ABSTRACT

Title of Document:  “OUR STYLISH BOARDING-HOUSE”: BOARDINGHOUSES IN THREE LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA NEIGHBORHOODS

Caitlin Hays Black, Masters of Historic Preservation, 2013

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Boardinghouses represent an important, yet highly overlooked historic resource. This study examines boardinghouses in three neighborhoods in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, using a combination of maps and census data, to shed light on the practice of boarding in Lancaster as well as the kinds of structures in which boarding took place. Considering boarding on a range of scales, this study looks at both the broad demographic trends of boarders and boardinghouse keepers, including gender, class, race, and ethnicity, as well as specific examples of boardinghouses. From these findings, this study provides a series of recommendations for how boardinghouses can be studied, preserved, and interpreted within their communities.
“OUR STYLISH BOARDING-HOUSE”: BOARDINGHOUSES IN THREE LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA NEIGHBORHOODS

By

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Master Final Project submitted to the Faculty of the Historic Preservation Program of the School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation of the University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Historic Preservation 2013

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“We keep a stylish boarding house,  
On the "Graeco-Roman "plan,  
Our boarders come just when they please,  
And go just when they can;  
But when the time to eat arrives,  
You'll find they all are there,  
Waiting for the servant girl  
To call out in their ear:  

Roast beef, roast pork,  
And nice potatoes, too;  
And a nice new mystery-  
They call it sawdust stew;  
And for dessert we have to-day  
A dish, 'twill make you cry;  
We made it fresh this morning,  
And it's called sole-leather pie.”

“Our Stylish Boarding House”  
by Edward J. Abram

“Our Stylish Boarding-House,” a late nineteenth-century, self-described “comic song and chorus,” exposes both the excitement and potential peril of boardinghouse life. The second and third verses of the song describe the residents of this lyrical boardinghouse—Doctor Quack, “with cures so sure and true,” Alfonso Spry, who is “considered quite a match,” and Scraphina Sharp, “a maid of many years”—all of who eagerly await the meal of “sawdust stew” and “sole-leather pie” described in the song’s chorus.

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1 Edward J. Abraham, “Our Stylish Boarding-House” in Latest Popular Music Compositions,  
2 Ibid.  
3 Ibid.
As the lyrics mock both the conditions and inhabitants of this “stylish boarding-house,” they expose the inherent divide between exterior and interior that marked these structures. From the outside, boardinghouse keepers could market their businesses as “stylish” or respectable, advertising vacancies as rooms “with a private family.” The conditions inside a boardinghouse, however, often conflicted with this rosy exterior view, evidenced by the meals offered and boarders present in “our stylish boarding-house.” Any consideration of the resource must examine the intersection between boardinghouse architecture and boardinghouse inhabitants to arrive at a full understanding of the resource.

The need to look beyond the architecture of boardinghouses and into their social histories accounts for why the resource has received minimal attention from historians and preservationists until the last decade. The banality of boardinghouses and their occupants has stood counter to the aspirations of preservationists from the 1858 founding of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, the first American preservation organization, into the late twentieth century, as preservation efforts focused on structures of high style architecture or associations with important

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individuals. In fact, hundreds, if not thousands of boardinghouses existed in every American city at any point in time during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, yet only ten of these structures have been listed on the National Register for their significance as boardinghouses, and comparatively small numbers have been included on state and local registries.

Even with the founding of organizations like the Vernacular Architecture Forum in 1980, which represented a shift in the conception of what is worthy of studying and preserving, boardinghouses have continued to receive little attention. Boardinghouses represent vernacular architecture at its finest, as the structures truly enable us to “think of buildings in terms of cultural, social and historical issues rather than simply as heritage.” As practice and research need no longer dwell on the monumental but instead may begin to focus on “the substance of buildings themselves, their surroundings, function, symbolic content, [and] evolution,” the time is right for studies of boardinghouses.

Using Lancaster, Pennsylvania, as a microcosm for urban America, this study seeks to follow in the tradition of vernacular architecture studies in exploring boardinghouses as a resource type while also providing insight into how still-extant

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boardinghouses should be treated in the present. This study explores boardinghouses within three of Lancaster’s neighborhoods between 1880 and 1920 and examines some of the specific structures within which boarding occurred. The results of this investigation allow for the development of recommendations for how boardinghouses can be studied and preserved, in hopes that the rich histories of these resources can be rediscovered and retold.

**Defining a Boardinghouse**

In advance of studying Lancaster’s boardinghouses it is important to first consider the resource more generally, especially in terms of how the practice of boarding transpired and the categories of structures in which boarding occurred. Boarding constitutes a transactional relationship whereby an individual pays the proprietor for a place to sleep, basic housekeeping, and meals; accordingly, a boardinghouse is a structure within which the practice of boarding takes place. Inside this seemingly simple definition lie many nuances in terms of how boarding was actually practiced and how boarders and proprietors sought to define the terms of their arrangement.

As historian Wendy Gamber describes in *The Boardinghouse in Nineteenth-Century America*, there were both public and private boardinghouses: private boardinghouses provided meals only to those living there while public boardinghouses served meals to non-resident guests as well.\(^\text{10}\) Public boardinghouses, in this regard, were quite similar to small hotels, which also served

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meals to the public in addition to their private guests. Making matters more nuanced, many hotels housed boarders in addition to short-term guests. As Gamber remarks, two individuals may have described the same establishment in different terms, one seeing it as a small hotel and the other as a large boardinghouse.\textsuperscript{11} Some boardinghouses accommodated “roomers” or “lodgers,” individuals who paid for a place to sleep but were not provided with meals, adding more complexity to the dynamics within a boardinghouse.

Within private boardinghouses, both boarders and proprietors sought to make a distinction between boardinghouses and situations where one boarded with a private family, which can be interpreted as the difference between “operating a boardinghouse” and “taking in boarders.”\textsuperscript{12} Often, boarders and boardinghouse proprietors used these terms as a means of marking class differentiation, separating middle class establishments from those of the working class.\textsuperscript{13}

Though boarders and proprietors would have recognized a myriad of boardinghouse types operating in urban America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, these establishments can be grouped into three main categories:

1. Private family boardinghouses

   Private family boardinghouses are defined as situations where one or two boarders lived with a family or single head of house. Within Lancaster, this was by far the most common way in which boarding occurred. Generally, in these situations, no one within the family

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
would see their occupation as operating a boardinghouse, and would not have reported it as such on the census.

2. Public or private boardinghouses

These kinds of establishments include three or more boarders, though most included between six and ten. Typically, both boarders and the proprietor’s family occupied the same residence. In some cases, an adult female—usually the head of house or wife of the head of house—would define her occupation as operating a boardinghouse.

3. Hotels with boarding

Although care should be taken to distinguish hotels from boardinghouses, as they were usually run by men—as opposed to women—and intentionally built—as opposed to organically developed—they provide an additional window into the practice of boarding that must be acknowledged. In these situations, individuals, including, but not limited to, the hotel staff, boarded on the premise. In most situations, the family of the hotel proprietor lived on the site as well.

Despite the variety of ways in which a boardinghouse could operate, the structure is best defined by what takes place within it rather than its architectural appearance. Unlike hotels, which were typically intentionally designed, boardinghouses were usually regular houses with extra rooms to let out or with additional rooms added on.\textsuperscript{14} A structure that functioned as a boardinghouse in one

year may not have done so several years, or months, later if the family’s situation changed or different residents moved in.

Boardinghouse life varied: individuals sought to live in a boardinghouse for a number of reasons, they found a range of conditions, cleanliness, and hospitality within boardinghouses, and they terminated their stay at a particular boardinghouse, or in boardinghouses in general, for a range of reasons. Likewise, boardinghouse proprietors were motivated by many different factors, especially their family economies, when deciding to operate a boardinghouse. As a resource-type, boardinghouses were united only in their collective commercialization of domestic space. In practice, these structures functioned quite distinctly, each a manifestation of the motivations and habitus of its boarders and boardinghouse keepers alike.

Cultural Context of Lancaster

The history of Lancaster in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century lays the groundwork for understanding the distinctive nature of individual boardinghouses as well as the combined role of these structures within the city. Located in southeastern Pennsylvania, Lancaster was laid out in 1734, became the Lancaster County seat in 1738, and was incorporated as a city in 1818 (Figure 1).

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15 Ibid.
16 Sociologists use habitus to refer to values and expectations of a social group developed through everyday experiences. The term was introduced by Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge University Press, 1977.
By 1860, the city boasted a population of over 17,000; the population increased to nearly 26,000 in 1880, making it the sixth largest city in Pennsylvania. Contemporaries regarded the city as an industrial hub: major industries included a rolling mill, four cotton mills, paper mills, an umbrella factory, and numerous tobacco sorting and cigar manufacturing establishments, in addition to smaller establishments like millineries, dressmakers, confectioners, breweries, harness makers, and carriage manufactures (Figure 2). The presence of the Conestoga River directly south of the city limits and the construction of the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad through the city in 1834 enabled the growth of these industries, providing mechanisms for hydropower and transportation. In addition to these industries, the city also

Figure 1: Location of Lancaster within Pennsylvania, “Pennsylvania,” geology.com.

contained a range of social and cultural institutions by the late nineteenth century, including an Alms House, a prison, an orphanage, a hospital, a waterworks, a public school system, a theological seminary, a college, an opera house, five public markets, and numerous religious centers.\textsuperscript{20}

Figure 2: Major industries in Lancaster from 1880 to 1920, 1897 Sanborn map of Lancaster, Sanborn Map Publishing Company, \textit{Lancaster Pennsylvania}, 1897.

\textsuperscript{20} Mombert, \textit{An Authentic History of Lancaster County} 464-487, Clare, \textit{A Brief History of Lancaster County}, " 235-239.
contained a range of social and cultural institutions by the late nineteenth century, including an Alms House, a prison, an orphanage, a hospital, a waterworks, a public school system, a theological seminary, a college, an opera house, five public markets, and numerous religious centers.\textsuperscript{21}

By the early twentieth century, Lancaster was undoubtedly a city witnessing, boasting new technologies such as “electric railroads” and gas and electric-lit streets.\textsuperscript{22} These late nineteenth century efforts enabled the city to expand past the limits of the traditional walking city, as one could easily travel further distances to places of work. By the first decades of the twentieth century, the city had also become home to large numbers of second wave German immigrants in addition to clusters of Russian, Irish, Italian, and Greek immigrants. Additionally, the city’s weight as an industrial center increased with the arrival of the Hamilton Watch Factory (1892) and Armstrong World Industries (relocated to Lancaster in 1906), a cork and linoleum flooring company. Boardinghouses stood at the center of social changes, like immigration. They provided accommodations for new residents, challenges to contemporary definitions of female domesticity, manifestations of attitudes towards race, and articulations of class status and aspirations.\textsuperscript{23}

**Social Analysis of Boardinghouses**

Since their interior uses and inhabitants define boardinghouses more meaningfully than their architecture, analysis of these structures must involve an

\textsuperscript{21} Mombert, *An Authentic History of Lancaster County* 464-487, Clare, *A Brief History of Lancaster County,* 99-235-239.

\textsuperscript{22} Clare, *A Brief History of Lancaster County,* 99.

effective means of interrogation and drawing out the social issues within these structures. This study uses a thorough consideration of gender, class, race, and ethnicity to understand the interior workings of boardinghouses and, consequently, achieve a more nuanced and meaningful understanding of the resource.

As first laid out by the Combahee River Collective in 1978, categories of identity and oppression cannot be fully separated from one another; rather, class, sex, ethnicity and race are “interlocking,” and care must be taken to engage in an “integrated analysis” of the way that these identifiers act upon individuals and groups.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the Combahee River Collective states that, “the synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives.”⁴⁵ In order to understand the lived experiences of an individual, one must first understand the compounded forms of oppression they face. As the theory of intersectionality has developed in recent decades, practitioners envision it accomplishing several goals, including the “reformulat[ion of] the world of ideas so that it incorporates the many contradictory and overlapping ways that human life is experienced.”⁴⁶ This insight applies to interpretations of boardinghouses as the multiple identifiers of boarders and boardinghouse keepers impacted how they interacted with the space. Boardinghouses cannot be interpreted as spaces only impacted by gender or class or ethnicity or race; rather, the structures must be seen as places in which these categories collided. Though class, gender, ethnicity, and race must be considered as collectively

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contributing to an individual’s identity and experiences, it is important to first understand each of these categories separately so that they can be understood together.

Issues of class permeate every boardinghouse in Lancaster, as class served as a means of predicting who resided in certain boardinghouses; people tended to board in homes or engage boarders with a similar class position. It is important to recognize that boardinghouses were not a purely working class phenomenon: in fact, a large number of those using and operating boardinghouses likely would have considered themselves middle class.27

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, both middle class and working class identity were in a period of transition. Timothy Mahoney explains that the industrialization that occurred in the years after the Civil War prompted a vast shift in society and social expectations, especially for those of the middle class.28 The ability of more people, and more diverse kinds of people, to attain middle class status created a sense of “disorder” among those of the “‘old’ middle class,” which was gradually eased by the creation of a middle class identity rooted in hard work, a gender-based division of labor, and engagement in a robust civic culture.29

The time period of boardinghouses considered for this project begins at the very end of this period of class re-articulation, making it likely that many of these elements of middle class identity, or aspirations for middle class identity, manifest within boardinghouses. In fact, as both Wendy Gamber and David Faflik have noted,

28 Timothy Mahoney, “Middle-Class Experience in the United States in the Gilded Age, 1865-1900,” in *Journal of Urban History*, 31:2, 2005, 360.
29 Mahoney, “Middle-Class Experience,” 357.
boardinghouses embodied many of the elements of the rearticulated middle class identity. The spaces were both places of work, providing a source of income for the women who kept them, as well as places of workers, generally housing those employed in nearby industries. Additionally, these spaces fostered a greater degree of “heterosocia[alty]” than other kinds of establishments, enabling unrelated men and women to interact together daily while simultaneously upholding both the claims to respectability and gendered work (at least in the role of the boardinghouse keeper) that characterized gendered expectations of middle class life.\(^{30}\)

As the period of this study also extends into the early twentieth century, it is also possible to read within boardinghouses the manifestation of some of the strains of middle class life in the early twentieth century. The development of new forms of entertainment that promoted new social mores, arrival of large numbers of immigrants, and decision of more women to enter into the workforce put strains on the “‘new’ middle class.”\(^{31}\) Within Lancaster’s boardinghouses, these tensions manifest in the frequent segregation of boarders into boardinghouses by race or ethnicity and shifts in the number of female workers across neighborhoods and across time. It is evident, then, that boardinghouses must be investigated as both evidence of changes in middle class identity as well as spaces in which that identity is tested, created, and reproduced.

Boardinghouses inhabited by working class individuals manifested the changes to working class identity that emerged in the late nineteenth- and early


\(^{31}\) Mahoney, “Middle-Class Experience,” 357, Daniel Horowitz, “Frugality or Comfort: Middle Class Styles of Life in the early Twentieth Century,” in American Quarterly 37:2, 1985, 293-294.
twentieth-centuries as well. Nineteenth century industrialization had ushered in a new economy whereby factory owners sought to maximize profit by taking advantage of cheap labor. This practice lead to the emergence of a working class population that worked for wages, many in unskilled positions. In many working class households, men, women, and even older children held jobs. While men and women worked in factories, women also found work as housekeepers, cooks, launderers, or domestic servants. Additionally, many working class women also worked as boardinghouse keepers, a position that enabled them to attain additional income for their families while remaining within the home.

While it is easy to look at the working class as a homogeneous group, John McClymer’s analysis of working class families in Boston demonstrates that there were many shades in the daily living conditions and potential for social mobility among working class households. Those of the working class ranged from immigrants to nativist whites and included both skilled and unskilled laborers. Additionally, family composition varied dramatically, as some households contained no children while others contained many. McClymer demonstrates that working class individuals who were native born, skilled laborers with less than two children could hope to attain a high working class or lower middle class status. Conversely,

36 Ibid.
an unskilled immigrant with more than two children would have more difficulty shedding his working class status.\textsuperscript{37} These nuances in working class identity impacted the use of boardinghouses in Lancaster, as working class individuals may have chosen to take in or expel boarders as their class status changed. Additionally, boardinghouses served as housing for many working class individuals, providing insight into the private aspects of their lives.

While working class status was a spectrum rather than an absolute, as a group, the working class would have been united in their differentiation from their employers, typically factory owners. Factory owners exercised hegemony over their workers, power that workers felt both in and out of the factory. In fact, in some instances factory owners owned workers’ housing.\textsuperscript{38} As such, a working class individual’s daily life was heavily impacted by their place of employment and their inferior position relative to the factory owner.

As boardinghouses were income-producing endeavors, both middle and working class boardinghouses were closely tied to the class status of the individuals residing within them and the changes in class identity. Within Lancaster, differences in class status resulted in boardinghouses of different quality that catered to individuals of varying class status. Additionally, the ability of individuals to attain higher class status often impacted a family’s decision to stop taking in boarders, as they no longer required the income.

Issues of gender are also essential to a thorough interrogation of boardinghouses, as women typically shouldered responsibility for maintaining the

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Mrozowski et al., \textit{Living on the Boott}, 2.
boardinghouse and caring for the needs of boarders in addition to their own families. To suggest that all female boarders or female proprietors experienced boardinghouse life similarly would be foolish, though it is evident that the tasks involved in maintaining a boardinghouse align closely with societal articulations of a woman’s “domestic” responsibilities within her own family. Boardinghouse keepers performed “‘kitchen work,’” like cooking meals, cleaning dishes, “‘chamber work,’” including sweeping rooms, laundering sheets and curtains, and other domestic tasks necessary to keep the house functioning and clean.39 A boardinghouse keeper may have employed a servant to assist in these tasks, but the burden would fall largely on her, especially since servants could be difficult to maintain long term.40 To suggest that these tasks were merely evidence of “women’s work” relegated to the private, domestic sphere, though, would diminish the full extent of what women undertook in boardinghouses.

The boardinghouse must be understood, in part, as a collapsing of the rigid dichotomies of man/woman and private/public, the notion of separate spheres that arguably characterized the nineteenth century. Writing in 1898, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, herself a boardinghouse keeper, attempts to “reconstruc[t] in our minds the position of women under conditions of economic independence,” asserting the injustice of women performing domestic work for no “change in her economic situation” and arguing that society as a whole would benefit from enabling women to

40 Ibid.
be economically independent and not tied to men for changes in their economic status.\textsuperscript{41}

To an extent, the boardinghouse keeper is Gilman’s independent woman, though she achieved this status through the home rather than outside of it. Many boardinghouse keepers in Lancaster between 1880 and 1920 were single or widowed women who kept boarders to generate income, using the home, and their work within it, to “affect [their] economic status.”\textsuperscript{42} In this regard, boardinghouse keepers merged the dueling notions of private and public spheres within their homes, transforming domestic space into economic space. Even married women who kept boarders demonstrate the need to read boardinghouses as a means of economic independence that defied traditional constructions of male and female roles in society, as their efforts typically supplemented family incomes, providing a better quality of life than what their husbands (and employed children) could accomplish alone.\textsuperscript{43}

An attempt to read boardinghouses as evidence of period gender relations must be tempered by an appreciation of how women viewed themselves and their position in society at the time and how we, in the present, interpret their experiences. In Beyond Separate Spheres, Rosalind Rosenberg remarks that the majority of women in the late nineteenth century did not readily embrace challenges to the notion of “female exceptionalism” that were emerging from the new disciplines of social science, preferring instead to see themselves cast in the light of female morality and

\textsuperscript{41} Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Chapter 5, Women and Economics, 1898, http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/gilman/economics/economics.html.
\textsuperscript{42} Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Chapter 1, Women and Economics, 1898.
\textsuperscript{43} Wendy Gamber, The Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century America, 49.
domesticity. Significantly, women would begin to change their outlook about themselves and their potential role in society in the early decades of the twentieth century, making it possible to read boardinghouses in the context of this change in perspective. The reshaping of how society understood female identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gives gender a particularly apt use in looking at boardinghouses and their occupants.

Ethnicity and race provide the final elements of the framework for analyzing boardinghouses. During the time period under study, four million Germans, nearly four million Italians, three million Irish, two and a half million English, Scots, and Welsh, nearly two and a half million European Jews, one million Poles and nearly one million Scandinavians immigrated to the United States. These individuals came to America for a variety of reasons, including the factory jobs resulting from rapid industrialization and lack of comparable opportunities in their native countries. Immigrant presence and experience is reflected in boardinghouses in two ways: (1) through the anticipated relationships between immigrants and non-immigrants and (2) the relationships between individuals of the same immigrant group.

One of the greatest unifiers of immigrant groups would have been the notion of “racial fear” and otherness with which white Americans saw them. The development of strict immigration policies and nativist movements attest to the growing fear and resentment of the large influx of immigrants in America during the

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45 Rosenberg, *Beyond Separate Spheres*, 208.
46 Gabaccia, *From the Other Side*, 8.
47 Gabaccia, *From the Other Side*, 11.
48 Gabaccia, *From the Other Side*, 9.
time period under study. The tensions that existed between immigrants and non-immigrants are reflected in Lancaster through the self-segregation of immigrants into specific areas of the city, most notably Germans in Cabbage Hill. Within Lancaster’s boardinghouses, it is evident that individuals tended to board with others of the same ethnic background, meaning that boardinghouses reinforced these social relationships. Ironically, these nativist attitudes also resulted in some of the earliest preservation efforts in America, as individuals, like William Sumner Appleton in New England, sought to reinforce American identity through the preservation and celebration of historic sites that celebrated America’s history and cultivated a civil religion.

Within specific immigrant groups, boardinghouses also served to reinforce social and cultural bonds. In many instances, a member or members of a family would immigrate in advance of the rest of the family. Boardinghouses typically provided a home to the first immigrant from a family (typically a man), who needed a place to stay as he established himself in a community. Likewise, by taking in boarders, families could facilitate the immigration of other members of their family, giving them meals and a place to stay in their first years in America. In this regard, boardinghouses enabled chain migration and promoted the retention of family bonds and cultural beliefs.

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49 Gabaccia, From the Other Side, 8.
52 Gabaccia, From the Other Side, 31.
53 Gabaccia, From the Other Side, 63.
Race also serves as an important factor in Lancaster’s late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century boardinghouses as blacks were present in the city, many as migrants from the south and others as emigrants from the Caribbean. Though only present in the city in small numbers, blacks worked as servants in boardinghouses, especially hotels with boarding, operated their own boardinghouses, or boarded within boardinghouses. Lancaster maintained a palpable level of de facto segregation, with black households tending to be located near to one another in small pockets throughout the city. Additionally, non-hotel boardinghouses were divided sharply on lines of race, with black-run boardinghouses only taking in black boarders and black boarders only boarding in black-run boardinghouses.

As the categories of gender, class, ethnicity, and race suggest, boardinghouses provide an unparalleled means of glancing into the lives of individuals and families that might otherwise remain unknown, giving them both meaning and distinction as a resource. At the very heart of their analysis, then, lies the issue of social justice, a belief that by uncovering the experiences of boarders and articulating how and why they used the spaces they inhabited, a fuller, more meaningful picture of the city may occur. Through a detailed consideration of the kinds of structures used as boardinghouses and the kinds of people living within them, this study seeks, on a fundamental level, to bring those on the margins of the city’s history back into the fold.

55 Ibid.
56 Ibid.
57 Ibid.
Boardinghouses must also be read as socially produced space. As Edward Soja describes, space “can be continuously reinforced or reproduced over time” or “it can be substantially restructured and radically reconstituted.” The spaces in which boarding occurred underwent these processes of stability and change. These spaces took on different meanings as the contexts of the neighborhoods in which they were located changed or as the kinds of people living in them changed. One structure could serve as a family home; a local business or small production site, like a bakery or grocery; a locus of Americanization for a group of immigrants; a place for room and board for a group of workers; a means of entrepreneurship for a single or widowed woman, who rents out rooms; or a symbol of one’s ascension from working to middle class life. While these uses could occur simultaneously or over time, each of them would have impacted the way space was used, demonstrating the way that boardinghouse space was socially produced.

Boardinghouses were closely tied to the social changes occurring in Lancaster and other cities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In fact, these structures both embodied and facilitated the cultural shifts occurring elsewhere throughout the city. Gender, class, ethnicity and race as well as current theories of social justice and socially produced space lend important insight into the study of boardinghouses in Lancaster. These factors aid in determining trends in where boardinghouses existed, who populated them, and why. In essence, these categories of analysis enable a more complete investigation of boardinghouses as a resource than

what their architecture alone provides. Furthermore, these factors point to the myriad of experiences boarders and boardinghouse keepers had, underscoring the need to approach boardinghouses as a collective phenomenon within a city or neighborhood as well as individual structures with distinct histories and meanings.

**Study Areas**

This study considers boarding in three of Lancaster’s neighborhoods: Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside (Figure 3). Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, distinct sets of characteristics marked each of these neighborhoods. Accordingly, each neighborhood provides different, and often divergent, insights into the practice and impact of boarding, dispelling any notion that the practice was unilateral, even within a single city.

1. **Penn Square**

   The Penn Square neighborhood contains a portion of the city’s central business district and Musser Park area. This neighborhood represents the first area of the city to be settled following the creation of Lancaster in 1734 and is bounded roughly by Prince Street, Vine Street, Plum Street, and Fulton Avenue.

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60 Unlike the other two areas under study, the boundaries of this neighborhood were created by the author rather than by inhabitants of the city. While the entire area included in this neighborhood contains a similar history of development, the combination of sections of the central business district and Musser Park neighborhoods allows for a consideration of both the commercial core of the city as well as the adjacent residential areas.
2. **Cabbage Hill**

Positioned in the southwestern portion of Lancaster, this neighborhood is bound roughly by West King Street, Dorwart Street, Manor Street, Laurel Street, Fremont Street, and West Strawberry Street. The area developed in the late nineteenth century and was first occupied primarily by German immigrants.

3. **Southside**

Southside extends south of the Penn Square area and east of Cabbage Hill. It is bounded roughly by South Prince Street, Hazel Street, South Queen Street, and Farnum Street. The neighborhood emerged in the mid-nineteenth century and was centered around factories and mill complexes.

Though only constituting a portion of Lancaster’s boardinghouses between 1880 and 1920, the boardinghouses within these neighborhoods are representative of the full spectrum of boardinghouses within the city during the time period under study. Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside provide insight into how immigration impacted boarding, how boardinghouses related to nearby factories and industries, how class status affected the quality of boardinghouses, and how boarding and boardinghouses changed over time. These issues reflect the major trends present within Lancaster between 1880 and 1920; accordingly, boardinghouses in Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside give insight into the resource throughout the entire city.
Figure 3: Boundaries of the three neighborhoods considered in this study. Penn Square is outlined in blue, Cabbage Hill in orange, and Southside in green, Sanborn Map Publishing Company, *Lancaster Pennsylvania*, 1897.
Research Questions

As insight into both the practice of boarding and the social history of Lancaster would suggest, the complex nature of boardinghouses and the variety of distinctions present within the building type raise a number of questions. This study strives to answer these questions through the context of Lancaster, though the results of these lines of investigation can be applied to boarding in other locations as well.

- How did patterns of class, ethnicity, and gender (separately and together) affect the way that boardinghouses developed and functioned?
- How do boardinghouses relate to the institutional and industrial forces within each community and throughout the city?
- Why does the boardinghouse provide better access to the lives of those who lived there than other resources? What can we learn about the often transient and working class individuals who lived in boardinghouses?
- How can we preserve and interpret these stories? Does increased insight into the lives of boardinghouse residents change our understanding of the larger themes and narratives surrounding cities like Lancaster in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?

Using the Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside neighborhoods, this research strives to unravel the complicated nature of boardinghouses in order to better understand both the structures and the activities that occurred within them, uniting both the architectural and social elements of boardinghouses to form a complete
understanding of this resource. After providing a comprehensive look at boarding in each of these neighborhoods, this study details recommendations for researching, preserving, and interpreting boardinghouses both within Lancaster and throughout cities more generally.
Chapter 2: Penn Square

“Wanted: By a family of four adults and three children—the oldest eight years—three nice rooms, furnished, with board. Location and board must be good. Private family preferred. References exchanged”
- *Lancaster Intelligencer*, September 1, 1881

- *Lancaster Intelligencer*, October 3, 1889

“Boarders wanted: Gentleman boarders wanted. Apply at No. 40 North Duke Street”
- *Lancaster Intelligencer*, April 13, 1885

Captured in these nineteenth-century advertisements is the notion that boardinghouses served a myriad of people, including single men and women, children, the elderly, large families, immigrants, native born whites, middle class individuals, and working class laborers. Not all boarders or boardinghouses were equal, and based on their individual social identifiers, boarders and boardinghouse keepers alike maintained distinct expectations for the kinds of boardinghouses they would reside in or boarders they would accept, evidenced by phrases such as “three nice rooms, furnished,” “in a private family,” or “gentleman boarders wanted.”

Penn Square, located in the center of Lancaster, was well suited in terms of location and building stock to cater to the range of boarders present in Lancaster. Between 1880 and 1920, Penn Square contained boarders who were native born whites, recent immigrants, elderly, young, African American, working class, middle class, single, married, male and female. Some sought a collection of rooms in a boardinghouse for their family, while others were content to “double up,” or share their room, or even their bed with someone else. Some resided within a hotel or large
boardinghouses, while others preferred rooms in a small home, “with a private family.” Some boarders stayed in boardinghouses long-term, until marriage or following the death of a spouse, while others viewed the arrangement as short-term, merely residing in a boardinghouse until established in America. Many boarders occupied boardinghouses with residents economically, racially, or ethnically similar to themselves, giving rise to Greek and Italian immigrant boardinghouses, African American boardinghouses, Rolling Mill worker boardinghouses, middle class boardinghouses, and the like. From these disparate experiences, distinct patterns emerge, giving boardinghouses in Penn Square a character all of their own.

The Penn Square area joins the central business core of Lancaster with nearby residential streets, providing insight into boarding in both the commercial downtown and in surrounding single-family housing. The neighborhood, bounded by Prince, Chestnut, Fulton, Plum, King, Lime, and West Vine streets, represents one of the earliest parts of the city to be settled, and contained the county courthouse, newspaper office, an opera house, a train station, a market, and a variety of businesses and factories in the period under study (Figure 4). By the late nineteenth century, the area bounded by King, Prince, Chestnut, and Duke streets had a largely commercial character: residences mainly stood on the surrounding streets, which is reflected in the inclusion of the area bounded roughly by Fulton, Plum, King, and Duke streets in the Penn Square neighborhood for this study.\footnote{“Central Business District,” Lancaster City Living, 2013, http://www.lancastercityliving.com/index.php?pID=410} The structures within this entire area
were mostly constructed between 1870-1930, though the area had been settled and established much earlier.63

Figure 4: The boundaries of Penn Square and important industries and institutions within the neighborhood. A: Train Station; B: Newspaper office; C: Fulton Opera House; D: Central Market; E: Court House, Sanborn Map Publishing Company, *Lancaster Pennsylvania*, 1897.

63 “Musser Park,” Lancaster City Living, 2013
During the census years considered, there were 341 different structures used as boardinghouses, forty of which were used for boarding in two or more census years.\textsuperscript{64} Penn Square contained the largest numbers of boarders of the three neighborhoods in each year considered, which is not surprising, given its proximity to employment sources and transportation routes.

The heavy concentration of boarders within the neighborhood distinguishes Penn Square from the other two neighborhoods under study. In 1880 and 1900, the 100 blocks of Queen and Duke streets contained many large boardinghouses and hotels with boarders, some of which held upwards of twenty boarders in a single location; the high numbers of boarders within these locations focused a significant portion of the neighborhood’s boarders within only a few blocks. By 1910 and 1920, many of these large hotel and boarding structures no longer existed or accommodated only roomers or lodgers, shifting the highest concentrations of boarders to the residential blocks west of Duke Street.\textsuperscript{65}

The transition from boarding to lodging felt in Penn Square was reflected in cities across America. For example, a study of boarding and lodging in Boston in the late nineteenth century found that the number of boarders in Boston decreased from 15,938 in 1885 to 9,496 in 1895, while the number of lodgers increased


simultaneously from 24,280 in 1885 to 44,926 in 1895.\textsuperscript{66} The percentage of boarders and lodgers in the total city population remained stable between 1885 and 1895, suggesting that it was shift in the kinds of accommodations people preferred that changed over time.\textsuperscript{67}

The Penn Square neighborhood witnessed a similar decrease in the number of boarders over time, though this decrease occurred in the early twentieth century rather than the late nineteenth century (Table 1). Between 1880 and 1900, boarders increased slightly from 460 to 475. By 1910, boarders dropped sharply, to 187 individuals, remaining steady at 187 boarders in 1920.\textsuperscript{68}

Table 1: Gender of Boarders in Penn Square from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Boarders</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Boarders</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Boarders</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 also reveals the changes in relative percentages of boarders that occurred over time. Male boarders consistently outnumbered female boarders in

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{67} Wolfe, \textit{The Lodging House Problem}, 42-43.
\end{footnotesize}
Penn Square, though the percentage of female boarders did increase slightly over time, from 27% in 1880 to 38% in 1920. These numbers reflect growing opportunities for single women within the city, many of whom were employed as clerks, stenographers, or factory workers, as well as an increased, though begrudging, cultural acceptance of young women living away from their families.\textsuperscript{69}

The age-range of Penn Square’s boarders from 1880-1920, demonstrate that the neighborhood’s boardinghouses catered to both men and women of working-age (Table 2). Children and the elderly accounted for a significant portion of boardinghouse residents, demonstrating that boardinghouses served a wider range of functions than simply workers’ housing.

Table 2: Age of Boarders in Penn Square from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th></th>
<th>1900</th>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th></th>
<th>1920</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In each census year, the 18-30 year-old age bracket contained the largest number of men and women, though men in this range certainly outnumbered women. For men, the 31-40 and 41-50 age brackets, respectively, generally contained the next largest numbers of boarders. The picture is more complex for women. Thought the

18-30 age bracket continuously contained the largest number of boarders, the 41-50 and over 50 brackets shift in their position as the second largest age bracket. The large numbers of girls and boys under eighteen, especially in 1880 and 1900, point to the presence of families and orphaned children within boardinghouses. Families were equally common within large boardinghouses or hotels with boarding as it they in smaller boardinghouses. The Woolworth family provides an apt example of this trend. Boarding at 6 West Chestnut Street in 1880, F.W. and Janie Woolworth lived with their two-year-old daughter Lena. Twelve other boarders resided within the boardinghouse, operated by Anna Kendig, including two other married couples. Similarly, in 1900, 122 North Queen Street contained a large boardinghouse run by Peter and Francis Ammon. The residents of the structure included two families with children, the Benedicts and the Bensings, as well as four other married couples.

In other instances, children occupied boardinghouses independent of adult relatives. The Shackford siblings provide one such example. Belle, William, and Blanche, who ranged in age from seven to twelve, lived at 229 East Orange Street in 1880, a boardinghouse with ten boarders and two servants operated by Sarah Kieffer and her daughter Emily Flinn. Belle, the oldest, had been born in Connecticut, while her siblings had been born in Ohio. It is unclear if the children were orphans or resided separate from their parents for other reasons. All three of them attended school in 1880, suggesting that they maintained a comparatively normal, and easy, childhood; in that same year, thirteen-year-old Alice Printz, a boarder at 45 North

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71 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
Queen Street, was employed as a milliner and twelve-year-old Harry Swndy, who was the sole boarder with M.A. and Mary Philips at 49 North Prince Street, worked in the cotton mill (Figure 5).\(^{75}\)

Figure 5: 45 North Queen Street, center, a boardinghouse in 1880, Photograph by author.

Boardinghouses also provided a refuge for the elderly, a use reflected in the steady numbers of boarders over fifty between 1880 and 1920. In 1900, eighty-seven-year-old Elizabeth Gemperling boarded at 352 East Orange Street with Robert and Bertha Gall and their young son, Raymond.\(^{76}\) In that same year, Amis Murdoff, eighty-one years of age, boarded at 137 North Duke Street with Joseph and Margaret

Similarly, in 1910, eighty-three-year-old Magdalena Strehier boarded at 338 East Orange Street. Frederick and Mary Kammer, Mary’s sister, Helen, and James Frederick, a fifty-one-year-old boarder and cotton mill worker, occupied the house.\textsuperscript{78}

Considering that few options existed for elderly individuals who could no longer fully care for themselves in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it is not surprising that some would turn to boardinghouses for assistance. The boardinghouse rested between two extremes: the almshouse, which provided the poorest conditions yet housed the majority of elderly people unable to live on their own, and homes for the aged, which served an elite and moneyed clientele (Figure 6).\textsuperscript{79} For those who could afford it, the boardinghouse would have provided a

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Figure 6: A depiction of the Lancaster Alms House, B.A. Skeel, \textit{Atlas of Lancaster}, 1897.

\textsuperscript{77} 1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 45, Lancaster Pennsylvania, 8.  
\textsuperscript{78} 1910 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 62, Lancaster Pennsylvania, 1.  
desirable alternative to life in an almshouse, which was marked by poor conditions, illness, and understaffing.\textsuperscript{80} Residence in a boardinghouse provided basic housekeeping and meals, relieving the elderly of these burdens. The young and the elderly represented important minorities within boardinghouses, demonstrating that boardinghouses served a range of functions and accommodated many different individuals.

As the majority of individuals residing in the neighborhood’s boardinghouses were young or middle-aged adults, occupations provide important evidence into why boarders resided in Penn Square’s boardinghouses. As Table 3 demonstrates, the kinds of occupations undertaken by boarders varied over time. The number of boarders employed as doctors, attorneys, and in the rolling mill declined over time, becoming nonexistent by 1910. Similarly, employment in smaller operations—bakeries, confectionaries, blacksmith shops, dressmaking, tailoring—declined over time as well. The number of boarders employed in occupations like cigar rolling, teaching, and bookkeeping remained relatively constant over time. Significantly, the number of unemployed boarders rose over time, even as the number of boarders within the neighborhood was decreasing.

Despite shifts in the sources of employment, it is evident that boarders undertook working class occupations, like peddler, servant, cook, washer, or laborer, as well as occupations that were more closely aligned with middle class status, such

\textsuperscript{80} Munson, “The Care of the Sick,” 1228.
as doctor, attorney, clerk, or salesman.\textsuperscript{81} As such, boardinghouses must be viewed as both a working class and middle class phenomenon.\textsuperscript{82}

Table 3: Major Sources of Boarder Occupation in Penn Square form 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Home</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caramel Worker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carriage Trimmer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk, Bookkeeper, Stenographer</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confectioner</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Worker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigar/ Tobacco Worker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor, Dentist, Veterinarian, Medical Student</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook, Servant, House Keeper, Chambermaid</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressmaker, Seamstress, Tailor, Hatter</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Worker</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry/Washing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linoleum Worker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinist</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\textsuperscript{82} Gamber, “Away From Home,” 301.
Boarder occupations also demonstrate the way that the lines between home and work—private and public—became blurred. Hotels with boarding provide one of the clearest examples of the collapsing of the private/public dichotomy. In 1900, 122 North Queen Street, known as Franklin’s Hotel, contained forty-two boarders. Of these individuals, four were employed as hotel cooks, six as waitresses, three as chambermaids, and two as hostlers. These men and women saw the hotel as both their residence and their place of work, limiting the geographic space they would have covered in their daily lives.

The boardinghouse also functioned as part of a family business model. 45 North Queen Street contained the Weber family in 1880; Peter Weber, the head of house, worked as a hat dealer. His wife, Nellie, daughter, Lizzie, and boarders, Alice

\[\text{1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 45, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 2.}\]
and Salome, all worked as milliners, providing the labor for his business. In this instance, it is evident that boarding functioned as a strategic element of the Weber hat business, as room and board may have provided an incentive for potential employees. Similarly, it may have impacted how wages were distributed to employees, as the cost of boarding was likely deducted from Alice and Salome’s wages.

Occupation impacted the residents of boardinghouses even when boarders were not employed within the boardinghouse. In 1880, 338 East Fulton Street, 337 East Chestnut Street, and 218 North Plum Street all contained heads of house and multiple boarders who were employed at the Rolling Mill (Figures 7-8). The sixteen boarders in these three boardinghouses account for half of the boarders in Penn Square employed at the Rolling Mill. These figures suggest that individuals sought to board with those of similar occupations as themselves, perhaps easing the tensions of boarding with strangers and making it easier for those new to the occupation or location to find a place to board. Additionally, the fact that the male head of house in each of these locations was also employed at the Rolling Mill suggests that, in some instances, men were involved in elements of the boardinghouse economy as it is probable that the husbands in these households helped to find and engage boarders.

86 Ibid.
Figure 7: 337 East Chestnut Street, a boardinghouse used in 1880 to house Rolling Mill workers, Photograph by author.
In addition to age, gender, and occupation, ethnicity serves as another
important tool for understanding who resided in Penn Square’s boardinghouses, why
they may have chosen to live there, and how they interacted with the boardinghouse
space. Table 4 demonstrates that, while Penn Square was comprised mostly of white,American-born residents, a substantial amount of racial and ethnic diversity existed
within the neighborhood.

Figure 8: 218 North Plum Street, right, a boardinghouse that was also used in 1880 to
house Rolling Mill workers, Photograph by author.
Table 4: Race and Ethnicity in Penn Square from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boarders</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Boarders</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbadian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The percentage of immigrants ebbed and flowed in Penn Square between 1880 and 1920, decreasing between 1880 and 1900, increasing by 1910, and decreasing again by 1920.\textsuperscript{87} As this neighborhood represented the commercial core of the city, it is not surprising that changes in the percentage of immigrants would occur. A significant portion of individuals in this neighborhood did not seem to intend to reside in the area long term, evidenced by the high numbers of hotels and boardinghouses. Likewise, the neighborhood was characterized by small numbers of individuals, mostly men, from a single country rather than large concentrations of a particular ethnic group. It is probable that many immigrants in this neighborhood sought to work in one of the city’s businesses or factories before bringing their families to the United States and settle more permanently elsewhere.

Of the ethnic groups represented in Penn Square, Germans and the Irish consistently accounted for the largest immigrant groups, both in the neighborhood and among boarders. These trends exist within all three neighborhoods discussed, as well as on a national level, as Germany and Ireland accounted for two of the largest sources of immigrants to America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.\textsuperscript{88}

Though not representative of the neighborhood’s largest ethnic groups, Russian, Italian, and Greek immigrants demonstrate the important role that boardinghouses played in enabling immigration to America. South Christian Street contained a large Italian population in the early twentieth century, and many of the


\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., Gabaccia, \textit{From the Other Side}, 8.
households contained boarders.\textsuperscript{89} In 1900, 36 South Christian Street contained the Saut family and several boarders. Louis Saut immigrated to America from Italy in 1884, the same time as his father and sister, who also occupied the house. Louis’ mother followed in 1890, and their two boarders emigrated from Italy the following year.\textsuperscript{90} While it is unclear how long the boarders occupied the Saut residence, it is probable that the process of being able to board, rather than the burden of establishing one’s own residence upon arrival in America, made the process of immigration easier for these men.

A similar situation occurred at 38 South Christian Street in 1910. At that time, Frank and Mellie Harmide occupied the residence along with their young son and five boarders. Both Frank and Mellie immigrated to America in 1902, though likely separately, as they were married in 1907.\textsuperscript{91} While three of their boarders had immigrated to America from Italy around the turn of the century as well, Vinernge Fauferillo and John Fiscione had immigrated to America in 1909 and 1910, respectively.\textsuperscript{92} As with 36 South Christian Street, it is likely that the prospect of residing in a boardinghouse with Italian natives eased the process of immigration to America for these individuals, as they would have continued to practice their own language and customs within their residence. Additionally, this arrangement enabled new immigrants to establish themselves economically prior to moving into their own

\textsuperscript{90} 1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 47, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 3.
\textsuperscript{91} 1910 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 65 Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 4.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.
homes.\textsuperscript{93}

27 Penn Square demonstrates a similar trend among Greek immigrants. In 1920, six Greek immigrants, ranging in age from twenty-one to fifty, occupied the residence.\textsuperscript{94} The household head, D. Skylas, had immigrated to America in 1906 and became a naturalized citizen in 1915. Only one of his boarders, Alex Gust, had emigrated from Greece prior to D. Skylas having come to America in 1904. The other members of the household emigrated from Greece between 1914 and 1918. More tellingly, every member of the household except Alex Gust had emigrated from the Greek island of Kos.\textsuperscript{95} Collectively, this information suggests that most members of this household may have had prior connections: the boardinghouse enabled a chain of migration, as D. Skylas’ presence in Lancaster, as the earliest member of the household to emigrate from Kos, likely facilitated the immigration of others in the household from Kos to Lancaster.

Another telling factor about boarding in Russian, Greek, and Italian houses is that individuals of these ethnic backgrounds tend to board almost exclusively with members of their own ethnic group, a factor that manifests in each of these previous examples. This choice would have enabled individuals to more easily transition into American life, which was likely important, considering the small minority each of these groups represented in Lancaster.\textsuperscript{96}

Chinese immigrants form a very small, but suggestive, portion of Penn Square’s boarders. Only one Chinese boarder lived in the Penn Square neighborhood

\textsuperscript{93} Gabaccia, \textit{From the Other Side}, 47.
\textsuperscript{94} 1920 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 57, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 15.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{96} Hoagland, “The Boardinghouse Murders,” 13-14.
from 1880 to 1920, Fan Lee, who lived at 8 East Chestnut Street in 1900.\textsuperscript{97} Several Chinese immigrants lived in the Penn Square neighborhood in the early twentieth century, though the number remained below a dozen.\textsuperscript{98} The small number of Chinese immigrants in Lancaster is likely the result of America’s immigration laws. Asian immigrants were subject to the harshest immigration laws enacted by the government, and, not surprisingly, some of the harshest discrimination in America. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act banned Chinese laborers from immigrating to America for a decade. The 1921 and 1924 quota laws strengthened the policy, as they essentially prohibited all Asian immigrants.\textsuperscript{99} These laws prohibited most Asian immigrants from coming to America, curtailing the presence of larger numbers of Asian immigrants within the city.

As Lancaster witnessed the high influx of immigrants that occurred throughout the nation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it is evident that ethnicity was an important factor in determining where individuals boarded and how boardinghouses functioned within ethnic communities. Race also formed an important component of boardinghouses in Penn Square in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

African Americans occupied boardinghouses as boarders and as servants throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Unless an employee of a boardinghouse, African Americans tended to remain segregated in boardinghouses solely run and used by African Americans. F. Gatewood, for example, worked at

\textsuperscript{97} 1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 45, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1.
\textsuperscript{99} Gabaccia, \textit{From the Other Side}, 9.
Anna Kendig’s boardinghouse at 6 West Chestnut Street as a servant in 1880.\textsuperscript{100} Similarly, Isaac Bradey worked as a hostler at a hotel with boarding located at 51 West King Street in the same year.\textsuperscript{101}

34 and 36 East Mifflin Street represent the only African American-run boardinghouses in Penn Square in 1880.\textsuperscript{102} 34 East Mifflin Street contained the Salbary family and two boarders, Isaac Braddley and Jacob Cantor. Both men, along with Charles Salbary, the household head, worked in the Rolling Mill.\textsuperscript{103} At 36 East Mifflin Street, the Smith family lived with four boarders, Susan Jackson and her two children Anna and Henry, and two-year-old Abbie Hunker.\textsuperscript{104} It is telling that these boardinghouses were located next to one another, as they suggest the presence of a small sub-community within Penn Square, similar to the communities created by white ethnic groups within Penn Square.

In 1900, African Americans continued to occupy boardinghouses as servants. The hotel at 2 East Chestnut Street, for example, had six African American boarders who also worked as servants in the hotel.\textsuperscript{105} Another hotel, located at 162 North Queen Street, contained a number of African Americans who were both boarders and employees, Robert Davis, the porter, John Fairfax, the cook, and Harry Brown, Cyrus Moslen, Noah and Cyrus Rowlands, James Norton, Albez Richardson, and Mary Dugan, who worked as waiters and chambermaids in the hotel.\textsuperscript{106}

\textsuperscript{100} 1880 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 146, Lancaster Pennsylvania, 16.
\textsuperscript{101} 1880 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 146, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 14.
\textsuperscript{102} 1880 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 151, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 24.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{105} 1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 45, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1.
\textsuperscript{106} 1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 48, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 3.
In 1910, Samuel and Francie Sanfeld maintained a large African American boardinghouse at 30 South Queen Street, serving eight boarders that year.\textsuperscript{107} Interestingly, many of their boarders were employed as staff in nearby hotels, suggesting that the community had become increasingly segregated, a factor underscored by the decrease in African Americans in Penn Square and presence of only one African American boarding household in 1920, 46 South Christian Street, home to Ida Hady and her boarder Harry William.\textsuperscript{108} Collectively the presence of African Americans in Penn Square points to the high level of de facto segregation in the community, whereby whites became increasingly reluctant to share space, like a hotel with boarding, with African Americans and, eventually, the neighborhood itself.

Thus far, analysis of Penn Square’s boardinghouses has focused almost exclusively on the boarders; Penn Square’s boardinghouse keepers are an equally important group to consider. Though women primarily undertook the tasks, like cooking and cleaning, necessary to run a successful boardinghouse, as Table 5 demonstrates, the majority of boardinghouse households were headed by men.

Table 5: Gender of Heads of House in Penn Square from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Heads</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Heads</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Households</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When coupled with information on the marital status of boardinghouse household heads in Penn Square, it is evident that boarding occurred primarily in family situations, as, across time, most household heads were married men (Table 6).

Table 6: Marital Status of Household Heads in Penn Square Boardinghouses from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880 Men</th>
<th>1880 Women</th>
<th>1900 Men</th>
<th>1900 Women</th>
<th>1910 Men</th>
<th>1910 Women</th>
<th>1920 Men</th>
<th>1920 Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures dispel the stereotype of the single or widowed female boardinghouse keeper, who took in boarders “as a last resort.” Rather, the practice of taking in boarders must be interpreted, in part, as a component of a larger “familial economic strategy,” whereby families took in boarders to supplement the family income or pay rents or mortgages. The concept of boardinghouses within a family should not diminish instances in which single or widowed women chose to operate boardinghouses independently; rather these figures demonstrate that these situations were the exception rather than the norm.

When considering boardinghouse household heads, it is also important to bear in mind the extent to which they owned or rented their houses, as these figures provide insight into how maintaining boarders served family economies. The 1880 United States Federal Census does not list whether household heads rented or owned their homes, but data in subsequent years reveals that the majority of heads of house,


110 Ibid.
both male and female, rented their homes (Table 7). This factor suggests that, in most cases, individuals or families operated a boardinghouse in order to maintain their class status, not to improve it through home ownership.\footnote{Chapter 3, “Cabbage Hill,” considers in greater detail the context of mortgages and home ownership during this period in American history.}

Table 7: Percentages of Homes Owned or Rented by Boardinghouse Heads of House from 1900 to 1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1900 Men</th>
<th>1900 Women</th>
<th>1910 Men</th>
<th>1910 Women</th>
<th>1920 Men</th>
<th>1920 Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own with Mortgage</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Freely</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boardinghouse keepers who owned their houses freely or with a mortgage were in a position to use boarding as a means of paying off their mortgages or as a truly income-producing endeavor, as a freely-owned home would require no monthly payments. Table 7 suggests that freely-owned boardinghouses were less common than rented or mortgaged ones but that nearly equal percentages of men and women operated boardinghouses under this condition.

Another important factor to consider about boardinghouse keepers is the extent to which they formed a sub-community and network within their neighborhoods. As historian Wendy Gamber notes, in some instances, boardinghouse keepers worked together to form “unofficial combinations” and set collective board rates, a phenomenon that tended to occur mainly in state capitals among boardinghouse keepers who housed politicians during the legislative session.\footnote{Gamber, Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century America, 47.} Though collective rate setting may not have necessarily occurred in Lancaster,
boardinghouse keepers also worked on a more informal level to help one another by sending inquiring boarders to nearby boardinghouses when they were out of rooms.\footnote{Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century America,} 47.}

Though it is difficult to track the relationships between boardinghouse keepers without specific information, like diaries or record books, to illuminate their actions or decisions, spatial analysis of the locations of boardinghouses can facilitate an understanding of where these networks may have existed. In 1920, for example, 114, 116, and 118 East Vine Street were all used as boardinghouses and each contained three or more boarders (Figure 9). 114 East Vine Street contained George and Elizabeth Ruhna, their son, George, daughter-in-law, Marie, twelve boarders, and one servant. Next door at 118 East Vine Street, Hattie Ruhna, likely the sister of George senior of 114 East Vine Street resided with her mother, four boarders, and one servant. 118 East Vine Street was the residence of Emmanuel and Phebe Shreiner, their young son Harold, Phebe’s brother, and eight boarders.\footnote{1920 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 55, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 14.}

It is likely that these families, who lived right next door to one another, considered themselves a small sub-community of boardinghouse keepers, perhaps referring boarders to one another when their rooms were full or assisting one another with the physical or psychological burdens of maintaining a boardinghouse. Elizabeth Ruhna, Hattie Ruhna, and Phebe Shreiner each considered herself as a boardinghouse keeper on the 1920 United States Federal census, a declaration that was surprisingly rare among boardinghouse keepers.\footnote{Ibid.} This factor points to the way that the collective keeping of boarders may have impacted how these women saw themselves and interacted with their neighbors.
While a consideration of the demographics in Penn Square certainly helps to illuminate the general trends surrounding houses in the community over time, a consideration of some specific boardinghouses provides more insight into how these structures functioned and the ways in which space within them was used.
Y.W.C.A.

Throughout the nation, Young Women’s Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) centers have served as important sources of boarding, especially for young women. Considered by their contemporaries as “boarding homes” rather than “boardinghouses,” structures operated by the Y.W.C.A., Ladies Christian Union, or Young Woman’s Catholic Association assisted young women new to a city and without connections by providing them with a safe, reputable place to live.\textsuperscript{116} Though certainly places of boarding, these structures differed from traditional boardinghouses because they were motivated more by benevolence than a desire to turn a profit: young women and their families were assured that the moral and physical well-being of Y.W.C.A. boarders would be well-attended to.

Located at the corner of North Lime and East Orange streets, Lancaster’s Y.W.C.A. building was built in 1915, though the organization had been operating in the city since 1888 (Figure 10).\textsuperscript{117} In 1920, the three and a half story structure contained twenty-three female boarders, who ranged in age from sixteen to fifty-four.\textsuperscript{118} About half of these women were employed by the Y.W.C.A., working as part of the kitchen staff or in the office, as secretaries or stenographers.\textsuperscript{119} The other half of the women occupying the boarding home were employed as stenographers, clerks, bookkeepers, or telephone operators.\textsuperscript{120}

\textsuperscript{116} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century America}, 152.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
Boarding in the Y.W.C.A. would have differed from boarding in a Lancaster boardinghouse in a number of ways. Most plainly, only women inhabited the space, a stark contrast from nearly every other place of boarding in the city. Additionally, this structure was purpose-built, meaning that boarders did not live in parlors or halls repurposed as bedrooms as they may have in a boardinghouse.\textsuperscript{121} Rather, women lived in rooms that had been designed as bedrooms, increasing both the respectability and sense of home the Y.W.C.A. sought to project.

\textsuperscript{121} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century America}, 45.
In other ways, however, boarding in the Y.W.C.A. would have resembled boarding in a boardinghouse. For one, both staff and non-staff members occupied the site, which is reflective of the presence of cooks and servants as boarders within traditional boardinghouses. Similarly, much in the way that boardinghouse keepers tended to cater only to specific kinds of people—for example, a certain racial or ethnic group or members of a particular occupation—so too did the Y.W.C.A. engage only boarders of a certain type: young, white, appropriately employed women.\footnote{United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 53, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 25, Gamber, \textit{The Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century America}, 57.}

While the Y.W.C.A. was not a typical boardinghouse, it represented a significant boarding option for young women in Lancaster, and evidence of a larger, national boarding trend, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

**229 East Orange Street**

229 East Orange Street is a five bay, double pile, two-and-a-half story brick structure with a central hall and a brick addition on the rear (Figure 11). Unlike many boardinghouses that were simply houses with bedrooms to spare, the size of 229 East Orange Street suggests that the structure was built with the intention that it be used as a boardinghouse.

An 1886 map demonstrates that the house was significantly wider than those around it: this extra width made possible a central hall, as opposed to the more typical side hall plan, enabling the inclusion of four rooms on both the first and second floors of the main block of the house (Figure 12). This configuration doubled the number of rooms on the first and second floors beyond what was possible in a side hall plan, the
plan used for most of the city’s houses and, thus, boardinghouses. The two-story rear addition contained the building’s kitchen along with additional rooms (Figure 13).

Figure 11: 229 East Orange Street as it appears today, Photograph by author.
Figure 12: An 1886 view 229 East Orange Street, showing the size of the house compared to others nearby, J. L. Smith, *Lancaster*, 1886.

Figure 13: An 1891 depiction of 229 East Orange Street, Sanborn Publishing Company, *Lancaster, Pennsylvania*, 1891.
In 1880, Sarah Kieffer, her daughter, Emily Flinn, and her grandson, Victor
Flinn, occupied the building along with ten boarders and two servants. Though Sarah
listed her occupation that year as boardinghouse keeper, she was seventy-seven years
of age, suggesting that she received some assistance from her widowed daughter in
managing the operation, in addition to the aid from her two in-house servants.\textsuperscript{123}
Their boarders were a mixed group, especially in terms of age and occupation. Mary
Handle was the oldest boarder at seventy-seven years of age, living in the
boardinghouse with her daughter Mary, who worked as a drawing teacher. Margaret
Hunnel and Elizabeth White were both in their late sixties and neither were
employed, likely residing in the boardinghouse as a place of retirement. The youngest
boarders in the residence were the Shackford children, Belle, William, and Blanche,
who ranged in age from seven to twelve. Also residing in the boardinghouse were
William Shalloys, a locksmith, and David Leach, an attorney, both in their late
twenties and Jane Tucker, who was in her late thirties.\textsuperscript{124} All of these boarders were
white and American born, just as were Sarah Keiffer and her family.

Also residing within 229 East Orange Street were two female servants,
Barbara Mutchel, who was thirty-four, and Maggie Feight, who was nineteen. Both
women had German backgrounds: Barbara had been born in Wurtenberg and
Maggie’s parents had both emigrated from Germany.\textsuperscript{125} Within the boardinghouse,
Barbara worked as the cook, preparing the household meals, while Maggie worked as

\textsuperscript{123} 1880 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 149, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 9.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
the chambermaid, cleaning rooms for both the boarders and the family in the house.\textsuperscript{126}

The relationships that existed between members of this household, as well as the relative economic status of the boarders, would have impacted how much of the space within the structure was used. The first floor likely functioned predominately as public space, with parlors and a dining room occupying much of this floor. Boarders and the Keiffer family alike would have used these rooms for entertaining outside guests, interacting with one another, or enjoying leisure time, demonstrating the lack of boundaries that existed between household members and their boarders. For Sarah Keiffer, these rooms would have also been the first part of the boardinghouse seen by potential boarders, demonstrating that they also would have functioned as a marketing tool for her business.\textsuperscript{127}

The second and top floors of the house would have contained bedrooms for both the Keiffer family and their boarders. Some boarders may have enjoyed a single room, or even a single room with a parlor, while others would have certainly shared rooms with other boarders. Typically, the larger and more private a space, the more expensive it was to occupy.\textsuperscript{128} While it is difficult without additional records to speak to the allotment of space within the boardinghouse for certain, it is possible to make a few assumptions. It is likely, for example, that Mary Handel and her daughter shared a space, though they may have occupied a room with an exterior parlor, affording these two grown women additional space. It is also probable that the Shackford children shared a single bedroom. Beyond these considerations, it is difficult to say if

\begin{footnotes}
\item[Ibid.]
\item Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century America}, 17.
\item Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century America}, 45.
\end{footnotes}
other members of the household could afford their own rooms or if they shared with other boarders. The size of the house suggests that there could have been as many as ten rooms, leaving open the possibility of a range of sleeping accommodations.

The Keiffer family would have occupied their own portion of the house, perhaps some of the bedrooms on the second floor, which were the best rooms in the house, or a collection of rooms in the rear addition, which would have afforded them more privacy from their boarders. Their servants would have resided in rooms in the rear addition near the kitchen, rooms that were essentially the worst accommodations in the house.

In 1900, 229 East Orange Street remained a boardinghouse, though it was owned and operated by Harry and Maria Myers.\textsuperscript{129} The Myers, who were both in their late sixties, had seven boarders and one servant that year. Their boarders ranged in age from nineteen to fifty-four, though most were in their mid-forties. Interestingly, most of their boarders were also related to other members of the household. Taylor and Maxfield Shoher, both forty-three, were brothers, as were John and J.B. Miller, who were both employed as carriage trimmers. Elizabeth Bair, a widow, resided in the boardinghouse with her twenty-four-year-old son David. Harry Bomberger, a tinsmith, was the final boarder in the residence; at nineteen years old, he was also the youngest.\textsuperscript{130} The Myers also employed a single servant, Mary Ganley, who was thirty-eight years old. Every member of the household was white and had been born in Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{131}

\textsuperscript{129} 1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 45, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 5.  
\textsuperscript{130} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid.
Though the members of the household had all changed by 1900, the layout of the house would have remained essentially the same, with the first floor functioning as public space with the kitchen, parlors, and dining room, and the rest of the house as sleeping accommodations or private spaces. It is likely that Mary Ganley, the servant, occupied the same sleeping space that Barbara and Maggie had in 1880. As many members of the household were related to other members, it is likely that these family groupings would have shared bedrooms or a small collection of rooms within the house. These arrangements would have afforded small families some privacy within the boardinghouse. As the Myers formed a smaller family than the Keiffers had in 1880, it is possible that they only occupied a single room within the house, though it is more likely that they, too, occupied a small collection of rooms within the residence.

Presently this structure serves as a domestic violence center in which individuals can reside temporarily. This current use underscores both the size and utility of the design of the interior configuration of the house, which enables the structure to accommodate a significant number of unrelated people comfortably.

The Y.W.C.A. and 229 East Orange Street reflect the trends in boarding that distinguished boardinghouses in the Penn Square neighborhood. The neighborhood contained the largest number of boarders and the highest concentration of large boardinghouses—those containing three or more boarders—of the three neighborhoods discussed. Penn Square contained hotels that housed boarders between 1880 and 1920, which is one of the reasons the neighborhood’s infrastructure could accommodate high numbers of boarders. Significantly, the neighborhood was
marked by the decline of boarding and rise in lodging over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a trend that lead to diminished numbers of boarders in the commercial downtown; between 1910 and 1920, the largest numbers of boarders resided in the residential blocks bordering the downtown.

Most boarders in Penn Square were male, though the percentage of female boarders rose over time from 27% to 38%. This change reflects shifts in the lifestyles available to women by the early twentieth century and the emergence of institutions, like the Y.W.C.A., that catered specifically to young women. Additionally, most of the neighborhood’s boarders were middle aged individuals, though children and the elderly constituted significant minorities of boarders. Children and the elderly serve as an important reminder of the varied meanings of boardinghouses, as they functioned as foster homes and old age homes for some of the individuals occupying them.

For many boardinghouse residents, these structures maintained close ties to their places of employment. In some instances, boarders worked within the boardinghouse as domestic servants or as part of a business within the home. In other cases, boarders resided with an individual who also worked in their place of employment, demonstrating the connections between work and home that manifested within boardinghouses. Boarder occupations ranged from working to middle class, demonstrating that these structures accommodated a range of individuals.

Non-native and non-white boardinghouse residents in Penn Square tended to board with others of the same ethnic or racial background, a trend reflected in Black, Chinese, Greek, and Italian boardinghouses, among others. The racial and ethnic
composition of boardinghouse residents points to the ways that these structures facilitated the immigration and Americanization processes of some communities. It also points to the way that boardinghouses reflected segregation and the racial fears of the moment.

Between 1880 and 1920, the majority of boardinghouse heads of house were male, though female-headed houses increased from 27% to 34% during this period. Most male heads of house were married, demonstrating that women—their wives—carried out most of the work necessary to maintain a boardinghouse. The majority of female household heads were widowed women. Most household heads rented their homes, though nearly equal percentages of male and female household heads owned their homes freely or with a mortgage. In instances where homeowners owned their houses freely, boarding served as an income producing endeavor, rather than a means of making rent or mortgage payments.

From research into both the boarders and boardinghouse keepers in Penn Square, it is evident that the occupants of boardinghouses were as varied as the structures in which they lived. Penn Square contained boardinghouses that were purpose-built hotels, large boardinghouses meant to accommodate many boarders, and private boarding situations that occurred within a private home. Photographs and maps throughout this chapter have reflected boardinghouses of various sizes, shapes, and floor plans, demonstrating that the practice occurred in many ways and inside a range of very different structure.
Chapter 3: Cabbage Hill

“The permeable line between home and neighborhood explains why many immigrant women remembered impoverished lives in overcrowded, poor housing as richly satisfying…”

- Donna Gabaccia, From the Other Side, 80.

Cabbage Hill a neighborhood of German residents. In fact, it was called Cabbage Hill because a large German population settled in the area in the late nineteenth century and many grew cabbage in their backyard gardens. As Mary Kline remembers, “everybody had big families on the hill, a lot of them were Catholics and the Catholics all had five and six and seven children.” These large families resided in houses that were generally small and often poorly constructed. In fact, Lewis Hine even photographed housing in Cabbage Hill as part of a Works Progress Administration project documenting the poor conditions of workers’ housing during the Great Depression.

Yet, the experiences of those residing in Cabbage Hill was not defined so much by the substandard nature of the housing as much as it was by the social ties formed between those who lived there. In many ways, boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill were a microcosm of the large neighborhood network. Many boarders worked in the same occupation as a member of the family with whom they boarded. Most boarders shared ethnic ties with their boardinghouse keeper, some even emigrating from the same region of Germany. Some boardinghouse keepers even used the added income from boarders to purchase their homes, further establishing themselves in the

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132 Mary Kline interview with Allison Duckworth and Amanda Scalzo, November 29, 2006, in Lancaster History Collections, Lancaster County Historical Society.
neighborhood. If the character of Cabbage Hill resulted from its German occupants, then it was also rooted in the presence of boarders and boardinghouses.

Cabbage Hill is bound roughly by West King, Dorwart, Manor, Laurel, Fremont, and West Strawberry streets (Figure 14).\textsuperscript{133} Though the streets within this neighborhood were opened for purchase in the early nineteenth century, the area remained largely unsettled until the last decades of the nineteenth century when large scale growth occurred: by 1900, 80\% of the available lots in the neighborhood had buildings on them.\textsuperscript{134} The area was primary residential, though it also contained Christ Lutheran Church and St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, important religious centers for the neighborhood’s German immigrants, the Laurel Street Silk Mill, and Kunzler and Company, a food manufacturer, during the time span under study.\textsuperscript{135} Boarding in Cabbage Hill is best understood by approaching the topic on several scales: after considering the broad trends and statistics present in the neighborhood between 1880 and 1920, this chapter will look specifically at two extant structures that illuminate the broad contours of boarding within Cabbage Hill.

As the maps in Appendix B demonstrate, boarding took place within a significant portion of households in Cabbage Hill. In 1880, 14\% of houses within the neighborhood contained boarders. In 1900, the percentage rose to 25\%. The number dipped to 10\% in 1910. By 1920, roughly 20\% of households contained at least one boarder. These numbers demonstrate that boarding remained a widespread, though

\textsuperscript{135} Ibid.
not universal practice within the neighborhood, even into the early twentieth century. Overall, census data from the years 1880-1920 reveals 326 different structures used as boardinghouses, 41 of which were reported as having boarders in two or more census years. The number of boarders in the community grew from 76 in 1880 to 177
in 1900 before decreasing slightly to 129 in 1910 and rising again to 169 in 1920. These numbers parallel the growth and decline of boardinghouses in the neighborhood over the same span of time: there were 57 boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill in 1880, 117 in 1900, 86 in 1910, and 117 in 1920. The continued strength of boarding, and the lack of a shift towards lodging in the twentieth century, provides a notable contrast to Penn Square, pointing to the different ways that boarding occurred in neighborhoods throughout the city.

Given the significant portion of structures in the neighborhood in which boarding took place, it is not surprising that boardinghouses took on many forms over the years. In fact, it is difficult to distinguish these structures from their neighbors by their exterior appearance alone, especially since nearly every house in Cabbage Hill was built between 1870 and 1900, giving them a shared set of architectural characteristics. An examination of insurance maps reveals several distinguishing features in Cabbage Hill’s boardinghouses. These structures tend to have extra half stories, two and a half to three stories high, and many extend back on their lots, with one and two story additions off the rear (Figure 15). These additions were typically wooden, though some were made of brick. The inclusion of chimneys in most of these additions suggests that the household members intended to use these additions as long-term living space, with comparable amenities to the rest of the house.

It is evident that boardinghouse keepers were able to maximize use of space through features like added stories and rear additions, though known boardinghouses often shared these features with structures not identified as boardinghouses in the census years between 1880 and 1920. A number of social factors account for the
Figure 15: Map depicting the kinds of structures used for boardinghouses. Note how the three houses in the center not reported as having boarders are smaller than the others, both in terms of stories and rear additions. The two houses at the bottom, though, serve as a reminder that many boardinghouses were quite similar in size to non-boarding houses, Sanborn Map Publishing Company, *Lancaster Pennsylvania*, 1897.

similarities between boarding and non-boarding houses in the neighborhood. Most significantly, birthrates in Cabbage Hill were very high compared to the rest of the
city.\textsuperscript{136} Census data from 1880-1920 reveals that it was not uncommon for families to have 7-10 children, all of who may have been living in the house into their early twenties.\textsuperscript{137} This data also suggests that families without boarders or many children tended to house relatives, a trend quite frequent among immigrant families at the time. Nearly every house in the neighborhood contained characteristics conducive to housing large numbers of people. The choice to admit boarders into these spaces rested on a variety of factors, not the least of which was the availability of space within the house. As was the case in Penn Square, boardinghouses cannot be analyzed or classified on their size and form alone; rather, one must compare social trends and their impact on the use of interior space to understand boardinghouses.

In 1880, the neighborhood’s population consisted of a large number of immigrants and children of immigrants, who accounted for 68\% of the entire neighborhood population (Table 8).\textsuperscript{138} The number of immigrants in the neighborhood nearly doubled by 1900 before contracting in 1910 and 1920. Though immigrants accounted for a significant portion of boarders between 1880 and 1920, they remained below 50\% of the total number of boarders from 1900 to 1920. As Table 8 demonstrates, Germans represented the largest immigrant group in the neighborhood and among boarders.

\textsuperscript{136} Mary Kline interview with Allison Duckworth and Amanda Scalzo, November 29, 2006, in Lancaster History Collections, Lancaster County Historical Society.
\textsuperscript{138} These statistics are based on information about an individual’s place of birth and their parents’ place of birth as reported in the United States Federal Census.
Table 8: Boarder Race and Ethnicity in Cabbage Hill from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880 Boarder</th>
<th>1880 Neighborhood</th>
<th>1900 Boarder</th>
<th>1900 Neighborhood</th>
<th>1910 Boarder</th>
<th>1910 Neighborhood</th>
<th>1920 Boarder</th>
<th>1920 Neighborhood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1587</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2257</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1778</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2419</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2044</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 illuminates several interesting trends in the practice of boarding among non-German immigrant groups. Russian boarders are only present in 1880; between 1900 and 1920, the number of Russians in the neighborhood grows, though none of them are boarders. Among those of French origin, a similar pattern occurs. There was a relatively steady number of French within the neighborhood, though only three boarders, all of whom were present only in 1900. Among the Swiss and English, boarding also disappears after 1900, though first and second generation immigrants from both groups remain present within the neighborhood. Even Irish boarders, who represented one of the most stable groups of boarders within the neighborhood, disappeared by 1920. Though the number of boarders from many of these ethnic groups declined in the early twentieth century, Turkish and Greek boarders and residents emerge by 1920, demonstrating that the neighborhood continued to house new groups of immigrants looking to come to America.
Table 9: Change in German Boarder Population in Cabbage Hill from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of German Boarders</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Boarders</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of German Neighborhood Members</td>
<td>1587</td>
<td>2257</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>1706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total Neighborhood</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The change in the racial and ethnic composition of boarders generally reflects national and local trends in immigration and segregation. The major immigrant groups present in Cabbage Hill—German, Irish, and English in the late nineteenth century and German, Irish, Russian and Greek by the early twentieth century—reflect both some of the largest immigrant populations throughout America as well as the shift in the source of immigration from western to southern Europe that occurred between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.139

The disappearance of an African American boarding and neighborhood population in Cabbage Hill points to the presence of de facto segregation within the city. The five African Americans in Cabbage Hill in 1880 represent a single household. By 1900, the members of the household had disappeared from the neighborhood and no other African Americans were present. Though segregation was never the law within Lancaster, racist practices resulted in African Americans

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139 Gabaccia, *From the Other Side*, 8.
largely residing in the southwestern portion of the city, especially by the mid twentieth century.¹⁴⁰

Germans reflect the largest immigrant population in the neighborhood as well as the steadiest boarding population, accounting for between 32% and 61% of the entire neighborhood and between 15% and 41% of boarders in Cabbage Hill (Table 9). They are the only ethnic group that included both boarders and non-boarding residents in Cabbage Hill from 1880-1920, though these numbers certainly declined over time.

Across all of the ethnic groups present in Cabbage Hill, and especially Germans, it is evident that boarding facilitated chain migration. Many boarders resided with those from the same country, and even the same region of a country. The house at 512 Manor Street provides an apt example of this trend. In 1880, Edward Lehman resided there with his son, daughter in law, granddaughter, and a boarder named August Kreigen. Edward, his son, and August had been born in Prussia.¹⁴¹ This shared place of birth suggests that August had known of the Lehman family prior to immigrating to America, choosing to immigrate specifically to Lancaster and take up residence with them as a boarder until he had established himself. At the very least, their shared background made the practice of sharing a home less uncomfortable.

304 Laurel Street provides a similar example of boarders residing in homes of those with similar or identical ethnic backgrounds. In 1910, the house consisted of

Mary Droney, a widow, her 10 children, and her boarder, Michael McMahan. Both Mary and Michael were immigrants from Ireland, Mary having come to America in 1880 and Michael in 1906. That Michael would chose to board with someone from the same country who had come to America several decades before and become established in the country suggests that both Mary and Michael felt that residing with someone of the same ethnic background and similar immigration experiences would ease the immigration experience for Michael and the admittance of a boarder into her home for Mary.

471 High Street demonstrates the same pattern, and the level of detail provided in the 1920 census solidifies the presence of chain migration in the neighborhood. In that year, James Makeds, his wife, two young daughters, and two boarders, Gregoriona and Jake Baalas, occupied the residence. James had immigrated from the European portion of Turkey to America in 1912 and was followed by his wife, Anne, in 1914. In that same year, both Gregoriona and Jake (who were likely brother and sister) immigrated to America as well. The practice of a husband immigrating to America in advance of his wife was common, as it was highly practical for a man to find a residence and a steady job before asking his wife to relocate to America. It is also quite telling that Gregoriona and Jake would immigrate to America in the same year as Anne and take up residence in their house, suggesting that James’ earlier presence in America enabled not only his wife, but also others from his Turkish community to come to America.

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144 Gabaccia, From the Other Side, 29.
Census data points to countless other households in Cabbage Hill that reflected this pattern, with individuals boarding with those of similar racial or ethnic backgrounds. Without additional insight into the mindset and choices of the boarders and boardinghouse operators, it is impossible to determine conclusively the extent to which boardinghouses facilitated chain migration. These anecdotes, though, suggest that this is one important function that some boardinghouses served. This practice should also not come as a surprise, as boarding no doubt conflicted with contemporary perspectives on the home and domesticity: from both the perspective of the boarder and boardinghouse operator, residing with those of a similar ethnic background likely eased some of these concerns and made boardinghouses less like the homes of strangers.\textsuperscript{145}

Given the neighborhood’s large presence of newly immigrated families, it is not surprising that, of the three neighborhoods, Cabbage Hill contained the lowest percentage of female-headed households with boarding, a trend that held true from 1880-1920 (Table 10).

Table 10 suggests that the neighborhood’s boardinghouses consistently contained about a 2:1 ratio of male to female heads of house. When paired with information about the marital status of household heads, it is possible to gain a clear picture of the typical family composition of boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill in the period under study.

\textsuperscript{145} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century}, 12-13 considers the ability of boarders to fashion homes within a boardinghouse. Gabaccia \textit{From the Other Side}, 62-63 looks at the important role of chain migration within immigrant communities.
Table 10: Gender of Household Heads with Boarders in Cabbage Hill from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Heads</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Heads</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Households</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 illustrates that the majority of household heads in boardinghouses were married men, with widowed women constituting the second largest category across time. These figures reflect the typical composition of boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill, which tended to consist of a man, his wife, their children, and a small number of boarders, typically one or two. In fact, of the 366 different boarding house situations present in the 1880, 1900, 1910, and 1920 census data, 325 contained only one or two boarders.\(^{146}\) Of the remaining 41 boardinghouses, the majority, 22, were headed by married male heads of house. Widowed women constitute the second largest category of household heads in these larger boardinghouses, with nine of them acting as such.\(^{147}\)

\(^{146}\) 1880 United States Federal Census, District 145-162, Lancaster, Lancaster Pennsylvania, 1900 United States Federal Census, District 42-75, Lancaster, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1910 United States Federal Census, District 60-97, Lancaster, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1920 United States Federal Census, District 51-84, Lancaster, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. These figures reflect each distinct boardinghouse situation: in instances where the same house was used as a boardinghouse in separate census years, it has been counted separately each time it was used.

\(^{147}\) Ibid.
Table 11: Marital Status of Household Heads with Boarders in Cabbage Hill from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880 Men</th>
<th>1880 Women</th>
<th>1900 Men</th>
<th>1900 Women</th>
<th>1910 Men</th>
<th>1910 Women</th>
<th>1920 Men</th>
<th>1920 Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These numbers demonstrate that, while the majority of boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill consisted of male heads of house and a few boarders, the largest boardinghouses in the neighborhood were not more likely to contain households headed by women than by men. In fact, the largest boardinghouse in Cabbage Hill between 1880 and 1920 was located at 526 West King Street in 1920, where Charles and Joan Martin resided with their two adult daughters and 12 boarders (Figure 16). As such, it is important to remember that while women did the majority of the work to operate and maintain boardinghouses they did not always do so because they were the sole breadwinners for their families. These situations also demonstrate that the majority of boarders in Cabbage Hill resided in households that contained a family situation, not simply alone with a single or widowed woman, dispelling some of the stereotypes about the conditions in which boarding occurred.

Significantly, the period under study correlates with the period in American history during which single-family, owner occupied houses became the American ideal.\textsuperscript{149} For the growing working class and incoming immigrants in particular, owning one’s house became a vital goal, as many of these individuals saw property rights as key to future economic security.\textsuperscript{150} Taking in boarders must be interpreted,


\textsuperscript{150} Garb, \textit{City of American Dreams}, 17.
in part, as a means by which some individuals acquired money to pay off mortgages on their homes or saved money while renting in order to afford a down payment on a future house (Table 12). The Falk Family at 509 St. Joseph Street provides an apt example of this trend: the family took in boarders in 1900, when they still maintained a mortgage on their house. By 1910, when Charles Falk owned the house freely, the family no longer took in boarders.

Prior to the establishment of the Home Owners Loan Cooperation (1933), which introduced the long-term mortgage most homeowners utilize today, the terms of mortgages were much shorter. Data provided by the United States Census Office in 1895, for example, demonstrates that in the Northeast, which included Pennsylvania, the average mortgage had a 5.63% effective interest rate and lasted for an average of 5.99 years.\textsuperscript{151} Because mortgages had a short life, taking in boarders for several years would have been a viable means of affording mortgage payments at this time.

Table 12: Percentages of Homes Owned or Rented by Boardinghouse Heads of House from 1900 to 1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1900</th>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th></th>
<th>1920</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own with Mortgage</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Freely</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 12 demonstrates, most boardinghouse heads of household rented their homes, though both male and female heads of house owned their homes with a

mortgage or freely. While the percentage of houses rented remained nearly steady among men and women over time, the percentage of houses owned with a mortgage decreased slightly and the percentage of houses owned freely increased slightly. Collectively, these figures point to a range of purposes boarding served for household heads: in some instances the income provided a means of paying rents or mortgages while in other cases it produced an income not clearly allocated to a particular use. Additionally, boarding also provided a means by which household heads could either maintain or improve their class status through indicators like home ownership.

Having given some attention to the kinds of people who operated boardinghouses, it is important to also consider the kinds of people who boarded within Cabbage Hill’s boardinghouses. As Table 13 demonstrates, the neighborhood contained roughly similar numbers of male and female boarders in 1880 and 1900, though the percentage of male boarders increased slightly in 1910 and 1920 as the percentage of female boarders decreased.

Table 13: Gender of Boarders in Cabbage Hill from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Boarders</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Boarders</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Boarders</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the gender of boarders is considered alongside the age of boarders between 1880 and 1920, several important trends emerge (Table 14). The single
largest age range among both men and women remains the 18-30 bracket, a trend that holds up from 1880 to 1920. By 1900, the number of female boarders aged 31-50 decreases dramatically, especially those aged 41-50. The number of female boarders over 50 remains significant between 1900 and 1920.

Table 14: Age of Boarders in Cabbage Hill from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>1900</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th></th>
<th>1920</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though most male boarders are 18-30 years old, there remains a larger number of male boarders between 31-50 years old than female boarders. Though many of the male and female boarders under 18 were 13-17 years old and listed as having fulltime occupations, a number of these boarders were quite young. Some of these children lived with at least one parent or relative in a boardinghouse, while others did not occupy the boardinghouse with another relative.152 The distribution of age and gender among boarders in Cabbage Hill reflects the variety of functions boardinghouses served: for young children, they were foster homes or orphanages; for the elderly, they were retirement homes; for others, they were workers housing, spaces of transition to American life, or residences for bachelors and widows.

Both Table 13 and Table 14 demonstrate that the majority of boarders, both male and female, within Cabbage Hill were working age. It is evident most boarders found their way to boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill because, at least in part, they intended to work at one of the local industries. Work within major factories in the area, especially the cotton mills, silk mill, umbrella factory, Linoleum plant and cigar factories, provided employment to the largest concentrations of both male and female boarders. This relationship is logical, as accommodations provided at boardinghouses would have been affordable to workers and would have given boarders the flexibility to leave the neighborhood or city if they found better work elsewhere.153

In 1880 most female boarders worked for the cotton mill or as teachers, with some also working as dressmakers, washers, or in the Hamilton Watch Factory (Table 15). By 1900, women worked in a greater number of industries, though the largest numbers of women worked for the cotton mill, umbrella factory, as cigar makers, or as servants or housekeepers. In 1910, women were largely concentrated in the cotton mill and cigar making industries. By 1920, women had again expanded into a larger number of industries, with cigar and tobacco work containing the largest concentrations of women. Though not unilaterally, many of the jobs women held within factories tended to be unskilled positions, like sweeping or changing spools, where workers were interchangeable or easy to replace, or positions that extended from traditional domestic roles, like trimming, sewing, or weaving.154

153 Mrozowski, Living on the Boot, 2.
For male boarders, factory jobs also provided employment, but men were not as concentrated into specific industries as were women. Significant numbers of men worked in the tobacco warehouses, cigar factories, cotton mill, umbrella factory, silk mill, foundry, linoleum plant or as general laborers; unlike the positions held by women in these industries, male boarders tended to be employed in more skilled or advanced positions, serving as supervisors, machinists, or electricians.\textsuperscript{155}

Additionally, male boarders also tended to work in highly skilled, non-factory jobs, finding employment as bakers, blacksmiths, brewers, or tanners.

There is a strong correlation between the industries in which boarders worked and the industries in which members of the household they boarded in worked. In 1880, the house at 30 Caroline Street contained Henry and Mary Breiter and their boarders Charles and Mary Bilzberger. Both Henry and Charles worked as cigar makers.\textsuperscript{156}

Table 15: Major Sources of Boarder Occupation in Cabbage Hill from 1880-1920\textsuperscript{157}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{156} 1880 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 159, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 49.
\textsuperscript{157} This table reflects major sources of occupation within the neighborhood and is not meant to account for the occupation of every boarder in the community.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880 Men</th>
<th>1880 Women</th>
<th>1900 Men</th>
<th>1900 Women</th>
<th>1910 Men</th>
<th>1910 Women</th>
<th>1920 Men</th>
<th>1920 Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cigar Maker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork Worker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Mill Worker</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caramel Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressmaker, Shoemaker, Tailor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver, Teamster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Day) Laborer</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostler, Hotel Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry, Washing, Rag Sorter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linoleum Plant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lock Works</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolling Mill, Foundry, Iron Worker</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant, Housekeeper, Cleaner</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Silk Mill Worker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanner</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco Worker</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umbrella Factory Worker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watchmaker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None Listed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly, in 1900, Philip Fisher lived at 43 Dorwart Street with his wife, two sons, John and Edward, and three boarders, Charles and Lillie Jones and Westel Hawkins. Both John Fisher and Charles Jones were employed at the local lockworks in that year. Down the street, at 41 Dorwart Street, John Rill lived with his wife, three children, and two boarders, Mary Goss and Annie Kline. Both John and Mary worked in the cigar industry, John as a cigar maker and Mary as a cigar packer.\textsuperscript{158} In 1910, John and Caroline Brill lived at 513 St. Joseph Street with their two children and three boarders, William Blackman, Elmira Bachman, and Gottlieb Rader. John and Elmira both worked at the cotton plant, John as a foreman and Elmira as a weaver.\textsuperscript{159} Much like the shared ethnic or racial connections between boarders and boardinghouse keepers, these occupational similarities suggest that boarders often knew the family with whom they boarded prior to entering into the arrangement. These connections also suggest that boarding households would have been highly correlated to changes in conditions within local industries, as in many cases multiple members of the household had ties to the same source of occupation.

Though it is evident that many boardinghouses held ties to local industries, providing housing for workers, some boardinghouses functioned as worker housing for small, family-run businesses. In 1920, for example, Michael and Anna Smallhoffer lived at 236 Laurel Street with their five young children and two boarders, Michael Schwarz and Michael Gessel. Michael Smallhoffer operated a brewery on his property, and both Michael Schwartz and Michael Gessel were employed as brewers in the operation. Similarly, in 1880, Albert and Elizabeth

Wetters lived at 518 Poplar Street with their son and boarder, Anton Gerg. Albert operated a tannery on the site with his son and Anton working in the business as well. Though certainly not all boarding situations followed this model, the examples that do point to the myriad of circumstances surrounding the use and intent of boardinghouses. In instances like these, the boardinghouse structured both the social and economic relationships within the household.

The information garnered about the basic demographics of Cabbage Hill and, in particular, those who boarded or operated boardinghouses, begins to give a clear sense of how boarding worked within the community. It is evident that the boarding community was driven largely by the presence of factories and mill complexes in the surrounding area as well as by the area’s comparatively large immigrant population. Evidence also suggests that boarding took place largely within family contexts, contradicting traditional images of what boardinghouse life was like. Similarly, boardinghouses were rarely houses of strangers: boarders often shared ethnic backgrounds with the boardinghouse operator, were employed by the boardinghouse operator, or worked in the same industry as a non-boarder in the household. These connections suggest that in some cases, boarders and boardinghouse keepers knew each other prior to entering into the relationship, and, in other cases, that the experience of taking a boarder into one’s home was mitigated by the existence of shared experiences and cultural mores.

A fuller understanding of boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill emerges after considering two extant boardinghouse structures. These resources provide a telling window into boardinghouse life, as they give clear examples of the general trends

emerging within the neighborhood’s boarding community as well as how these trends manifested in the use of space within boardinghouses.

416 Manor Street

Spanning two structures, two businesses, and one family, 416 Manor Street reveals a great deal about the multiple ways boarding occurred in Cabbage Hill over time. The first house at 416 Manor Street was built in the mid-nineteenth century and functioned as both the family home and the location of Henry Gast’s pottery manufactory. Though the date of construction is unknown, the first documented evidence of the house’s existence comes in 1860, at which time Henry Gast, his first wife Sophia, four of their sons, and two boarders, Amanda Ritzer and Thomas Haittey resided in the location. Gast had immigrated to America from Germany in the early nineteenth century, becoming part of the earliest wave of German immigrants to settle in Cabbage Hill.

Maps of the house from 1864, 1886, and 1891 reveal that the structure grew significantly over time, though most of the growth occurred in the rear of the structure, where Henry’s pottery business was located. In 1864, the property consisted solely of the two-story brick structure, but by 1886, two two-story wood additions had been added to the back (Figure 17). By 1891, two more additions had been added to the rear of the house, one of which contained Gasts’ pottery kilns (Figure 18). The family and their boarders lived in the front portion of the structure, which abutted the street. The house seems to have accommodated from five to eight

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people over time. Investigating the house as a boardinghouse, rather than as a family residence or a business, provides additional meaning to this early structure and to the relationships and interactions within it.

In 1860, the Gast household included two boarders, Amanda Bitzer, a 20 year-old seamstress, and Thomas Hartely, a potter. Like Henry Gast, Thomas had also been born in Germany. In 1860, Gast also employed two of his sons, John and William, in his pottery, and they resided in the house as well. In total, four of the eight people residing in the house were involved in the pottery business, giving distinct ties between the residential and business aspects of the site. The house took on a similar composition in 1870, with Henry and Sophia continuing to reside there with three of their sons, John, Levi, and Jacob, and two boarders, Mary Ruckins, their domestic servant, and Saul Etter. Saul, along with Henry’s three sons, worked in

Figure 17: 1886 view of 416 Manor Street, J.L. Smith, *Lancaster*, 1886.
Henry’s pottery. At this point, five of the seven members of the household worked in the pottery. The clear connections between the pottery and presence of boarders within the household in these decades suggests that boarding was just as much Henry’s business as it was Sophia’s.

By the time we reach the period under study, Gast had established himself as a successful and well-known pottery manufacturer (Figure 19). His first wife had died, and he had remarried to a woman named Emma, who, though thirty years his junior,

Figure 18: 1891 depiction of 416 Manor Street, Sanborn Map Publishing Company, *Lancaster Pennsylvania*, 1891.
was also a widow.\textsuperscript{162} In 1880, Henry and Emma lived at 416 Manor Street with Emma’s daughter from her previous marriage and two boarders, Alvin and Marion Duchman.\textsuperscript{163} Though in previous decades, there had been distinct ties between the boarders within the house and the pottery operation, Emma’s arrival in the house seems to have signaled a shift in this connection: Alvin worked as a laborer and Marion as a carriage trimmer.

![Figure 19](http://www.crockerfarm.com/stoneware)


The engagement of boarders not tied to the pottery created a wholly independent business of which Emma was the sole operator. There were likely a

\textsuperscript{162} 1880 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 159, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 31..
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid.
number of factors that accounted for this shift, but the largest may have been Henry’s comparably advanced age: he was 73 in 1880 while Emma was 40. His business productivity may have decreased, creating the need for additional income for the household. Additionally, it is probable that Emma enjoyed the practice of keeping boarders, a suggestion that seems more likely in light of Emma’s decision to grow the size of the boardinghouse in later years.

Henry Gast died in 1889, leaving the house and land to Emma. Following his death, the property underwent a complete transition from pottery business to boardinghouse. These changes were evident by 1897, by which time Emma seems to have sold some of the land in the back of their property, demolished the house and buildings that comprised her husband’s pottery business, and rebuilt a new house on the site (Figure 20). This new house, which still stands, was a three-story brick structure with a two-story wood addition off the back (Figure 21). Within this new building, Emma’s boardinghouse business fully emerged.

The 1900 Census reveals that Emma and her daughter Lillie resided in 416 Manor Street with six male boarders: George Sensenderfer, his sons George, Frank, and John Sensenderfer, Clay Evans, and Charles Bonarch. These men ranged in age from 13 to 47 and were employed in several different industries, including cigar

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making, painting, cork cutting, iron molding, watch-making, and general laboring.165 The male members of the household were fully employed and would have spent minimal time within the residence during the workweek.166 This would have left Emma and Lillie, who was an unemployed watchmaker in 1910, with the house largely to themselves to carry out the various domestic duties necessary to care for six boarders and themselves. The women would have cleaned bedrooms, cooked meals, washed laundry, cared for the house, and performed countless other tasks to keep the boardinghouse functioning. The operation was, after all, a business, and assuring the continued engagement and contentment of boarders was central to their operation.

The first floor of 416 Manor Street would have contained living and dining space along with the kitchen, space that would have been accessible to all members of the household. The second and third floors of the house would have contained bedrooms. Given the large size of the house, it is probable that some of these rooms also contained exterior sitting rooms, which would have afforded members of the

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166 Ibid.
household the ability to regulate access to their sleeping space, adding to divisions of public and private space within the household.

Figure 21: 416 Manor Street as it appears today, Photograph by author.

This boardinghouse, atypical for those in Cabbage Hill in a number of ways, serves as a reminder that few boardinghouses followed predictable patterns. In a neighborhood where half the population in 1910 was an immigrant or had parents who were immigrants, only one person in this boardinghouse, Charles Bonarch, fit
these criteria, as both his parents were born in Germany.\textsuperscript{167} Additionally, though the majority of boarders in the neighborhood were not related to their fellow boarders, the Sensenderfer family, George and his three sons, resided within the house.

Emma died in 1908, leaving the house to her daughter, Lillie. Lillie, who married around the time of her mother’s death, lived in the house in 1910 with her husband.\textsuperscript{168} There is no further evidence of boarders residing within the property, suggesting that the operation ended with Emma’s death. Though her husband’s pottery has been well documented and recognized within the community, Emma Gast’s boardinghouse has been largely forgotten. The documentary evidence that remains to shed light on this establishment serves as a reminder of the important function that this boardinghouse and earlier boarders on the property played in the development of the site and the community’s boarding history.

\textbf{509 St. Joseph Street}

The residence located at 509 St. Joseph Street is a two and a half story brick dwelling built between 1890 and 1897 (Figure 22). Though only three bays wide, the side passage plan structure extends back half a block, giving it a larger size than nearby properties on the block. Encountered through the perspective of the two adults and four boarders living within the residence in 1900, the house as a place of boarding acquires multiple meanings.

When Charles Falk owned the house in 1900, he lived there with his wife, two sons (two of his five children), and four boarders, Elizabeth, Teresa, and Mary

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{168} Ibid.
Benner and Bernard Falk. Charles had grown up on High Street in Cabbage Hill, working in one of the nearby cotton mills as a young man.\textsuperscript{169} In fact, his mother and father had likely lived in Cabbage Hill since they immigrated to America from Baden Germany in the mid-nineteenth century. Charles’ choice to remain within Cabbage Hill is not surprising; he likely felt at home among the hundreds of other residents of German heritage in the neighborhood.

![Figure 22: 509 St. Joseph Street as it appears today, Photograph by author.](image)

Charles was likely the first owner of 509 St. Joseph Street and had a mortgage on the house in 1900. He used the home as both a residence and as a butcher shop, explaining the building’s significant depth compared to other structures on the street. The three bay, double pile main block of the house likely provided living space for

\textsuperscript{169} \textit{1870} United States Federal Census, Lancaster Ward 8, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 379.
those within the household. The three rooms extending off the back of the house, the smokehouse, and the slaughterhouse in the rear likely provided the space for his butcher shop; it is also likely that the building to the left of the residence, which was built later than the house, served as a store for selling the prepared meats (Figures 23-24). For Charles, the boarders within his house served two functions, they contributed towards paying the mortgage on his house and, in the case of Bernard, they provided live-in assistance for his butcher shop.

By 1910, Charles Falk owned his house free and clear. Significantly, he no longer kept any boarders in the house: in addition to himself, his wife, two sons, and brother occupied the residence.\textsuperscript{170} He continued to live in the house until his death in 1926. The home had grown into a multi-generational family residence in the years before his death, with his two sons, daughter-in-law, grandchildren, and brother living in the home with him and his wife.\textsuperscript{171} The large number of people living in the house following its years as a boardinghouse points to its ability to accommodate a significant number of people comfortably. Following his death, his children and grandchildren assumed ownership of the house.\textsuperscript{172}

\textsuperscript{172} 1930 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 66, Lancaster Pennsylvania, 4.
For Charles Falk, boarders provided him the opportunity to attain extra income in order to pay off the mortgage on his house quickly; it served as a means of attaining home ownership and of creating a tangible legacy for his family.
For Charles’ wife, maintaining a boardinghouse would have taken on different meaning. Frances Falk married Charles in 1890, at which time he was 38 and she was 30. Theirs was likely a second marriage for her, as she had five children, only two of whom were living at home, and both of these sons had been born after her marriage to Charles, suggesting that the other three children were older.\(^{173}\) Though the idea of home ownership likely appealed to Frances as much as it did to Charles, if boarders provided the means for attaining that goal, then the burden fell largely on Frances. The presence of four boarders doubled the members of the household in 1900, and, as the Falks did not employ any servants, it would have been solely Frances’ responsibility to see to the additional cleaning and cooking in addition to looking after her two eight-year-old sons.\(^{174}\) How Frances would have understood her identity is unclear: did she recognize the additional work she performed as contributing meaningfully to the family income? Did she see the presence of boarders within her home as an intrusion on the middle class values of domesticity she likely sought in the process of achieving home ownership? Did she see herself as keeping boarders or merely as allowing boarders into her private home? Though Frances’ role was central in accommodating boarders within the house, it remains difficult to sort out.

Equally elusive are the four boarders who resided within 509 St. Joseph Street in 1900, the three Benner sisters and Bernhard Falk. Fourteen, sixteen, and nineteen years old respectively, Mary, Theresa, and Elizabeth Benner likely saw 509 St. Joseph Street residence as a means of mediating the challenges of being away from

home and working fulltime with the excitement of having a degree of personal freedom. Elizabeth worked as a dressmaker, while Theresa and Mary both worked as weavers in a cotton mill, positions that would have offered them a level of economic freedom.\textsuperscript{175} Though clearly of the working class, the power of making their own wage for the sisters would have been significant: they would have been able to chose where to board in addition to making other decisions as consumers. It is unclear under what circumstances these girls arrived in Lancaster or how long they stayed, but it is conceivable that their narrative reflects that of other young women who arrived in the city in their teens, remaining into their early adulthood when they married.

Within the boardinghouse, the three sisters likely shared a room, perhaps occupying all or part of the space on the topmost, half-story of the house or one of the single story rooms. If the modern location of windows reflects the historic appearance of the house, the space would have been reasonably well lit by the three windows located on the eastern-facing front façade of the house. Though the space appears somewhat large, it would have been cramped for three young adults, though their long hours away at work would have reduced the amount of time they needed to spend in the space. As part of their board, the sisters would have received meals prepared by Frances Falk and would have had their room cleaned and linens laundered by her. Because half the residents within the residence were related, the experience in 509 St. Joseph Street likely approximated many of the comforts and surroundings of home for Elizabeth, Theresa, and Mary, allowing the boardinghouse

\footnote{\textsuperscript{175} Ibid.}
to stand as both a symbol of freedom, in terms of economic power and personal mobility, and a symbol of home.

Bernhard Falk was the fourth boarder and final resident of 509 St. Joseph Street in 1900. His last name suggests that he was a relation of Charles Falk; his age, 33, suggests that he was a nephew or cousin of Charles. Bernhard’s occupation is also listed as butcher, making it apparent that he assisted Charles in the onsite butcher shop. The presence of family members as boarders within one’s house was not uncommon and neither was the arrangement of allowing one’s employees to board. Both of these factors point to the fact that many boardinghouses were not places full of strangers; rather, connections between boarders or between the boarders and the proprietor(s) existed externally.

As there is no information available to illuminate the composition of the household between 1900 and 1910, it is difficult to say how long the four boarders remained. Many boardinghouse keepers found that it was difficult to keep boarders for lengthy periods of time. It is unclear if the Falks encountered this difficulty, though it is likely that Bernhard boarded in the house for a period of time as he was employed there as well. It seems likely that the Falks would have sought to take in other boarders if those within their house in 1900 left, as the income provided by the boarders was key to their ability to quickly pay off their mortgage.

For Charles, Frances, the Benner sisters, and Bernhard, 509 St. Joseph Street contained distinct meanings: the aspiration for home ownership, an articulation of domestic duties, proof of economic independence, and the continuation of familial ties.

\[176\text{ Ibid.}\]
Collectively, the experiences of those living at 416 Manor Street and 509 St. Joseph Street along with the general demographics of boarding in Cabbage Hill underscore the unique character of boarding in the neighborhood. The institution was defined by the area’s large German population, which constituted between 30% and 60% of the neighborhood and 16% and 40% of boarders in Cabbage Hill between 1880 and 1920. The neighborhood contained a significant immigrant population in general, and the importance of this population is reflected in the frequency of ethnic ties between boarders and boardinghouse keepers.

The majority of boardinghouse households were headed by men, as they represented between 67% and 84% of boardinghouse heads of household. This percentage is far greater than in either Penn Square or Southside and suggests that most boardinghouses consisted of a family and several boarders. Though female-headed boardinghouse households were less common, the majority of female heads of house were widows. It is also apparent that the majority, over 60%, of household heads rented their dwellings, though a similar portion of both male and female heads of house owned their houses freely or with a mortgage. These figures demonstrate that boarding served a range of economic purposes within family economies, enabling families to maintain their current class status or rise to middle class status by buying and subsequently freely owning a home.

Most boarders in Cabbage Hill were working age individuals between eighteen and forty years old. There were roughly equal numbers of male and female boarders in the neighborhood in 1880, though by 1920, there were more men than women. The total number of boarders in the neighborhood grew between 1880 and
1920, demonstrating that boardinghouses remained an important institution within the neighborhood into the early twentieth century. Furthermore, these numbers demonstrate that boarding was not eclipsed by lodging in Cabbage Hill as it had been in Penn Square.

Cabbage Hill’s boarders worked in a variety of occupations, though most found employment in one of the city’s many factories. Women often worked in the cotton mill, silk mill, or umbrella factory while men tended to find employment in the linoleum plant or foundry. In most cases, women held unskilled positions while men held skilled jobs that seemed to contain a degree of mobility. Many boarders resided with others employed in the same location, demonstrating a clear connection between place of employment and the individual with whom they boarded.

Most boardinghouses within Cabbage Hill contained less than three boarders, demonstrating that boarding occurred on a smaller scale within the household than it had in Penn Square. Additionally, boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill are not easily identified: though these structures tend to contain extra stories or rear additions they often share these characteristics with non-boardinghouses, a factor explained by the large family sizes within Cabbage Hill.
Chapter 4: Southside

“One of the most dangerous classes in the world,’ said he, ‘is the drifting and friendless woman…She is helpless. She is migratory…She is lost, as often as not, in a maze of obscure pensions and boarding-houses…””

-Sherlock Holmes in “The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax”

Many boardinghouse keepers refused to admit single women. Viewing them as harbingers of vice and crime and fearing others would view their establishments as brothels rather than boardinghouses, a single, employed man was a safer, more reliable occupant than his female counterpart. Near the Conestoga Cotton Mill, though, young, single women in need of a place to board were plentiful, as were working class families in need of the additional income that boarders—even the young, female-type—would provide. Perhaps because of the issues of supply and demand present in Southside, unlike in Lowell, where female cotton mill workers were housed together in large boardinghouses under the supervision of a matron, Lancaster’s cotton mill workers boarded, instead, with private families.

Southside contained some of the lowest quality housing and poorest residents in the city at the time. Boarding formed a central component of working class family economic strategies in Southside, enabling families to remain financially stable and most working class women to maintain the dignity of working within the home. While boarders present in the neighborhood may have been the least coveted among boardinghouse keepers, the arrangements formed between families renting houses in Southside and local workers satisfied the needs of both parties.

Southside developed as a means of housing workers employed at the nearby factories, especially cotton mills, that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century. During
the time period under study, the neighborhood was characterized by the presence of factory buildings, especially cotton mills, and houses, a portion of which were owned by factory owners. Extending from West Farnum Street on the north (known historically as West German Street) to Hazel Street on the south and from Water Street on the west to Queen Street on the east, the majority of structures in the neighborhood date to the mid nineteenth century (Figure 25).

In 1880, 14% of the neighborhood’s 280 households contained boarders. By 1900, 12% of the 330 households in Southside held boarders. The percentage rose to 15% of the neighborhood’s 370 households in 1910 and held steady at 14% of the neighborhood’s 420 households in 1920. Between 1880 and 1920, 162 different structures contained boarders, 26 of which contained boarders in more than one census year. These numbers suggest that, while boarding was never widespread throughout Southside, the practice impacted many families and even more residences throughout the neighborhood.

178 Ibid.
Figure 25: Southside neighborhood boundaries, Sanborn Map Publishing Company, *Lancaster Pennsylvania*, 1897.

Much as was the case in Cabbage Hill, the boardinghouses in Southside are not easy to distinguish from non-boardinghouses from the street. Many of these houses were built as workers’ housing and contain a similar footprint to nearly every other house on the block. Maps along with the knowledge that the neighborhood’s households were typically smaller in size than those of Cabbage Hill provide insight into the location of boardinghouses within the community. Most boardinghouses in Southside contained additions off the back of the main house to accommodate more people.
within the residence; a significant portion of houses within the neighborhood lacked these additions, enabling some distinctions between the appearance of boarding and non-boarding houses (Figure 26). As the majority of households in Southside had smaller family sizes than those of Cabbage Hill, a factor explained by the discrepancies in birthrates between immigrant and non-immigrant women, it is most probable that boarders would have filled this extra space.183

Figure 26: Sample of boardinghouses in Southside. Note how some of the houses used for boarding, especially those at the bottom, are quite small. Additionally, some houses with extra rear additions were never reported as having boarders. The largest houses, located at the top, all had boarders, Sanborn Map Publishing Company, *Lancaster Pennsylvania*, 1897.

Southside also tended to contain more boardinghouses with three or more boarders than did Cabbage Hill, a factor explained in part by the presence of more

183 Gabaccia, *From the Other Side*, 66.
female-headed households. Within these structures, nearly every bedroom could be rented to boarders for income.

As in Penn Square and Cabbage Hill, boarding within Southside took on a very particular form and was characterized by the presence of factories and need for working class housing. One of the most distinctive characteristics about boarding in Southside was the high percentage of female boarders. As Table 16 demonstrates, women accounted for a high portion of the neighborhood’s boarders from 1880-1920.

Table 16: Gender of Boarders in Southside from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Boarders</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Boarders</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Boarders</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though the percentage of female boarders tended to drop over time, women tended to represent at least half of the neighborhood’s boarding population. As Table 17 highlights, the high percentage of female boarders in Southside is even more pronounced when compared with the percentage of female boarders in Penn Square and Cabbage Hill in each of the census years. These differences are best attributable to the kinds of jobs available within Southside that would draw boarders to the area.
Table 17: Percentage of Female Boarders in Southside Compared to Penn Square and Cabbage Hill 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southside</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penn Square</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage Hill</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted above, in the mid-nineteenth century, men and women tended to hold different jobs within the same industry, with men holding the more skilled positions. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, men and women tended to self-segregate into different industries: women going into textile, garment, and cannery operations while men worked in the steel, chemical, and construction industries. The high level of female boarders in the neighborhood reflects the presence of factories and factory jobs of which women were the prime employees. Figure 27 illustrates the heavy concentration of factories and industrial businesses in the western portion of Southside, the most notable of which were the cotton mill buildings located on the blocks between Water and Beaver Streets.

As Table 18 demonstrates, men and women tended to be concentrated in different industries, though those patterns changed over time. Cotton mills provided the largest single source of employment for all Southside boarders from 1880-1920, though there were consistently twice as many female boarders employed at the cotton mills than men. Caramel making and cigar rolling were also more prevalent among female boarders, reflecting the tendency of women in general to predominate in these occupations. Female boarders also replace male boarders as umbrella workers

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184 Gabaccia, *From the Other Side*, 47.
between 1900 and 1910, likely reflecting women’s concentration in textile industries by the early twentieth century. Female boarders also worked in positions that have been traditionally recognized as extensions of women’s work, finding employment as servants, housekeepers, or waitresses in hotels, as dressmakers or sewers, as teachers, or as laundresses.

Though most women seemed to board in Southside in order to work at the Cotton Mills, male boarders were engaged in a larger variety of occupations between 1880 and 1920. Many of these men worked in positions that required more skill or enabled them to run or work for a smaller business, including blacksmith, cooper, or tinsmith shops, tailoring or shoemaking businesses, or bakery or confectionary operations. Men also tended to find employment in occupations that required physical strength or would have reflected contemporary conceptions of male traits, such as work in iron foundries, the linoleum plant, brickyard, cork works, tannery, or lock works, employment as police officers or firemen, jobs as drivers and cable car conductors, or work as general laborers or machinists.\(^{186}\)

Though boarders in Cabbage Hill often worked in the same industry or occupation as members of their boardinghouse, boarders in Southside did not typically share this characteristic with the family they boarded with. In 1880, for example, the house at 318 Beaver Street was occupied by Philip and Mary Kemp, their young son, Mary’s mother, and two boarders, John Show and Lizzie Nodler.\(^{187}\) Though Philip worked as a shoemaker, both of his boarders were employed at the cotton mill.

Likewise, the Thompson family occupied 57 West German Street in 1900.

Hugh Thompson worked as a bread baker along with one of his two nephews, who also lived in the house.\footnote{1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 49, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 10.} Their boarder, Anne Sheaffer, worked as a cotton

\begin{table}[h!]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
           & 1880 &       & 1900 &       & 1910 &       & 1920 &       \\
           & Men & Women & Men & Women & Men & Women & Men & Women \\
\hline
At Home/ Housework & 1  & 1 &       &       &       &       &       &       \\
Baker & 3 &       &       &       &       &       &       &       \\
Blacksmith/Cooper/Tinsmith & 1 &       & 1 &       & 1 &       &       &       \\
Brick worker & 1 &       & 1 &       &       &       &       &       \\
Clerk/Accountant/Book Keeper & 1 & 2 & 4  & 4 & 3 & 2 &       &       \\
Cigar Maker & 1 & 3 & 1  & 4 & 2  & 9 &       &       \\
Coachsmith, Wagon Maker &       & 2 &       &       &       &       &       &       \\
Cook, Hotel Worker, housekeeper, Servant & 1 &       & 2 &       & 2  & 2 & 1 & 3 \\
Cotton Mill Worker & 5 & 14 & 10 &       & 5  & 11 & 4  & 9 \\
Confectioner &       & 2 &       &       &       &       &       &       \\
Cork Works &       & 2 &       &       &       &       &       &       \\
Caramel Worker & 1 & 4 & 1  &       &       &       &       &       \\
Dressmaker/Sewer/Tailor/Shoemaker/Milliner & 1 & 1 & 1  & 1 & 1 & 2 &       &       \\
Driver/Teamster/Street Car Conductor & 2 &       & 3  & 1 & 3 &       &       &       \\
Fireman, Policeman &       &       &       &       & 2 &       &       &       \\
Foundry Worker &       & 4 &       &       &       &       &       &       \\
Insurance Agent &       & 1 &       &       & 1  &       &       &       \\
(Day) Laborer & 3 &       & 4  &       &       &       &       &       \\
Laundry/ Washing &       &       & 2  &       &       &       & 2 &       \\
Linoleum Plant &       &       & 2 &       &       &       &       &       \\
Lock Works & 2 &       &       &       & 1 &       &       &       \\
Machinist &       &       &       &       &       &       &       & 2 \\
Salesperson & 1 &       &       &       &       &       &       & 3 \\
Soap Factory Worker &       &       &       &       &       &       & 3 &       \\
Silk Mill Worker &       &       & 1  &       & 1  &       & 4 &       \\
Tanner & 1 &       &       &       & 1  &       & 2 &       \\
Teacher & 1 &       &       &       & 1  &       &       &       \\
Tobacco Worker &       &       & 2  & 1 &       &       &       &       \\
Umbrella Worker & 4 &       & 1  &       &       &       &       & 6 \\
No Occupation Listed & 6 & 5 & 7  & 5 & 21 & 10 & 11 &       \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Major Sources of Boarder Occupation in Southside form 1880-1920}
\end{table}
Similarly, in 1920, Curtis and Mary Baum lived at 331 Beaver Street with two boarders, Norman and Lloyd Sellers (Figure 28). Curtis worked as a railroad laborer, Norman as a truck driver, and Lloyd as a cotton mill worker.¹⁹⁰

These occupational differences suggest that boarders and boardinghouse keepers maintained a greater sense of personal and occupational separation than those in Cabbage Hill. This difference was also likely reflected in the perceived class of both the boardinghouse keepers and boarders, as Southside’s boardinghouse keepers likely saw themselves as lower middle class whereas their boarders likely saw themselves as working class.

Figure 28: 331 Beaver Street, left of the pink house, Photograph by author.

The age of boarders in Southside was also indicative of the character of the neighborhood’s boardinghouses (Table 19). As with boarders in Cabbage Hill, boarders in Southside tended to be mainly in the eighteen to thirty year old age range, indicating that most of them were working age people, who resided within the neighborhood mainly with the intention to work.

In 1900, a significant number of individuals were also under the age of 18, pointing to the employment of children within many industries. Carrie Smith, a thirteen-year-old girl, was the youngest employed child boarder in Southside. Carrie, who worked as a cigar roller, lived with Maggie Ficker at 43 West German Street and three other boarders, Martha Dyer, a sixteen-year-old cotton carder, George Sydam, a forty-two-year-old tanner, and W.Y. Eshelman, a thirty-three-year old musician.\textsuperscript{191}

The eight child boarders in Southside under the age of eighteen that were older than Carrie were employed in the cotton mills, cigar factories, silk mill, and umbrella factory.\textsuperscript{192}

Table 19: Age of Boarders in Southside from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th></th>
<th>1900</th>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th></th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1910, the youngest employed child was twelve-year-old John Walton, who worked as a warehouse laborer. John lived at 314 South Queen Street with Susan

\textsuperscript{191} 1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 44, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 5.

\textsuperscript{192} 1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster Districts 60-97, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.
Carrigan, a fifty-year-old widow, her daughter, son-in-law, grandson, and three boarders, Isaac Kesey, and Adam and Lottie Ichas, who were all in their thirties and forties.\textsuperscript{193} There were nine boarder children younger than him, the youngest of whom was two months, who were not employed. There were also four other boys, ranging in age from fifteen to seventeen, employed in the cork works, as clerks or cash boys, and as tobacco packers. Though there were five girls under the age of 18 living in Southside as boarders in 1910, none of them were employed.\textsuperscript{194}

While the presence of children in boardinghouses with non-relatives certainly indicates the presence of children within factories prior to the adoption of twentieth-century labor laws, it also illuminates the distinct role that boardinghouses and boardinghouse members played as a pseudo home and family for these children. It is telling that both Carrie Smith and John Walton lived in female-headed households and in boardinghouses without non-boarding children: the boardinghouse keepers no doubt took them in with the understanding that children as young as twelve and thirteen could not care entirely for themselves, requiring the boardinghouse keepers to assume the “intangible—if unachievable—charge of providing [them] with surrogate homes” and surrogate mothers.\textsuperscript{195}

In an era marked by a large influx of immigrants and the growing presence of immigrant men and women within factories, perhaps the most surprising characteristic of Southside and particularly its boarders and boardinghouse keepers was the low percentage of immigrants. As Table 20 demonstrates, the neighborhood was nearly 100% white between 1880 and 1920, with a small number of African

\textsuperscript{194} 1910 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 60-97, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.
\textsuperscript{195} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouses in Nineteenth Century}, 74.
Americans residing on South Water Street in 1910. Though there were steady populations of white ethnics within the neighborhood, these individuals remained at or below about a third of the entire neighborhood. Immigrants accounted for between nine and thirty-seven percent of boarders, with the percentage declining over time.

Table 20: Ethnicity in Southside From 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>1880 Borders</th>
<th>1900 Boarders</th>
<th>1910 Boarders</th>
<th>1920 Boarders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrian</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Total</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Germans represented the single largest immigrant group in Southside, which is not surprising since Southside abutted Cabbage Hill. Southside also contained a substantial Irish immigrant presence both within the neighborhood and among

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197 Ibid.

198 Ibid.
boarders. Most other groups, especially English, Greek, Italian, and Russian immigrants, were present within the neighborhood, though few were boarders. As in Cabbage Hill, Southside’s boarders and boardinghouse keepers tended to reside with those of similar backgrounds, reflecting both the “racial fears” that many Americans felt towards immigrants as well as the desire of immigrants to board with those of similar backgrounds as themselves.\(^\text{199}\)

Having considered the general attributes of boarders in Southside, our attention can turn to boardinghouse keepers. As in the Penn Square and Cabbage Hill neighborhoods, the majority of heads of house in Southside’s boardinghouses were men, who accounted for a third or more of boardinghouse heads of house between 1880 and 1920 (Table 21). The percentage of female heads of house in Southside’s boardinghouses generally decreased over time, from 31% in 1880 to 22% in 1920. Interestingly, in both Penn Square and Cabbage Hill, the percentage of female-headed boardinghouses grew over time, from 26% to 34% in Penn Square and from 16% to 27% in Cabbage Hill.\(^\text{200}\)

Of Southside’s boardinghouse heads of household, the majority of men were married and the majority of women were single or widowed (Table 22). These figures are quite logical; women tended to operate boardinghouses, so in most male

\(^{199}\) Gabaccia, *From the Other Side*, 9.

Table 21: Gender of Heads of House with Boarders in Southside from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Heads</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Heads</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

headed houses, it was the wife who was undertaking the work necessary for operating the boardinghouse.\(^{201}\) Additionally, taking in boarders enabled single and widowed women to generate an income while remaining within the home, making it a logical choice for most women who needed to support themselves financially.\(^{202}\)

Table 22: Marital Status of Heads of House with Boarders in Southside from 1880-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1880</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boardinghouse keepers in Southside generally rented their houses more frequently than their equivalents in Penn Square or Cabbage Hill (Table 23). This trend correlates with the knowledge that factory owners owned many properties in the neighborhood and that most Southside households were working class.

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Table 23: Percentages of Homes Owned or Rented by Boardinghouse Heads of House from 1900 to 1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1900</th>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th></th>
<th>1920</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Freely</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own with Mortgage</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 22 reveals several important points about the nature of boardinghouse businesses in Southside. In every year except 1900, female boardinghouse keepers rented their houses at a higher percentage than male boardinghouse keepers, suggesting that widowed, single, and divorced women who operated boardinghouses were often not in a position where they could hope to buy a house independently or occupy a freely owned or mortgaged house willed to them by a deceased husband. Additionally, these numbers suggest that families in male-headed boardinghouse households occasionally kept boarders either to contribute to mortgage payments or, in the case of freely owned houses, as a business within the house that did not contribute specifically to payments on the house.

Southside, as a largely working class, factory driven community, was a likely place for boarding to occur. When compared with the other two neighborhoods, it is evident that boarding occurred in a very specific form within Southside, with trends that differed from Penn Square and Cabbage Hill. The neighborhood contained a higher percentage of female boarders than either Penn Square or Cabbage Hill and a boarding population that consisted almost entirely of American workers. Additionally, Southside was the only neighborhood that saw a decrease in the number of female-headed households over time, a stark contrast from the other two
neighborhoods. A consideration of two specific structures within Southside illuminates these trends as well as how these trends related to the physical space of a boardinghouse.

15 Conestoga Street

The two and half story brick house at 15 Conestoga Street stands three bays wide and two piles deep with a two-story rear brick addition (Figure 29). Built in 1860, the house underwent some enlargements in the early twentieth century, including the construction of the second story onto the rear addition and the addition of dormer windows into the roof of the house to create the upper half story. Given the presence of an iron chimney, the rear addition likely contained the kitchen. Fifteen Conestoga Street is part of a series of row houses, containing windows on only the front and rear elevations.

Between 1880 and 1920, the Miller Family rented 15 Conestoga Street, living in it with and without boarders over the forty years. In 1880, Samuel and Olivia Miller lived in the residence with their two young daughters, Lillie and Annie, and their boarder, Emmie Haughman. Samuel worked as a house painter while Olivia’s occupation was listed as keeping house. Emmie, who was nineteen years old, worked in the cotton mill.203

Given the placement of windows and doors, the house consisted of a side hall plan, with two rooms located on both the first and second floors, one facing the street and the other towards the rear of the house. The first floor would have contained a

Figure 29: 15 Conestoga Street, center, as it appears today, Photograph by author.

parlor, which was likely located in the room facing the street, and a dining room, which would have faced the rear of the house and been adjacent to the kitchen in the rear addition of the house (Figure 30). The second floor would have contained the bedrooms, and it is likely that there were only two.

Olivia’s days would have been devoted to caring for her two young children, only one of whom was in school, and maintaining the house. She would have spent a great deal of time in the kitchen preparing meals, setting the table for dinner,
cleaning the house, taking out the laundry, and providing for any challenges or difficulties that might have arisen in her maintenance of the house.\textsuperscript{204} Her husband earned a respectable, though not immense, income as a house painter—$300 in 1870—so the added income of a boarder would have been integral to this young family’s financial stability.\textsuperscript{205} Olivia’s ability to maintain a clean and comfortable boardinghouse would have been vital, as these qualities would have been central to maintaining her boarding business.

Emmie would have enjoyed some advantages and disadvantages as a boarder at 15 Conestoga Street. The most notable advantage of the situation would have been the house’s proximate location to the Conestoga cotton mill complex, which was only half a block away (Figure 31). As one of the many young, female workers at the cotton mill, it no doubt would have been convenient to reside so close to her place of employment.

\textsuperscript{204} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century America}, 60-63.
Within the house, Emmie’s position may have been less convenient. Though the house only contained two bedrooms, it is uncertain how these spaces would have been used. Olivia and Samuel may have taken a bedroom to themselves, leaving Emmie to share the second bedroom with Lillie and Annie. It is also conceivable that Olivia, Samuel, and their daughters would have shared one of the bedrooms, leaving Emmie with the second bedroom to herself. A third possibility is that Olivia and Samuel took one bedroom and their daughters the other while Emmie slept in a space temporarily converted into a bedroom, such as the parlor or attic. Though this third option may seem extreme, it was not uncommon, especially in working class or lower middle class families, for parlors to be converted into bedroom space or for boardinghouse keepers to merely provide their boarders with a portion of room for a mattress and some personal affects. The answer to where Emmie would have slept would have related to how much she paid for her accommodations: the more personal space and the better the space a boarder received, the higher the cost. Given her position as a cotton mill worker as well as her young age, it is unlikely that Emmie could afford to pay for a private bedroom. It is most probable that she shared a bedroom with the Miller’s young children or lived within a less comfortable space in the house, like the attic or parlor.

Regardless of the room arrangements the Millers decided upon in 1880, it is likely that they found their house too cramped for boarders in the ensuing years as their family size grew. Though the Millers continued to reside within the house in the early twentieth century, the census does not reveal them having boarders within their house again until 1920. In the ensuing years, 15 Conestoga Street had been expanded, with both a second floor added to the kitchen addition and windows to the attic, providing an additional half-story to the residence (Figure 32).

In 1920, Olivia was 65 years old, living as a widow with two boarders, Mary Schmidt and Ella Stouer, both in their twenties.\footnote{1920 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 60, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 12.} Mary worked at the cotton mill
that year and Ella at the box factory.\textsuperscript{209} Olivia listed her occupation in 1920 as “lodging house keeper,” suggesting that she had turned earlier efforts to maintain boarders, or lodgers, into a full-scale entrepreneurial effort.\textsuperscript{210} The additions to the house in the early twentieth century would have provided two additional bedrooms, one in the attic and the other over the kitchen, meaning that Olivia could engage more boarders, or lodgers, than the two in her house at the time. It is probable that Olivia also intended to maintain more than the two boarders, though there is no evidence to determine if she did and how the occupancy of her house changed over time.

As in 1880, these women’s place within the house would have depended on how much they were able to pay. It is possible that Mary and Ella shared a room on the second floor or that one of these women paid for the second floor room while the other paid for the room in the attic or over the kitchen. Because of the apparent vacancies in the house, it is also possible that Olivia was actively trying to engage additional boarders, a process that typically occurred via word of mouth rather than through the newspaper or city directories.\textsuperscript{211}

Olivia’s duties in maintaining boarders would have remained quite similar in 1920 to what they had been in 1880, though she likely would have felt the pressure of knowing that she needed to maintain boarders in order to afford both the rent on 15

\textsuperscript{209} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{210} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{211} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century}, 36.
Conestoga Street and a suitable living for herself, as she no longer had her husband’s income. The experiences of the Miller family demonstrate the capacity for one residence to maintain two distinct kinds of boarding establishments: one with a single boarder residing with a private family and the other a larger boarding business venture. These two situations show how factors like family size and status of the head of household can impact the kind of boarding establishment that occurs.

### 326 South Queen Street

326 South Queen Street captures many of the trends that made boarding in Southside particularly unique and counter to boarding trends in the other two neighborhoods. The house was occupied by a succession of families from 1900 to 1920, during which time it transitioned from a female-run, large-scale boardinghouse to a structure occupied by private families who took in several boarders. The three bay, two and a half story brick structure extends two piles deep with a large brick
addition off the rear. Between ten and thirteen people resided within this large structure from 1900-1920, attesting to both its size and the variety of functions the structure served (Figure 33).

Figure 33: 326 South Queen Street as it appears today, Photograph by author.

In 1900, Susan Hawthorne, a widow in her fifties, rented the house, using it as a boardinghouse. Within the establishment, she accommodated nine male boarders and a female domestic servant. The boarders ranged in age from nineteen to forty
eight, though most were in their mid-twenties. All but one of these men were single and employed within the city. The other, Harry Hauser, had been married for four years, though his wife did not reside within the boardinghouse. Of the nine, only two had clear immigrant roots: Charles McKelvey, whose parents had both been born in Ireland, and Emil Schelle, who had immigrated from Germany in 1881, though he had become a naturalized United States citizen. Twenty-five-year-old Kate Sanvater was employed as Susan’s domestic servant in 1900. Kate’s father had been born in Germany, though her mother was American.\footnote{1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 50, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 7.}

Susan Hawthorn appears to have run what contemporary boarders would have found a respectable establishment. She likely asked her boarders and servant to submit letters of reference prior to admitting them into her boardinghouse, though many boardinghouse keepers also used their first impressions to interpret a boarder or servant’s respectability.\footnote{Gamber, Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century, 56.} Susan also does not appear to have admitted single women into her boardinghouse, which is notable as many contemporaries equated a boardinghouse full of single women with a brothel.\footnote{Ibid.} Additionally, all of the men in Susan’s boardinghouse were employed, suggesting that they had the means to pay for their board, a factor that would have been important to Susan as the success of her enterprise would have rested on the reliability of her boarders in paying their bills.\footnote{Gamber, Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century, 47.}

The interior space of the structure likely consisted of public and private space, with some boarders being afforded better accommodations than others. The first floor of the main structure would have had a side passage and two rooms, one facing
the street and one facing towards the rear of the house. It is probable that one of these rooms was a dining room and the other a parlor. A chimney was located in the front room of the house, suggesting that this room may have been used as the parlor. On the second floor, there were likely two bedrooms, one facing towards the street and the other towards the rear of the house. The rear addition of the house contained a number of bedrooms on two floors, as well as the kitchen, which would have been located near the chimney in the back of the addition (Figure 34).

Given the size of the establishment, the parlor and dining room on the first floor of the main house would have been public space where boarders could have entertained guests or congregated together in the evening or on days off from work. Though not large in size, the room likely contained the nicest furniture in the house. The parlor was not only a place for congregation and leisure, it was also a form of advertising for the boardinghouse keeper, who could use interviews with prospective boarders in the space to entice them to board with her.216

![Figure 34: 1897 depiction of 326 South Queen Street, Sanborn Map Publishing Company, Lancaster Pennsylvania, 1897.](image)

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As with other examples of boardinghouses, the living space each boarder was allotted would have depended on the rates he was able to afford. It is possible that Susan kept one or both of the rooms in the main portion of the house for herself, preferring some privacy and separation from her boarders. It is almost certain that the majority of her boarders would have resided within the rear addition of the house, which likely contained four or five rooms in addition to the kitchen. Most of the boarders would have shared rooms, as having one’s own room was uncommon unless one could afford it.\textsuperscript{217} Some of the boarders, like Harry Ruanfort and Emil Schelle, who both worked as confectioners, may have sought out the boardinghouse together, intending to share a room.\textsuperscript{218} Most boarders, though, would not have known their roommate or roommates in advance.\textsuperscript{219}

Kate, the servant, may have slept in the kitchen or in a room located near the kitchen. Her position within the house would have been less than desirable for, though Susan was the boardinghouse keeper, the majority of work necessary for running the boardinghouse, especially the heavy cooking and cleaning, would have fallen on Kate.\textsuperscript{220} If the difficulty of her position wasn’t enough, Kate likely also faced difficulties in receiving her wages, as boardinghouse keepers were notorious for failing to pay their domestic servants promptly.\textsuperscript{221}

The economic success of Susan Hawthorne’s 1900 boardinghouse is uncertain. The house, though, continued to function as a boardinghouse for the following two decades, suggesting that her venture may have experienced some

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{gamber2000} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century}, 41.
\bibitem{census} 1900 United States Federal Census, Lancaster District 50, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 7.
\bibitem{gamber2000b} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century}, 41-42.
\bibitem{gamber2000c} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century}, 61.
\bibitem{gamber2000d} Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century}, 55.
\end{thebibliography}
success, prompting others to try and mimic her success. In 1910, Elmer Wiker rented the house with his wife, two sons, and two daughters. Elmer worked as wagon driver and his wife, Mary, as a boardinghouse keeper. Their children ranged in age from twelve to twenty four. Their oldest two children were employed, Ralph as a wagon driver and Nora as an umbrella factory worker. The family also kept seven boarders, including a married couple, Christian and Mary Zwally, a father and son, Abram and Paul Suanely, two single men, Gottleib Hess and John Pyfer, and a single women, Mary Paullis. These boarders ranged in age from fifteen to fifty three and were employed as cigar makers, clerks, cork works operators, and in an ice works. The only boarder not employed was Mary Zwally, whose husband of nineteen years worked as a cigar maker.

The distribution of space within the second iteration of the boardinghouse at 326 South Queen Street would have been different than when Susan Hawthorne ran the establishment, as the Wiker family was much larger and many of their boarders were related to one another. The Wiker family likely occupied the main portion of the house, with Mary and Elmer taking the front room and two of their children, either their sons or daughters, the back room. A half story had been added to the house between 1900 and 1912, so it is possible that the attic room was available for use by 1910, enabling the other two Wiker children to occupy this space. Additionally, it appears that the house annexed the upper stories of the shop located next door at 328 South Queen Street, so it is more probable that the family lived

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223 Ibid.
224 Ibid.
225 Ibid.
within the three rooms located on the second floor of 326 and 328 South Queen Street (Figure 35).

The first floor space in the house—the parlor and the dining room—would have continued to function as public space, used by all of the boarders as well as by the family. Their boarders would have continued to occupy the rear addition of the structure, much as boarders had in 1900. There were likely four rooms available, some of which may have contained parlors, one occupied by Christian and Mary Zwally, one by Abram and Paul Suanely, one by Gotlieb Hess and John Pyfer, and the last by Mary Paullis. It is possible that Mary, as a young woman without much income, occupied the same space that had been occupied by Kate, Susan Hawthorne’s 1900 domestic servant or that she resided within the half-story attic space, as this was typically the cheapest accommodation in a boardinghouse.\(^{226}\)

\[\text{Figure 35: 326 South Queen Street in 1912, Sanborn Map Publishing Company,}\]
\[\text{Lancaster Pennsylvania, 1912.}\]

The range of relationships and situations embodied by these boarders reflect some of the numerous reasons individuals came to reside within a boardinghouse.

\(^{226}\)Gamber, \textit{Boardinghouse in Nineteenth Century}, 45.
Mary Paullis, Gotleib Hess and John Pyfer certainly follow the general pattern of young, single individuals who resided within a boardinghouse while working in local industries. The stories of the Zwallys and Suanelys is quite different.

Though Christian Zwally was still employed as a cigar roller in 1910, he was fifty-three years old; his wife, Mary, was forty-two. Having been married for nineteen years, they had three children together, but none resided with them. Relocating to a boardinghouse for Christian and Mary was either a signal of hard financial times or a step towards retirement. Renting a room or a collection of rooms within a boardinghouse would have required less money than renting an entire house, a decision that would have been quite practical for two adults without children in their house.

Abram Suanelys was a widower. His son, Paul, was only sixteen when they lived in the Wiker boardinghouse. Though both men were employed and likely could have afforded to rent a house themselves, the decision to reside in a boardinghouse was likely rooted in the lack of a woman to keep house for them. By living in a boardinghouse, where they could pay for someone else to take care of basic housekeeping and cooking for them, they could have their domestic needs met, even if the conditions within a boardinghouse were often sub par.

Compared to the 1900 boardinghouse, the 1910 boardinghouse represented a shift from an operation run by a widowed woman to one run by a married woman who lived there with her husband and children. The structure also transitioned from one that solely accommodated single men, who were a growing constituent of

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228 Ibid.
Southside boarders, to one with a combination of gender and relationship types. By 1920, the composition of the boardinghouse again underwent a transformation, as three separate families, one of which kept boarders, occupied it.

In 1920, ten people resided within 326 South Queen Street: Edgar and Lizzie Leese, their two teenage children, and two boarders Manuel Hory and Amos Kohl; sisters Edith and Vivi Diffenbaugh; and George Korider and his wife Mary. This household composition took advantage of the structure’s vast size and number of bedrooms, though represented a departure from the use of the house explicitly as a boardinghouse. The layout of the house appears to have remained quite similar to what it had been in 1910, so it is likely that the structure was divided into roughly three private living areas, with the three families continuing to share the first floor public spaces along with the kitchen.

The Leese family, as the largest, likely occupied the front portion of the house. This would have afforded them two or three bedrooms on the second floor along with the attic space. It is probable that Edgar and Lizzie Leese resided in the rooms located on the second floor and that their boarders shared the attic bedroom space. Both Edgar and his two boarders, Manuel and Amos, worked within the cotton mill, suggesting that, although Lizzie would have undertaken the domestic duties for maintaining them as boarders, her husband was responsible for bringing them into the boardinghouse. Edgar’s role in this situation represents the increased role that men seemed to play in Southside boardinghouses into the twentieth century.

The Diffenbaugh and Korider families, smaller in size, would have split the rear addition of the house, with one family occupying each floor of the addition. As

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the Diffenbaugh sisters, in their twenties, were much younger than George and Mary Korider, who were near sixty, it is probable that they resided on the second floor, leaving the Koriders with the more accessible first floor.230

The multi-family use of a house, especially one with boarders, was rare, but not uncommon. Within this type of configuration, boarding served as a small component of the larger use of the structure. Though this kind of use was rare, it demonstrates a shift that occurred over time in Southside away from female-headed boardinghouses and towards male-headed establishments.

From both the demographic profile of boarding in Southside as well as the experiences of boarders and boardinghouse keepers at 15 Conestoga Street and 326 South Queen Street, it is evident that boarding in Southside differed markedly from the practice in Cabbage Hill and Penn Square. The community contained several large industries, most notably, the Conestoga Cotton Mill, and was inhabited mainly by working class individuals. The houses in Southside, which were built specifically as workers’ housing, are much smaller than those in Cabbage Hill or Penn Square; while it is difficult to distinguish boardinghouses from the exterior, many former boardinghouses contain large rear additions or extra half stories to accommodate the presence of boarders within these structures.

Women accounted for a large percentage of boarders in Southside, though the percentage of female boarders decreased over time from 61% to 46%. The comparatively high percentage of female boarders in Southside relates to the presence of jobs, especially in the Cotton Mill, that were typically undertaken by women. In fact, most female boarders in Southside worked in the Cotton Mill, though large

230 Ibid.
numbers also worked as caramel workers, cigar rollers, or domestic positions, like cooking, cleaning, or dressmaking. Conversely, male boarders tended to be occupied in a wider range of occupations and in occupations that required a higher degree of physical strength or skilled labor. Between 1880 and 1920, male boarders worked as day laborers, tanners, machinists, drivers, and a range of other occupations.

The age distribution of boarders in Southside reflects the fact that most boarders in Southside were factory workers and between eighteen and forty years of age. A significant number of boarders were under eighteen, though many of these individuals were in their teens and employed in factories, pointing to the absence of strict child labor laws in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Unlike in Penn Square and Cabbage Hill, Southside’s population was mainly white and non-immigrant. Germans continued to represent the largest ethnic group, though immigrants remained at or below a third of the neighborhood’s residents. The neighborhood also did not see the large influx of Italian, Russian, and Greek immigrants witnessed by Cabbage Hill and, especially, Penn Square.

Heads of house in Southside’s boardinghouses were predominately male, and the percentage of female heads of house decreased, from 31% to 22%. Most male heads of house were married, though a few were single or widowed. Most female heads of house were widowed, though some were single or married and living independent of their husbands. Additionally, most household heads rented their residences, though a few owned their properties freely or with a mortgage. Except in 1900, female heads of house tended to rent their properties at a higher percentage than male heads of house. These figures point to the working class nature of most of
Southside’s boardinghouse residences as well as the slight opportunity for class mobility through home ownership available in the neighborhood.
Though Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside represent three neighborhoods within the same city, they portray distinct circumstances under which boarding occurred, vastly different boardinghouse housing types, and different trends in the prevalence of boarding over time. These differences demonstrate that boardinghouses and the practice of boarding took on different forms even within different neighborhoods of the same geographic area. Additionally, these differences point to the need to continue to study boardinghouses further, as these structures and their occupants cannot be properly understood through vast generalizations.

In all three neighborhoods, most boarders were working age individuals between eighteen and forty years old, though all three neighborhoods contained important minorities of child and elderly boarders. These numbers demonstrate that most boardinghouse residents were young adults or middle-aged individuals, though children and the elderly serve as an important reminder of the range of individuals who occupied boardinghouses. Both Penn Square and Southside contained child boarders who were employed, pointing to the lack of strong child labor laws at the time. All three neighborhoods contained elderly boarders, who likely viewed boardinghouses as a refuge from the almshouse.

Since the majority of boarders in all three neighborhoods were employed, boardinghouses tended to maintain close ties to various industries. Often, these ties were geographic, demonstrated, for example, by the large number of boarders in Southside who worked in the nearby cotton mill. In other instances, these ties were
social, reflected in instances in both Penn Square and Cabbage Hill where boarders and a member of the household shared the same occupation. At times, boarding functioned as part of another business, evidenced by instances where boarders were employed in an industry occurring within the residence, such as Gast’s pottery or Falk’s butcher shop, or in maintaining the residence, such as hotels who allowed their employees to board.

Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside contained different ethnic and racial compositions, factors that were reflected in these neighborhoods’ boardinghouses. Penn Square was the most diverse, containing a range of ethnic and racial groups at different points in time. Especially among early twentieth century Greek, Russian, and Italian immigrants, it is evident that boardinghouses in the neighborhood facilitated the immigration and Americanization process. Though all three neighborhoods contained large German immigrant populations, Cabbage Hill contained the largest percentage of German immigrants of the three neighborhoods. Among German immigrants in Cabbage Hill, too, it is evident that boardinghouses facilitated both immigration and Americanization. Southside contained the lowest percentage of non-white individuals between 1880 and 1920, which is reflected in the mainly white, native, working class population of its boardinghouses.

In all three neighborhoods, the majority of boardinghouse heads of house were married men. These figures suggest that maintaining boarders provided a means by which women could contribute to the overall family economy rather than a means by which women maintained their own livelihood. In Penn Square and Cabbage Hill, the number of female heads of house in boardinghouses increased slightly over time,
perhaps indicating an increased willingness among single, widowed, and divorced women to operate their own businesses. In Southside, the percentage of female-headed boardinghouses decreased over time, perhaps indicating a stigma against female-headed boardinghouses in a neighborhood that was more notably working class than either Penn Square or Cabbage Hill.

Most boardinghouse heads of house rented, rather than owned, their residences in each of the three neighborhoods discussed. Southside contained the highest percentage of rented boardinghouses of the three neighborhoods, which is not surprising since factory owners controlled a significant portion of the neighborhood’s housing stock. In instances were the boardinghouse head of house owned their residence with a mortgage, it is evident that the practice of maintaining boarders facilitated a family’s rise to middle class through the indicator of home ownership.

The structures and scale in which boarding occurred in Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside were as varied as their occupants. Penn Square contained the largest number of boarders and the highest concentration of large boardinghouses—those containing three or more boarders—of the three neighborhoods. The neighborhood contained a combination of hotels that housed boarders and large boardinghouses, enabling the neighborhood’s infrastructure to contain high numbers of boarders. Most boardinghouses within Cabbage Hill contained less than three boarders, demonstrating that boarding occurred on a smaller scale within the household than it had in Penn Square. Additionally, boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill are not easily identified: though these structures tend to contain extra stories or rear additions often share these characteristics with non-boardinghouses, a factor
explained by the large family sizes within Cabbage Hill. In Southside, most houses were built specifically as workers’ housing and are much smaller than those in Cabbage Hill or Penn Square; while it is difficult to distinguish boardinghouses from the exterior, many former boardinghouses contain large rear additions or extra half stories to accommodate the presence of boarders within these structures.

The prevalence of boarding and boardinghouses over time within the three neighborhoods also varies. Penn Square was marked by the decline of boarding and rise in lodging over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This change was geographically reflected in a shift in the highest concentrations of boarders from the commercial downtown to the adjacent residential blocks by 1910 and 1920. The decline of boarding and rise of lodging felt in Penn Square was not noticed in either Cabbage Hill or Southside; in fact, the practice of boarding in these two neighborhoods increased into the twentieth century.

Boardinghouses in Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside demonstrate that the resource-type can reveal much about the surrounding community and its history. Additionally, it is quite clear that many former boardinghouses still stand within their communities, their stories waiting to be told. There are several important steps that communities can take to discover and subsequently preserve boardinghouses. These steps range from identifying, surveying, and documenting to listing, recognizing, and interpreting.
1. Identify

The first step in any effort to preserve an area’s boardinghouses must be the identification of the city or neighborhood’s historic boardinghouses. Though a seemingly obvious step, as the earlier analysis of Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside has suggested, identifying boardinghouses can be a laborious task. Because these structures are rarely self-evident, their identification must come through the use of historic documents, especially census data, historic maps, and directories.

Census data provides the easiest, though most laborious, means of identifying former boardinghouses, as one need only look at the occupants of a household and their relationship to the head of house to determine if boarders resided within a residence. There are some definite limitations to this method, though, as the entries can be subject to the biases of the information giver: the individual providing information on the household may forget or not know demographic information about the members of their household, especially in instances where many non-relatives reside in the house. Additionally, different households maintained different definitions of what constituted a boarder: some considered adult children or their spouses as boarders and others did not. These factors remind us that census data serves as much as a subjective portrayal of how people saw themselves as an objective listing of how things were. Nevertheless, it remains a powerful tool for uncovering boardinghouses. Additionally, it is not until 1870 that census takers list the names and relationships of household members and not until
1880 that most census takers began providing addresses with the data: these factors certainly limit the usefulness of census data in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

More significantly, census data only provides insight into the composition of households and presence of boarders for a small window of time, being accurate for, in the best cases, the census year or, possibly, for only the months surrounding the census-taker’s arrival. As boarding was a particularly fluid practice, it is difficult to know how representative the given information is of the household’s typical composition. More importantly, the use of census data leaves vacant the years in between: there is no comparable source for piecing together at the same level of detail the places in which boarding occurred in a given community. Despite these limitations, census data provides an unparalleled means of locating boardinghouses, making it a useful tool.

Newspapers, maps, and city directories also provide access into the presence of boardinghouses, as these resources are occasionally listed as local businesses or identified on maps. Additionally, they may appear in newspaper advertisements or stories. These sources are greatly limited by the fact that most boardinghouses were not publically reported and recorded endeavors; rather, boarding occurred as a private transaction between the boarder and boardinghouse keeper. Nevertheless, these resources can be useful in identifying a community’s boardinghouses.
2. Survey

The next step in recognizing boardinghouses is to pair the historic locations of these resources with the area’s current building stock for the obvious fact that not all historic structures have survived into the present. Through this process, one may begin to consider the kinds of extant structures in which boarding occurred and pose questions such as: are there patterns in the size or layout of boardinghouses? Do concentrations of boardinghouses within the area change over time? Are there structures being used for boardinghouses in a single instance or over time?

In order to understand how extant boardinghouse structures reflect historic concentrations, it would also be ideal to use historic Sanborn maps and atlases to look at the form and size of every identified boardinghouse, including those that are no longer standing. This information enables one to see how still-extant resources reflect, or do not reflect, historic patterns.

In Lancaster, for example, this process revealed that many of the largest boardinghouses in Penn Square were no longer standing, as they had been demolished during a 1970s urban renewal project.\(^\text{231}\) This information was critical, as it demonstrated that the neighborhood’s still-extant boardinghouses only reflected a certain portion of boardinghouses and spoke to boarding on a smaller scale in a neighborhood that had historically contained some of the city’s largest and most populated boardinghouses.

\(^{231}\) See David Schuyler, *A City Transformed*, for information on the blocks and historic structures lost to urban renewal.
3. Research and Document

After establishing the location and extent of still-standing boardinghouses within an area, one should then begin to investigate specific examples using the full range of primary and secondary resources available. While it would be ideal to investigate all extant boardinghouses to this level, this process would be rather laborious and time-consuming. Consequently, one should look for specific structures that reflect major trends in an area’s boardinghouse types. Structures may be organized in terms of year, size, class, ethnicity, race, gender, occupation, or any number of other factors that speak to the kinds of structures, boarders, and boardinghouse keepers in an area. From these categories, one can then select representative samples and investigate select structures in greater detail rather than every structure.

Some of the resources that one may use in this process include diaries; journals; birth, death, and marriage records; and family histories. These, and other available primary and secondary sources, should enable one to understand the larger narratives surrounding who occupied a particular boardinghouse and why.

As the interior appearance of a boardinghouse is more important than its exterior appearance, insight into the use of space and changes in use over time is critical to understanding how a structure functioned as a boardinghouse. If available, building permit records and pattern books may enable one to understand the interior design of a building and when changes to the structure occurred. This information is useful in understanding if and how
buildings were modified to accommodate boarders or how the intended use of space within a structure may have changed when boarders were present.

Even without this information, or access to the interior of the structure, it is possible to form some conclusions regarding the historic interior layout of a building through careful fieldwork. By merging historic maps, such as Sanborn maps, with the current appearance of a structure, one can begin to identify the layout of rooms, stairwells, and hallways. Knowledge of chimney placement can reveal the historic location of kitchens. Likewise, a sense of the size of a structure can reveal how comfortably—or uncomfortably—large numbers of individuals may have been accommodated within the structure.

Through building a detailed understanding of the history of the fabric of a structure and its occupants, one can start to answer questions along the lines of: How frequently was a location used as a boardinghouse? How long did a specific family reside in a particular boardinghouse and did they have boarders the entire time? Did multiple families use a structure as a boardinghouse? If so, what in particular about the fabric of the structure made it conducive to use as a boardinghouse? Do I have any insight into how boardinghouse keepers or boarders may have understood their position?

With this contextual information in hand, one can start to formulate profiles on specific boardinghouse structures. Additionally, one may also use comparisons of boardinghouses to create a fuller picture of boardinghouses within the area, using the detailed information on specific structures to better understand various categories of boardinghouses. Likewise, one can compare
various categories of boardinghouses to understand boarding trends that were particular to specific groups, kinds of structures, or periods of time versus trends that extended to most boardinghouses.

4. List

The tasks carried out in the previous three steps should result in a thorough understanding of the location and significance of boardinghouses within a community. The final three steps—list, preserve, and interpret—consider ways that these resources can be recognized and maintained within their communities.

Listing boardinghouses on local, state, or national registries serves as an important first step in assuring awareness of these resources. Communities should update historic district listings to reflect the presence and importance of boardinghouses in the area. Additionally, towns and cities should consider a National Register multiple property nomination (or the state or local equivalent), as these group listings capture both pervasiveness and interconnectivity of these resources. Nominators should use the structures analyzed during the research and documentation phase as the basis for a multiple property nomination, as these structures serve as a microcosm for larger boardinghouse trends and structures within the community.

Towns and cities should also consider individually nominating strong examples to a local, state, or national registry. Many of these structures are significant as female-run businesses, components of a particular ethnic group’s immigration and assimilation into American culture, or as evidence of
the role that boarding served in small businesses. By nominating them as individual properties, one recognizes the importance of boardinghouses in connection to these larger themes.

5. Preserve

Boardinghouses often provided homes for immigrants who were marginalized by nativist Americans who resented the high influx of immigration during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Nativists acted on these sentiments, in part, by preserving structures representative of important parts of American history, cultivating a civil religion and initiating some of the nation’s earliest preservation efforts. These efforts would bring preservation full circle, from a means of reacting against the presence of immigrants to a tool for including their stories in the larger narrative of American history. Likewise, the preservation of boardinghouses would serve as a means of social justice within cities, allowing boardinghouses, a resource significant to historically marginalized immigrant groups, to be recognized and maintained as important components of their communities.

While listing boardinghouses on local, state, or national registers is important in portraying an appreciation for boardinghouses in one’s community, these efforts do not necessarily assure the long-term preservation of these structures. Ideally, communities should undertake processes and

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efforts necessary to assure the bricks-and-mortar preservation of these structures, though it is likely unreasonable to expect hundreds, if not thousands, of these mainly residential structures to be preserved over time.

Accordingly, communities should focus their efforts on alternative ways of preserving the memories and histories of boardinghouses, a process that will enable future generations to have greater information and access to the largest number of a community’s boardinghouses. One should work to preserve boardinghouses through documentation, photographing their exteriors and, if it is possible to gain access, creating floor-plans of their interiors.

Communities should also consider preserving boardinghouses through spatial analysis, using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other tools to map out the locations of boardinghouses over time. This process provides for the preservation of the location of current boardinghouses as well as the preservation of the memory of boardinghouse structures that are no longer standing. Additionally, a spatial analysis approach also conveys both the scale and quantity of boardinghouses over time, factors central to the significance of boardinghouses as a resource-type.

6. Interpret

Closely tied with the preservation of boardinghouses is their interpretation. Efforts to interpret these resources for the community play an important role in their preservation, as they enable members of the community
to reconsider the historic use of their own neighborhoods, and possibly their own houses.

Maps of the locations of boardinghouses, or public access to a GIS system with this information, provides a basic step towards acquainting the public with these resources, as this information enables community members to begin their own analysis of these structures and their presence within the community. The dissemination of this information could also lead to an improved understanding of these resources, as homeowners of former boardinghouses may be willing to make the interior of their homes available for documentation upon realizing the historic use and importance of their home. Similarly, long-time residents of the community may be able to provide anecdotal information about a particular boardinghouse upon realizing the historic locations of these structures. These kinds of interests would contribute to a fuller understanding of both specific boardinghouse structures and the resource-type in the community in general.

Communities should also consider instituting walking tours of boardinghouses and their neighborhood environments, as these efforts enable members of the public to see these structures up close and appreciate the different kinds of structures that were used as boardinghouses within a particular neighborhood. Individuals can begin to consider how these spaces were divided and used by considering evidence like the depth of the structure and window and door placement. Additionally, tours provide an opportunity for individuals to understand how boardinghouses geographically and socially
related to other aspects of a neighborhood. For example, one can appreciate their context and relationship to local sources of employment.

The kinds of narratives that would likely arise when discussing a particular boardinghouse on a walking tour would serve as lenses into larger themes and trends, both good and bad, within the town or city, including immigration, industry location, gender roles, and racial discrimination. These conversations would cultivate in the public a greater understanding of an area’s past and changes to the neighborhood or city over time.

In addition to interpreting boardinghouses through walking tours, communities may also want to consider the interpretation of these structures through archaeology. While any archaeological investigation naturally results in the destruction of the archaeological site, countering the main tenets of preservation, in certain instances, this process can provide an important means of understanding a town or city’s boardinghouses.

In instances where a former boardinghouse structure must be demolished, archaeology, if it is possible to undertake, can be an important means of learning about a structure that will no longer be standing. Recovered artifacts may provide insight into the daily functions of a boardinghouse, the class status of the boardinghouse’s occupants, and other general insights into boardinghouse life. Of course, this information is only useful in understanding a structure as a boardinghouse if one can determine the years in which the structure was used as a boardinghouse and the date of the artifacts recovered from the site.
Archaeology may also be a useful tool for interpretation in instances where a boardinghouse is no longer extant but the yard is accessible and intact. In these instances, one may hope to locate a former trash pit or evidence of former structures, like privies, smokehouses, or kitchens, in the rear yard. These features would likely contain clues about the lives of the boarders that once occupied the site and important insight into the daily functions of the boardinghouse. Again, the use of these findings would be dependent on the ability of researchers and archaeologists to determine the dates during which the structure functioned as a boardinghouse and the dates of the artifacts recovered from the site.

In instances where archaeology could be undertaken with the expectation of yielding useful results, the public could be engaged through public archaeology efforts, which could enable individuals to either dig or screen artifacts. More importantly, the artifacts yielded from these excavations would serve as important, tangible tools for explaining to the public the use and meaning of boardinghouses in the past.

In addition to large interpretive efforts like walking tours or archaeology, towns and cities could also interpret boardinghouses to the public through smaller measures, like online exhibits, local history talks, or newsletter articles. Even these smaller efforts help to inform the public about the presence of these resources and rescue them from obscurity.

Through efforts to identify, preserve, and interpret boardinghouses, communities can begin to understand the extent to which these institutions
functioned historically within their communities. Additionally, these efforts provide greater insight to towns and cities, as well as to the public, into how their communities, and even their homes, were used in the past. Through efforts to identify, survey, and document boardinghouses, communities can begin to understand the spatial organization of these resources, changes in the concentration of these resources over time, and number of boardinghouses still present within their communities. Subsequent efforts to list boardinghouses on local, state, or national registers, preserve these structures, and interpret them for the public assure that current and future members of the community will be aware of the importance of this rich resource-type.

As the analysis of boardinghouses in the Penn Square, Cabbage Hill, and Southside neighborhoods of Lancaster has shown, boardinghouses are a valuable resource-type that provide useful insights into many aspects of a community. Their potential in shaping our understanding of the past is only realized to the extent by which we can locate and investigate them.
Appendix 1

This Appendix contains a series of maps depicting the location of boardinghouses in Penn Square from 1880-1920. Maps are created as overlays onto the 1897 Sanborn Map of Lancaster.
Penn Square Boardinghouse Location, Section 2
1897 Sanborn Map

Key: 1880  1900  1910  1920
Penn Square Boardinghouse Location, Section 3
1897 Sanborn Map

Key: 1880  1900  1910  1920
Appendix 2

This Appendix contains a series of maps depicting the location of boardinghouses in Cabbage Hill from 1880-1920. Maps are created as overlays onto the 1897 Sanborn Map of Lancaster.
Cabbage Hill Boardinghouse Location, Section 1
1897 Sanborn Map
Cabbage Hill Boardinghouse Location, Section 2
1897 Sanborn Map
Cabbage Hill Boardinghouse Location, Section 3
1897 Sanborn Map
Appendix 3

This Appendix contains a series of maps depicting the location of boardinghouses in Southside from 1880-1920. Maps are created as overlays onto the 1897 Sanborn Map of Lancaster.
Southside Boardinghouse Location, Section 1
1897 Sanborn Map

Key: 1880  1900  1910  1920
Southside Boardinghouse Location, Section 2
1897 Sanborn Map

Key: 1880  1900  1910  1920
Southside Boardinghouse Location, Section 3
1897 Sanborn Map

Key: 1880  1900  1910  1920
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