</sup> It is not, then, hyperbole that Woodson

<sup>29</sup> ASNLH Brochure, n.d. Woodson Collection at Emory, box 1 folder 31; Geneva C. Turner, “A Look at the Association: Past, Present, Future,” *Negro History Bulletin* (May 1965): 184; Dagbovie, *Carter G. Woodson in Washington, D.C.*, 42; ASNLH Articles of Incorporation, Woodson Papers, UC Berkeley Microfilm Collection, reel 1.

<sup>30</sup> Lorenzo J. Greene, *Working with Carter G. Woodson, the Father of Black History: A Diary 1928-1930*. Louisiana State University Press.

<sup>31</sup> Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, “Carter G. Woodson’s Place in History,” Speech presented at the Shiloh Baptist Church, December 19, 2015, 6.

<sup>32</sup> These earlier organizations include the American Negro Academy in Washington, D.C. (1897); the American Negro Historical Society of Philadelphia (1897) and the Negro Society for Historical Research in Yonkers, NY, (1912). Alexander Crummell co-founded the American Negro Academy as an “organization of authors, scholars, artists, and those distinguished in other walks of life, men of African descent, for the promotion of Letters, Science, and Art.” Woodson, along with W. E. B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, Alain Locke, and Arthur Schomburg were members. Ruble, 66. Correspondence from ASALH president, Dr. Evelyn

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is called the “Father of Black History.” He germinated the idea of a black history movement for all and dedicated more than thirty-five years of his life to creating multiple platforms that would make black history a national and global phenomenon. The Association and the *Journal* were the first of these platforms.

Woodson founded the *Journal of Negro History* in 1916 to publish scholarly articles about African American history and by African Americans and other scholars of history. As quoted above, Woodson protégé Lorenzo Greene noted, “One of Dr. Woodson’s main reasons for establishing [the *Journal*] was to afford Negro scholars a vehicle for publication of their research. Black and white scholars turned to [the *Journal*] if they desired to publish findings at variance with [racist views] of black people.” The articles Woodson published in the *Journal* not only challenged racism, but also emphasized daily struggles and resistance. In sum, Woodson’s editorship of the *Journal* furthered his objective to promote and professionalize black history, to provide scholars with a place to publish, and to expose and critique the untruths in some of the white-run history journals.<sup>33</sup>

The first issue of the quarterly *Journal* was published in January 1916. It featured four articles, three primary documents, and four reviews. The featured content covered a wide range of subjects, including education, churches, and local history, and a wide geographic swath, including the U.S., the West Indies, and Africa. There was also a notes section, which included a short remembrance of Booker T. Washington, who died on November 14, 1915, new and upcoming publications, and details about a Fisk University conference convened by scholars interested in “making a systematic study of Negro life.” The journal was available to readers for 25 cents.

In addition to being innovative in their interpretation of black history, scholars publishing in the *Journal* also used new methodologies and approaches to the study of history and the archives. They not only used primary records such as census data, marriage registers, birth and death certificates, diaries, and oral histories, but also approached their subjects in an interdisciplinary manner, combining anthropology, psychology, sociology, and history. While these methods are standard practice for historians today, at the time Woodson was editor of the *Journal*, scholars were introducing groundbreaking and forward-thinking approaches to scholarly inquiry.<sup>34</sup>

Woodson brought the ASNLH and the *Journal of Negro History* with him to Washington, D.C. in 1922, with the support of a \$25,000 research grant from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Foundation, a white philanthropic organization. The funding enabled him to move back to D.C. and devote himself full time to the organization and the journal.<sup>35</sup> That same year, he purchased the house at 1538 9th Street, NW, to have a home for himself and to house the organization, the journal and his new publishing firm, Associated Publishers.

Woodson’s annual reports capture the work he was doing in the field to garner interest in the ASNLH. He reported, “Wherever there is a call to encourage a school or a club to do more for the study of Negro life and history, the Director generally responds.” Woodson’s travels to different cities and the stirring talks he gave typically led to the establishment of “local clubs to cooperate with this national organization.”<sup>36</sup> By 1929, over one hundred schools, junior high through the collegiate level, were using his textbook, *The Negro In Our History*. Furthermore, according to the ASNLH’s reported membership data, over 1600 people had joined the Association, representing forty states, with approximately 34 international members. Woodson was making the

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Brooks Higginbotham, August 13, 2019.

<sup>33</sup> Lorenzo J. Greene, *Working with Carter G. Woodson, the Father of Black History: A Diary 1928-1930*. Louisiana State University Press.

<sup>34</sup> Goggin, 360.

<sup>35</sup> Goggin, 60.

<sup>36</sup> The Annual Report of the Director for the Year 1922-1923,” *Journal of Negro History* 8, no. 4 (October 1923): 32.

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study and proliferation of black history local, national, and international.

Woodson positively reflected on the sustained support from the general public in 1940. He noted that while the income of the ASNLH had dropped tremendously during the early years of the Depression,

“It has gradually increased until it is now about two-thirds of what it was during the most prosperous years of the undertaking...The success thus achieved is a credit to the Negro race and serves as eloquent evidence of that capacity of the Negro for self help...it is fortunate that the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History is obtaining its income in small amounts from a larger number of people.”<sup>37</sup>

Woodson increased his outreach in the 1930s and 1940s, despite the association’s limited funds. He sponsored lectures, teacher-training institutes and workshops, and devoted a lot of his time to local and family history. In addition, he continued his quest and received great support in collecting and disseminating source materials for the study of black history. According to historian Jacqueline Goggin, “Although Woodson’s movement succeeded best in areas with large centers of black population, by the 1920s, non-blacks were also reaching out to ASNLH. White-run boards of education began to integrate black history into the curriculum, white teachers and educational administrators wrote to Woodson for advice, and white-run public libraries purchased more books on black history for their collections.”<sup>38</sup>

Like many reformers of the Progressive era, Woodson believed that education was the key to most problems in society. In particular, that education was instrumental in ending racial bias and prejudice. He believed that prejudice was taught and therefore extended this belief to whites as well as blacks.<sup>39</sup> As Woodson stated during a speech at the Hampton Institute:

"We have a wonderful history behind us. ... If you are unable to demonstrate to the world that you have this record, the world will say to you, 'You are not worthy to enjoy the blessings of democracy or anything else.' They will say to you, 'Who are you anyway?' ... Let us, then, study ... this history ... with the understanding that we are not, after all, an inferior people. ... We are going back to that beautiful history, and it is going to inspire us to greater achievements. It is not going to be long before we can sing the story to the outside world as to convince it of the value of our history ... and we are going to be recognized as men.”<sup>40</sup>

### Associated Publishers (1921)

“The idea in the minds of the [Associated Publishers] incorporators is to meet a long-felt need of supplanting exploiting publishers sending out booking agents, who since the emancipation of Negroes have gone from door to door filling their homes with literature which is neither informing

<sup>37</sup> Carter G. Woodson, “An Accounting for Twenty-Five Years,” *Journal of Negro History* 25, no. 4 (1940): 426. ASNLH also included an Extensions Division, which was comprised of local branches (1919) and a Home Studies Department (1927). ] Givens, 30. Brochure, “Home Study Department of the Extension Division,” Box 1 Folder 32, Carter Godwin Woodson collection, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

<sup>38</sup> Goggin, 118.

<sup>39</sup> Goggin, 156.

<sup>40</sup> Woodson Speech at Hampton Institute Makes Broad Race Appeal-Democracy and the Man Far Down,” *Broad Ax* December 3, 1921, p. 1.

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nor elevating.”<sup>41</sup>

Carter G. Woodson (1921)

In the July 1921 issue of the *Journal of Negro History*, Carter G. Woodson announced the founding of The Associated Publishers, Incorporated, an independent publishing company in Washington, D.C. “The firm will publish books of all kinds, but will direct its attention primarily to works bearing on Negroes so as to supply all kinds of information concerning the Negro race and those who have been interested in its uplift.” Six other individuals, including Mordecai Johnson, who would become the first black president of Howard University in 1926, were involved in the founding of the firm.<sup>42</sup> However, it was principally Woodson’s enterprise. According to historian Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, Woodson’s share of the company was 95% and he used income from book sales to cover his salary.<sup>43</sup> The firm began with capital stock of \$25,000.

Woodson and his colleagues believed that post World War I U.S. was ripe for an independent publishing firm given the increasingly high literacy rates among children, teenagers, and adults. In Washington, D.C., literacy rates were among the best in the country. Woodson stated:

“During the recent years the Negro race has been seeking to learn more about itself and especially since the social upheaval of the World War. The Negro reading public has been largely increased and the number of persons interested in the Negro have so multiplied that creditable publication giving important facts about the race now finds a ready market throughout the United States and even abroad.”<sup>44</sup>

In 1921, Woodson’s *The History of the Negro Church* was the Associated Publisher’s first publication. The following year, *The Negro In Our History*, a textbook, was published. By 1950, Associated Publishers had published more than 60 books.<sup>45</sup>

### Negro History Week (1926)

“If a race has no history, if it has no worth-while tradition, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated.”<sup>46</sup>

Carter G. Woodson (1926)

In 1920, Woodson, a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity,<sup>47</sup> gave a presentation at the fraternity’s annual

<sup>41</sup> Notes, *Journal of Negro History* (July 1921): 380.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. The other incorporators were John W. Davis, D.S.S. Goodloe, Louis R. Mehlinger, C.E. Mitchell, and Byrd Prillerman.

<sup>43</sup> Dagbovie, *Carter G. Woodson in Washington, D.C.*, 80.

<sup>44</sup> Notes, 380.

<sup>45</sup> Rayford W. Logan, “Carter G. Woodson,” *Journal of Negro History* 35 (July 1950): 346.

<sup>46</sup> Carter G. Woodson, “Negro History Week,” *Journal of Negro History* Vol. 22, no. 2 (April 1926): 239.

<sup>47</sup> “Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. is the first international fraternal organization founded on the campus of a historically black college. On the evening of November 17, 1911, Omega Psi Phi was founded inside the Science Building (later renamed Thirkield Hall) at Howard University located in Washington, D.C. The founders were three undergraduates — *Edgar Amos Love*, *Oscar James Cooper* and *Frank Coleman*. Joining them was their faculty adviser, *Ernest Everett Just*. From the initials of the Greek phrase meaning, “*friendship is essential to the soul*”, the name Omega Psi Phi was derived. That phrase was selected as the motto. *Manhood*,

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meeting themed “Democracy and the Man Far Down.” He stated, “If the Negroes hope to enjoy the blessings of real democracy...they must attain economic independence; they must have educational independence; they must develop a press; they must develop a literature; they must learn to preserve their own records; and they must learn the value of tradition.”<sup>48</sup> Inspired by his presentation, the fraternity voted to launch Negro History and Literature Week, grounded in the work of Woodson and the ASNLH. The first Negro History and Literature Week took place the following year, in April 1921.

In 1925, Woodson requested that Negro History and Literature Week be transferred to the ASNLH so that he and his colleagues could oversee it. He envisioned enlarging the annual celebration by reaching out to a larger group of constituents, especially secondary school teachers. Mary McLeod Bethune, as president of the National Association of Teachers in Colored Schools, worked closely with the ASNLH on this effort.<sup>49</sup> Under the ASNLH, the name was changed to Negro History Week and shifted from April to February, to honor Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, who were both born in February. The first Negro History Week took place in 1926 to great success.

In 1937, Woodson shared the unique contours and tenors of Negro History Week celebrations held throughout the U.S. He noted the significant uptick in visits to historic sites that increasingly became a regular part of Negro History Week celebrations.

“Pilgrimages to monuments constituted another important feature of the celebration in 1937. Such interest has been manifested in all celebrations of Negro History Week, but it was more pronounced this year than ever, probably because of a growing appreciation of the characters in history memorialized and the sacredness of the ground on which they labored for humanity. Visitors frequented such places as the Frederick Douglass Home, the scenes of the labors of Booker T. Washington, the birthplace of Paul Laurence Dunbar, the Soujourner [sic] Truth House, the Harriet Tubman shrine, and the tomb of Paul Cuffe. Monuments not the least imposing but great because they are enshrined in the hearts of the descendants of those generations that these heroes served. Exercises rendered on these hallowed spots left a deep impression which the participants will carry with them throughout the years. Not a thought as to the imitation of what these forerunners did but a determination to meet life's challenge in responding to the call of duty with that nobleness of soul which actuated these heroes to unselfish service. A clarification of vision so essential to the preparation of the youth who must serve on tomorrow.”<sup>50</sup>

In 1948, ASNLH began producing Negro History Week kits. Woodson and his colleagues recognized that individuals living in rural areas needed more resources to learn and share black history. The kits, then, included plays, speeches, writings, and photographs. They offered a rich foundation for teachers and others to use these materials to develop their own unique programs and celebrations. It is because of this commitment to make black history materials affordable and available to all that Negro History Week was, according to Dagbovie,

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*Scholarship, Perseverance and Uplift* were adopted as Cardinal Principles.” *The History of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.* Retrieved on January 8, 2020. <https://www.oppf.org/about-omega/>

<sup>48</sup> “Self-Reliance for Negroes,” *Indianapolis Star* November 30, 1921. This article quotes from a speech he gave at Hampton Institute, which appears to be the same or similar speech he gave at the fraternal meeting in 1920. [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/18472780/self\\_reliance\\_for\\_negros\\_speech/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/18472780/self_reliance_for_negros_speech/) Accessed August 15, 2019.

<sup>49</sup> Bethune became president of the ASNLH in 1936.

<sup>50</sup> Carter G. Woodson, “Negro History Week-The Twelfth Year,” *Journal of Negro History* 22 no. 2 (April 1937): 147.

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“the first major achievement in popularizing black history....”<sup>51</sup>

In 1976, during the United States bicentennial celebration., Negro History Week was officially extended to Black History Month. Woodson, undoubtedly, would have approved of this expansion because it meant more opportunities to share and promote black history.<sup>52</sup> Negro History Week and Black History Month (changed by ASALH on February 10, 1976) also inspired other groups throughout the U.S. to broadly celebrate their history and culture with the subsequent creation of Hispanic American Month (1988), Asian Pacific Heritage Month (1990), Women’s History Month (1987), American Indian Heritage Month (1990), and LGBT History Month (1994).

### Negro History Bulletin (1937)

“Readers of this periodical [*The Negro History Bulletin*] who follow the course of study outlined in will understand how to make Negro History Week develop into Negro History Year.”<sup>53</sup>

Carter G. Woodson

*The Negro History Bulletin*, a publication for schoolteachers and the general public, was founded in October 1937. It was published monthly during the school year. The *Negro History Bulletin* was a counterpoint to the more scholarly *Journal of Negro History*. It offered schoolteachers, and many others, low cost access to regular and varied information about black history and culture. According to Dagbovie, the *Negro History Bulletin* regularly offered biographical sketches, photography, book reviews, Q&A, current events, Negro History Week material, poems, Book of the Month suggestions, plays, a diasporic focus, and a children’s page.<sup>54</sup>

Mary McLeod Bethune served as president of ASNLH beginning in 1936 (and through 1950) and urged Woodson to create the *Negro History Bulletin*. As president of the National Association of Teachers in Colored Schools from 1923-1937, she founded and edited the organization’s official publication, *The Bulletin*. She was, then, acutely aware of teachers’ interest in and need for excellent material for curriculum development. Bethune was one of a number of black women responsible for the reach and success of the *Negro History Bulletin*. Other black women served on the editorial and managing boards, served as writers and contributors, and taught the material as schoolteachers. They were the ones most actively engaged with the *Negro History Bulletin*. They were also able to bring to fruition Woodson’s desire to reach “the masses” and “make Negro History Week develop into Negro History Year.” Through their production, dissemination, teaching, sharing, and conversation, African American history was able to become a local, national, and international endeavor. Just two years after its founding, Bethune, Woodson and their colleagues doubled the magazine’s content output from eight pages to sixteen pages. This was done because Woodson believed that schoolteachers needed more information to adequately incorporate black history into their curricula.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Dagbovie, *Carter G. Woodson in Washington, D.C.*, 100.

<sup>52</sup> Jarvis R. Givens, “The Political Origins of Black History Month,” *Black Perspectives*, AAIHS Blog, February 21, 2019. <https://www.aaihs.org/the-political-origins-of-black-history-month/> Accessed October 30, 2019.

<sup>53</sup> Dagbovie, *Carter G. Woodson in Washington, D.C.*, 145.

<sup>54</sup> Dagbovie, *Carter G. Woodson in Washington, D.C.*, 106.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.



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### Carter G. Woodson as Scholar-Activist

“Carter G. Woodson made his fight the effort to desegregate American History.”<sup>56</sup>

ASALH President Dr. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham (2015)

On February 10, 1930, the ASNLH held an “outstanding” Negro History Week celebration in Washington, D.C. It began in the evening at Armstrong High School with a dinner. There were more than 300 noted individuals in attendance. Local luminaries gave presentations. After this event, the guests joined 5,000 other participants at a “demonstration” in a large downtown venue to honor four Congress members--H.P. Cheatham (who was unable to attend), Oscar De Priest, John Lynch, and Thomas E. Miller, and to galvanize attendees to fight for full citizenship, using the tools of research, writing, and elocution. Speaker after speaker spoke out against the abridgement of full citizenship for African Americans after Reconstruction by invoking the ideals and promises of the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. Oscar De Priest stated:

“It is worse than a crime to witness in the United States the gross intolerance which exists in a country famed for its foundation on the rock of liberty. To think that millions of citizens are dis[en]franchised by certain States of the Union, that the people of the United States disregard the provisions of the Constitution is appalling.”<sup>57</sup>

The importance of this event to Woodson is evidenced by his detailed account in the April 1930 issue of the *Journal*. Woodson, in addition to sharing excerpts from De Priest’s speech, shared its reception and impact. Woodson stated:

“The audience received him with vociferous applause. Referring to the present status of the Negro in this Country, he spoke in a fearless manner of the duty of the Negro to contend for his rights as guaranteed by the constitution [sic] of the United States. To enlighten the public, [De Priest] had distributed [copies of the Constitution] in parts where it is not taught in the schools. He hoped that the Negroes of the country will give more attention to the study of the constitution [sic] and will contest every invasion of their rights and privileges therein guaranteed. The oppressed must, therefore, resist the oppressor and incapacitate such enemies of the truth in the efforts to raise up barriers to bar Negroes from spheres into which they should go.”<sup>58</sup>

Woodson’s mission was to “incapacitate” the influence of white historians whom he believed were “enemies of the truth,” about the place of African Americans in history and the democratic vision outlined in the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. In the first half of the twentieth century, many white historians advanced historical scholarship in their classes, at American Historical Association meetings, in the *Journal of American History*, that not only excluded African Americans as historical actors but argued against the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments passed during Reconstruction and downplayed the horror of slavery. As Higginbotham stated,

“Woodson, a relatively recent PhD...dared to counter the scholarship of established white historians, such as the highly acclaimed Ulrich Phillips and William A. Dunning. The influence of these two scholars loomed so large that their ideas were designated as schools of thought, the Phillips School

<sup>56</sup> Higginbotham, “Carter G. Woodson’s Place in History,” 4.

<sup>57</sup> Carter G. Woodson, “Negro History Week Celebration,” *Journal of Negro History* (April 1930): 125-133.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 131.

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of slavery studies, and the Dunning School of Reconstruction history. For example, in *American Negro Slavery* (1918) Phillips described southern slave plantations as training schools for civilization. Dunning's book *Reconstruction: Political and Economic* (1907) portrayed a highly pejorative image of [Reconstruction].<sup>59</sup>

Woodson, then, understood that knowledge was power. He was motivated to research, write, publish, present, and share that knowledge in order to “desegregate” American history and, in addition, to provide civil rights lawyers of the 1920s-1940s, including Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall, with material to argue for full “freedom, citizenship, and voting rights” in state and federal courts.<sup>60</sup>

Spencer Crew, in his 2019 book, *Thurgood Marshall: A Life in American History*, writes that Thurgood Marshall's experience desegregating a white-owned theater in Oxford, Pennsylvania while a student at Lincoln University was critical to his devotion to civil rights and his desire to understand African Americans historically. After that win, he began to read the work of Carter G. Woodson, among others, which “increased his appreciation for African American culture and sharpened his thoughts about the place of people of color in the United States.”<sup>61</sup> After graduating from Lincoln University with honors in 1930 and being refused admission by the University of Maryland Law School because of their whites-only admissions policy, Marshall went to Howard University Law School, where he became a student of Charles Hamilton Houston, an indefatigable administrator, scholar, and civil rights attorney.

Charles Hamilton Houston and Carter G. Woodson had a long working relationship. Houston, who helped to develop Howard University Law School as a civil rights behemoth and was critical to the legal civil rights work of the NAACP that led to *Brown v. Board of Education*, used Woodson's home archive and library at 1538 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW in the 1920s, while he was dean of the law school. At that time, Houston was researching and writing his 1928 study which explored the role of lawyers as a professional class and was one of the first reports to explore the important role of lawyers in the black freedom struggle.<sup>62</sup> Woodson, then, and the institution that he built, was a major part of the process by which attorneys like Houston and Marshall were able to see themselves as individuals and attorneys anew, which was central to their ability to transform civil rights into a viable arena for lawyers.

Finally, Carter G. Woodson also personally fought back against racism and white supremacy that he experienced not only in the field of education but also over more than ten years while attempting to travel outside of D.C. Woodson wrote countless letters to the heads of white-owned businesses and then sent them as letters-to-the-editor to newspapers in order to encourage readers to be vocal and to boycott white-owned establishments. In a November 1932 letter, Woodson recounted how a white clerk at the local Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Company office refused to sell him first class accommodations on a train to West Virginia. He wrote this to the head of the company:

This is merely to say that the Ku Klux Klan policy still dominates your City Ticket office at 1714 14th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. The management there still refuses to sell Negroes reservations except when they have Lower 1 available; and some of the clerks do not want to sell that. I have written to you to this effect several times, and no change in this policy has been noted.

<sup>59</sup> Higginbotham, “Carter G. Woodson's Place in History,” 5.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Spencer R. Crew, *Thurgood Marshall: A Life in American History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2019), 17-18.

<sup>62</sup> Kenneth W. Mack, “Rethinking Civil Rights Lawyering and Politics in the Era Before Brown,” *Yale Law Journal* 115 no. 2, 265-266.

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The management here in Washington, however, had rather see the road go into the hands of a receiver than sell a Negro a Pullman berth. This may be a fine way to promote the Ku Klux Klan movement, but it will never do for running a business. Inasmuch as this is your policy, I am going to West Virginia by another route which does not champion the cause of the Ku Klux Klan...The only thing we can do, then, is to advise self-respecting Negroes to travel on some other road whenever they can.<sup>63</sup>

Woodson's commitment to scholarship and activism continued until his death on April 3, 1950.

### 1976 National Historic Landmark Designation

The designation of the Carter G. Woodson Home as an NHL was a result of three major factors. First, was the push for urban renewal in Washington, D.C. during the 1950s and 1960s that targeted majority black neighborhoods in the city as "blighted" and "slums" for wholesale redevelopment. Subsequently, the Shaw neighborhood where Woodson lived and worked, sustained significant damage in the 1968 uprising that engulfed the city for four days in response to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Memphis, Tennessee. While Woodson's house was not directly impacted by the destruction, it was centrally located near 14<sup>th</sup> & U Streets, NW, that was one of the centers of the uprising. Finally, as the pace for reconstruction after the 1968 riots in Washington hastened, so too did homegrown initiatives to identify and safeguard sites of black heritage in the city. Brothers Robert deForrest and Vincent deForest formed the Washington-based Afro-American Bicentennial Corporation (ABC) to address this issue. The ABC considered the Bicentennial to be a "vehicle for improving the lives of Black Americans."<sup>64</sup>

In the early 1970s, Robert Utley, NPS Chief Historian and NHL project lead, reached out to the ASNLH to help the NPS address the under-representation of black landmarks (and the over-representation of white landmarks) in the program. Utley acknowledged criticism from black historians about the absence of black sites in the Park System and he tried to find organizations that could do the work. At the time, there was no black professional staff acting within the Historic Site Survey, National Register of Historic Places, or NHL programs. The ASNLH was located within its long-time home – the residence and office of Carter G. Woodson, "Father of Black History in the Shaw neighborhood." Utley recalled his visit with Historic Site Survey head Horace Sheely to the ASNLH headquarters:

...Horace and I got in a taxi cab and went over there. It was in a portion of Washington that had been badly gutted in the 1968 riots, and we both felt out of place in that old rowhouse that had survived while all of its neighbors had burned down. There it stood in all of its loneliness...<sup>65</sup>

Through the ASNLH, NPS was introduced to and hired ABC for an initial three-year contract to identify, study, and nominate black historic landmarks throughout the country.<sup>66</sup> ASNLH scholars and

<sup>63</sup> Dagbovie, *Carter G. Woodson in Washington, D.C.*, 68-69.

<sup>64</sup> The variance in the spelling of their last name is due to their foster care upbringing. "'76 Bicentennial Plans Cut Back as Mood Shifts,' *New York Times* July 4, 1973: 40.

<sup>65</sup> "An Interview with Robert M. Utley on The History of Historic Preservation in the National Park Service—1947-1980," *Southwest Cultural Resources Center Professional Paper* no.16. September 26, 1985. <http://npshistory.com/series/archeology/scrc/16/utley7.htm> (Accessed July 1, 2019).

<sup>66</sup> Vincent deForest of ABC had already developed a relationship with then-president of ASNLH Charles Wesley. DeForest was the

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historians were employed by ABC to do the foundational work of increasing black historic sites in the NPS. Before the brothers acquired the contract, the NPS had 1200 NHLs, with only three recorded specifically for black history – the homes of Frederick Douglass (D.C.), Booker T. Washington (Virginia), and George Washington Carver (Missouri).<sup>67</sup> ABC contracted out work to researchers to develop Historic Site Survey data and NHL nominations related to the local and national black struggle. ABC worked to nominate landmarks under three broad themes: Development of the English Colonies, 1700-1775; Major American Wars; and Society and Social Conscience. These themes emphasized the early African American contributions to the founding of the United States, African American sacrifice in wartime, and social movements that laid the groundwork for the civil rights activism of the day.

ABC was successful in nominating 61 landmarks by the end of its initial contract, including the Carter G. Woodson home, which was designated an NHL in 1976.<sup>68</sup> The previous nomination form indicates that the building falls under the NHL framework Theme 8: “Contemplative Society, Education and Intellectual Currents.”<sup>69</sup> Areas of significance listed include education and African American history, with significant dates identified as 1915-1950.<sup>70</sup> Other sites designated as NHLs in Washington, D.C. during this period through ABC’s work and collaboration include the Blanche K. Bruce Home (1975), the Mary Church Terrell House (1975), the Mary Ann Shadd Cary House (1976), and the Charlotte Forten Grimke Home (1976).

### National Historic Landmark Update

In 2016, the NPS undertook a rehabilitation of the building. The project restored the building to the period of significance (Period 3, 1922-1950), when Carter G. Woodson owned and occupied the house, and rehabilitated it for use as a museum. The updated nomination’s period of significance starts in 1922 and ends with Woodson’s death in 1950. The Association continued to occupy the site until 1971, however those years are outside the period of significance for this site.

The property is also a contributing resource to the National Register-listed Mount Vernon West Historic District (National Register 1999). The Carter G. Woodson Home was designated a National Historic Site on December 19, 2003 (P.L. 108-192). In 2005, the National Park Service acquired the property and in 2006 the Carter G. Woodson National Historic Site became the 389<sup>th</sup> unit of the National Park System.

This nomination form revises the 1976 NHL form, updating it to current standards. The Woodson Home

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architect of the African Methodist Episcopal church in St. Louis, Missouri, where Wesley served as a minister. Wesley, Mary F. Berry, Senator Edward Brooke and Representative Shirley Chisolm were a few of the power names listed on ABC’s advisory board. Two other ABC advisory board members were also appointed to NPS boards – Dorothy Porter (Howard University) to the Historic Site Survey’s Consulting Committee, and Edgar Toppin (Virginia State University) to the Secretary’s Advisory Board.

<sup>67</sup> Angela Terrell, “Black Landmarks,” *Washington Post*. August 3, 1974: B1. “Around Town: ‘Requiescant in Pace,’” *Washington Post*. August 11, 1975: A18. The count on the total number of NHLs in 1970 vary.

<sup>68</sup> Barry Mackintosh, *The Historic Sites Survey and National Historic Landmarks Program: A History* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1985): 73.

<sup>69</sup> This theme is from a 1970 framework recommended to the NPS by its Advisory Board, and is no longer used by the NPS. See U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Part One of the National Park System Plan History* (1972).

<sup>70</sup> Those dates reflect the time from the founding of the ASNLH to Woodson’s death. Since the ASNLH was founded in Chicago, not at the Woodson house, later research reports have listed period of significance from 1922-1950, indicating the period from which Woodson purchased and occupied the house as a start date. Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, “‘Willing to Sacrifice:’ Carter G. Woodson, the Father of Black History, and the Carter G. Woodson Home,” *Woodson Home National Historic Site Historic Resource Study* (2012); Beyer Blinder Belle, *Carter G. Woodson Home Historic Structure Report* (2008).

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is eligible for designation under NHL Criterion 2, for being closely associated with Carter G. Woodson's productive life and career, and reflective of his extraordinary accomplishments in American history -- it served as the office-home from which Woodson developed, promulgated, and sustained the idea of black history. He operated his organization from the building, published books, articles, and newsletters that supported the idea of black history, and engaged the public from this site. In essence, this building was a home, office, archive, and site of production. It is also eligible under Criterion 3 for its close and significant association with the work of Woodson who developed, promoted, and distributed, through the ASNLH, educational pedagogy and information that debunked racist histories that upheld Jim Crow oppression of black people. In doing so, Woodson laid the foundation for black social consciousness that would grow during the "modern" Civil Rights era of the 1950s and 1960s. Woodson's work tasked blacks and other Americans with pushing the nation forward to realize its truest ideals of citizenship -- that all people are created equal, that they are endowed with the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and that they deserve equal rights, treatment, and protection as afforded by the Constitution.

**NHL Criterion 2:** The Carter G. Woodson Home at 1538 Ninth Street in Northwest Washington, D.C. was the home, office, and workplace of Carter Godwin Woodson (1875-1950) – the “Father of Black History” -- from 1922 until his death in 1950, the most important years of his life as a pioneering historian of African American cultural and social history. For almost three decades, Woodson lived in the house at 1538 Ninth Street and used it as the headquarters of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH, now the Association for the Study of African American Life and History or ASALH) and the organization's journals, the *Journal of Negro History* (now the *Journal of African American History*) and the *Negro History Bulletin* (now the *Black History Bulletin*). Woodson also operated, from his home, Associated Publishers, Inc., an independent commercial publishing house that he founded in 1921. Woodson successfully raised the profile of black history in the United States, not only through his numerous publications, but also by establishing Negro History Week, which continues today as Black History Month. In addition to instituting black history as an integral part of American history and life, Woodson, his colleagues and proteges, were also progressive in their multidisciplinary approach to historical research and writing that foreshadowed significant changes to the field of history later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### ***Comparison to Other Related Properties:***

The only other property related to the founding of the ASNLH is the Wabash Avenue YMCA at 3763 S. Wabash Avenue in Chicago, where the foundational meeting was held. The meeting took place at this location since Carter G. Woodson and William B. Hartgrove were staying at the YMCA, and A. L. Jackson had recently become the facility manager.<sup>71</sup> Since this site acted only as an initial meeting space, and not an operational space for the association, it does not embody the same value as the Woodson House. The Wabash Avenue YMCA was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986.

Prior to purchasing the house on Ninth Street, Woodson periodically lived in Washington, D.C., beginning in 1909, when he took up a position at Armstrong High School. According to city directories and the federal census, between 1910 and 1922 Woodson was either a boarder or rented a house in Washington, D.C. While all these houses are extant and retain integrity, Woodson only lived in them for

<sup>71</sup> Carter G. Woodson Center, Berea College, “The Founding of the Association September 9, 1915” <https://www.berea.edu/cgwc/the-founding-of-the-association-september-9-1915/> Accessed July 30, 2019.

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a short time and not during the most productive years of his career. (See Table 1)

**Table 1: Washington, D.C. Residences of Carter G. Woodson**

| YEAR | ADDRESS                         | OCCUPATION                     | SOURCE              |
|------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1910 | 1928 11th Street, NW            | Boarder, public school teacher | 1910 Federal Census |
| 1911 | 928 T Street NW                 | Teacher                        | 1911 City Directory |
| 1915 | 2223 12 <sup>th</sup> Street NW | Teacher, M Street School       | 1915 City Directory |
| 1918 | 2223 12 <sup>th</sup> Street NW | Teacher, Dunbar High School    | 1918 City Directory |
| 1919 | 2223 12th Street NW             | Teacher, Miner Normal School   | 1919 City Directory |
| 1920 | 1925 13th Street NW             | Dean, Howard University        | 1920 City Directory |
| 1921 | 21 U Street NW                  | Editor                         | 1921 City Directory |

The exact location of Carter G. Woodson’s birthplace near New Canton, Virginia in Buckingham County is unknown. Two Virginia Historical Highway markers and a Civil Rights in Education Heritage Trail sign identify the general vicinity of his birth.<sup>72</sup> The Douglass High School building that Woodson attended in Huntington, West Virginia, is no longer extant, though a successor building, erected in 1924 was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.<sup>73</sup> The house Woodson purchased for his sister Bessie Yancey at 1703 Artisan Avenue in Huntington, West Virginia is also no longer extant. Woodson’s funeral was held at Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. His final resting place is Lincoln Memorial Cemetery in Suitland, Maryland.

While Carter G. Woodson’s early life unarguably helped form his cause and drive, his most prolific years were with the Association and during the 28 years that he lived and worked out of the house at 1538 Ninth Street, NW. As there are no other extant locations so deeply connected to Woodson professional and personal accomplishments, his office-home at 1538 9<sup>th</sup> Street is the best suited to represent his significant career.

<sup>72</sup> The Historical Marker Database, “Carter G. Woodson,” Historical Marker F-53 <https://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=28972>, F-57 <https://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=28977>, and CREIHT Marker 5 <https://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=31608> Accessed July 31, 2019.

<sup>73</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form Douglass Junior and Senior High School (1985). The original Douglass High building, located at the corner of Hal Greer Boulevard and 16th Street in Huntington was renamed for Barnett Elementary School when the replacement Douglass school was built in 1924.

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**NHL Criterion 3:** This is the primary site associated with Carter G. Woodson's work as a scholar-activist. Woodson's scholarship proclaimed that blacks should have equal access to rights and equal treatment as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. It is through association with Woodson, as well as the multitude of activities that happened at the site -- research, writing, conducting meetings, training future historians, public outreach, publishing -- that make this site a physical manifestation of these ideals. It is in his office home that he developed a framework and methodology for African American history, as well as trained future scholars for the cause.

Woodson brought about the rewriting of the American past by starting a movement that would ultimately convey the true meaning of the first line of U.S. Constitution's preamble: "We the people of the United States." He did so by calling attention to the diversity of the American people and by introducing to the larger public African Americans' contributions to the building of this nation. In the early twentieth century, when racial segregation operated legally and highly respected scholars of the American Revolution, slavery, and the Civil War, presented a whites-only narrative of American heritage, Woodson led the way toward filling in the gaps in a story that omitted blacks and other groups from the historical narrative. Equally important, he initiated the first sustained fact-driven movement to refute interpretations that explicitly disparaged black men and women by referring to them as inferior and as having no history—interpretations that served to sanction racial discrimination. For example, many racist statements went unquestioned in historiography, such as made by the historian Ulrich Phillips, whose highly influential book *American Negro Slavery* (1918) described the southern system of human bondage as a "training school for civilization."

Woodson's commitment to truth through the work of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now ASALH), founded in 1915, led to a widespread and now longstanding endeavor to contest the popular saying during his lifetime that "America is the white man's country." Such an ambitious project required more than a blacks-only movement. Nowhere is this more evident than in Woodson's *Journal of Negro History*. For many years this journal was the only one to publish articles, documents, bibliographies, and book reviews on subjects related to the history of black Americans and to race relations, generally. In the very first article to appear in the first issue of the *Journal of Negro History* (1916), Woodson identified the ways members of Cincinnati's pre-Civil War black community and their allies in the white community worked together and succeeded in providing schools for black youth in the face of strong racist opposition. Indeed, Woodson's *Journal of Negro History* was the only professional historical periodical to publish race-related topics in a regular and consistent way. And the *Journal* created opportunities for people of all races to publish in its pages. The list of article contributors in Woodson's day includes black historians such as Benjamin Quarles, who was the first author to write about African American soldiers in the Revolutionary War, and other famous black historians such as Charles H. Wesley, Rayford W. Logan, and John Hope Franklin. All of them had their writings first come to light through the *Journal of Negro History*. Thus, Woodson made possible both the opportunity and vehicle for black scholars to publish. Because of this, many black scholars, now recognized as influential, gained an audience as well as professional respect for their work.

While Woodson served as a role model and mentor for younger black scholars, who worked with him to expand and correct scholarly and public understanding of the nation's past, his efforts to tell a fuller and truer American story steadily influenced a growing number of white historians in the years prior to his death in 1950. Some of them published in the *Journal of Negro History* and the *Negro History Bulletin*. Many presented papers at the ASALH annual conferences, well before African American scholars appeared in the journals and on the conference programs of the white professional historical meetings. For example, John Hope Franklin writes in his autobiography about the tremendous controversy surrounding the invitation extended to him to present at the Southern Historical Association's meeting in 1949. This was not the case for ASALH's annual meetings, at

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which men and women of all races and ethnicities have shared their research findings with conference attendees, similarly diverse, from the organization's founding until this very day. Carter Woodson's many programs engaged with and won the respect of eminent white scholars during his lifetime, including Arthur Meier, Sr. and Jr., Richard Hofstadter, Francis Simkins, George Tindall, and C. Vann Woodward. John Hope Franklin would use the term, "intellectual kinsmen," for the many whites who took seriously the African American historical perspective because of the foundation laid by Woodson. Establishing thorough, objective research and analysis (Woodson used the term "scientific") to prove that African Americans had a history and one worthy of respect has left yet another lasting legacy. Woodson's focus on African Americans paved the way for other neglected groups—for example, women, different ethnic groups, and the disabled—to later develop fields of history to make known that they, too, are included in "We the people."

As historian V.P. Franklin argues, "throughout the 19th century scholarly research by African American intellectuals and learned works by public figures were often directly connected to social and political activism, and this trend would continue in the 20th century, defining the distinctive nature of the African American intellectual tradition in the United States."<sup>74</sup> Scholar John Hope Franklin contends:

The work of Dr. [Carter G.] Woodson and the Association [for the Study of Negro Life and History] in those early years may be regarded as launching the era of "The New Negro History." Dr. Woodson and his associates went about the task of exploding the myths of Negro history and of putting the Negro in his rightful place in the history of this country. And they did it with as much precision and system as those who sought to tear the Negro out of any meaningful context of American history.

This was, perhaps, the most far-reaching and ambitious effort to rewrite history that has ever been attempted in this country. *But it was more than an attempt to rewrite history.* It was a remarkable attempt to rehabilitate a whole people—to explode racial myths, to establish a secure and respectable place for the Negro in the evolution of the American social order, to develop self-respect and self-esteem among those who had been subjected to the greatest indignities known in the Western world. *Finally, it was a valiant attempt to force America to keep faith with herself, to remind her that truth is more praiseworthy than power, and that justice and equality, long the state policy of this nation, should apply to all its citizens and even to the writing of history* (emphasis added).<sup>75</sup>

Woodson's activism is evident in his establishment of ASNLH, the *Journal of Negro History*, Associated Publishers, Inc., the *Negro History Bulletin*, establishment of Negro History Week, and his numerous publications that pushed forward the idea of full citizenship for black Americans.

As noted in the "Civil Rights in America" NHL Theme Study:

It was not until 1776 that a clear statement regarding civil rights rang out, in the words of the Declaration: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are

<sup>74</sup> V. P. Franklin, "The Power to Define: African American Scholars, Activism, and Social Change, 1916-2015," *Journal of African American History* 100 no. 1, "Centennial Perspectives, 1915-2015" (Winter 2015): 5. Contemporary historians and cultural critics refer to early black educators such as Woodson, Anna Julia Cooper, Alain LeRoy Locke, W. E. B. Du Bois, Mary McLeod Bethune, etc. as scholar activists. See Dagbovie, "Willing to Sacrifice," 50; Carl A. Grant, Keffrelyn D. Brown, Anthony L. Brown, *Black Intellectual Thought in Education: The Missing Traditions of Anna Julia Cooper, Carter G. Woodson, and Alain LeRoy Locke* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Dwayne Ashley, Juan Williams, and Adrienne Ingram, *I'll Find a Way or Make One: A Tribute to Historically Black Colleges and Universities* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009).

<sup>75</sup> John Hope Franklin, "The New Negro History," *Journal of Negro History* (April 1957): 93-94.



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endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Although Thomas Jefferson’s words have sometimes seemed to ring hollow, they nonetheless constitute one of America’s shining ideals— an inspiration to the world—that all citizens have equal rights and stand equal before the law.<sup>76</sup>

Woodson consistently engages with these inconsistencies in his scholarship and activism. Woodson launched a *movement* (and refers to it as such) to give an accurate account of the American heritage. The great ideal of the American people as recognized in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution was undermined in history books and films, such as *Birth of a Nation* (1915). Woodson did not merely identify the lives of significant black people, he worked to rid the American people of a whites-only and racist view of the history of this nation - the narrative of the “Lost Cause” which proliferated in post-Reconstruction America. Ulrich Phillips and William Archibald Dunning were two of the noted white scholars who argued in favor of slavery and denounced Reconstruction. Thus, Woodson sought “truth” in the American narrative by revealing the African American role in the founding of this nation, in the American Revolution, in the abolitionist struggle against slavery, in the Civil War, and more. Through knowledge, Woodson revealed not only a pluralistic nation, but he also strove for “equal justice for all” through knowledge of historical facts. As Woodson argued in the introduction to *The Mis-Education of the Negro*:

The so-called modern education, with all its defects, however, does others so much more good than it does the Negro, because it has been worked out in conformity to the needs of those who have enslaved and oppressed weaker peoples. For example, the philosophy and ethics resulting from our educational system have justified slavery, peonage, segregation, and lynching. The oppressor has the right to exploit, to handicap, and to kill the oppressed. Negroes daily educated in the tenets of such a religion of the strong have accepted the status of the weak as divinely ordained, and during the last three generations of their nominal free-dom they have done practically nothing to change it.<sup>77</sup>

He also focused on the past, for example, Reconstruction, to call attention to disfranchisement, Jim Crow, and other forms of racial injustice. On February 10, 1930, Negro History Week was celebrated with a march and banquet with the keynote speaker being Oscar De Priest, congressman from Illinois, who spoke on voting rights. Also, Woodson’s interactions with teachers, black and white, helped to promote racial understanding and promoted racial tolerance. The elevation of black history for Woodson, then, was to tell a fuller and truer story of American history, one that would then allow for the United States to fulfill its promises of liberty and citizenship. Quoted at length:

In our own particular history we would not dim one bit the lustre of any star in our firmament. We would not learn less of George Washington, “First in War, First in Peace and First in the Hearts of his Countrymen”; but we would learn something also of the three thousand Negro soldiers of the American Revolution who helped to make this “Father of our Country” possible. We would not neglect to appreciate the unusual contribution of Thomas Jefferson to freedom and democracy; but we would invite attention also to two of his outstanding contemporaries, Phillis Wheatley, the writer of interesting verse, and Benjamin Banneker, the mathematician, astronomer, and advocate of a world peace plan set forth in 1793 with the vital principles of Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations. We would in no way detract from the fame of Perry on Lake Erie or Jackson at New Orleans in the second struggle with England; but we would remember the gallant black men who assisted in winning these memorable victories on land

<sup>76</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Historic Landmarks Program, *Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites* (2008), i.

<sup>77</sup> Carter G. Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1933), xii.

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and sea. We would not cease to pay tribute to Abraham Lincoln as the “Savior of the Country”; but we would ascribe praise also to the one hundred and seventy-eight thousand Negroes who had to be mustered into the service of the Union before it could be preserved, and who by their heroism demonstrated that they were entitled to freedom and citizenship.<sup>78</sup>

Woodson argued that elevating black Americans’ contributions to the United States would push the country forward in achieving constitutional ideals about liberty and individual freedom. Pero Gaglo Dagbovie is careful to note that while Woodson and other Progressive Era African American intellectuals possessed a privileged status, they were careful to wrap their fight for black liberation within the rhetoric of American patriotism, so as not to seem unpatriotic. Dagbovie argues that “while they criticized the United States for dehumanizing African Americans and for not living up to the ideals of the Founding Fathers, they avoided being unpatriotic. Like their counterparts who served in the U.S. armed forces during an age of empire building, African American historians of the Progressive Era believed that their patriotism could help them gain access to certain rights and resources as well as respect for black people.”<sup>79</sup> This push to make the United States a true democracy for all its citizens, as opposed to a select few, and the patriotic contributions black Americans made to the founding of the country is clear in Woodson’s quote above. Thus, Woodson’s black liberation methodology was grounded in rigorous scholarship, public history, and patriotism. As Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton explained in her testimony to support incorporation of the site into the National Park System:

The Woodson home is a historic site because of the work that was done there and the influence of Dr. Woodson on American history and historiography and because *his work helped bring changes in American attitudes concerning black people and ultimately changes in the legal status of African-Americans in our country* (emphasis added).<sup>80</sup>

The NPS Long Range Interpretive Plan for the Carter G. Woodson National Historic Site reiterates this notion, stating that “a fundamental value of the site is its connection to the struggle for civil rights for all Americans and the belief that everyone deserves dignity and basic human rights.”<sup>81</sup> As evidenced, Woodson’s educational ideals are directly tied to the foundational tenets of American democracy guaranteed under the Constitution, and his broad-ranging scholarship and activism were central to the modern Civil Rights Movement that built on and succeeded his work.

### Other Properties Associated with Black History and Black Intellectual Organizations

Other properties associated with the development of black history as an intellectual field include the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, which was designated an NHL in 2016. Along with Arturo Schomburg, Jesse E. Moorland is also credited with developing and promoting a substantial collection of scholarship on black history. The Moorland-Spingarn Research Collection is housed at Howard University’s Founders Library, which was listed as an NHL in 2001, along with Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel and Frederick Douglass

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 155-156.

<sup>79</sup> Dagbovie, “Willing to Sacrifice,” 22-23.

<sup>80</sup> “Statement of Hon. Eleanor Holmes Norton, Delegate from the District of Columbia,” Hearing Before the Subcommittee on National Parks of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, One Hundred Eighth Congress, First Congress, First Session on S. 499, S. 546, S. 643, S. 677, S. 1060, H.R. 255, H.R. 1012, S. H.R. 1577, June 10, 2003 (Washington, 2003), 5-6.

<sup>81</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site: Long Range Interpretive Plan* (2016), 6.

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Memorial Hall. The primary significance for that listing was for its association with the fight to desegregate public schools, not for association with African American historical scholarship.<sup>82</sup>

The three major black intellectual organizations that were contemporaneous with the ASNLH are no longer active entities. The American Negro Academy, a predecessor to the ASNLH, was founded in 1897 and held conferences in the Lincoln Memorial Church in Washington, D.C. The original building was replaced with the current structure in 1928. The church was listed on the National Register in 1995. Its congregation dissolved in 2018, and the future use of the building is uncertain.<sup>83</sup> The American Negro Historical Society of Philadelphia (1897) papers reside within the collection of the Historical Society of Philadelphia.<sup>84</sup> The papers of the Negro Society for Historical Research (1911) are housed in the Schomburg collection.<sup>85</sup> There are no other known buildings associated with those two organizations.

### Historic Themes and Contexts

The life and work of Carter G. Woodson occupy a moment in American history between the era of Reconstruction and the advent of the modern Civil Rights Movement. The height of Woodson's educational advocacy was achieved in the interwar Jim Crow era. As such he is not easily categorized within the larger NPS Civil Rights thematic framework but falls into the periods identified as "Rekindling Civil Rights, 1900-1941" and "The Birth of the Civil Rights Movement, 1941-1954." The former time frame includes the Niagara Movement and the founding of the NAACP. Woodson was a contemporary of Arturo Schomburg, W. E. B. Du Bois, Mary Church Terrell, Marcus Garvey, Charles Hamilton Houston, and Mary McLeod Bethune during this time of expansion in black intellectual activity, creativity, and political activism following the failure of Reconstruction. In many ways, Woodson was ahead of his time. Within his seminal work, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, Woodson addresses topics of oppression for black Americans that would show up later as protected provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (including voting, desegregation in public facilities, desegregation in public accommodations,) which would pass three decades after the publication and fourteen years after Woodson's death.

The Carter G. Woodson Home falls in line with the thematic framework II. Creating Social Institutions and

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<sup>82</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel Frederick Douglass Memorial Hall Founders Library (2001).

<sup>83</sup> American Negro Academy, "The Third Annual Meeting of the American Negro Academy," ca. 1899. W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries

<http://credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b001-i078> Accessed July 31, 2019; U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form Lincoln Industrial Mission/Lincoln Memorial Congregational Church (1995); D.C. Preservation League, "Lincoln Congregational Temple United Church of Christ," D.C. Historic Sites <https://historicsites.DCpreservation.org/items/show/330> Accessed July 31, 2019; Cultural Tourism D.C., Lincoln Memorial Congregational Church/American Negro Academy, African American Heritage Trail

<https://www.culturaltourismDC.org/portal/web/portal%20/lincoln-memorial-congregational-church/american-negro-academy-african-american-heritage-trail> Accessed July 31, 2019; DeNeen L. Brown, "The End of Our Journey': A Historic Black Church Closes its Doors in a Changing D.C." *Washington Post* September 30, 2018 [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/the-end-of-our-journey-a-historic-black-church-closes-its-doors-in-a-changing-DC/2018/09/30/b2f3f222-c1c5-11e8-a1f0-a4051b6ad114\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/the-end-of-our-journey-a-historic-black-church-closes-its-doors-in-a-changing-DC/2018/09/30/b2f3f222-c1c5-11e8-a1f0-a4051b6ad114_story.html) Accessed July 30, 2019.

<sup>84</sup> The Historic Society of Philadelphia, Leon Gardiner collection of American Negro Historical Society Records <http://www2.hsp.org/collections/manuscripts/g/Gardiner0008.html> Accessed July 31, 2019.

<sup>85</sup> Elinor Des Verney Sinnette, *Arthur Alfonso Schomburg, Black Bibliophile & Collector: A Biography* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989).

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Movements, subcategories 3. clubs and organizations and 4. reform movements, for his work founding ASNLH and the creation of Negro History Week, two institutions that exist to present day as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) and Black History Month, respectively.<sup>86</sup>

Woodson was a prolific scholar and held various teaching and administrative positions but dedicated his life to the production of scholarship. With the Associated Publishers, Inc. and ASNLH headquartered in his house he produced the *Journal of Negro History*, the *Negro History Bulletin*, and other scholarly works related to black history. Therefore, the site exemplifies thematic framework III. Expressing Cultural Values: 2. educational and intellectual currents; 3. literature 4. mass media.

Woodson's diligent and robust work collecting primary and secondary source material related to black history for his personal collection as well as his archive within the Library of Congress, producing scholarly and popular publications for the masses, qualifies for the following Historic Contexts: XIX. Literature; C. Non-Fiction; D. Journalism: Opinion and Criticism; E. Newswriting and Reporting. Since this scholarly production was meant specifically to apply to education from primary to post-secondary schools with the ultimate goal of integrating black history into American history teaching and scholarship more generally, his work also falls within the Historic Contexts: XXVII. Education; D. Specialized Education; 1. Conceptual Development; 2. Patterns of Organization; G. Adjunct Educational Institutions; 4. Other Specialized Institutions; H. Special Populations; 2. Ethnic Populations.

Scholars of black history and ethnic studies have characterized Woodson's work as foundational to the development and proliferation of Africana studies, black studies, and African American studies programs and departments in post-secondary degree-granting institutions across the United States and in comparable educational institutions throughout the world. As the demand for Afrocentric education grew in the late 1960s and early 1970s, black academics looked towards the work of Woodson as evidence of the depth and breadth of black history, and the need to establish college programs and departments dedicated solely to that field as an autonomous subject apart from history and literature. Additionally, Woodson's research and public outreach was the foundation upon which black activists worked in promoting self-love and black power in the Civil Rights-Black Power era. Therefore, while Woodson pre-dated the apex of the Civil Rights-Black Power movement, he was a scholar-activist who set the stage for arguments made during that time. As such, the Woodson home is relevant to the Historic Theme IV. Shaping the Political Landscape 4. political ideas, cultures, and theories and Historical Contexts: XXXIX. Intellectual Currents; C. Ideologies, as well as Interpretation of the Branches of Knowledge (History, Philosophy of History, Political Philosophy, etc.); XXXI. Social and Humanitarian Movements M. Civil Rights Movements.

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<sup>86</sup> These frameworks were originally proposed in U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Carter G. Woodson Home Special Resource Study* (2001): 18.

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### **6. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION AND STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY**

#### **Ownership of Property**

Private:  
Public-Local:  
Public-State:  
Public-Federal: X

#### **Category of Property**

Building(s): X  
District:  
Site:  
Structure:  
Object:

**Number of Resources within Boundary of Property: 1**

#### **Contributing**

Buildings: 1  
Sites:  
Structures:  
Objects:  
Total: 1

#### **Noncontributing**

Buildings: 0  
Sites:  
Structures:  
Objects:  
Total: 0

### **PROVIDE PRESENT AND PAST PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS OF PROPERTY**

**(Please see specific guidance for type of resource[s] being nominated)**

#### **Neighborhood Setting and Historic Development**

The Carter G. Woodson Home, constructed between 1872 and 1873 by an unknown architect and builder, is nestled within a solidly residential block in the Shaw neighborhood of Northwest Washington, D.C.<sup>87</sup> The house is one of nine three-story, brick row houses built together in the early 1870s on rectangular lots measuring 120 feet deep and 17 feet 9 1/3 inches wide. Lot 819 is bounded by Ninth Street on the east and by a 10-foot wide alley on the west. The site is within the historic boundaries of the District of Columbia's Federal City as laid out by Pierre Charles L'Enfant. The house and its row are adjacent to and across the street from other mid-to late 19th-century rowhouses. These houses and the immediate blocks around them were developed as the city's population expanded after the Civil War.

Under Alexander Shepherd's tenure as head of the D.C. Board of Public Works, this block of Ninth Street had sewers laid and was paved with concrete by 1873, while less important arteries were covered in wood and stone.<sup>88</sup> The attractiveness of the neighborhood, and especially the block, increased with the expansion of the streetcar lines in the city. By 1876, the Metropolitan Line ran up Ninth Street directly in front of the home, and the house was two blocks away from the Seventh Street Washington and Georgetown Line as well as the

<sup>87</sup> The Shaw name, however, dates from the mid-twentieth century. The area and adjacent neighborhood carried various names throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century including "Northern Liberties" and "Mount Vernon West."

<sup>88</sup> William James Stone. Map of Washington D.C. showing wood, concrete, and stone street pavements. [Washington: s.n., 1873] Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/87695618/> and J. F. Gedney and District Of Columbia. Board Of Public Works. Exhibit chart showing streets & avenues of the cities of Washington and Georgetown, improved under the Board of Public Works, D.C.: Nov. 1st: sewers. [Washington?: s.n, 1873] Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/87695540/> Accessed October 30, 2019.

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Southwest Washington and O Belt Line.<sup>89</sup> These transportation lines to downtown Washington made the neighborhood good for speculative developers who continued to build in a northerly progression up Seventh and Ninth Streets, following the streetcar lines. Residents could commute easily downtown where a variety of jobs were located around the federal core.

The rapid population explosion and speculative building forced the city to enact building codes limiting the number of wood frame and wood clad structures erected in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. To this end, most residential structures built in the 1870s and later were of brick construction. Advancing technology allowed for mass production of building components and hardware, and speculative developers tried out a variety of styles for their building projects. These included English Gothic, Queen Anne, Second Empire, and Italianate.<sup>90</sup> The neighborhood fabric was densely packed, with row houses built in groups of two, three, and four along Ninth Street and neighboring blocks.

Most of the construction in the neighborhood was solidly residential and allowed for a strong cohesiveness in the surrounding blocks. The need for different types of housing, from low to higher incomes, opened the possibility of speculative alley dwelling construction as well. Most alley dwellings in Washington were occupied by African American residents, many of whom had come to the city from the neighboring states of Maryland and Virginia, and who crossed battle lines during the Civil War to enter the city as contraband. After the war, the number of freedmen increased in the city as the federal government sought ways to address the needs of this population. By 1871, 81% of alley dwellers were black, whereas previously in 1858, 65% of alley dwellers were white.<sup>91</sup> Within Square 365, where the Woodson house is located, was Turner Alley, which, like most alleyways in the city, was visually separated from the everyday life found on the surrounding public streets. Unlike older alley dwellings in the city that were wood frame, these were made of brick and were two and three stories tall.<sup>92</sup> As noted in the Mount Vernon West National Register nomination form:

The increasing influx of European immigrants and African Americans expanded the population of the city [in the late 19th century] ... Although the area remained a desirable residential community for the middle class well into the 20th century, Mount Vernon [and by extension, the area now known as Shaw] began to be segregated by class and race after about 1875. For example, by 1880, the census records show that most of the occupants along Blagden Alley and Naylor Court were African Americans who held jobs as coachmen, hucksters, laborers, and laundresses. Along public streets such as M Street, the residents were predominately white middle-class workers, who worked as clergymen, government employees, small businessmen, tradesmen, skilled laborers, and professionals.<sup>93</sup>

This configuration related to the residential blocks around 1538 Ninth Street. On the north end of the block, at the corner of Ninth and Q streets, was a corner store, while the south end of the block was occupied by the Hamline Methodist Church, which was constructed in 1873. This building was the second structure dedicated by the congregation in the neighborhood, the previous wood frame building having been erected in 1866 and

<sup>89</sup> J. C. Entwistle, Entwistle's handy map of Washington and vicinity: showing public buildings, churches, hotels, places of amusement, and lines of street railroads. Washington, D.C.: J.C. Entwistle, 1876. Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/88693467/>

<sup>90</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form Mount Vernon West National Historic District (1999), 7:2-7:3.

<sup>91</sup> James Borchert, "Alley Life in Washington," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 49: 245.

<sup>92</sup> Redfern Alley was directly adjacent to Turner Alley, across P Street to the south, located in Block 366. The two alleys were renamed Columbia Street. Nomination Form Mount Vernon West National Historic District 8:2 and 8:29; G. Wm. Baist, Wm. E Baist, and H. V Baist. Baist's real estate atlas of surveys of Washington, District of Columbia: complete in four volumes. Plate 27. [Philadelphia: G.W. Baist, to 1921, 1919] Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/map40000002/> Accessed October 30, 2019.

<sup>93</sup> Nomination Form Mount Vernon West National Historic District 8:20-8:21.

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replaced by 1873 with a Romanesque Revival style brick church.<sup>94</sup> The configuration of the block, with speculative public facing housing, alley dwellings, and commercial and religious buildings punctuating its corners, is typical of late-19th and early 20th-century urban life in Washington. It illuminates the working and middle-class mixture of city dwelling, as well as the convenient proximity of small commercial enterprises interspersed within city blocks. The O Street Market was built in 1881 at the intersection of 7th and O streets in response to the growing needs of the neighborhood.

When Carter G. Woodson purchased the house in 1922, it had been used as a multi-family house for several decades. Woodson made some interior modifications to the house for its use as his home, his office, and the headquarters of the ASNLH. He removed portions of the first-floor entrance hallway wall, as well as the wall that separated the two easternmost rooms (front parlor rooms) to create a larger, open reception area and clerical space. The first-floor kitchen was converted to book storage, while a second-floor bedroom was made into a kitchen. Woodson's office and library were also converted second floor bedrooms, while his living room and bedroom were located on the third floor. Two additional bedrooms – one located on the second floor, the other on the third – were converted into book storage. Woodson's reorganization of the building was similar to the layout of other professionals in the city, as historian Laura V. Trieschmann notes "doctors, lawyers, and dentists who lived in the area tended to own their houses, using the first floor as office space and the second floor as living space - a common 19<sup>th</sup> century practice."<sup>95</sup>

Demographic changes from mainly ethnic immigrant white to black in Woodson's neighborhood were reflected in institutional changes on his street. The Hamline Methodist church, a white congregation, sold its building to Shiloh Baptist Church in 1924. It was extensively renovated and expanded following a fire in 1924. Shiloh Baptist Church, founded in 1863 by formerly enslaved residents and free blacks, was previously housed in a different building.

Woodson was cognizant of the diverse nature of his changing neighborhood -- ethnic white, but increasingly black -- and he wrote specifically about the range of class and education status of blacks in Washington, including the "masses" of alley dwellers. He had firsthand knowledge of this condition through the social makeup of his own neighborhood, and his lengthy walks throughout the city. Dagbovie notes "in the *Negro History Bulletin's* 'Children's Page' in the 1930s and 1940s, there were several commentaries that lamented the fact that there were many poor black children who lived in the broader Shaw community. Upon several occasions, writers for the Bulletin praised the children-centered uplift work that Shiloh Baptist Church was engaged in."<sup>96</sup>

As for Woodson's immediate neighbors, city directories offer a glimpse into the makeup of the 1500 block of Ninth Street when Woodson lived there. The following vignette is taken from the Beyer Blinder Belle *Historic Structure Report*:

For the years 1923 through 1925, residents included Amedeo Michienzi (later listed as McKenzie), a shoemaker, who lived and worked at 1534 Ninth Street, NW and Harry Taylor, a museum foreman, who lived next door to Woodson. Other occupants of the street included Bert Singman, a painter, John M. Connor, a plumber, Annie White, a cook, various laborers, an upholsterer, and a dressmaker. The lot on

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 8:23.

<sup>95</sup> Trieschmann was referring to white professionals in her example, though this setup applies to the few black professionals at the time as well. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form Mount Vernon West National Historic District (1999), 8:21.

<sup>96</sup> Dagbovie, "Willing to Sacrifice," 46.

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the corner of Ninth and Q streets was a grocery store for many years. Its owners included Abraham Nimetz, followed by Phillip Golden, in the 1930s, and Alexander Berez starting in 1941.<sup>97</sup>

Washington's population increased exponentially during World War II, creating a housing crisis that was exacerbated by racist redlining practices in the nation's capital. By Woodson's death in 1950, Washington had reached its peak population of 802,178 residents. It was also during the 1950s that the city became majority black. These conditions put undue pressure on the segregated black Washington neighborhoods, including the neighborhood where ASNLH was located. The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) targeted these neighborhoods for wholesale demolition in the vein of the massive Southwest Urban Renewal project that displaced 23,000 residents, some of whom resettled in the already-crowded Shaw area. During the 1960s, community activists such as Rev. Walter Fauntroy protested such measures, calling for community control of urban renewal in the Shaw neighborhood. In 1966, the NCPC conducted a survey of historically significant structures in the Shaw neighborhood that did not include the Woodson home.

Continued struggles for social services and investment in the neighborhood were exacerbated by the 1968 riots following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., which devastated the neighborhood. Despite the destruction, many of Shaw's 19<sup>th</sup>-century houses, commercial buildings, and churches stand today, particularly in the blocks surrounding the Carter G. Woodson Home, and strengthen the character and setting of the site. Modern buildings on the block that were not present during Woodson's lifetime include the Seaton Elementary School and its associated playground and parking lot separated by the alley immediately west of the home, Shiloh Baptist Church (1998, rebuilt after a fire destroyed the historic sanctuary) and its Henry C. Gregory III Family Life Center (dedicated in 1981) with underground parking, auditorium, classrooms, and gymnasium, which dominate the southern end of the block. A four-story commercial and residential building at 1501 Ninth Street was built in 2012, and a commercial building and its adjacent parking lot located at 1509 Ninth Street NW, built in the 1950s, is occupied by the Cirtie Mae Turner Shiloh Baptist Church Outreach Center.<sup>98</sup>

### Woodson Home Historical Development

Beyer Blinder Belle's 2008 *Historic Structure Report* identified five major periods of development that represent the times during which the most significant changes of use and construction occurred at 1538 Ninth Street NW. Period 1 extends from 1872 until 1879 and represents the original construction of the house. Period 2 covers the years 1880 to 1921, when the house was primarily used by multiple tenants and the massing and interior layout of the house underwent significant changes. Period 3, which dates from 1922 to 1950, represents when Carter G. Woodson owned, lived and worked in the house and coincides with the period of significance identified in this NHL nomination. Period 4 spans from 1951 to 1971, when ASNLH used the house as their headquarters and made changes to the use and layout of the building. Period 5 spans from 1972 to present (in this case, the year was 2008) and covers the time when ASNLH moved out of the building until preparation of the report in 2008.<sup>99</sup>

Construction of the house at 1538 Ninth Street, N.W. was most likely a speculative venture undertaken between 1870 and 1873. On April 1, 1870 real estate developer Joshua Whitney and Brainard H. Warner purchased and subdivided a portion of Square 365 owned by Henry Turner. Whitney and Warner replaced Turner's numbered

<sup>97</sup> Beyer Blinder Belle, *Carter G. Woodson Home Historic Structure Report*, 26-27.

<sup>98</sup> Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "From Strength to Strength: The History of Shiloh Baptist Church of Washington, D.C. 1863-1988," [http://www.shilohbaptist.org/pages/page.asp?page\\_id=245533](http://www.shilohbaptist.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=245533) Accessed May 22, 2019.

<sup>99</sup> Beyer Blinder Belle, *Carter G. Woodson Home Historic Structure Report* (Washington, D.C.: Beyer Blinder Belle 2008), 46.



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system of naming his lots (Lots 54-61) with a new alphabetized system, renaming their purchase Lots A-I. Lot C (now known as Lot 819) with the address of 1538 Ninth Street, N.W., was created with this subdivision. The lot measured 120 feet deep by 17 feet 9 1/2 inches wide. Tax records in 1872 indicate Lot C (now Lot 819) of Square 365 was worth \$854. Information gleaned from the 1873 Joseph Enthoffer map produced by E.F.M. Faetz and Fred. W. Pratt indicates that construction was completed by October 1, 1873. The 1874 assessment for Lot C (now Lot 819) of Square 365 was \$3,500 with an “improvement” of “1 brick structure.”<sup>100</sup>

As originally built, the house had an L-shaped plan consisting of a three-story, three-bay, side-hall main block measuring 18 feet wide by 32 feet 3 inches deep with a two-story rear ell measuring 12 feet 9 inches wide by 20 feet 4 inches deep, all over a raised basement with a common-bond brick foundation. Narrower than the main block, the rear ell created an areaway or light well on the south elevation to allow for light and ventilation into the central rooms of the house. The façade of the house was constructed of more expensive pressed brick laid in a common or stretcher bond while the rear ell was built of common brick laid in a seven-course American bond.

On August 18, 1875, Clarinda S. Henkle purchased the house from Brainard H. Warner. Henkle lived in the house with her son, Edward, and her older brother, Gen. Saul S. Henkle. In 1880, the Henkles expanded the house with a two-story addition on the rear of the house, extending the ell. The permit, dated 23 June 1880, indicates that the cost of the improvement was around \$600 and was “to enlarge and repair the back building by extending wall” and make “general repairs.” The addition is 12 feet 9 inches wide, corresponding with the width of the original ell, and extends 18 feet 3 1/2 inches into the rear yard. The two-story addition was built over a crawl space on a brick foundation.

In the late 1880s the Henkles began to rent out rooms in the house as evidenced by advertisements in the *Washington Post*. They also added a small one-story frame addition on the rear of the house. After General Henkle’s death in 1895, Edward Henkle sold the property to Jacob Xander. City directories indicate that Xander used the house at 1538 Ninth Street as a rental property. By the early 1900s, the one-story frame addition on the house had been removed, but a small one-story frame shed had been built at the rear of the lot. In 1912 Xander transferred the property to J. Edward Giles. One year later, Giles sold the house to Ida J. Heiberger, who used the house as a rental property.

Woodson purchased the house from Heiberger in 1922 for \$8,000. In 1923, Woodson received a permit granting him permission to erect “one metal and wood sign” with dimensions of 11 feet 6 inches wide by 2 feet high. The permit stipulated that the sign was to have no lights and had to lie flat against the wall of the house. The accompanying application for the permit indicated that the sign would read “The Associated Publishers, Inc.” and would be erected 8 to 10 feet from the sidewalk. By 1927, the one-story shed on the rear of the lot had been removed. Permits indicate that Woodson erected a 6-foot corrugated metal fence on the property in 1935 and made repairs to the house in 1949. Woodson died on April 3, 1950 and ASNLH used the house as its office until 1971.<sup>101</sup>

When the house was designated an NHL in May 1976, it was vacant. Interior improvements were made to the house in the 1980s by the black-owned architecture firm Bryant & Bryant, in anticipation of its re-occupancy

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<sup>100</sup> A detailed timeline with dates and archival sources is in Beyer Blinder Belle, *Carter G. Woodson Home Historic Structure Report* (Washington, D.C.: Beyer Blinder Belle 2008), 36-37. J. Enthoffer and Faetz & Pratt. Map of the city of Washington: premium map for subscribers to the Real estate directory of Washington City published by E.F.M. Faetz and Fred. W. Pratt: and containing buildings, railroads, sewers, watermains, fire plugs, etc. [Washington, D.C.: Faetz & Pratt, 1873] Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/88693469/> Accessed May 22, 2019.

<sup>101</sup> This information is condensed from Beyer Blinder Belle, *Carter G. Woodson Home Historic Structure Report* (2008), 36-45.

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for *American Visions* magazine. Woodson's fraternity, Omega Psi Phi, Inc., raised about \$12,000 toward that effort.<sup>102</sup> Work included the installation of security grilles on windows, the construction of new partition walls and a bathroom on the first floor, new bathroom fixtures on the second floor, and installing a new boiler and water heater. The magazine, which covered African American culture, was headquartered at the house from the mid-to late-1980s. The house was mainly vacant and rundown in the 1990s and early 2000s. The 2001 *Special Resource Study* noted water damage on the interior of the structure. That same year the Carter G. Woodson Home was placed on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's list of 11 Most Endangered Places and the D.C. Preservation League's 11 Most Endangered Places lists.<sup>103</sup>

Washington, D.C. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton spoke on behalf of designating the home as a National Historic Site in 2003. She chronicled the derelict condition of the site while giving testimony before the Subcommittee on National Parks of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate (108th Congress, First Session):

The walls inside the house are crumbling, there is termite infestation, water seeps through the roof during heavy rainstorms, and the house also constitutes a fire hazard jeopardizing adjacent buildings. This house is a priceless American treasure that must not be lost.<sup>104</sup>

On December 19, 2003, Congress passed legislation that authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the Carter G. Woodson Home to establish the historic site as a unit of the National Park System. On June 10, 2005, the NPS purchased the house from ASALH for \$465,000. In 2008, the NPS, through a contract with architectural firm Beyer Blinder Belle, completed a *Historic Structure Report* on the Carter G. Woodson Home and determined that the building was in extremely poor condition. A leaking roof had caused constant water infiltration and significant damage to the building's exterior envelope, the wood and masonry structure, and interior finishes. Termite damage and rot to the wood structural system also caused the main stair and several areas of the floor to sag. Because of the deterioration of the structural system and failing mortar joints, the southwest corner of the rear ell was close to collapsing. The lack of proper heating or ventilation and water infiltration also resulted in the failing and damage of plaster walls and ceilings as well as the decorative wood features and flooring.<sup>105</sup>

In August of 2011 additional damage occurred when a 5.8-magnitude earthquake detached the façade from the building and Hurricane Irene caused extensive water damage to the house. As a result, the home has undergone extensive stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration work. Emergency stabilization work began in 2012 and completed in 2015 included the installation of a single ply membrane roof and filling window and door openings with concrete block. Between 2015 and 2017 the NPS undertook major rehabilitation of the building. The project restored the building following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (SOI Standards) to the period of significance (Period 3, 1922-1950), when Carter G.

<sup>102</sup> Dagbovie, "Willing to Sacrifice," 68-70.

<sup>103</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Carter G. Woodson Home Special Resource Study*, 5. Courtland Milloy, "Black History's Doorway Is in Need of Care," *Washington Post*, February 4, 2001: C1; Alexander M. Padro, "Let's Save Our Black History Landmarks," *Washington Post*, February 18, 2001: B8; Linda Wheeler, "Home of Black History Movement Imperiled in D.C.," *Washington Post*, June 25, 2001: B2. Linda Wheeler, "D.C. Sites Listed as Endangered," *Washington Post*, July 21, 2001: B5A.

<sup>104</sup> "Statement of Hon. Eleanor Holmes Norton, Delegate from the District of Columbia," Hearing Before the Subcommittee on National Parks of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, One Hundred Eighth Congress, First Session on S. 499, S. 546, S. 643, S. 677, S. 1060, H.R. 255, H.R. 1012, S. H.R. 1577, June 10, 2003 (Washington, 2003), 5-6.

<sup>105</sup> Beyer Blinder Belle, *Carter G. Woodson Home Historic Structure Report*, 244.

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Woodson owned and occupied the house, and rehabilitated it for use as a museum.<sup>106</sup>

This nomination moves forward with the 1922 start date for period of significance, ending with Woodson's death in 1950. Ownership of the home transferred to the ASNLH after Woodson's death, and the Association continued to occupy the site until 1971, however those decades fall outside the period of significance for this site. Therefore, changes that occurred in Periods 4 and 5, or changes to the building that were not original and were not there at the time Woodson occupied the house will not be discussed in detail below since these features have been removed. The floorplan and interior and exterior details of the house are as they were when Carter G. Woodson owned and occupied the building with only minor variations. Much of the architectural description herein is pulled from the 2008 *Historic Structure Report*, the 2017 *Historic Structures Record of Treatment*, and on-site analysis and documentation completed in 2019.

The *Historic Structure Report* identified two categories of features that contributed to the historic significance and integrity of the site. These are the features that are discussed in detail below. They are as follows:

Contributing- Primary: Architectural features, spaces and elements of the house which are original, character defining features of the Italianate style, or which date to and characterize the Period 3 – the Period of Significance (1922-1950).

Contributing-Secondary: Architectural features, elements and spaces of the house which may date to the Carter G. Woodson period or earlier, but were of secondary significance historically, such as utilitarian spaces in the rear extension and basement.<sup>107</sup>

### Façade

The east (main) façade of the Woodson house is typical of Italianate-style row houses. It has a simple, symmetrical façade with ornamentation limited to its bracketed wood cornice and door surround. Also common of the style are the elongated windows, simple marble sills and lintels, and the marble stringcourse along the façade directly above the basement windows. The flat nature of the façade contrasts with row houses built across the city several years later after laws were passed in 1871, 1872, and 1877 that allowed building projections, such as bay windows, to extend past the building line. As evidenced by several of the row houses across the street from the Carter G. Woodson Home that were built in the 1880s, "by the 1880s, few residential buildings were built without some projection beyond the building line." Thus, the Italianate row houses along the 1500 block of Ninth Street, NW, with their continuous façade abutting the building line and sidewalk, were some of the last of this type in the District of Columbia during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>108</sup>

The three-story, three-bay façade of the house (18 feet wide by 36 feet high) is composed of pressed red brick laid in a stretcher bond brick with thin butter joints. A marble stringcourse separates the first story from the basement below. An overhanging wood cornice with Italianate-style brackets spaced by modillions lines the façade and extends to the neighboring buildings to the north and south. The primary entrance, located on the northern end of the first story, consists of a single-leaf, four-paneled door with arched upper panels that is surrounded by a wood surround. Above the door is a single-light transom and a wood entablature with three

<sup>106</sup> Historic Preservation Resource Center, *Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site, Emergency Stabilization Phase II and Restoration Stage I Historic Structures Record of Treatment* (2017).

<sup>107</sup> Beyer Blinder Belle, *Carter G. Woodson Home Historic Structure Report*, 71.

<sup>108</sup> Alison K. Hoagland, "Nineteenth-century Building Regulations in Washington, D.C.," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 52 (1989): 73; James A. Jacobs, *Historic American Buildings Survey, Addendum to Carter G. Woodson House HABS No. DC-369* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2013), 2.

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ornate modillions and is supported by foliated, scrolled brackets. Marble steps with a decorative cast iron railing lead up from the street to a marble entrance stoop. Below the stoop is an entryway that parallels the façade and has bluestone stairs that lead down to the basement. South of the entryway are two rectangular casement windows with two vertically divided lights that service the basement. The remaining fenestration on the façade consists of evenly spaced elongated two-over-two wood-sash, double-hung windows each with a simple rectilinear marble sill and lintel.

### South Elevation

The original section (1872-1873) of the two-story rear ell is constructed of red common brick laid in a seven-course American bond. On the eastern end of the first story is a single-leaf door with a jack-arched brick lintel. West of the door are two evenly spaced windows. On the second story are three evenly spaced windows. The windows on the first floor are larger in height than those on the second story. All the window openings have jack-arched brick lintels and hold six-over-six double-hung wood-sash windows with simple wood sills. A single casement basement window is located below the westernmost window bay.

The extension of the rear ell (1880) is evidenced by a seam in the brick and is also constructed of seven course American-bond common brick. The south elevation has a single-leaf six-paneled wood door on the western end of the first story. Above the door is a single-light transom and a jack-arched lintel. This door was originally a window opening, like the adjacent window, and was added during the 2016 rehabilitation project. East of the door is a six-over-six double-hung wood-sash window with a segmental-arched brick lintel. On the second story are two widely spaced six-over-six double-hung wood-sash windows with jack-arched brick lintels. All the windows have simple wood sills.

### Rear Elevation

The rear (west) elevation of the three-story main block is constructed of seven course American bond common brick and has a corbelled brick cornice. Three vertically aligned window openings, one on each floor, are located on the south side of the main block and are part of the light well formed by the rear ell. On the third story is an additional window on the north side. The opening on the first story is slightly larger in height than the windows on the second and third stories. All the openings have jack-arched brick lintels and hold six-over-six double-hung wood-sash windows.

The south elevation of the two-story rear ell has two vertically aligned window openings on the west end of the elevation, one on each story. The openings have segmental-arched brick openings and hold six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows with wood sills.

### Interior

The building contains 3,380 square feet of interior space, including the basement.<sup>109</sup> The configuration of rooms in the Carter G. Woodson period is a character defining feature of his use of the house, as well as the interior changes that occurred during his occupancy. This includes the steel beams in the basement, which are examples of early steel construction and likely installed concurrent with or just before Woodson's occupancy; radiators throughout the house, which are labeled American Radiator and match models seen in the company's catalogues dating from 1925; and elements seen in photographs from the period, such as bookshelves in Woodson's office, which are no longer extant but have enough documentation to recreate them as they appeared in the period of significance.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>109</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Carter G. Woodson Home Special Resource Study*, 5.

<sup>110</sup> Beyer Blinder Belle, *Carter G. Woodson Home Historic Structure Report*, 69-70.

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### First Floor

The first floor of the main block consists of a small entrance vestibule and side hall along the north side of the house that leads to two connecting rooms, originally parlors, on the south. The first floor originally had five rooms and a vestibule, however, during Woodson's occupancy, a portion of the wall along the hallway as well as a partial piece of wall that divided the two rooms were removed, essentially creating one large room. The front (east) and larger of the two former rooms was used as a reception area for the ASNLH and the smaller, western room used as clerical space. Both rooms have fireplaces along the south wall that are original to the building. The fireplace mantels and surrounds are slate that are faux grained to look like black marble. Not intended for wood or coal fire, the fireplaces are fitted with decorative grills that originally served as room registers for a passive hot air heating system that also extended to the rooms above. Steam heat and registers were likely added after Woodson purchased the house.

At the end of the hall, within the rear ell, is a curving stair that leads up to the second floor. The rear ell is accessed through a doorway on the south side of the stairs. The rear ell has two rooms. The first, easternmost room originally served as the kitchen, but was likely used as a dining room after the ell was expanded in 1880. As part of the addition, the room was expanded to the west and fireplace and chimney removed. During Woodson's occupancy, the ASNLH used the room for fulfilling orders and shipping copies of books, bulletins, and the *Journal of Negro History*. The rear, westernmost room is accessed through a doorway on the south that was originally an exterior door. This room served as a kitchen when the ell was expanded in 1880 and brick fireplace with a segmental arch was built along the north side of the east wall. During Woodson's time, the fireplace was closed, plastered, and the arched recess fitted with a radiator.

### Second Floor

On the second floor of the house is a straight run of stairs along the north party wall, near the back (west end) of the main block, that leads up to the third floor. Adjacent to the stair is a hallway that provides access to two connecting rooms. The front (east) room spans the width of the house and served as Woodson's office where he held meetings with guests. A doorway on the west wall leads into the smaller, adjacent room that served as Woodson's library. Behind the curving stairwell that connects the first and second floors is a bathroom and adjacent room that are original to the house. The room adjacent to the bathroom was used as a kitchen by Woodson; however, the room has not been restored to reflect this use. Behind the kitchen in the 1880 addition to the ell is a room that Woodson used as book storage. The addition also contains a large closet that is accessed from the former kitchen.

### Third Floor

The third floor of the house, located in the main block, served as Woodson's living area and contains three rooms, all accessed from a small hallway. At the top of the stairs and at the front of the house is a small room used by Woodson for book storage. Adjacent and accessed by a door on the south side of the hallway, is the largest room on this floor that was used as Woodson's living room. To the west and connected to the living room and hallway is a smaller room used by Woodson as a bedroom, where Woodson eventually passed away in 1950.

### Restoration and Rehabilitation

The Carter G. Woodson Home has undergone two phases of emergency stabilization and one phase of restoration between 2012 and 2017. The first stabilization phase was to counteract damage from the 2011 earthquake - installation of bracing and shoring in interior and exterior of 1538 and 1540 Ninth Street (note that 1540 is not part of the nominated NHL). The second stabilization phase completed in 2015 included –

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installation of complete bracing and shoring for 1538 Ninth Street and portions of 1540 Ninth Street.

The restoration work, which lasted from 2015 to 2017, included reconstruction / restoration of all exteriors and complete interior restoration of 1538 Ninth Street, and temporary space buildout at the first floor of 1540 Ninth Street. Additionally, the roof, plumbing, HVAC and electrical systems were replaced and brought up to code. The NPS completed significant structural repairs while preserving as much of the original fabric as possible. The façade and rear ell of the house were dismantled. Each brick from the façade was removed, numbered, cataloged, sanded, and re-laid in its exact original location. Bricks that were not salvageable were replaced with similar pressed brick from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The rear ell of the house was rebuilt with 30,000 salvaged common brick. Specialized tie rods were inserted in the building frame on the façade to stabilize the structure and are carefully hidden to preserve the historic appearance of the building.

Original moldings, frames, and decorative pieces were removed, carefully repaired off-site, and reinstalled in their original location. All the interior doors, trim, and staircases that were intact have been meticulously restored. The staircase was removed, restored off site, and reinstalled piece by piece. In the main three-story section of the house, damaged flooring was removed and replaced with random width flooring that was removed from 1540, as 1540 was constructed at the same time with the same flooring. East façade windows dated from the 1970s but had the same profile as the historic windows. They were retrofitted with traditional ropes and weights. The west and south façade windows were all historic and were restored off site before reinstallation.

The front exterior door of the Woodson home was not original and was replaced, while the original inner vestibule door was restored. All other doors on the first floor were either missing or not original, therefore they were constructed according to historic measurements with simple profiles to distinguish them from the other original historic features in the home. Most of the second and third floor doors were original and restored offsite. Only three doors from the upper levels were not historic. These were replaced with new doors that complemented, but did not copy, the profiles of the original upper floor doors. The door hardware was of mixed condition. Given the lack of evidence for hardware, all door hardware was restored offsite, and historic reproductions were made for missing hardware.

Phase two of the project involved the rehabilitation of the two neighboring row houses at 1540 and 1542 Ninth Street NW (not part of this nominated property), acquired by the NPS as part of the Carter G. Woodson Home. This phase, completed in 2017, created working space for staff and made the site accessible through the addition of an elevator and an ADA-compliant entrance.

The final planned phases of restoration -- installation of exhibits -- has not yet begun as of 2019. That work will coincide with the completion of this update, with the nomination form serving as a guiding document for historic house and museum exhibit development.

### Integrity

The house retains a high level of integrity of location and setting. The house remains in its original location on Ninth Street in a predominantly residential block. All nine row houses built concurrently with the Carter G. Woodson Home remain intact, although some are in better condition than others. The row houses at 1540 and 1542 Ninth Street, NW, are owned and managed by the NPS as part of the Carter G. Woodson National Historic Site. The exterior façade of the house at 1540 Ninth Street has been restored to its original appearance and the façade of 1542 Ninth Street has been partially restored and a period sensitive storefront added to provide an ADA-accessible entrance to the site. The late 19<sup>th</sup>-century dwellings on the east side of Ninth Street, across

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from the Carter G. Woodson Home, also remain intact and have a good level of integrity. Thus, the streetscape provides a sense of place that was similar to when Carter G. Woodson lived there.

While some of the original materials of the house have been lost due to deterioration and damage caused by water, termites, neglect, and other factors, the 2016 rehabilitation/restoration meticulously restored much of the original building fabric. When materials were not salvageable, similar materials were used. In the instance where modern materials were needed, such as for structural stabilization, the materials are not visible. Similar to materials, the building has a high level of integrity of workmanship even though the building was in poor condition prior to the restoration/renovation. The original staircase, interior and exterior moldings, and pressed brick on the exterior of the house were painstakingly removed and restored to their original condition and continue to illustrate the workmanship of the house at the time that Woodson owned the house. Following the recent restoration, the Carter G. Woodson home conveys a strong feeling and association with the time that Carter G. Woodson lived and worked in the house.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** Previously listed in the National Register (fill in 1 through 6 below) Not previously listed in the National Register (fill in **only** 4, 5, and 6 below)

1. NR #: 76002135
2. Date of listing: 1976
3. Level of significance: National
4. Applicable National Register Criteria: A\_\_ B\_X C\_\_ D\_\_
5. Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A\_\_ B\_\_ C\_\_ D\_\_ E\_\_ F\_\_ G\_\_
6. Areas of Significance: Education, Ethnic Heritage - Black, Literature, Philosophy, Social History

 Previously Determined Eligible for the National Register:

Date of determination:

 Designated a National Historic Landmark:

Date of designation: 1976

 Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey:

HABS No. DC-369

 Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record:

HAER No.

 Recorded by Historic American Landscapes Survey:

HALS No.

**Location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office: D.C. Office of Planning, Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency:

Federal Agency: National Archives, Carter G. Woodson Collection of Negro Papers and Related Documents.  
Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Local Government: D.C. Archives. Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Library.

University: Moorland-Spingarn Archives, Howard University. Carter G. Woodson Collection, Emory  
University

Other (Specify Repository): Scurlock Photo Archives, Smithsonian Institution.



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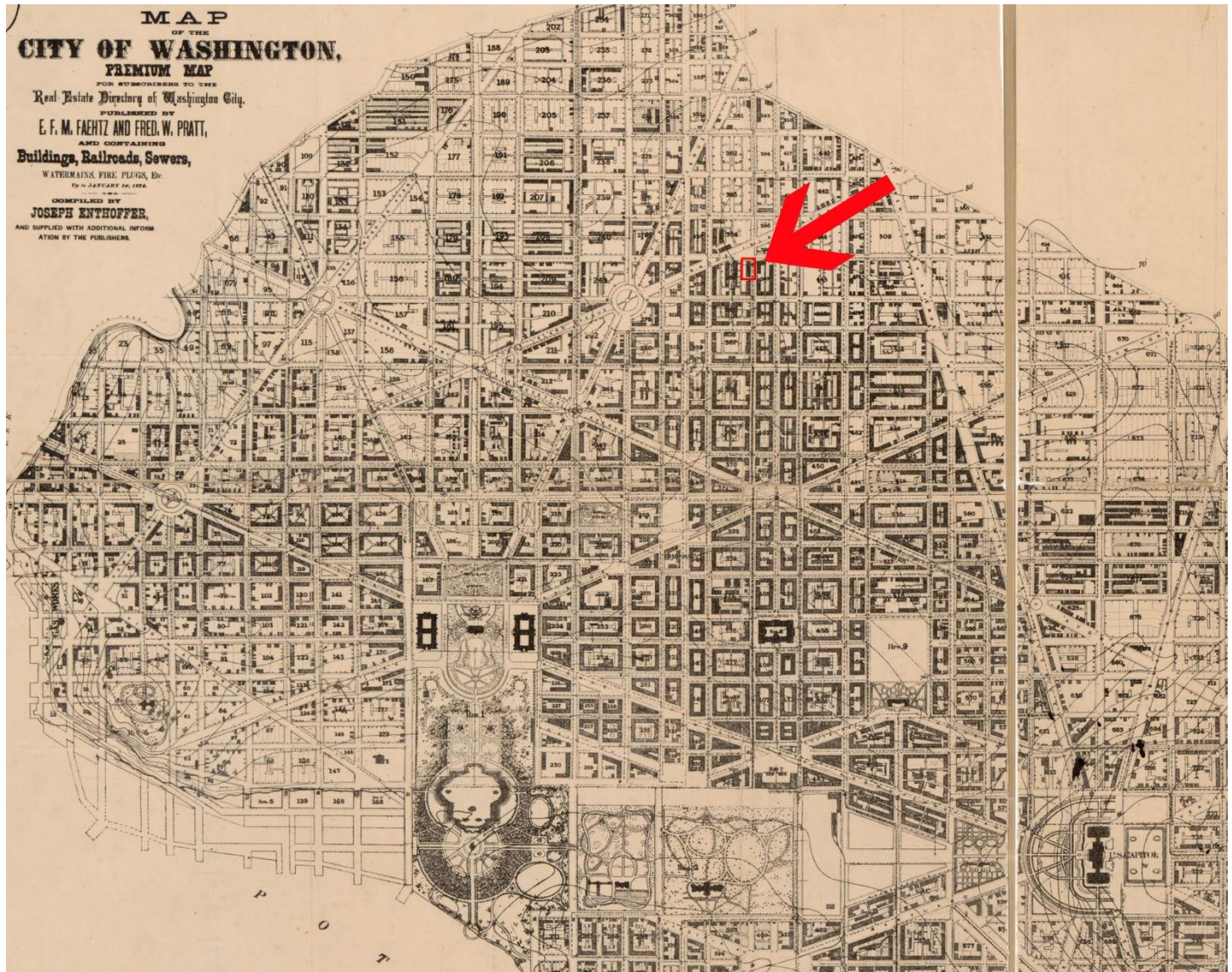
**Telephone:** (202) 619-7180

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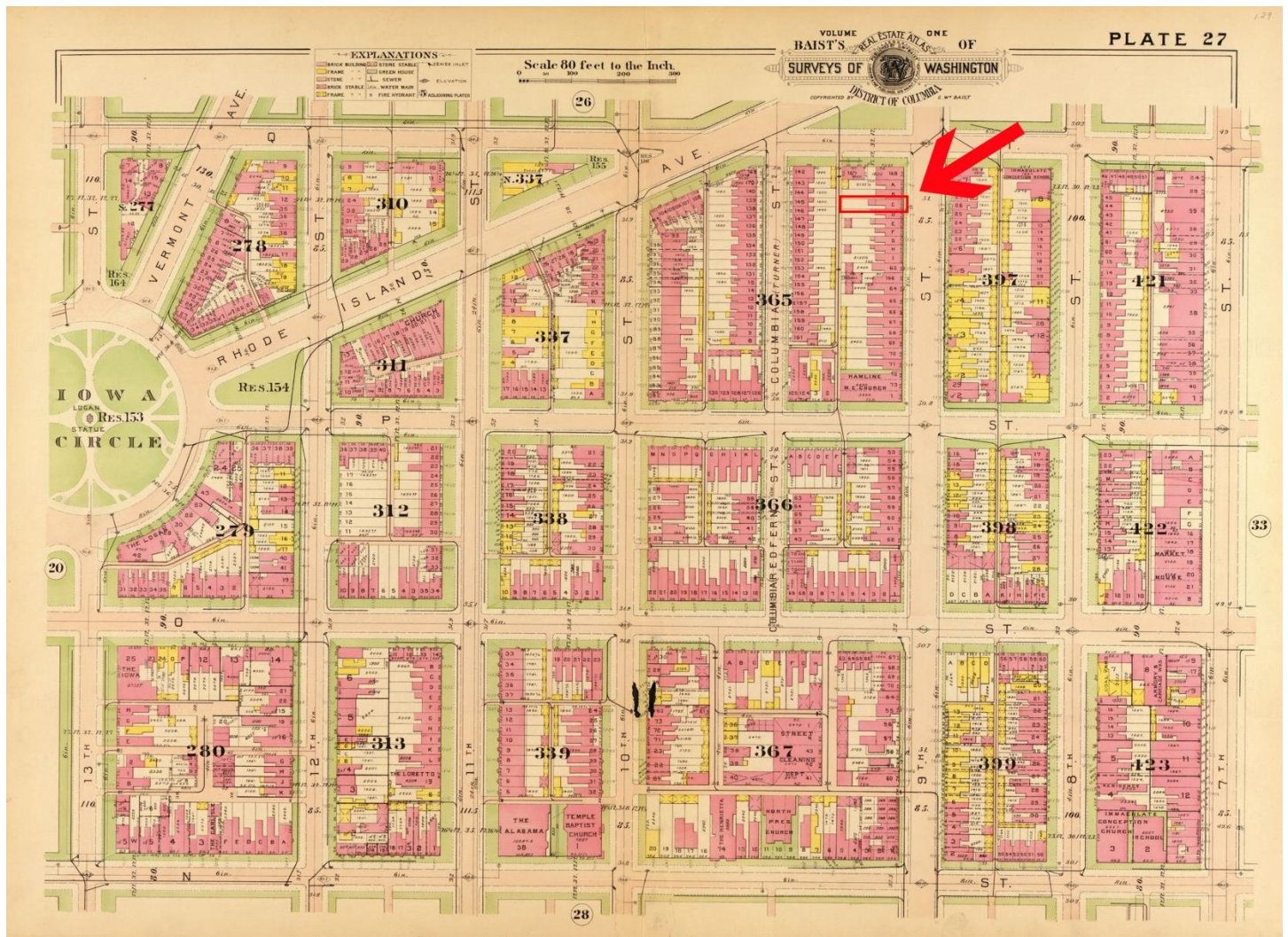
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**Figure 1.** Joseph Enthoffer map produced by E.F.M. Faetz and Fred. W. Pratt indicates that construction of 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C., (outlined in red with adjacent buildings) was completed by October 1, 1873. J. Enthoffer and Faetz & Pratt. Map of the city of Washington: premium map for subscribers to the Real estate directory of Washington City published by E.F.M. Faetz and Fred. W. Pratt: and containing buildings, railroads, sewers, watermains, fire plugs, etc. [Washington, D.C. Faetz & Pratt, 1873] Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/88693469/>. Accessed May 22, 2019.

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**Figure 2.** 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C., as documented in 1919 Baist Map. G. Wm. Baist, Wm. E Baist, and H. V Baist. Baist's real estate atlas of surveys of Washington, District of Columbia: complete in four volumes. Plate 27. [Philadelphia: G.W. Baist, to 1921, 1919] Map. <https://www.loc.gov/item/map40000002/>. Access May 22, 2019.

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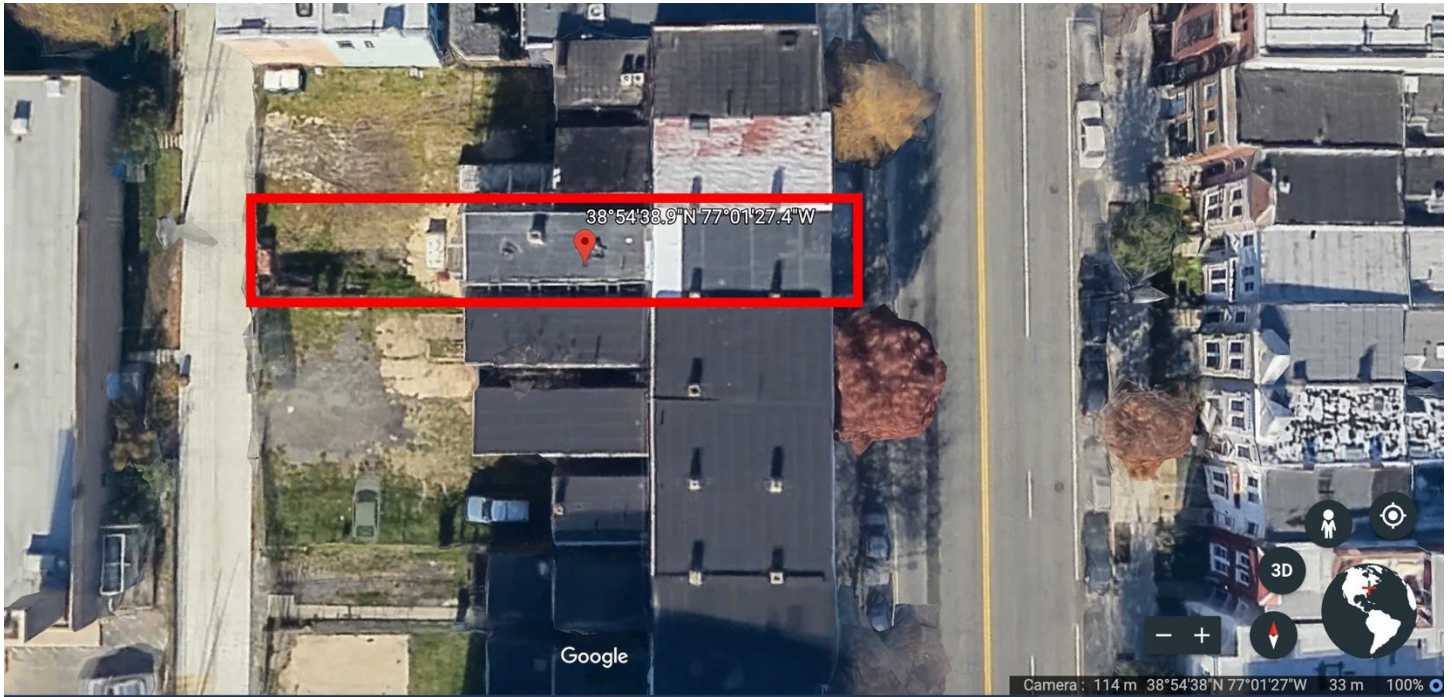
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**Figure 3.** Neighborhood setting of 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C. via Google Earth, 2019. Accessed August 13, 2019.



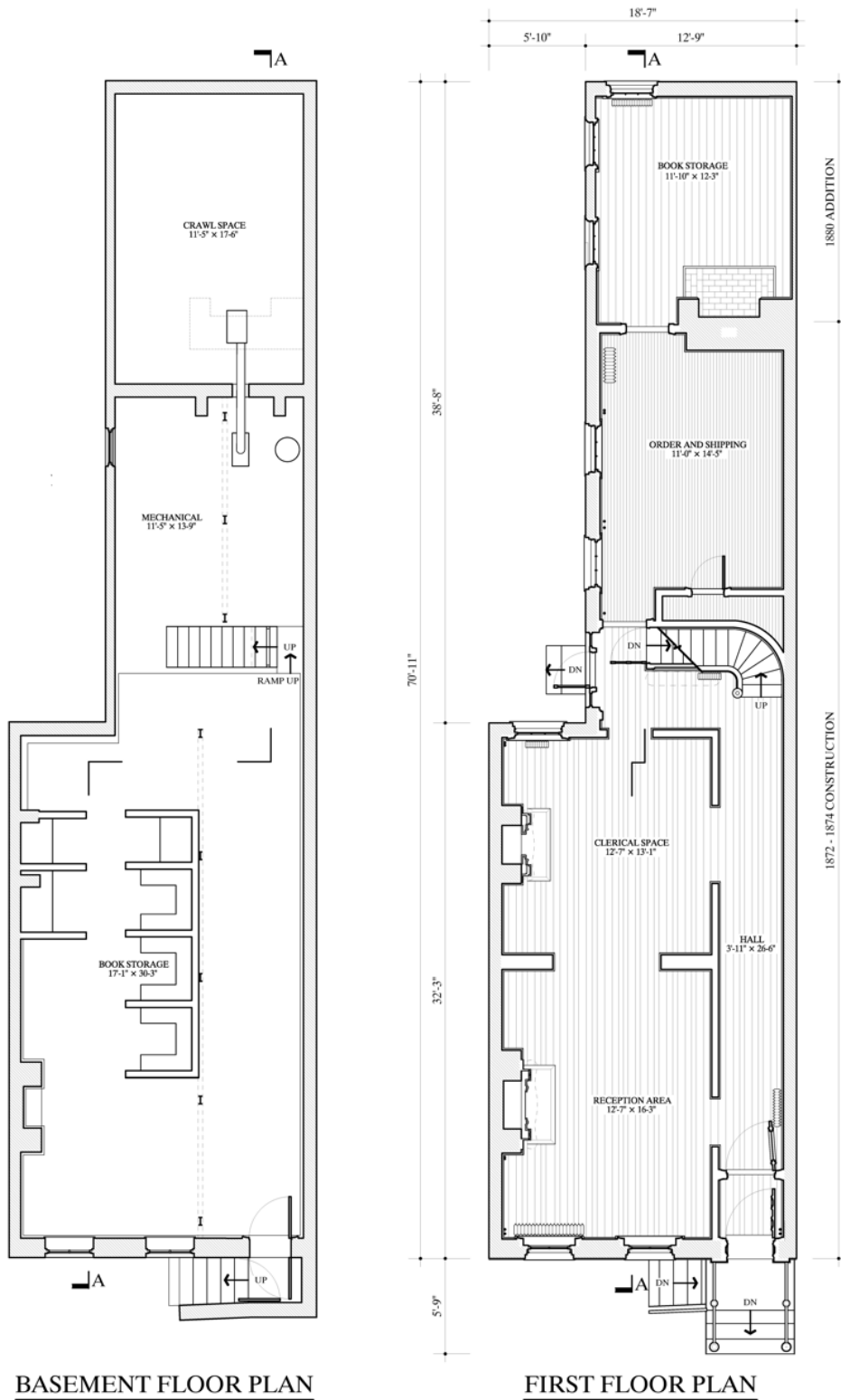
**Figure 4.** Detail view of aerial of 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C. via Google Earth, 2019. Accessed August 13, 2019.

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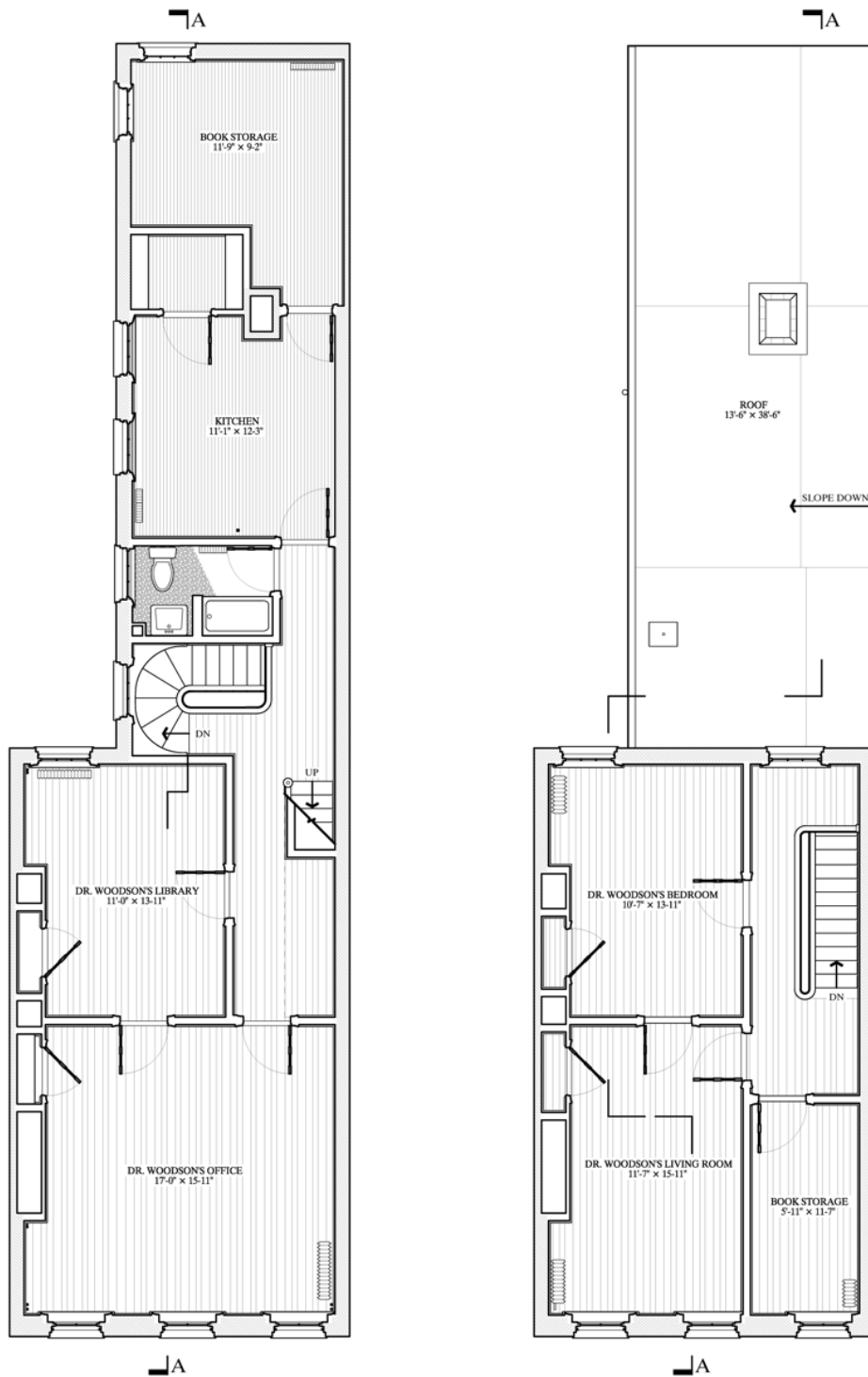
**Figure 5.** Basement and First Floor Plans. Carter G. Woodson House, 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C. These HABS drawings and the ones that follow, completed in 2013, do not depict the Woodson House in its condition at the time, but are interpretations of the home during the occupancy of Woodson, from 1922 to 1950. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey. Carter G. Woodson House HABS No. DC-369. Note: The 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> Floors were restored to match these plans during the 2015-2017 restoration/rehabilitation campaign.

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SECOND FLOOR PLAN

THIRD FLOOR PLAN

**Figure 6.** Second and Third Floor Plans. Carter G. Woodson House, 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey. Carter G. Woodson House HABS No. DC-369. Note: The 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> Floors were restored to match these plans during the 2015-2017 restoration/rehabilitation campaign.

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## EAST ELEVATION

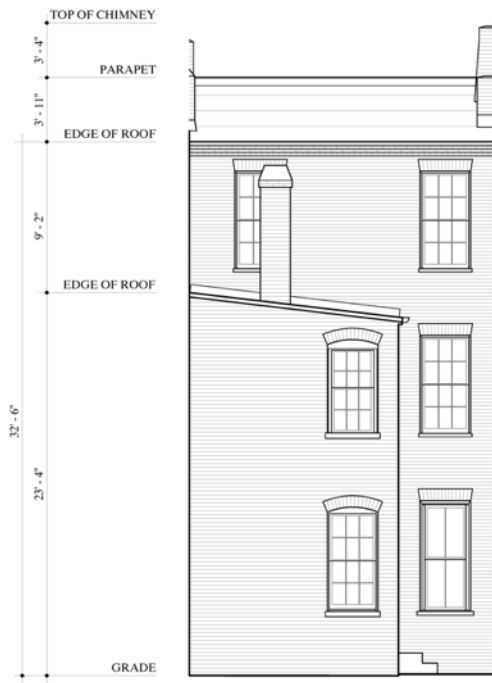
**Figure 7.** Main Elevation. Carter G. Woodson House, 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey. Carter G. Woodson House HABS No. DC-369.

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WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

**Figure 8.** West and South Elevations. Carter G. Woodson House, 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey. Carter G. Woodson House HABS No. DC-369.



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**Figure 9.** Longitudinal Section. Carter G. Woodson House, 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey. Carter G. Woodson House HABS No. DC-369.

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**Figure 10.** Carter G. Woodson Portrait, 1915. Scurlock Studio Records, ca. 1905-1994, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

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**Figure 11.** Exterior of the Woodson home with sign for the Associated Publishers taken during his occupancy (1923-1950), n.d. Jacqueline Goggin, *Carter G. Woodson: A Life in Black History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993).

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**Pictures of Distinguished Negroes**

The history of the Negro race told with the pictures of its great men and women. Frame them and decorate your home with them. Hang them on the walls of your school room. Induce your friends and neighbors to do likewise.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

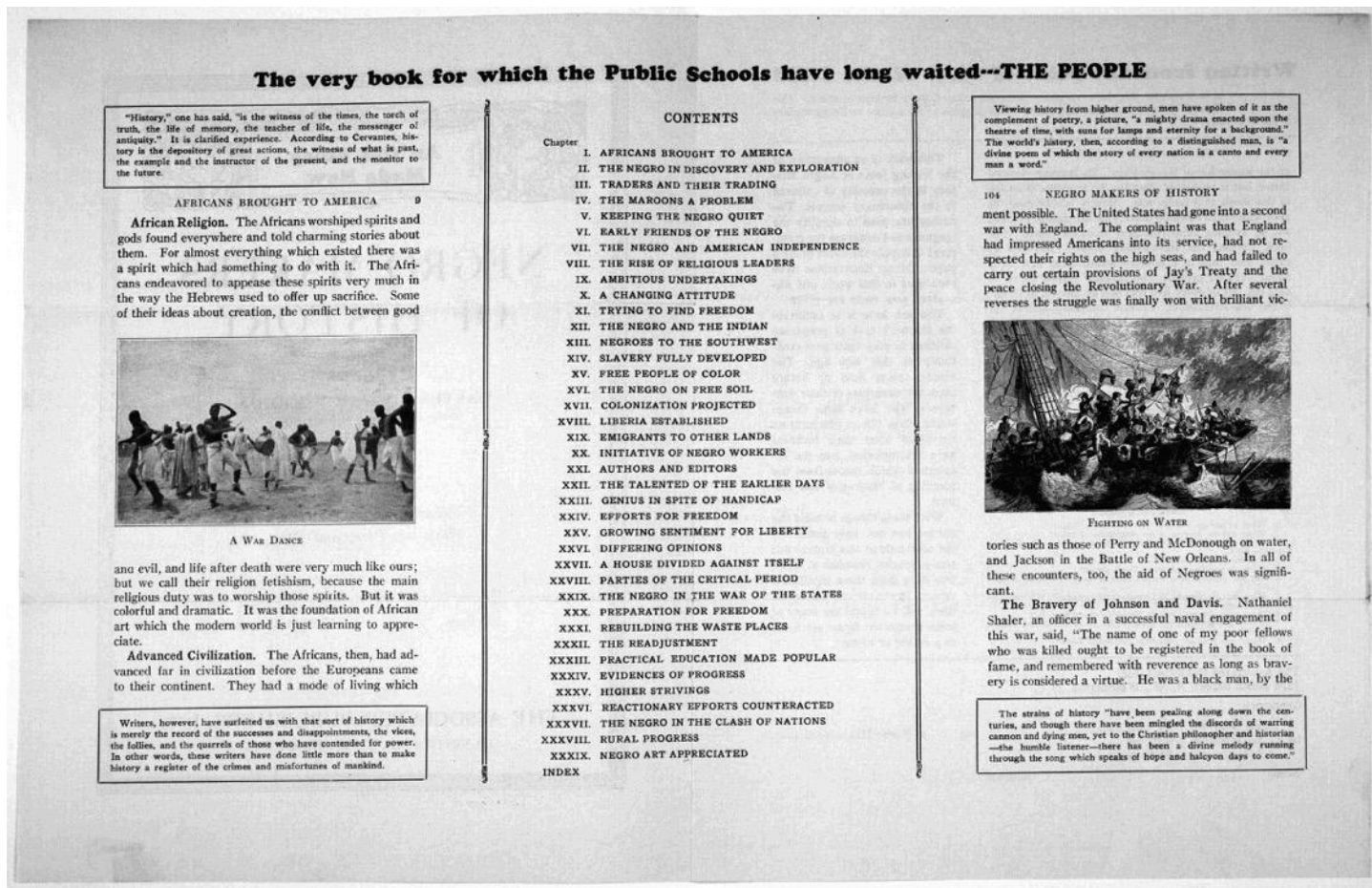
PAUL L. DUNBAR

S. COLERIDGE-TAYLOR

Each picture costs only ten cents. A dozen of them cost only (\$1.00) one dollar. One hundred of them (\$7.50) seven and a half dollars. A special effort will be made to supply the needs of those purchasing these pictures in large quantities. Kindly place your order at once that there may not be any delay. If you do not find what you want listed, write us about it. Criticism is invited. Your cooperation is earnestly solicited. With it we can serve the public efficiently.

**THE ASSOCIATED PUBLISHERS**  
1538 NINTH STREET N. W. WASHINGTON, D. C.

**Figure 12.** Carter G. Woodson, *An Old Story Made New: Negro Makers of History Text Book* (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers, n.d.), 4. Washington. Pdf. <https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.21003300/>. Accessed August 14, 2019.



**Figure 13.** Carter G. Woodson, *An Old Story Made New: Negro Makers of History Text Book* (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers, n.d.), 2. Washington. Pdf. <https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.21003300/>. Accessed August 14, 2019.



**Figure 14.** 1946 cover of the *Negro History Week Bulletin*. Chicago Public Library, Carter G. Woodson Regional Library. Madeline Stratton Morris Papers, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature.



**Figure 15.** Carter G. Woodson at his second-floor office desk in 1948. Scurlock Studio Records, ca. 1905-1994, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

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**Figure 16.** February 1, 2018 Google Doodle featuring Carter G. Woodson based on Scurlock Studio images. Doodles Archives, Google. <https://www.google.com/doodles/celebrating-carter-g-woodson>. Accessed August 14, 2019.





**Figure 17.** Woodson in the house with his second-floor library collection, 1948. Scurlock Studio Records, ca. 1905-1994, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.



**Figure 18.** Woodson with a manuscript in his second-floor library, 1948. Scurlock Studio Records, ca. 1905-1994, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

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**Figure 19.** General view of block. Carter G. Woodson House, 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C., 1979. Woodson House second from right. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey. Carter G. Woodson House HABS No. DC-369.

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**Figure 20.** Main façade. Carter G. Woodson House, 1538 Ninth Street NW, Washington, D.C., 1979. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey. Carter G. Woodson House HABS No. DC-369.

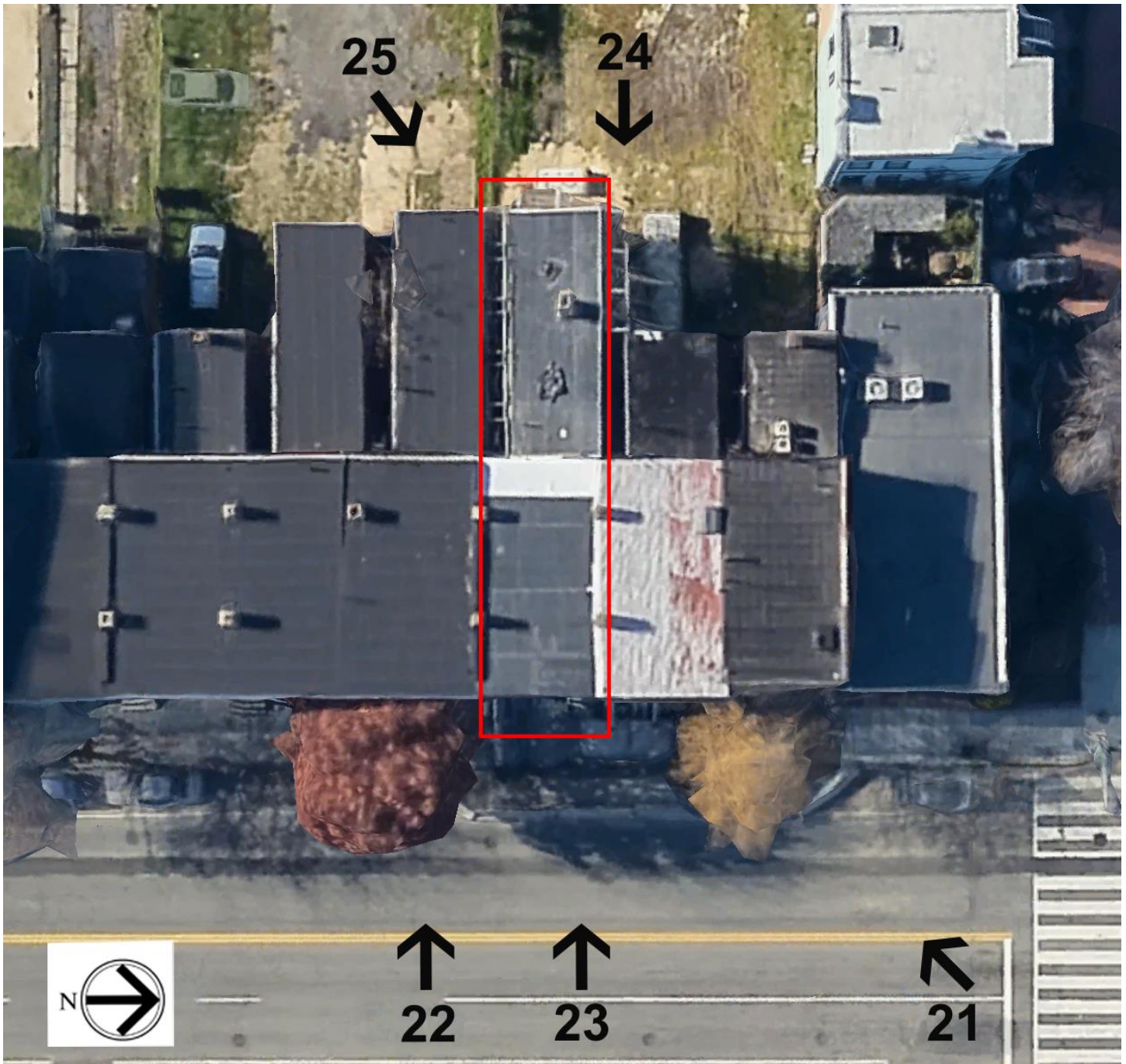
# CARTER G. WOODSON HOUSE

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**Exterior Photo Key, 1538 Ninth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001.** NHS property indicated by red rectangle.



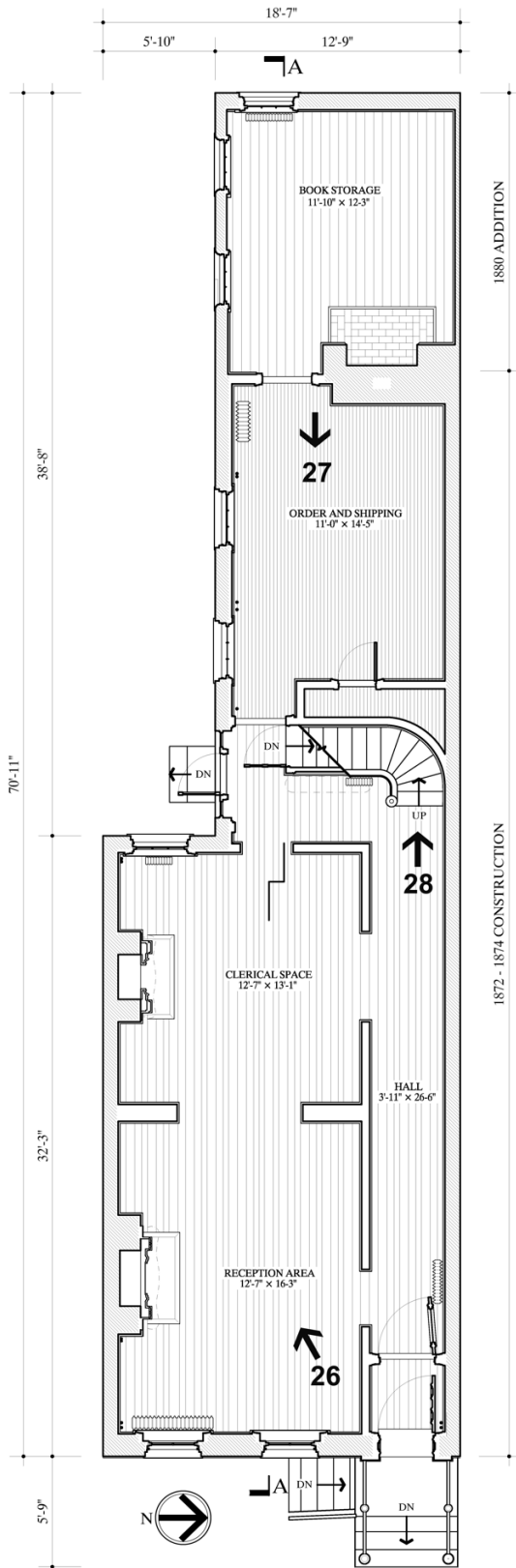
# CARTER G. WOODSON HOUSE

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### Interior First Floor Photo Key, 1538 Ninth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001



**FIRST FLOOR PLAN**

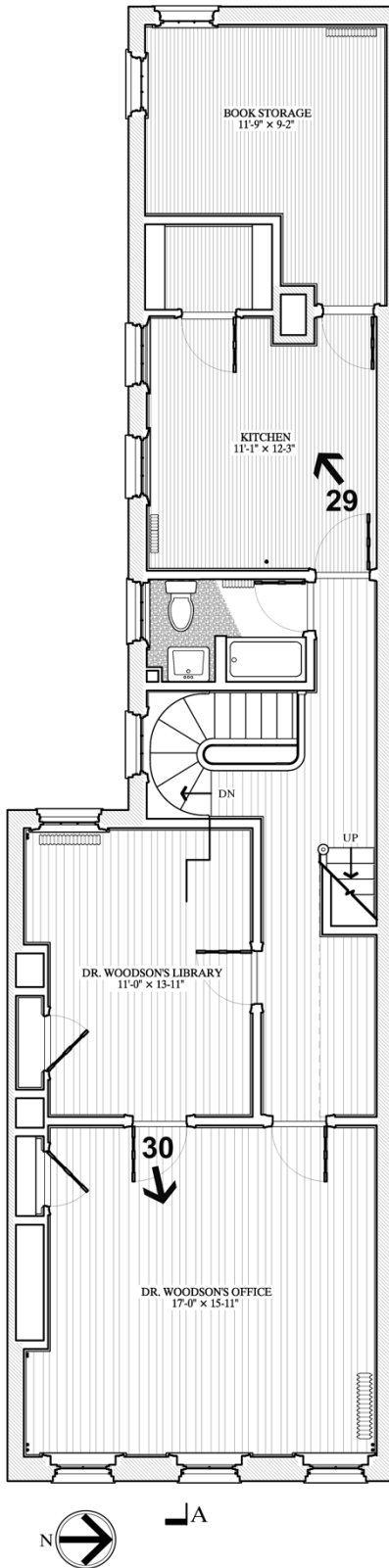
# CARTER G. WOODSON HOUSE

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### Interior Second Floor Photo Key, 1538 Ninth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

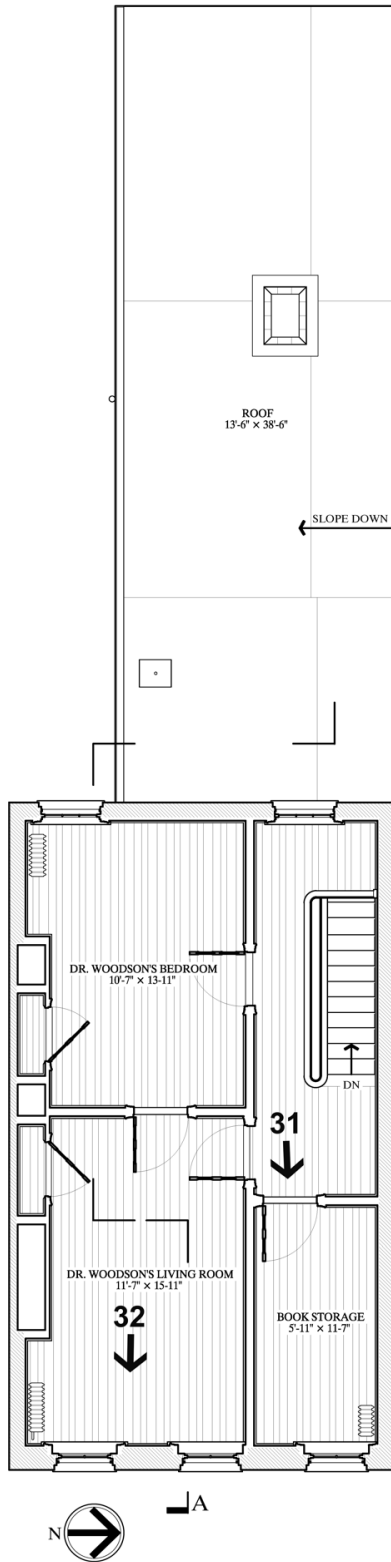
# CARTER G. WOODSON HOUSE

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### Interior Third Floor Photo Key, 1538 Ninth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001



THIRD FLOOR PLAN



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# CARTER G. WOODSON HOUSE

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**Figure 21.** Streetscape of Woodson home looking southwest, February 2019. Woodson House indicated by arrow. Photograph by Amber N. Wiley. (DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0001)



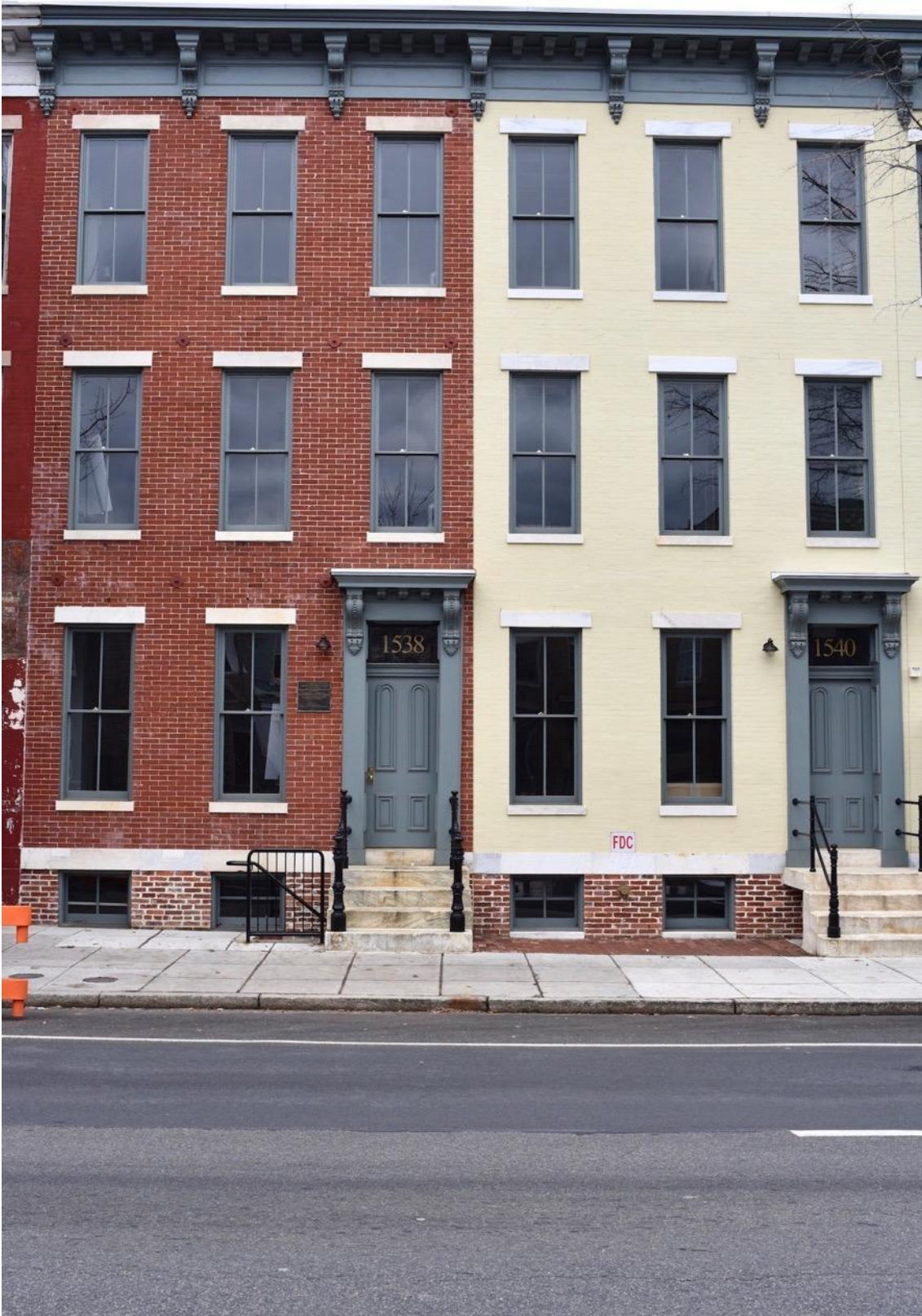
**Figure 22.** Woodson home streetscape, February 2019. Woodson House indicated by arrow. Photograph by Amber N. Wiley. (DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0002)

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**Figure 23.** East façade Woodson home. Red brick building is the Woodson House, January 2018. NPS Photo. (DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0003)



**Figure 24.** West elevation (rear) Woodson home on right, January 2018. NPS Photo.  
(DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0004)



**Figure 25.** View of Woodson home looking northeast, showing south elevation of rear ell, January 2018. NPS Photo. (DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0005)



**Figure 26.** View of first floor reception area with clerical space beyond, February 2019. Photograph by Amber N. Wiley. (DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0006)



**Figure 27.** First floor ordering and shipping room looking east towards the front of the house, February 2019. Photograph by Amber N. Wiley. (DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0007)





**Figure 28.** First floor staircase, February 2019. Photograph by Amber N. Wiley. (DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0008)



**Figure 29.** Second floor kitchen, February 2019. Photograph by Amber N. Wiley. (DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0009)

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**Figure 30.** Second floor, Woodson's office, February 2019. Photograph by Amber N. Wiley.  
(DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0010)

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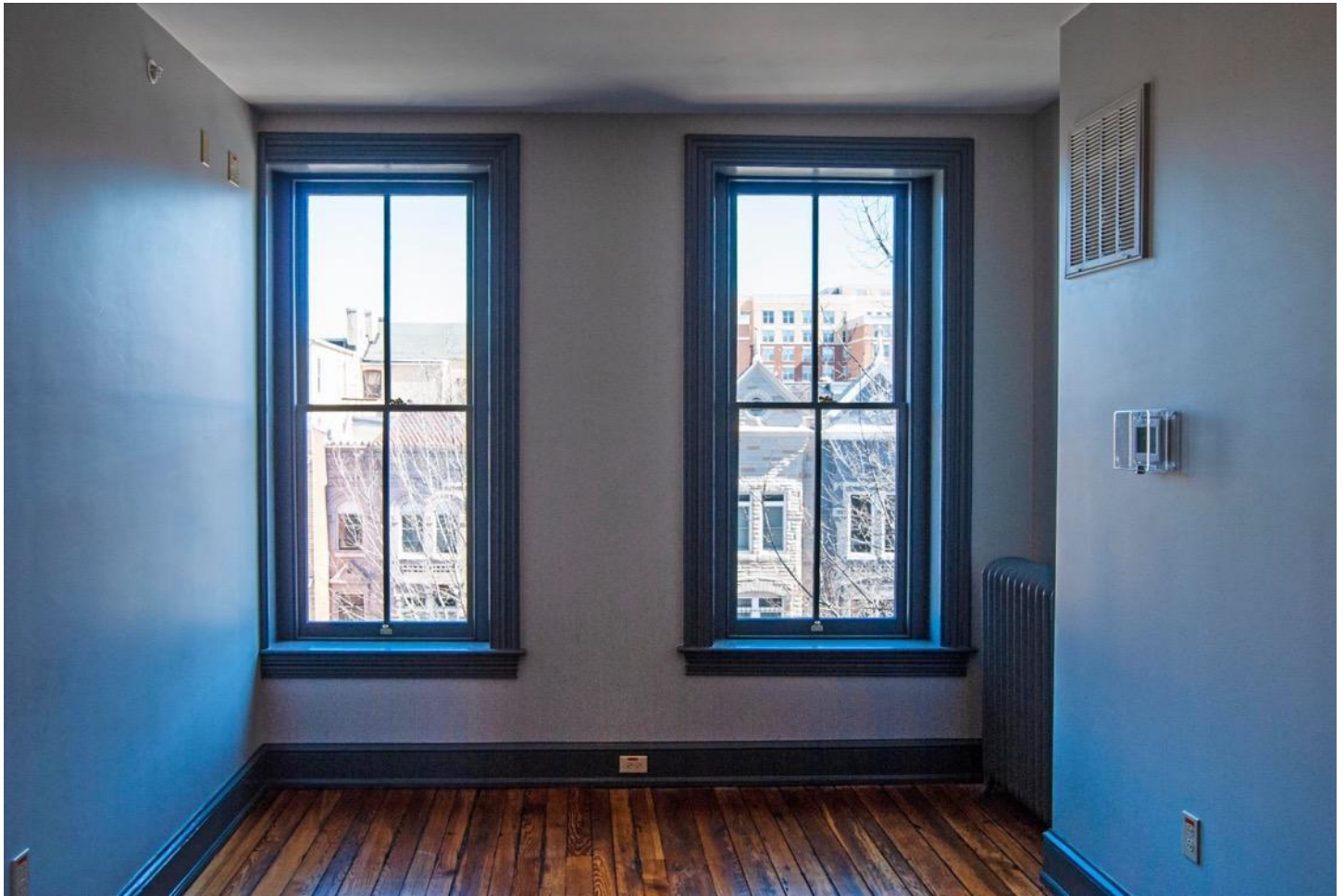
**Figure 31.** Third floor, book storage area, February 2019. Photograph by Amber N. Wiley. (DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0011)

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**Figure 32.** Third floor, Woodson's living room, February 2019. Photograph by Amber N. Wiley.  
(DC\_Washington\_Carter G Woodson Home\_0012)